

**OPINION 6**  
CLEAR & PRESENT  
DANGER

**WORLD 8**  
30 HELD OVER ATTACK ON HINDU  
TEMPLE IN NORTHWEST PAKISTAN

**SPORT 12**  
RAHANE, ASHWIN  
CLIMB IN RANKINGS

Established 1864

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

\*Late City Vol. 31 Issue 1  
\*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

NEW DELHI, FRIDAY JANUARY 1, 2021; PAGES 12 ₹3

# the pioneer

HAPPY NEW YEAR

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I RESEARCH  
AND READ A  
LOT: ANUSHKA  
10 VIVACITY



## Vaccine dry run across India on Jan 2

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After successfully conducting the coronavirus vaccination dry run in four States, a similar mega-drill will be kicked off across the country on January 2.

This is aimed at preparing the entire administration and management of vaccine supply, storage, and logistics, including cold chain management, as Covid-19 vaccines are likely to get approval any time soon.

The dry run will be conducted by all the States and UTs in their respective Capitals in at least three-session sites. Some States will also include districts that are situated in difficult terrain/have poor logistical support and Maharashtra and Kerala are likely to schedule the dry run in major cities other than their Capital, a senior official from the Union Health Ministry said.

Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan chaired a high-level meeting to review the preparedness at session sites for Covid-19 vaccination with respective Secretaries (Health), NHM MDs and other health administrators of all States/UTs through video conference.

The planning for the vaccine introduction will be as per the operational guidelines issued by the Ministry on December 20. For each of the three session sites, the medical officer in-charge will identify 25 test beneficiaries (healthcare workers).

The States/UTs have been asked to ensure that the data of these beneficiaries is uploaded

in CoWIN. These beneficiaries will also be available at the session site for the dry run. The States and UTs shall prepare the facilities and users to be created on CoWIN application including uploading the data of healthcare worker beneficiaries.

The States/UTs also been asked to ensure physical verification of all proposed sites for the adequacy of space, logistical arrangements, internet connectivity, electricity, safety, etc.

As the vaccine administrators will play an important role in the vaccination process, training of trainers and those who shall administer the vaccine has been taken up across various States. Around 96,000 vaccinators have been trained for this purpose.

The official said an important focus of the dry run will be on management of any possible adverse events following immunisation, besides adherence and management of infection control practices at the session site to prevent disease transmission.

He said, "The mock drill will include concurrent monitoring and review at block and district levels, and preparation of feedback. The State Task Force shall review the feedback and share with the Ministry."

The first round of the dry run was conducted in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Punjab on December 28-29 in two districts each where five-session sites with 25 beneficiaries each were identified. No major issues were observed in the operational aspects of the dry run.



A medic inside the national Capitals first Covid-19 vaccination centre at Srinivasपुरi area in New Delhi on Thursday

## Night curfew in Delhi on NY

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Following the Covid-19 and its highly transmissible United Kingdom (UK) strain, the Delhi Government has imposed night curfew from 11 pm on December 31 to 6 am on January 1, and again from 11 pm on January 1 to 6 am on January 2 to prevent large gatherings during New Year celebrations.

According to an order issued by Delhi Chief Secretary Vijay Dev, the night curfew will also be imposed to ensure social distancing is maintained.

No gatherings will be allowed in open public places like Connaught Place and India Gate during the night curfew.

## CBSE Class X, XII exams from May 4-June 10

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Thursday announced the dates for CBSE Class X and Class XII board examinations, which will be held in May-June 2021 against the normal schedule for March every year.

Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal "Nishank" said the CBSE board exams for Class X and Class XII will be held between May 4 and June 10, and the results will be announced around July 15.

"CBSE will conduct Classes X, XII board exams from May 4 to June 10. The Board will announce the results of Classes X, XII board exams by July 15," Pokhriyal said during his scheduled live session with the students.

The Minister said that the CBSE Board will release the date sheets online at the board's official website soon.

"Students should also check the official CBSE website cbse.nic.in for final 2021 datesheets for both theoretical and practical board examinations," he said.

With the CBSE board exams announcement, other boards like States and ICSE will now also schedule their examinations accordingly to put in line the next admission process. Sources in ICSE said that it will



also announce the schedule of Class XII and X examinations next week for greater convenience of students and other stakeholders to plan the session and the offline mode of examinations accordingly.

The Minister told the students that the Board has reduced the curriculum for Class X and XII by 30 per cent. He also wished the students good luck for the upcoming exams as he concluded the live session.

The announcement of dates by the Union Education Minister was streamed live on his official Twitter handle and Facebook page.

The CBSE 2021 board exam date sheets will be available for Class X and Class XII exams separately, containing date and time of examination along with other important instructions at the official website of CBSE.

Continued on Page 2

## Moderna vaccine shows 94.1% efficacy

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Results from the primary analysis of the ongoing phase 3 clinical trial of the US biotechnology company Moderna's Covid-19 vaccine have shown 94.1 per cent efficacy in preventing symptomatic infections, according to a peer-reviewed study published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*.

Researchers said while the results were encouraging, they

were limited by the short duration of follow-up so far.

The study found that among over 30,000 participants randomised to receive the vaccine or a placebo, 11 in the vaccine group developed symptomatic Covid-19 compared to 185 participants who received the placebo.

The researchers said this demonstrates 94.1 per cent efficacy in preventing symptomatic Covid-19, adding that cases of the severe disease

occurred only in participants who received the placebo.

"Our work continues. Over the next months, we'll have increasing amounts of data to better define how this vaccine works, but the results so far show a 94.1 percent efficacy. These numbers are compelling," said Lindsey Baden, an infectious diseases specialist at the Brigham and Women's Hospital in the US where the trial took place.

"And, importantly, the

data suggest protection from severe illness, indicating that the vaccine could have an impact on preventing hospitalisations and deaths, at least in the first several months post-vaccination," said Baden, co-principal investigator for the study, and lead author of the paper. The study enrolled 30,420 participants at 99 sites in the US, including over 600 participants enrolled at the Brigham.

Continued on Page 2

## China deploys underwater drones in Indian Ocean: Report

New Jersey: China has deployed a fleet of underwater drones called Sea Wing (Haiyi) glider in the Indian Ocean, which can operate for months and make observations for naval intelligence purposes, according to defence analyst HI Sutton.

Writing for the Forbes magazine, HI Sutton said that these sea gliders, which the Chinese are deploying "en masse", are a type of Uncrewed Underwater Vehicle (UUV) which were launched in mid-December 2019 and recovered in February after making over 3,400 observations.

Citing the government sources, HI Sutton in his report said that these gliders are similar to those deployed by the US Navy, one of which was seized by Beijing in 2016 to ensure "safe navigation of passing ships."

Continued on Page 2

## FASTag deadline now Feb 15; pay toll tax in cash in hybrid lanes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

To avoid inconvenience to highway commuters on account of the mandatory roll-out of FASTag from Friday, hybrid lanes at toll plazas on National Highways will remain operational till February 15, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways said in a statement on Thursday.

Payments can be made through FASTag as well as cash at the hybrid lanes, the MoRTH said, in apparent bid to ensure there was no panic-like situation from Friday.

"Ministry of Road Transport & Highways has mandated fitment of FASTag with effect from January 1 in M and N categories of motor vehicles sold before December 1, 2017," the Ministry said in a statement.

Continued on Page 2

## Kerala Assembly passes resolution against farm laws

PNS ■ KOCHI

The Kerala Legislative Assembly on Thursday saw the ruling LDF and the Opposition UDF unanimously adopting a resolution condemning the Centre for the three farm laws enacted by Parliament and expressing solidarity with the farmers agitating against the legislation.

Moving the resolution, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan alleged, "The three contentious agri laws were passed even without sending them to the standing committee of Parliament. If this agitation continues, it will severely affect Kerala, which is a consumer state," he said.

Stating that the reforms in the field of agriculture should be implemented as carefully envisioned, he said with the implementation of the laws, the bargaining power of farmers would be weakened, giving an advantage to the corporate.

Detailed report on P5

the pioneer wishes its readers **HAPPY NEW YEAR 2021** As the offices of The Pioneer will remain closed on January 1, the next edition will be published on January 3

**CAPSULE**  
**PAK TROOPS TARGET MOSQUES IN KUPWARA**  
Srinagar: Pakistani troops opened fire and shelled mortars in unprovoked violations of a ceasefire agreement along the LoC in Kupwara and Rajouri districts of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Thursday.  
**EIGHT CORE INDUSTRIES' OUTPUT CONTRACTS 2.6%**  
New Delhi: The output of eight core infrastructure sectors dropped by 2.6 per cent in November, mainly due to decline in production of natural gas, refinery products, steel and cement.

## A hard year has gone by

In the New Year, we can hope India and the rest of the world will bounce back and show the resilience of mankind to adversity

By Kushan Mitra

As a child who grew up in the 1990s, like so many Indians we saw hope in our country after the economy was opened up. Things have not quite panned out according to plan over the past three decades, but it would be fallacious to argue that India has not progressed.

We had hoped that by 2020, India would be standing tall among other nations on earth, yet the natural fault lines of caste, religion, creed and sex still divide us. It is no point blaming one side over another, as every side is responsible. We are told that India is a young country and that youth brings us hope, but after a brutal year in which millions have lost their income and education has come to a standstill, India faces a challenge like no other nation on earth. It is a challenge that each and every one of us must stand up to and do our

part and, in this regard, we can take some inspiration from India's premier sports team, the men's Test cricket team which, after being pummeled to the ground in Adelaide, saw each and every team member on the field and off the field stand up and do his part in achieving a victory a few days ago that no one — not one commentator or one fan — saw coming. It was a comprehensive victory, and when we are told that sports is but an imitation of life, this Test victory which might not eclipse the dramatic win at Eden Gardens of 2001, is one that should teach all of us the power of resilience and that together, we can overcome even the toughest situations.

But while many of us will want to write off 2020 as a lost cause, we should not do that. Yes, many of us lost loved ones during the year, many millions have died due to the accused pandemic, and others lost jobs and opportunities. But new

life has also come into the world, there were children born in trains taking migrants back home; it has also been a blessing that the pestilence that has overtaken our lives has by and large spared young ones.

Most of us were very careful in the early days of the lockdown in the months of March, April and May, deserted streets in major cities made them look like ghost towns as if an apocalypse has wiped out humanity, well, thankfully it had not. Of course, there has also been the indiscretion and stupidity of youth on display of late, crowding bars, beaches and, in Goa right now, the dance floor. Yet, most of humanity has stepped up to the plate, microbiologists and vaccine scientists have worked around the clock for the past nine months to ensure that a safe and successful vaccine can be developed. Others such as frontline medical staff, emer-

gency workers, police and even municipal staff have put their own lives at risk to ensure that things do not collapse. Over here, one must thank the countless number of delivery men and women who ensured that the wheels of commerce stayed on and did not fall off altogether.

It is dismaying to many of us to see people gathering with little or no worry at large gatherings where social distancing norms go for a toss and mask compliance is non-existent. The development of vaccines is not the same as deployment and the eventual deployment of a vaccine in a country of 1.3 billion will be a logistical and administrative challenge like no other. It is also true that Central, State and municipal governments have made mistakes, several of them in fact, indeed early celebrations of "management" in some areas and States were premature.

Continued on Page 2

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# China completes track-laying work for railway line in Tibet

Close to Indian border in Arunachal Pradesh

PTI ■ BEIJING

China on Thursday completed the track-laying work for a railway line linking the cities of Lhasa and Nyingchi in Tibet, close to the Indian border in Arunachal Pradesh, official media here reported.

The Sichuan-Tibet Railway will be the second railway into Tibet after the Qinghai-Tibet Railway. It will go through the southeast of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, one of the

world's most geologically active areas.

The Sichuan-Tibet Railway starts from Chengdu, capital of Sichuan Province and travels through Ya'an and enters Tibet via Qamdo, shortening the journey from Chengdu to Lhasa from 48 hours to 13 hours.

Linzi, also known as Nyingchi, is located close to Arunachal Pradesh border. Last month, President Xi Jinping instructed officials to expedite construction of the new railway project connecting Sichuan Province and Linzi in Tibet, saying it would play a key role in safeguarding the border stability.

With a designed speed of 160 km per hour, the 435-km rail line passes through 47

tunnels and 120 bridges, according to its constructor Tibet Railway Construction Co., Ltd.

Construction started in 2014 on the railway connecting Lhasa, the regional capital, and Nyingchi in eastern Tibet. It is the first electrified railroad in Tibet and is slated to begin operations in June 2021, the Xinhua report said.

So far, a total of 31.2 billion yuan (about \$4.8 billion) has been invested in the project, according to official data. With more than 90 per cent of the railway built in areas more than 3,000 metres above sea level, the high altitude and complex geological conditions have posed great challenges to the project, the report said.

# India gets consular access to its detained fishermen in Sri Lanka

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Indian fishermen, apprehended in Sri Lanka for allegedly poaching in its territorial waters, have been provided consular assistance by the Consulate General of India in Jaffna, the Indian High Commission here said on Thursday.

The high commission said it was in touch with the Sri Lankan Government to facilitate the early release of the detained fishermen.

"High Commission @CGJaffna were provided Consular Access to Indian fishermen who are apprehended in Sri Lanka and extended all possible support to them. They were given essential daily use items and offered legal and other forms of assistance," it

THE HIGH COMMISSION SAID IT WAS IN TOUCH WITH THE SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT TO FACILITATE THE EARLY RELEASE OF THE DETAINED FISHERMEN

said in a tweet.

India and Sri Lanka on Wednesday held through video conferencing a meeting of the joint working group on fisheries and discussed the issues related to fishermen and the ways to overcome challenges posed by the COVID-19 pan-

demic. "The Fourth Joint Working Group Meeting on Fisheries held in the usual cordial atmosphere, which marks India-Sri Lanka ties, concludes. Deliberation during the Meeting contributed to strengthening constructive cooperation between the two countries," the high commission tweeted on Wednesday.

Fishermen from both countries are arrested frequently for inadvertently trespassing into each other's waters.

During his five-day visit to India in February, Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa and his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi agreed to resolve the long-festering fishermen issue with a "humane approach".

# Yogi assures full support to weavers & artisans, launches Carpet Expo Mart in Bhadohi

PNS ■ VARANASI

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath dedicated to people 10 development projects worth ₹197.21 crore, including the new Carpet Expo Mart in Bhadohi, on Thursday.

This mart will be an international world-class complex that will provide all possible assistance to ensure that the carpet industry of Bhadohi scales to a new high.

Apart from this, he also laid the foundation stones of five projects and gave the benefits of several Central and state government schemes to about 750 beneficiaries.

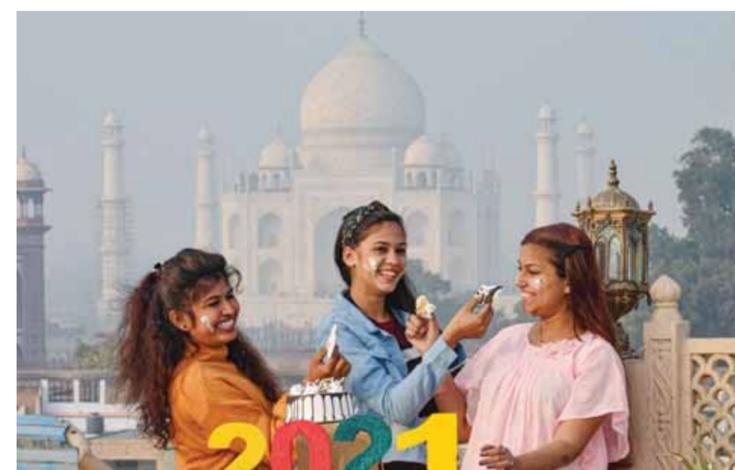
The CM also held a meeting with the MPs, MLAs and leaders of Vindhyaachal division.

In his address, the CM assured the weavers and artisans of full support from the government. He hailed the mastery of artisans in manufacturing carpet in Bhadohi

and said that the carpet exports from only Bhadohi district were around ₹4,000 crore.

"Eighty per cent of the carpet export of the country is from Bhadohi. The new mart will accelerate the intrinsic art and many decade-old craftsmanship of Bhadohi with new technology and ideation under one roof. This will also ease the process of business for the artisans by creating a market space for buyers and sellers under the same umbrella," the CM said.

Being a part of the ambitious ODOF scheme of the UP government, the carpets of Bhadohi, along with other products like the silk sarees of Varanasi, the black rice of Chandauli, the kala namak rice of Siddharthnagar, the terracotta of Gorakhpur, the wooden art of Saharanpur and other products of the ODOF scheme have given a new identity of Atmanirbhar Bharat," he added.



Young women prepare to welcome the New Year 2021, near the historic Taj Mahal in Agra on Thursday

# China, India in talks to hold 9th round of Commander-level meet on Ladakh standoff: Def Ministry

Beijing: China and India are in consultations to hold the ninth round of Corps Commander-level meeting to discuss the disengagement of troops in eastern Ladakh, the Chinese Defence Ministry spokesman Sr. Colonel Tan Kefei said on Thursday.

Since the eighth round of Corps Commander-level talks between the armies of China and India, the two sides have maintained consultations on disengagement of frontline troops and strengthened management of border troops, Tan

told an online media briefing.

The situation in the border areas is generally stable, he said, according to a transcript posted on the Chinese Defence Ministry website. China is willing to maintain communication with India through military and diplomatic channels, he said.

India is expected to work with China towards the same goal, implement the consensus reached at the Corps Commander-level meetings, and take pragmatic measures to further abate the tension in border areas, Tan said. PTI

# Mob sets Agra police post ablaze after youth dies in road accident

PTI ■ AGRA

An angry crowd on Thursday set ablaze a police post in Agra's Tajganj area after vandalising it, looting laptops and wireless sets and beating up policemen, injuring two of them following the death of a man in a road accident.

The police had to make heavy deployment of force to control and chase away the rampaging mob, said Inspector General of Police A Satish Ganesh of Agra police range.

Ganesh said a youth was earlier severely injured in the morning after his tractor-trailer overturned in the district.

He was hospitalised but died during the treatment after which an angry mob with some miscreants attacked Tora police post under Tajganj police station area and set it afire, he said.

# A hard year has gone...

From Page 1

But if one is to believe the numbers, while far too many have died, India has done a relatively good job and possibly some of the benefits of herd immunity have indeed kicked in, particularly in densely populated slum areas. That is no reason to celebrate, and antipathy towards political leadership should not be a reason to disobey public health missives because the challenges that lie ahead of us in 2021 are immense.

Despite some sectors showing promise, the manufacturing economy is in ruins. Millions of workers have headed home from the industrialised hubs of the country. Even some sectors like automobile, which have shown promise in the past few months, are being extremely cautious for 2021. In a country like India, where demographics are skewed towards the young, the lack of job creation over the past year, keeping in mind that things were already slowing down in 2019, has been devastating. An army of unemployed and frustrated youth is a challenge for any nation and urgent reforms coupled with demand creation, whether that is through tax reduction or incentives, are necessary for job creation. The Finance Ministry has been smart in not overplaying its hand too soon, despite what the Opposition has asked for. Narendra Modi maintains his immense personal popularity and political capital, despite 2020 being a year bookended by protests surrounding the Capital. The New Year will be a year for some hard political and economic decisions by the Government.

We can only hope that 2021 will be the year in which India and the rest of the world can successfully bounce back and show the resilience of mankind to adversity. We must remain cautious against enemies both small, like the virus, and large, like on our borders. And we should all do our bit to ensure that we can prevail. Here is wishing each and every one of our readers a very Happy New Year and hoping that 2021 will be a lot better.

# CBSE Class X, XII exams from May 4-June 10

The secondary education board releases the CBSE date sheets in November and holds the CBSE Class 10 and CBSE Class 12 board examinations in February and March every year. This year, however, due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the release of CBSE Board exam time table has been delayed.

Pokhriyal reiterated that the CBSE Board examinations 2021 will not be conducted online and will be held as before which means under physical supervision at examination halls. "Exams will be held as before. Students' physical presence will be needed during board exams," Pokhriyal said. Pokhriyal also rejected suggestions about cancellation of board examinations and said that cancelling the exams and promoting students will result in "putting a stamp on these students" and these students might face trouble in getting jobs and admissions at higher education level in future.

Pokhriyal said that the Education

Ministry reached out to 33 crore students online and also conducted NEET exams amid COVID-19. The government has already announced the schedule of NEET and JEE for year 2021 which is to be held four times between February and April.

The National Testing Agency (NTA) released new rules for JEE Main 2021 exams. According to the new rules, candidates who appeared for JEE Main 2019 or JEE Main Advanced 2019 will not be allowed to appear for JEE exams 2021. The NTA had said that a candidate can attempt JEE (Advanced) a maximum of two times in consecutive years whether or not he/she has passed the qualifying examination (JEE Main).

From the commencing academic year, candidates will have an opportunity to take the exam four times a year, i.e., in February, March, April, and May. Applicants would be allowed to appear in all four attempts and the best of two attempts will be considered for the final merit list.

# Moderna vaccine shows 94.1% efficacy

From Page 1

Eligible participants were 18 years old or more with no known history of SARS-CoV-2 infection, and whose locations or circumstances put them at appreciable risk of the infection and high risk of severe Covid-19, the researchers said.

They noted that the race and ethnicity proportion of the trial was 79 per cent white, 10 per cent Black or African Hispanic, and 20 per cent Latino participants.

The participants received their first injection between July 27 and October 23, followed by a second shot 28 days later. Each jab, given intramuscularly, had a volume of 0.5 millilitres (mL), containing 100 micrograms (µg) of mRNA-1273 vaccine or saline placebo.

In the placebo group, 185 participants developed symptomatic Covid-19 illness whereas in the vaccine group, only 11 participants did.

In secondary analyses, the vaccine's efficacy was similar

across groups of key interest, including those who already had antibodies against SARS-CoV-2 at the time of enrolment, and among those who were 65 years of age or older, the researchers said.

Thirty participants had severe Covid-19 -- all in the placebo group, they said. They were closely monitored for adverse events in the weeks following their injection.

The researchers said overall, reactions to the vaccine were mild -- about half of recipients experienced fatigue, muscle aches, joint pain and headaches, more so after the second dose.

Baden said while these results are encouraging, they are limited by the short duration of follow-up so far.

"Longer term data from the ongoing study may allow us to more carefully evaluate the vaccine's efficacy among different groups, determine the impact on asymptomatic infection, understand when immunity wanes, and determine whether vaccines affect infectiousness," she added.

# China deploys underwater drones in Indian Ocean: Report

From Page 1

"Taken at face value, it may be surprising that China is now deploying these types of UAV en masse in the Indian Ocean. China has also deployed the Sea Wing from an ice breaker in the Arctic," HI Sutton wrote.

According to the defence expert, reports from December last year suggested that 14 would be employed in the Indian Ocean mission but only 12 were used. HI Sutton said that these gliders are unpowered with large wings to glide that can run for long periods of time, adding that they are not fast or agile, however, they are employed for long-range missions.

Furthermore, the defence analyst said these Chinese gliders that are placed in the Indian Ocean were reportedly gathering oceanography data, which "sounds innocuous" however, is commonly gathered for naval intelligence purposes." ANI

# FASTag deadline now Feb 15; pay toll tax in cash in hybrid lanes

From Page 1

Category M stands for a motor vehicle with at least four wheels used for carrying passengers. Category N stands for a motor vehicle with at least four wheels used for carrying goods, which may also carry persons.

"It is clarified that this Central Motor Vehicle Rule stands in force as it is. However, at hybrid lanes of fee plazas on National Highways, fee payment can be made through FASTag as well as in cash mode till 15th February, 2021," the statement said.

In FASTag lanes, payment of fees will continue to be through FASTag only, it said.

The Ministry has also clarified that it is committed to implementation of 100 per cent E-tolling at fee plazas from January 1, 2021 onwards, mandated under CMV (Central Motor Vehicles) Rules, as amended.

## Corrigendum

Contract title:- Procurement of Current meters with accessories under NHP for Tripura State

E-PROCUREMENT NOTICE FOR INVITATION OF QUOTATIONS 01/EE/RD/NHP/2020-21, DATED, 17-12-2020 Following correction has been made in the PNIEt for the aforesaid work

RFQ No:- NHP-2020-2021-TR-134600

Date:- 17-12-2020

- (a) Price of bidding document: nil
- (b) Date and time of availability of bidding document from website: 24-12-2020, 10.00 hours
- (c) Last date and time for downloading bidding document: 06-01-2021, 15 :00 hours
- (d) Clarification starting date& time: 24-12-2020; 10.00 hour
- (e) Clarification end date & time: 06-01-2021, 15 :00
- (f) Online Bid Submission Starting date & time: 24-12-2020; 10.00 hours
- (g) Online Bid Submission Closing date & time: 06-01-2021, 15 :00
- (h) Time and date of opening of bids: 06-01-2021, 15:30 hours

Sd/-  
Name:- Er. Dhanu Majumder,  
Executive Engineer,  
Resource Division  
Address: Panchamukh, Agartala,  
Tripura Pin:- 799003  
Email id:- eeresource11@gmail.com

ICA/C-2627/2020-21

## CENTRAL RAILWAY

### CORRIGENDUM

It is hereby notified that, the work shown at Sr. No. 2 published vide Open e-tender notice No. CR-DRM(W) BB-2020-45, which is scheduled to be opened on 29.12.2020, is now postponed to 04.01.2021 due to administrative reasons. All other terms and conditions will remain the same.

Dial 139 for any Rail-related enquiry

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Public at large is hereby informed that my client Ashish Sharma & Swati Sharma are the owners of First & Second floor (FF-2), OLF Qutab Enclave, Phase -1, Gurgaon vide registered Saledeed dated 15/04/2019 in their favour. That Originally DLF sold to Birja Bish Paul and Nita B Paul vide Saledeed dated 28/02/1996 and then Nita B Paul died on 26/11/1996 & there is Un-registered RD executed by Basab B Paul favouring Siraj B Paul then further Basab B Paul sold to Kiril Singh Rathore & Kajjama Singh vide Saledeed dated 08/04/2005 and Kapilana Singh died on 15/02/2011 & there is Registered RD executed by Karan Singh Rathore favouring Kiril Singh Rathore & then Kiril Singh Rathore sold to my Client. That my Client intend to mortgage the said immovable property for their bonafide requirements to Citibank NA. Whosoever is having any objection to the said mortgage or anyone has claim or right or interest in the property shall contact the undersigned with the objection within 15 days failing which it shall be presumed that there stands no objections.

Alt Singh Arora (Advocate)  
Ch. No C2, C.L. Joseph Block Tis Hazari Court, New Delhi-110

**जल संसाधन विभाग**  
**कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय**  
**बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमण्डल, दरभंगा**  
अल्पकालीन पुनर्निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या - 05 SBD / 2020-21  
(राष्ट्रीय / राजकीय स्पर्धा)  
(केवल ई-टेंडर पद्धति के अनुसार वेबसाइट [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर)

1. कार्य का विवरण -

क्र. सं.	कार्य का नाम	प्रस्तावित राशि (लाख रु० में)	अनुमानित राशि (लाख रु० में)	परिमाण - विवरण का मूल्य (ऑन लाईन अथवा फिजिकल/मैन्युअल मोड में मुद्रांक) रु० में	बट्टी का योग (अनुमानित) रु० में	कर्य समाप्ति की तारीख
01.	सिंचने वाली नहरों के किण्वी 47.00 से किण्वी 47.50 तक कटाव नियंत्रण कार्य। (एलेक्ट्रॉन संख्या - 168 / 300 / 2021)	202.93430	4.59	10,000.00	3,540.00	15.05.2021
02.	सिंचने वाली नहरों के किण्वी 34.500 से किण्वी 35.580 तक किण्वी 40.420 से किण्वी 41.410 तक किण्वी 42.030 से किण्वी 43.30 तक एच किण्वी 43.710 से किण्वी 44.780 तक पुनर्स्थापन एवं सुस्थापक कार्य। (एलेक्ट्रॉन संख्या - 168 / 301 / 2021)	657.41772	13.15	10,000.00	5,900.00	15.05.2021

2. निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना निर्मित करने की तिथि : दिनांक - 30.12.2020

3. निविदा कागजात डाउनलोड एवं अपलोड करने की अवधि : दिनांक 07.01.2021 से दिनांक 11.01.2021 के 3:00 बजे अपरान्ह तक (सिर्फ वेबसाइट [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर )

4. प्री-बिड मीटिंग का समय, स्थान एवं तिथि : दिनांक-09.01.2021, 3:00 बजे अपरान्ह में, मुख्य अभियंता का कार्यालय, बाढ़ नियंत्रण एवं जल निस्सर्जन, जल संसाधन विभाग, समस्तीपुर।

5. तकनीकी विड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 13.01.2021 समय 3:30 बजे अपरान्ह।  
(सिर्फ वेबसाइट [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर )

6. वित्तीय विड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : सत्रस पदाधिकारी द्वारा बाद में घोषित की जायेगी  
(सिर्फ वेबसाइट [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर )

7. निविदा खोलने का स्थान : [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर

8. निविदा की वैधता अवधि : 120 दिन

9. विज्ञापनदाता का पदनाम एवं पता : कार्यपालक अभियंता, बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमण्डल, दरभंगा।

10. विशेष जानकारी प्राप्त करने हेतु वेबसाइट [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) एवं [state.bihar.gov.in/probihar](http://state.bihar.gov.in/probihar) पर देखा जा सकता है।

**कार्यपालक अभियंता**  
**बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमण्डल, दरभंगा**

PR. No. 010418 (WRD) 2020-21  
खाद्य सामग्री - संबंधी किसी तरह की जानकारी अथवा सूत्राच हेतु दूरभाष संख्या 0612-2217636 पर सम्पर्क किया जा सकता है।

**New Okhla Industrial Development Authority**  
Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida-201301 (U.P.)  
Website : [www.noidaauthorityonline.com](http://www.noidaauthorityonline.com)

**E-TENDER NOTICE**

E- Tenders are invited from eligible contractors/firm for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened /downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website: [www.noidaauthorityonline.com](http://www.noidaauthorityonline.com) & <http://etender.up.nic.in> Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/amendments & corrigendum etc.

**Fresh-Tender Work**  
A) The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 14.01.2021 upto 5.00 PM. shall be opened/downloaded on dated 15.01.2021 at 11.00AM.

S. No.	Job No.	Name of Work	Tender Amount (Rs. Lacs)
1.	32/GM/SM(E&M)-IV/2020-21	Providing street light arrangement in sector-168, Noida.	58.76

**Re-Tender Work**  
B) The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 07.01.2021 upto 5.00 PM. shall be opened/downloaded on dated 08.01.2021 at 11.00AM.

S. No.	Job No.	Name of Work	Tender Amount (Rs. Lacs)
2.	105/GM/SM(E&M)-III/2020-21/ET	Renovation of 04 nos Fountain at crossing 55/57/54/22 & Two years Operation & Maintenance, Noida.	42.64
3.	101/GM/SM(E&M)-III/2020-21/ET	Providing of New Traffic Signal at Phase-2, Sector-81, (03 Nos) and Various Locations, Noida	48.22

**Chief General Manager**  
Noida

**CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA**

# New strain in 4 of 38 positive UK returnees: Jain

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Health Minister, Satyendra Jain on Thursday said that four persons who recently came to Delhi from the United Kingdom and tested positive for Covid-19, have been found infected with the new strain of coronavirus. Jain said that a total of 38 people have been found positive since coming to Delhi from the UK recently, and kept in a separate institutional isolation unit in the LNJP Hospital premises.



"Four such patients have been found infected with the new UK strain of COVID-19. The persons who came in their contact have been also traced and tested, and its not in them.

So, only these four cases of new strain in Delhi so far," he said. "Flights have been stopped and those who came before that are being traced and tested rigorously," he added.

Delhi recorded 677 COVID-19 cases and 21 new fatalities on Wednesday, even as the positivity rate dropped to 0.8 per cent, authorities said. "Positivity rate has dropped to 0.8 per cent from 15.26 per cent on November 7. About 85 per cent beds are vacant, so the situation has improved a lot. And, so, it had been decided to make LNJP Hospital and GTB Hospital, partial COVID-19 facilities now. All services, including the OPD will be soon resumed gradually," Jain said.

On the preparedness for the vaccination, he said, work is on to set up 1,000 vaccination centres. Jain said the night curfew has been imposed as the situation is under control right now, but huge gatherings could spell trouble again. The Delhi government has imposed night curfew from 11 pm to 6 am on December 31 and January 1 to avoid large gatherings during New Year celebrations due to COVID-19 and its highly transmissible UK strain.

A formal order stated that not more than five people will be allowed to assemble at public places in Delhi during night curfew to avoid large gatherings in view of COVID-19. Amid mounting concerns over the new variant of the COVID-19, the Delhi government had earlier said that people who had arrived here recently from that country, are being traced and tested, while an institutional quarantine facility has been set up separately for positive cases at the LNJP Hospital.

## Farmers to celebrate New Year without their families

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Thousands of farmers protesting at borders of the National Capital will celebrate New Year without their families as their talks with the Government remained deadlocked over the main contentious issues of the repeal of three farm laws and a legal guarantee for MSP. However, the security remained tight at the Delhi borders with hundreds of personnel deployed at Singhu, Ghazipur and Tikri border points where the farmers have been camping. Meanwhile, All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee (AIKSSCC) on Thursday said that the Centre Government's appeal to the farmer leaders to suggest an alternative to repeal of the three farm acts is impossible as

the government itself has thrust these laws over the people undemocratically. "The laws will hand over control of agriculture markets, farmers' land and food chain to corporates, including Giant MNCs. Unless they are repealed there is no scope to discuss pro farmer changes in Mandis and farm processes for ensuring 'doubling farmers' income'," said AIKSSCC. The farmers, mainly from Punjab and Haryana, in these chilling winters are protesting at various borders including Singhu, Tikri, Chilla and Ghazipur borders of the national capital for more than a month against these three new laws. The protests have also led to traffic congestion forcing police to divert vehicular movement. Taking to Twitter on Thursday, the Delhi Traffic

Police alerted commuters about the routes that remained closed owing to the agitation and suggested them to take alternative roads. "Tikri, Dhansa Borders are closed for any Traffic Movement. Jhatikara Borders is open only for LMV (Cars/Light Motor Vehicles), two wheelers and pedestrian movement," it tweeted. "The Chilla and Ghazipur Borders are closed for traffic coming from Noida & Ghaziabad to Delhi because of farmer protests. Please take alternate route for coming to Delhi via Anand Vihar, DND, Apsara, Bhopra & Loni Borders. "Singhu, Auchandi, Piau Maniyari, Saboli & Mangesh borders closed. Please take alternate route via Lampur Safabad, Palla & Singhu school toll tax borders. Traffic has been diverted from Mukarba and GTK road. Please avoid Outer Ring Road, GTK Road & NH-44," they tweeted. "Available Open Borders to Haryana are Jharoda (Only Single Carriageway/Road), Daurala, Kapashera, Badusarai, Rajokri NH-8, Bijwasan/Bajghera, Palam Vihar and Dundahera Borders," the Delhi Traffic Police said in a tweet.



GOVERNMENT OF GUJARAT



**NARENDRA MODI**  
Prime Minister



**VIJAY RUPANI**  
Chief Minister, Gujarat

## CHIEF MINISTER SHRI VIJAY RUPANI HERALDS A NEW ERA OF CLEAN ENERGY

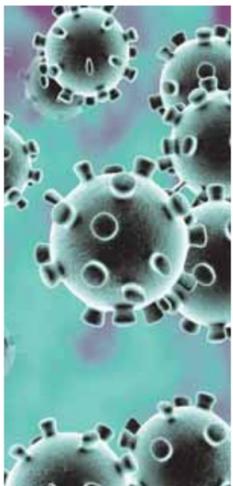
### GUJARAT SOLAR POWER POLICY 2021 ANNOUNCED



## NEW YEAR'S EVE — G'gram Police to ensure Covid SOP followed

PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

Ahead of the New Year's Eve, the Gurugram Police claimed to have deployed 4,000 cops but the main concern to ensure that people follow the covid-19 guidelines during the New Year events. As per senior police officials the biggest challenge for the Gurugram Police is to get people to follow the Covid rules amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Meanwhile, the police suspect that footfall in the pubs and bars this year could be very thin due to the coronavirus pandemic. According to officials, this time the main challenge will be to get the people immersed in the celebrations to follow the Covid norms. As the new strain of the virus has entered in India, there is a need to create social distance between people visiting malls and restaurants. "This time we have to take extra precautions in view of New Year celebrations. We urge the people to follow Covid-19 guidelines. We don't want to create any panic but will ensure action against those who flout the Covid-19 norms" said Gurugram police commissioner, K.K. Rao. The police chief also informed that the security arrangements in the city are on alert in view of the farmers' movement. Some anti-social elements may provoke agitating farmers under the grab of celebration so that they can enter the district and travel to Delhi. "Such people are being monitored so that the law and order situation can be maintained in the city. Along with this, instructions are being given to the station in-charges to keep an eye on the liquor



shops in their concerned areas. Nobody would be allowed to drink in the open and create ruckus," Rao said. "The police have completed all preparations for the new year celebration. Tight security arrangements are being made. All the police in-charge with additional force have been instructed to be vigilant while on duty," he said. Also, strict guidelines have been issued for restaurant and club owners in the city. Bar owners have been asked not to serve liquor beyond the permissible limit. The Gurugram Police has asked bar owners to check the ID card of each individual who enters the premises and ensure proper CCTV coverage at the entrance so that their faces can be clearly captured. Special joint teams of revenue, Excise and police personnel equipped with videographers have been formed to check any violation and take strictest possible action.

## Efforts on to make Delhi 'Child Labour Free' by 2023

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR) has reached out to the chairpersons, District Development Committees and Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) seeking support and cooperation in boosting the efforts being made by the commission to make Delhi 'Child Labour-Free' by 2023. According to official, the DCPCR has sought intervention in three areas primarily ensuring monthly meetings of District Task Force (DTF) for rescue and rehabilitation of child labourers. "The commission also wants to ensure efficient utilization of Child Labour Fund for rehabilitation of the rescued children and helping in awareness generation on the menace of child labour. The MLAs have been requested to popularize Child Helpline Number 1098 and DCPCR's Whatsapp Number 9599001855 for reporting child labour," said the official. "Being the Chairperson of respective District Development Committees, the MLAs shall be frequently interacting with the District Magistrate, other departmental officers, representatives of RWAs, Markets, Mandis and Industrial Associations besides the public at large. Thus, the MLAs can raise the issue of child labour with all the stakeholders as well as the public and thereby, help the Commission in eradicating child labour from Delhi," said the official. "Keeping in view the snowballing menace of child labor during the pandemic, DCPCR has remained engaged in evolving a long-term strategy to make Delhi 'Child Labor-Free' by 2023," said the official. "Besides coordinating regular rescue operations, a number of measures have already been initiated by DCPCR such as tracking of rescued children, monitoring meetings of the DTF meetings, reaching out to civil society partners for information of instances of child labour and monitoring transfer of compensation, backwages and restoring," said the official.

Gujarat is all set to usher in a new era of clean & green energy development through Solar Power. The new Solar Power Policy 2021 intends to make a significant contribution towards encouraging MSMEs and large industries to reduce cost of production & help them compete in the global market.

To encourage Gujarat's small-scale Solar Projects of up to 4 MW, DISCOMs will pay 20 paise / unit higher than the tariff discovered under competitive bidding process for power purchase.

DISCOMs will purchase surplus energy at Rs. 2.25 per unit from Residential Consumers (Surya Gujarat Yojana) & MSMEs (manufacturing) for initial 5 years & thereafter at 75% of average tariff discovered and contracted by GUVNL through competitive bidding process for non-park based Solar projects in preceding 6 months, which shall remain fixed for remaining life of the project.

For all other consumers, surplus power will be purchased at 75% of average tariff discovered and contracted by GUVNL through competitive bidding process for non-park based Solar projects in preceding 6 months, which shall remain fixed for a project life of 25 years.

### KEY INCENTIVES OF NEW SOLAR POLICY 2021

- Any person / developer / consumer can setup Solar projects without any capacity ceiling
- Existing ceiling of 50% of sanctioned load / contracted demand for setting up solar project is removed
- Residential consumers can set up solar projects on their roof / premises or can give their roof / premises on lease to third party for generation & consumption of power in same premises
- Consumers other than Residential can set up solar projects on their roof / premises or can give their roof / premises on lease to third party for generation & consumption of power within or outside the premises
- Surplus energy generated by any consumer shall be purchased by DISCOMs at rates specified in the policy
- A group of consumers can set up solar projects for self-consumption as a collective ownership project and consume the generated solar energy in the ratio of ownership
- Security deposit to be furnished by developer to DISCOMs for PPA, reduced from Rs. 25 lakh per MW to Rs. 5 Lakh per MW
- New Solar Power Policy will be operative for 5 years i.e. up to 31-12-2025. Solar projects set up under this policy shall be eligible for benefits of this policy for a project life of 25 years

**Gujarat ranks first in installed capacity of Solar rooftop projects with aggregate capacity of 866 MW**

**Gujarat to house world's largest 30 GW RE (Wind, Solar & Hybrid) Park in Kutch**

**Renewable Energy constitutes 37% of the total installed capacity of Gujarat**



**"Leading the path of clean & green energy for sustainable development, Gujarat Solar Power model will play a pivotal role in shaping the future development of solar projects for the entire country."**

**Nitinbhai Patel, Deputy Chief Minister, Gujarat**

# Covid dampens New Year's celebrations Modi: Preparation for corona vaccination in last stage

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

New Year's revelries will remain muted by coronavirus strain this year. Where can one take part in public celebrations as the clock strikes 12 to usher in a New Year? That was the question doing rounds on Thursday with the announcement of a night curfew and imposition of section 144 in several states and union territories, throwing plans into disarray for those planning to celebrate outside their homes.

Amid the scare of the new coronavirus strain, Maharashtra, Delhi, Kerala, Punjab, Odisha, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka have imposed renewed restrictions ahead of the New Year celebrations to help prevent the spread of coronavirus. Hotels, restaurants, pubs, public places and beaches were closed to the public for late-night celebrations on Thursday. Even the fireworks display was not allowed.

As many as 25 passengers all of whom recently returned were found to be infected with the new United Kingdom variant genome of SARS-CoV-2 so far.

According to hotel industry sources, hotels, restaurants and pubs, big and small, said they received many calls cancelling their pre-bookings even



though there was really no need. The Hilton Garden Inn, Saket, for instance, which was offering a stay for two, along with a full-fledged festive treat, at a discounted price of Rs 12,500 said many non-resident guests had cancelled. The ITC, Maurya, New Delhi, was giving an array of offers for the festive meal, including a special 'midnight buffet' from 12.30 am to 3 am.

But that probably stands cancelled and senior staffers said they are still discussing the order with concerned authorities and would abide by all guidelines imposed by the government. According to Public App, one of India's largest location-based social network, "78.82 per cent" — out of over one lakh Delhi residents surveyed — said they would prefer celebrating New Year at home over any hotel or restaurant.

In Maharashtra, a night

curfew in all the municipal areas was imposed from 11 pm to 6 am and will remain in force till 5 January. Gatherings in restaurants, bars and pubs has not been allowed post-11 pm, Loudspeaker/DJ music beyond permissible decibel limit and fireworks are also prohibited. The State Government has also imposed restrictions on parties in restaurants, pubs, bars, beaches, rooftops, and boats.

In Delhi, the government has been imposed night curfew beginning 11 pm on December 31 to 6 am on January 1. For January 2, the night curfew will begin at 11 pm on January 1 and continue till 6 am on January 2. An order issued by DDMA stated that not more than five people will be allowed to assemble at public places in Delhi during night curfew to avoid large gatherings.

The Karnataka



Government, through guidelines and orders, has also prohibited parties, and special events at clubs, pubs, restaurants, and other places that attract people in large numbers without social distancing.

The Kerala Government had set a 10 pm deadline for New Year's Eve celebrations in the state in view of the coronavirus pandemic situation. No public gatherings were allowed.

The Odisha Government also closed all shops, commercial establishments, offices, institutions and movement of till 5 am on Saturday.

The Punjab Government has imposed night curfew till January 1, 2021 so that revelers could not be celebrated.

In Tamil Nadu, the authorities have barred large gatherings beaches and roads and banned midnight parties in restaurants, hotels, clubs,

resorts and similar places.

Amid concerns over the new, more infectious coronavirus strain, the Centre on Wednesday issued an advisory to all states and Union Territories to keep strict vigil on New Year celebrations that could be potential "super-spreader" events. A total of 25 people in the country have tested positive for the new United Kingdom variant genome of SARS-CoV-2 so far.

In West Bengal, the Kolkata Police have taken measures to ensure that all COVID-19 safety protocols are maintained and there is no large gathering for celebrating the New Year eve, as ordered by the Calcutta High Court to check a spike in infections.

Uttarakhand's Capital Dehradun has banned public celebrations like parties at hotels, bars and restaurants on New Year's Eve and New Year.

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said that preparation for a coronavirus vaccine was in the last stages and that people will soon get vaccines manufactured in India even as he cautioned against rumours about coronavirus vaccination.

"In 2020, there was a question mark from all sides due to Covid-19 pandemic. But 2021 is coming with the hope of a treatment for Covid-19," said Modi after laying the foundation stone of a new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Gujarat's Rajkot via videoconference.

He said that while he was hopeful that the way in which India fought unitedly against the infection, it would similarly work hard to make the vaccination programme successful.

"The country is preparing to undertake the world's largest vaccination drive against the infection," he said while cautioning people to not get carried away by rumours against vaccine.

Modi said: "In our country, rumours spread quickly. Different people, for their personal gains or due to irresponsible behaviour, spread various rumours.

"Maybe, the rumours will be spread when the vaccina-

tion drive begins; some have already begun," the Prime Minister said.

He appealed to the people to refrain as responsible citizens from forwarding messages on the social media without checking.

The Prime Minister said that when India faced any problem, the entire nation united to help each other. "The way in which people took proper steps is the reason why we are in good a situation even amid the pandemic, despite a 1.3-billion population. More than one crore people have fought the pandemic and won.

"India's record is much better than other countries in the fight against Covid-19."

He said that the numbers of infections in India were going down. "India has emerged as the nerve centre of global health. In 2021, we have to strengthen India's role in healthcare," he said.

Modi said that 'dawai bhi aur kadaai bhi' should be our mantra for 2021. "Earlier, I said 'dawai nahi toh dhilai nahi' (no relaxation till no medicine). Now, I am saying 'dawai bhi aur kadaai bhi' (strictness even with medicine). Our mantra for 2021 is 'dawai bhi aur kadaai bhi'."

Pointing out that 'health is wealth', Modi said: "this year

taught us this maxim. When there is any attack on health, it affects the family and the entire society comes in its grip." The Prime Minister also said that it was time to remember on the last day of the outgoing year the frontline warriors who safeguarded people while risking their lives.

"I pay my humble tributes to all frontline warriors who lost their lives in the line of duty," Modi said, adding that the country also paid tributes to scientists, workers, doctors involved in the fight against Covid-19 and those working tirelessly for developing a vaccine for coronavirus.

Later at a webinar, Dr VG Somani, Drug Controller General of India, hinted that approval for coronavirus vaccine in the country could come soon.

"Probably we will have a happy new year, with something in hand," he said.

Somani also said that the approval process for the vaccines was expedited by processing the applications quickly and allowing phase 1 and 2 trials simultaneously, without waiting for the complete data. "There has been no compromise on the safety of efficacy of the data," he clarified. "The only thing is that the regulator has accepted partial data."

## BJP seeks tax relief for middle class, SME in new Budget



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of rolling of the Union Budget, the ruling BJP has suggested tax relief to the middle-class by increasing standard deductions and providing benefits to small and medium businesses by lowering raw material cost.

BJP specialist in economic affairs and National Spokesman Gopal Krishna Agarwal said the party has given proposal during meeting with the Finance Minister

Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday.

Talking to The Pioneer, Aggarwal said the Union Budget will be presented on February first and hoped the suggestions on reducing income tax and raw material prices would provide relief to the middle class and small business respectively. He pointed to the rise in commodity prices.

The middle-class would benefit if the standard deductions are broad-based.

As unprecedented Coronavirus

pandemic did not allow the winter session of the Parliament, the government hopes that the budget session in January would make up for the winter session.

In the background of economic squeeze caused by the pandemic, the budget 2021-22 may involve special economic announcements for the segments particularly impacted by a year-long lockdown.

As the Modi-Government had earlier announced some succour to poor in terms of free ration and loan relief to businessmen, the BJP has proposed that some tax relief to middle-class too would make a happy economic proposition.

"The middle-income group is feeling a lot of pinch, and they need some support," said Aggarwal.

"Incentivising consumption by them would also help the industry," I can say the Budget will take care of the middle class."

Last time, the Budget had maintained the status quo without making any major change that would have effectively benefited the tax-paying middle-class.

## PM to lay foundation stone of Light House Projects today

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lay the foundation stone of Light House Projects (LHPs) under Global Housing Technology Challenge-India (GHTC-India) at six sites across six States on January 1, via video conferencing. PM Modi will also announce winners under Affordable Sustainable Housing Accelerators - India (ASHA-India) and give out annual awards for excellence in implementation of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban (PMAY-U) Mission.

During the event, the Prime Minister will also release a certificate course on innovative construction technologies named NAVARITH (New, Affordable, Validated, Research Innovation Technologies for Indian Housing) and a compendium of 54 innovative housing construction technologies identified through GHTC-India. Besides the housing and urban affairs minister, chief ministers of Tripura, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh will be present on the occasion.

The Light House Projects (LHPs) showcase the best of new-age alternative global technologies, materials and processes in the construction sector for the first time in the country at such a large scale. "They are being constructed under GHTC-India which envisages to provide an ecosystem for adoption of innovative technologies in the housing construction sector in

a holistic manner. The LHPs are being constructed at Indore (Madhya Pradesh), Rajkot (Gujarat), Chennai (Tamil Nadu), Ranchi (Jharkhand), Agartala (Tripura) and Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh). They comprise about 1000 houses at each location along with allied infrastructure facilities.

These projects will demonstrate and deliver ready to live houses at an expedited pace within twelve months, as compared to conventional brick and mortar construction, and will be more economical, sustainable, of high quality and durability," the Prime Minister's Office said.

These LHPs demonstrate a variety of technologies, including Prefabricated Sandwich Panel System in LHP at Indore, Monolithic Concrete Construction using Tunnel Formwork in LHP at Rajkot, Precast Concrete Construction System in LHP at Chennai, 3D Volumetric Precast Concrete Construction System in LHP at Ranchi, Structural Steel Frame with Light Gauge Steel Infill Panels in LHP at Agartala and PVC Stay In Place Formwork System in LHP at Lucknow. The LHPs will serve as laboratories for facilitating transfer of technology to the field and its further replication. This includes planning, design, production of components, construction practices and testing for both faculty and students of IITs, NITs, other Engineering colleges, Planning and Architecture colleges, builders, professionals of private and public sectors and other stakeholders.

## Cold wave in north India to continue till January 2

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The cold wave in North India will continue till January 2 and it will get intense from the next week. Parts of northwest and central India appear set to begin the New Year on a wet note, as isolated rains and thunderstorms have been forecast across the region starting Friday, January 1.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a yellow watch over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, and Uttar Pradesh, thereby urging residents to 'be aware' of their local weather situation and remain wary of the lightning and thunderstorms.

The IMD also predicted light rain in eastern Rajasthan, Delhi, western Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana between January 2 and January 6. Immediately after this rain spell, a fresh western disturbance—a storm that originates as low-pressure systems over the Mediterranean Sea and pushes moist, high-altitude westerly winds towards India—is likely to affect the north Indian weather from January 3 onwards.

The system is expected to bring light/moderate scattered to fairly widespread rainfall/snowfall over the Western Himalayan region from January 3-5.

"Cold Day to Severe Cold Day conditions in isolated to some pockets very likely over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh & Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and West Madhya Pradesh during next two days and over Himachal Pradesh during next 24 hours," the IMD said.

According to Kuldeep Srivastava, the head of the IMD's regional fore-

casting centre, clear skies over Delhi-NCR, multiple western disturbances affecting the Himalayan region and the global impact of La Nina were the major reasons behind such low minimum temperatures. "After December 12, western disturbances mostly affected the western Himalayan region, leading to significant snowfall and rain over Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh," Srivastava said.

After the wind system withdraws, cold north-westerly winds blow from Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh to Delhi-NCR, bringing the minimum temperature down, he said.

"Uplifted fog" over Punjab and Haryana made the winds even colder, he added. "The global factor of La Nina further contributed to the fall in temperatures," Srivastava said.

"Dense/very dense fog in some pockets over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh & Delhi and Uttar Pradesh and dense fog in isolated pockets over Bihar, Assam & Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram & Tripura during next 2 days and over Uttarakhand, West Madhya Pradesh during next 24 hours," the IMD said.

The IMD said a trough in lower level easterlies is expected to bring isolated rain and thundershowers over the plains of northwest India and adjoining West Madhya Pradesh on Friday and Saturday, January 1-2.

According to the IMD, ground frost conditions in isolated pockets very likely over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh & Delhi and north Rajasthan during next 24 hours.

The cold wave sweeping Kashmir

intensified as the mercury fell several notches to settle well below the freezing point across the valley, Srinagar city -- the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir -- recorded a low of minus 5.9 degrees Celsius, which was over three degrees below the previous night's minus 2.2 degrees Celsius.

Gulmarg tourist destination in north Kashmir recorded 10.4 degrees Celsius as against the previous night's low of minus 11 degrees Celsius.

The ongoing cold wave conditions in Haryana and Punjab intensified at many places, with Hisar reeling at minus 1.2 degrees Celsius. A thick blanket of fog again enveloped most places in the two States early in the morning, reducing visibility levels. The minimum temperatures hovered well below normal limits as a few places experienced the season's coldest night so far. Hisar in Haryana recorded the season's coldest night so far and the mercury dropped eight notches below the normal.

Cold wave conditions also persisted in many places in Punjab. Bathinda reeled under severe chill recording a minimum temperature of 0 degree Celsius, the season's lowest so far, while Amritsar and Faridkot, too, braved the chill at 1.6 degrees Celsius and 1.2 degrees Celsius, respectively. Pathankot, Halwara, Adampur, Ludhiana and Patiala also recorded below normal minimums at 2.2, 3.1, 4.8, 4.1 and 4.8 degrees Celsius, respectively. Intense cold conditions prevailed in Rajasthan where over a dozen districts recorded night temperatures below 5 degrees Celsius.

**DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-1, DELHI**  
4TH FLOOR, JEEVAN TARA BUILDING,  
PARLIAMENT STREET, NEW DELHI- 110001

**O.A. NO. 1256/2019**

**Bank of India**..... Applicant  
Versus  
**Mr. Vikas Gupta & Ors.** ..... Defendants

To,

(3) (i) M/s. Rudra Buildwell Projects Pvt. Ltd. through Its Directors Having Its Registered Address D-53, Okhla Phase-I, New Delhi-110020.  
**Also at**  
(ii) M/s. Rudra Buildwell Projects Pvt. Ltd. through Its Directors Having its Administrative Office At A-66, Sector-63, Noida, Uttar Pradesh-201301  
**Also at**  
(iii) M/s. Rudra Buildwell Projects Pvt. Ltd. through Its Directors Having its Project Office Rudra Palace Heights, Plot No. GH-02B, Sector-01, Noida Extension, Greater Noida Pin-201306 (U.P.)

Whereas the above named applicant has instituted a case for recovery of **Rs. 50,89,093.15/-** (Rupees Fifty Lacs Eighty Nine Thousand Ninety Three & Fifteen Paise Only) against you and whereas it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in ordinary way. Therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance before Ld. Registrar on **04.03.2021 at 10.30 A.M.** (for further details kindly visit DRT website [www.tribunal.gov.in](http://www.tribunal.gov.in), Phone Number: 011-23748473).

Take notice that in case of your failure to appear on the above mentioned day before this Tribunal, the case will be heard and decided in your absence.

**Due to ongoing Pandemic Situation, all the matters will be taken up through Video Conferencing and for that purpose:-**

(i) All the advocates/Litigants shall download the "Cisco Webex" application/Software;  
(ii) "Meeting ID" and "Password" for the next date of hearing qua cases to be taken by Registrar/Recovery Officer-I/ and Recovery Officer-II shall be available one day prior to the next date at DRT Official Portal i.e. "drt.gov.in" under the Public Notice Head.  
(iii) In any exigency qua that, the Advocates/ Litigants can contact the concerned official at Ph. No. 011-23748473.

**Given under my hand and seal of the Tribunal on this 3rd December of 2020**

Respondent may contact under mention Ph. No. for further enquiry  
**Mr. Amit K. Dar, Ld. Registrar**  
DRT-1, New Delhi,  
Phone No.: 011-23748473  
Email : drt1delhi-dfs@nic.in

**By Order of this Tribunal**  
For Registrar

**DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-1, DELHI**  
4TH FLOOR, JEEVAN TARA BUILDING,  
PARLIAMENT STREET, NEW DELHI- 110001

**O.A. NO. 1242/2019**

**Bank of India**..... Applicant  
Versus  
**Mr. Ankush Mehra & Ors.** ..... Defendants

To,

1. (i) Mr. Ankush Mehra s/o Sh. Anil Mehra H. No. 40, East End Enclave Near Sai Baba Mandir, Laxmi Nagar, Sakarpur, Delhi-110092.  
**Also at**  
(ii) Mr. Ankush Mehra s/o Sh. Anil Mehra c/o MCI Management India Pvt. Ltd. Sector-44, Gurgaon, Haryana-122003.  
(2) Mrs. Richa Mehra w/o Mr. Ankush Mehra H.No. 40, East End Enclave, Near Sai Baba Mandir, Laxmi Nagar, Sakarpur, Delhi-110092.  
(3) Mrs. Anita Mehra w/o Mr. Anil Kumar Mehra, H.No.40, East End Enclave, Near Sai Baba Mandir, Laxmi Nagar, Sakarpur, Delhi-110092.  
(4) (i) M/s. Rudra Buildwell Projects Pvt. Ltd. through Its Directors Having Its Registered Address D-53, Okhla Phase-I, New Delhi-110020.  
**Also at**  
(ii) M/s. Rudra Buildwell Projects Pvt. Ltd. through Its Directors Having its Administrative Office At A-66, Sector-63, Noida, Uttar Pradesh-201301  
**Also at**  
(iii) M/s. Rudra Buildwell Projects Pvt. Ltd. through Its Directors Having its Project Office Rudra Palace Heights, Plot No. GH-02B, Sector-01, Noida Extension, Greater Noida Pin-201306 (U.P.)

Whereas the above named applicant has instituted a case for recovery of **Rs. 46,00,080.58/-** (Rupees Forty Six Lacs Eighty & Fifty Eight Paise Only) against you and whereas it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in ordinary way. Therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance before Ld. Registrar on **04.03.2021 at 10.30 A.M.** (for further details kindly visit DRT website [www.tribunal.gov.in](http://www.tribunal.gov.in), Phone Number: 011-23748473).

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**Given under my hand and seal of the Tribunal on this 3rd December of 2020**

Respondent may contact under mention Ph. No. for further enquiry  
**Mr. Amit K. Dar, Ld. Registrar**  
DRT-1, New Delhi,  
Phone No.: 011-23748473  
Email : drt1delhi-dfs@nic.in

**By Order of this Tribunal**  
For Registrar

## RSS leaders given new opportunities in BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

BJP president J P Nadda on Thursday gave new responsibilities to RSS leaders in the BJP.

V Satish, joint general secretary, is to look after Parliamentary office, ST morcha and 'vishesh sampark'. Sudeep Singh, vice-presi-

dent, to be stationed at Chandigarh, to oversee Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh.

Shiv Prakash, Joint-General Secretary, is to look after Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and west Bengal. He Will be at Bhopal.

## Bank fraud: ED seizes gold, jewellery worth over ₹4 cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate has seized gold and diamond jewellery worth ₹4 crore after it raided promoters of a Tamil Nadu-based company in a money laundering probe linked to an alleged bank loan fraud. The searches were conducted under provisions of the Prevention of

Money Laundering Act (PMLA) and the residential premises of K Subbaraj, chairman of Tiruchirappalli-based Cether Ltd, its managing director K Pothiraj and director of NSK Builders Pvt Ltd N S K Kalairaja were covered, it said.

Gold and diamond jewellery worth ₹ 1.77 crore along with several property documents were seized in raid.

# Kerala passes resolution against three farm laws

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The Kerala Legislative Assembly on Thursday saw the ruling LDF and the Opposition UDF unanimously adopting a resolution condemning the Centre for the Farm Bills 2020 enacted by the Parliament and expressing solidarity with the farmers agitating against the legislation.

The special Session of the Legislative Assembly was convened by the Governor following repeated directive by the CPI(M)-led LDF Government to convene the House.

Though the Government had asked Governor Arif Mohammed Khan to convene the Session last week, the latter had declined to do so stating that there was no situation that mandated a special Session. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, who was hurt by the Governor's stance on the issue did not yield an inch and pressed for convening the special session which the Governor had to oblige.

The Chief Minister who



THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY WAS CONVENED BY THE GOVERNOR FOLLOWING REPEATED DIRECTIVE BY THE CPI(M)-LED LDF GOVERNMENT TO CONVENE THE HOUSE

introduced the resolution gave a piece of his mind to the Governor in harshest term. But Vijayan maintained silence

about Prime Minister Narendra Modi despite the demand by KC Joseph of the Congress to rebuke Modi.

# 225 terrorists killed in J&K in 2020

## Decline in terror incidents and infiltration: DGP

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

More than 40 top commanders heading Pakistan based terror outfits were eliminated among 225 terrorists in over 100 encounters by the joint teams of security forces across Jammu & Kashmir in 2020, Director General of Police Dilbag Singh said on Thursday.

Compared to 2019, the security forces gunned down 65 more terrorists in 2020. A total number of 160 terrorists were gunned down in 2019. Meanwhile, the number of local recruits inducted by different outfits in its ranks recorded an upward trend in 2020. However, the shelf life of these terrorists was reduced between 3 days to 3 months in 2020.

Addressing an annual Press conference in the laws of the Police headquarters in Jammu DGP Dilbag Singh told reporters the total number of



Director General of Jammu & Kashmir Police Dilbag Singh addresses a Press conference in Jammu on Thursday

infiltration bids, incidents related to terrorist violence and civilian killings have also come down.

Sharing details DGP said "We undertook over 100 successful operations in J&K. Ninety operations took place in Kashmir and 13 in Jammu. As many as 225 terrorists were killed — 207 in Kashmir and 18 in Jammu division."

He said that among the slain terrorists, 46 were top commanders belonging to various outfits. "Today, all top commanders of various outfits have been eliminated," he added.

The DGP said 16 Jammu & Kashmir Police personnel — 15 in Kashmir and one in Jammu — and 44 security forces jawans — 42 in Kashmir and

two in Jammu — were killed while fighting terrorism this year. Singh said that police and security agencies have cracked down on overground workers (OGWs) of terror outfits, who throw grenades or work as messengers and couriers.

"As many as 635 OGWs were arrested and 56 out of them were booked under the Public Safety Act (PSA)," he said.

During the year, 299 terrorists and their associates were arrested and 12 terrorists surrendered, he said.

The police chief said that 426 weapons, over 9,000 ammunition and magazines, and a huge cache of explosive material were recovered and seized during anti-terror operations.

There has been a decrease in the number of civilian killings this year. "As many as 38 civilians were killed this year as compared to 44 last year," Singh said.

He, however, said that there has been a slight increase in terrorist recruitment this year as compared to last year. "But 70 per cent of them have either been eliminated or have left ter-

ror outfits and returned. As many as 46 terrorists have been arrested and 76 have been killed (among new recruits). Their shelf life is very less," the DGP said.

He said that there is a large scale decrease in the level of infiltrations this year. Due to the strong anti-infiltration grid, the infiltration is down, he said. Singh said that Pakistan is trying to increase the arch of terrorism to Jammu region and foment communal trouble here.

"There were a dozen terrorists active in the Jammu region, the number has reduced to three now. They are in Kishtwar district, we are tracking them," Singh said.

The police chief further said that despite several attempts by Pakistan, cases of infiltration this year is the lowest in the last three-four years. "So, they (Pakistan) had to rely on local recruits and they tried to supply weapons, explosive materials and cash to them through drones, most of these were foiled," he said.

"The best thing is that the trend of local youths joining terror group is constantly decreasing," he added.

# Modi to lay foundation of Light House project for UP's urban poor

**Lucknow:** In an attempt to bring smiles to the underprivileged people of the State, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will lay the foundation stones of the Light House Project (LHP) on Friday.

Under this project, 1,040 urban poor families of Lucknow would get a flat each of 415 sq ft area for only ₹4.76 lakh. The State Government has set the timeline of a year to complete the project. The actual cost of this flat will be ₹12.59 lakh, of which ₹7.83 lakh will be given as grant by the Central

and UP Governments. The remaining amount of ₹4.76 lakh will have to be paid by the allottees of the economically weaker section (EWS).

The allotment of the flats, situated off Shaheed Path under Awadh Vihar Yojana, will be done as per Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) and District Urban Development Authority (DUDA). For this, a lottery will be drawn by the district magistrate of Lucknow.

The Prime Minister will virtually attend the foundation laying event of Global Housing Technology Challenge India

(GHTC India) and distribution of houses under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) in six states of the country.

Yogi Adityanath will be joining the event virtually at 11 am on Friday. In the programme, the PM will also announce awards in many categories.

The Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry has chosen Indore in Madhya Pradesh, Rajkot in Gujarat, Chennai in Tamil Nadu, Ranchi in Jharkhand, Agartala in Tripura, and Lucknow in UP to construct houses under the LHP project. **PNS**

# CRPF officer injured in firing by terrorists in J&K

**Srinagar:** Terrorists fired on a CRPF company in Anantnag district of Jammu & Kashmir on Thursday, injuring an officer, police said.

The terrorists opened fire on the C company of 89 battalion of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) at Sangam in Anantnag district, a police official said. The official said sub-inspector Hardayal Yadav was injured in the firing.

Security forces have cordoned off the area and launched a search operation to track down the terrorists, he added. **PTI**

# Pak troops violate ceasefire along LoC, target mosques and houses in Kupwara

PTI ■ SRINAGAR/JAMMU

Pakistani troops opened fire and shelled mortars in unprovoked violations of a ceasefire agreement along the Line of Control (LoC) in Kupwara and Rajouri districts of Jammu & Kashmir, officials said on Thursday.

In the Tangdhar sector of Kupwara, Pakistani troops specifically targeted mosques and houses in border villages, an Army official said in Srinagar.

"Pakistan initiated an unprovoked ceasefire violation

Security forces officials said that shelling and firing by Pakistani troops was "very heavy" in 2020, virtually making the 2003 India-Pakistan border truce "redundant"

along LoC in Tangdhar Sector, Kupwara by firing mortars and other weapons yesterday evening," the official said.

In the Nowshera sector of Rajouri, Pakistan Army personnel engaged in heavy firing and mortar shelling on forward posts.

"At about 1,515 hours today, Pakistan Army initiated

unprovoked ceasefire violation by firing with small arms and intense shelling with mortars along LoC in Nowshera sector in Rajouri district," a defence spokesman said in Jammu.

Indian Army personnel guarding the LoC retaliated befittingly to the unprovoked ceasefire violations, officials said.

Jammu and Kashmir recorded 5,100 instances of ceasefire violations by Pakistan along the LoC in 2020 — the highest in the past 18 years — in which 36 people were killed and over 130 were injured,

# Indian Army personnel guarding the LoC retaliated befittingly to the unprovoked ceasefire violations, officials said

official sources said. Twenty-four security personnel were among the 36 killed.

Security forces officials said that shelling and firing by Pakistani troops was "very heavy" in 2020, virtually making the 2003 India-Pakistan border truce "redundant".

"Pakistani troops repeatedly targeted forward posts and villages along the Line of Control (LoC) and the International Border (IB) to create a fear psychosis among the people and destabilise the peace along the borderline," a senior police officer said.

# Left, Cong seek trust vote in Bengal to see 'who is on which side'

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

With reports of more Trinamool Congress MLAs preparing for a "right turn" in coming weeks, the Left and the Congress have demanded immediate summoning of the Bengal Assembly for the Mamata Banerjee Government to clear a trust motion.

Speaking to newsmen the Left and Congress leaders on Thursday said that it was the Government's duty to seek a trust motion against the backdrop of wholesale migration of TMC legislators to the BJP.

"Many TMC MLAs have crossed over to the BJP and there are reports of many more planning to go in the coming weeks. Against this backdrop there is a clear lack of clarity on who is on which side which is unprecedented in the history of State legislature.... It is being difficult to keep track on floor

crossing. So we want the Government to summon the House immediately and prove its majority," CPI(M) legislative party leader Sujan Chakrabarty said drawing severe criticism from both the ruling party and the BJP.

Congress and the State Leader of Opposition Abdul Mannan said there was the "Government is afraid to call a Session because it is suffering from trust deficit... it has no track of TMC MLAs as to which party they belong to now... Even the Speaker has no record regarding the MLAs' political loyalty... this is the reason we are asking the Government to prove its majority on the floor of the House and clear the doubts from the mind of the people... it is only after the Trust Motion that the House and the entire people will be able to know the number of the MLAs supporting the Trinamool Congress today."

# 3,509 new Covid cases, 58 deaths in Maha

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a drop in the number of Covid-19 infections and fatalities, Maharashtra recorded 3,509 infected cases and 58 deaths on Thursday, even as 3,612 people were discharged from various hospitals in various parts of the state after full recovery.

A day after the state logged 3537 infections and 70 deaths, the infected cases dropped marginally to 3509, while deaths came down to 50.

With 3612 fresh infections, the total infections in the state climbed from 19,28,603 to 19,32,112. Similarly, with 58 new deaths, the Covid-19 toll in the state from 49,463 to 49,521.

As 3612 patients were discharged from the hospitals across the state after full recovery, the total number of people discharged from the hospitals since the second week of March this year went up to 18,28,546. The recovery rate in the state rose marginally from 94.62 per cent to 94.64 per cent.

With 9 new deaths, the

total number of deaths went up from 11,107 to 11,116, while the infected cases rose by 714 to trigger a jump in the total infections from 2,92,722 to 2,93,436.

Meanwhile, the number of "active cases" total cases in the state dropped from 53,066 to 52,902. The fatality rate in the state stood at 2.56 per cent.

Pune district, which continued to be the worst-affected city-district in Maharashtra, saw the total number of cases increase from 3,72,103 to 3,72,655, while the total number of deaths in Pune rose from 7760 to 7767.

Thane district remained in the third spot — after Pune and Mumbai — after the total number of infections rose from 2,54,074 to 2,54,457, while the total deaths climbed from 5573 to 5577. Of the 1,27,47,633 samples sent to laboratories, 19,32,112 have tested positive (15.16 per cent) for COVID-19 until Thursday.

Currently, 2,81,303 people are in home quarantine while 3,578 people are in institutional quarantine.

# 14-year-old fatally shoots classmate after dispute over seats in UP school

**Lucknow:** A petty dispute over seat arrangement in Bulandshahr turned a classroom into a war room and claimed the life of a class 10 student. According to police, the ordinary classroom fight took a life when both the boys — aged 14 — fought over seats in the class on Wednesday. Police said that one of the classmates was so incensed by the heated argument that he got his uncle's gun to school and shot his classmate dead on Thursday morning.

"The accused went home and stole a licensed revolver belonging to his uncle, who is in the army and currently home on leave," a senior police officer, Santosh Kumar Singh, told local media persons. **PNS**

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For additional info, please contact" Ms. Taranjeet Kaur | Email: biracbig.dbt@nic.in ; sped01@birac.nic.in

# BMC tries to pep up Mumbaikars' mood Allows food deliveries in Mumbai after 11 pm on New Year eve

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Seeking to pep up the somewhat dampened mood of the people of the country's commercial capital on the eve of the New Year, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Thursday evening sent out an unusual but a welcome message to Mumbaikars: "Don't Stop The Party, Mumbai - Just Take It Indoors After 11:00!"

Amid a "night curfew" triggered by a new strain of the SARS-CoV-2 detected in the United Kingdom, the BMC tweaked the rules a bit to permit restaurants to home deliver food in the metropolis after 11 pm.

No wonder, a tweet put out by the BMC on its official handle: "Don't Stop The Party, Mumbai — Just Take It Indoors After 11:00! Restaurants are allowed to home deliver food in the city post 11:00pm" came as a pleasant surprise for Mumbaikars.

However, the BMC came out with a rider in the same tweet: "Covid-prevention norms will have to be followed to ensure Mumbai rings in the new year with safety", a condition that the Mumbaikars — reconciled as they are to the challenging Covid-19 times they are passing through — did not mind.

Known all along as "a city that never sleeps", Mumbai and its people will for the first time will be ushering in New Year without celebrations in restaurants and at public places.

The tweaking of the "Night Curfew" rules by the BMC come ten days after the Maharashtra government on Monday announced the imposition of a "night curfew" from 11 pm to 6 am between December 22 and January 5 in the metropolis and other Municipal Corporation areas in the state, in the wake of the detection of a new strain of the SARS-CoV-2 in the United Kingdom. Even the BMC had

last week announced the ban on all celebrations after 11 pm at all places, including building terraces.

More than a week ago, the Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) had exhorted its member-hotels and restaurants in Mumbai and other major cities across the state to gear up for early New Year's eve celebrations coinciding with "Thailand Time".

The hotels and restaurants in Mumbai and Municipal Corporation areas in Maharashtra — as per the advice by HRAWI — will ring in the New Year as early as at 10.30 pm on December 31 which is 12 midnight as per "Thailand Time". In effect, the hotels and restaurants will usher in the year 2021 one-hand-a half hour early.

However, State Home Minister Anil Deshmukh displayed a bit of leniency when he said on Wednesday: "As part of efforts to ensure against the

spread of Covid-19, hotels, restaurants, bars and pubs will shut down at 11 pm. However, if Mumbaikars want to visit friends and family members for early morning dinner or go to markets, they can do so, but there is restriction on the assembly of five or more persons at public places".

Notwithstanding the minor tweaking of "night curfew", Mumbai will not be the same on the eve of the New Year. In normal times, hundreds and thousands people would converge on beaches, gardens or waterfronts and public places like the Gateway of India, Marine Lines, Girgaum and Juhu Chowpatty.

Given to partying and revelry on the New Year eve, a large number of Mumbaikars have gone out of the metropolis to nearby get-away places including hill stations, far-away beach towns, farmhouses, jungle and other tourist destinations where there are no Covid-219 restrictions to ring in 2021.

## India in a churn

The social commitment to rebuilding systems in stressed times may deliver bigger gains than divisive politics

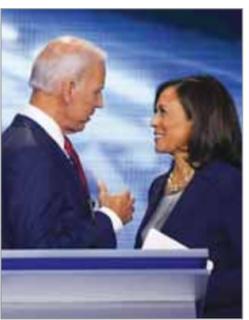


The Government may have hit the pause button because of the pandemic, sweeping every other crisis under the carpet but it is likely to find its hands full with unresolved issues in 2021. And though he may have beaten many world leaders in actually winning the war of perception — Modi's political stock continues to be high despite what we may consider as flaws in COVID management, his economic packages or the migrant workers' pain — the Prime Minister has got to do a lot more than just rely on his party's electoral victories. First and foremost, he will be tested on the successful rollout of the vaccination programme, a logistical challenge of unimaginable proportions and attendant investments. With the shroud of COVID-19 likely to cast dark shadows over the first half of the year and our public health infrastructure still in a shambles in the countryside, the budgetary allocation for healthcare is likely to stretch the seams. Besides, a tanking economy has its own side-effects and though forecasts project a recovery by the year-end for India, pivoted around a strong base effect, the stressed banking sector and recessionary trends would but naturally contract the GDP growth in the first half when funding for vaccination would be the pressing concern. Besides, joblessness is still a reality and a resultant weak demand arising out of low consumer spends means recovery will be a stutter. Resource mobilisation, too, will be an unprecedented challenge. Politically, the turbulence that has been simmering under the blanket shutdowns, which did encourage a Centrist and absolutist approach to problem-solving, is expected to surface with full force. In fact, the farmers, protesting against the new farm Acts in a depoliticised and pointed manner, have shown that dissent can indeed win the day and bring even the toughest Government to its knees. Will this largely people-driven movement also make the Opposition further irrelevant? Would a leaderless movement emerge as the alternative to the leader-driven politics of our times? Would this revive the dissent against the ruling BJP's divisive politics, which has reared its ugly head again amid the legislation on love jihad — more an exercise in "otherisation" of minorities than on conversion? If anything, it has reignited the latent anger that was visible in the protests against a religion-based citizenship law and the National Register for Citizens (NRC) and it remains to be seen whether the muffled voices take to the streets again with the Union Ministers spelling out their agenda in no uncertain terms.

The Modi Government must realise that it has a brute majority, it has achieved its core agenda of the Ram temple and mainstreaming Jammu and Kashmir and it has the heft to get things done in Parliament. It doesn't need to fan the flames but should go back to its core development platforms to redeem itself as a stabiliser of hard times, not a destabiliser. The BJP's drumroll on its divisive policies is understandable, considering that the polarisation of votes continues to reap it rich electoral dividends. So the party is deploying its proven formula with the Assembly polls scheduled in five States around the middle of the year, by which time the vaccine politics and related controversies are expected to take the centre stage. No matter how much of a prestige fight the States might be for the BJP, it would be wise to respect the imperatives of a post-pandemic world and appear as a transformative party, not a destructive one, under these circumstances. Of course, the only accelerator for Modi's vaunted appeal is a slipshod Opposition. It cannot read into trends at the right time and, instead of making an issue, waits for the civil protesters to react. Little wonder then that the Opposition parties have been marginalised from the discourse on the farmers or minorities. If the local body polls in States are any indication, there is an undercurrent against the BJP from the high of 2019. It also proves that the grassroots matrix of traditional parties is still intact. But somehow, the Opposition is not being able to coalesce as a national alternative. And the main party that should have been the initiator of such an effort, the Congress, is still sailing rudderless. Both the ruling party and the Opposition must realise that the pandemic has changed socio-political and economic anxieties. Respecting that will change India.

## A healing touch

Joe Biden and Kamala Harris are trying to stitch together an inclusive Administration to represent the real face of the US



The Joe Biden Administration is trying to heal the wounds inflicted by the Trump Administration which had split America right down the middle on racial lines. The veteran politician, who is known to be sharp but down to earth, had promised Americans a Cabinet that would be "the most diverse in history" while he was on the campaign trail. This is no surprise given that Biden's running mate Kamala Harris is the first woman to be elected Vice-President of the US. What makes this feat even more significant is that she is also the first Black and South Asian person to be elected to the key post and might be on her way to becoming the President if Biden chooses not to run for another term at the White House.

Now that the two of them have got down to the business of choosing their Cabinet, Biden is keeping his word to a highly polarised nation in the hope that he will be able to undo some of the damage to the social fabric of the country which is already reeling under the impact of the Trump Administration and the Coronavirus outbreak. So far, the President-elect seems to be living up to the vow of an administration that would reflect the "real face of America". A significant 54 per cent of the White House appointees are people of colour and 61 per cent are women, while Asian-American and Pacific Islander appointees represent more than twice their share of the US' population and LGBTQ+ appointees have been given a 11 per cent representation. Some of the trailblazing nominees to the Cabinet are Janet Yellen, who will be the first woman to be the Secretary of Treasury, while Neera Tanden will be the first woman of colour and first South Asian to head the Office of Management and Budget. Then there is Lloyd Austin, the first African American to be the Secretary of Defence, followed by Alejandro Mayorkas, who will go down in US history as the first immigrant to lead the Department of Homeland Security. Xavier Becerra will be the first Latino to be the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

To his credit, the President-elect also appointed the first all-women senior White House communications team, which made headlines globally and sent out the message of gender parity. In 2020-2021, the US seems to have come a long way from the time when in 1791 George Washington sanctified the idea of promoting divergent views in the US Government, even though at that time, ironically, all his appointees were White men. Significantly, since 1933, only 11 US Presidents have named women to Cabinet-level positions even though each successive President, save for the outgoing one, has tried to ensure greater representation of all sections. However, there is a growing demand for an administration that reflects the true America and the Biden-Harris team seems to be trying to achieve that. One of the reasons why it has taken the leader of the supposed "free world" so long to include women and minorities in the decision-making process (even as a developing country like India had a woman Prime Minister way back in 1966, a woman President, Pratibha Patil, in 2007 and numerous women as Chief Ministers) is because in the US, there is a scarcity of women, especially those from the minority base, in elective office. Now as Biden and Harris try to make history and undo the wrongs of the past, one can only hope that the nation will heal itself.

# Clear & present danger

China's attempt to alter the *status quo* along the LAC should not be taken lightly as the PLA will have many options available once the snow starts melting



DEEPAK SINHA

As we see off a rather turbulent and difficult year, it would be worthwhile to review how well the military faced up to the nation's security challenges and, more importantly, where it goes from here. As has been the case with the vast majority of peoples and countries around the world, the COVID-19 impact has been quite disruptive and debilitating for our military as well. A situation no doubt further compounded by the unprovoked aggression by the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) in Eastern Ladakh along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), which undoubtedly caught the military by surprise.

The year had started on an excellent note with the Government finally biting the bullet and announcing the appointment of General Bipin Rawat as the first Chief of Defence Staff, two decades after it was first officially mooted following the Kargil conflict. It went a step further by carving out a Department of Military Affairs, to be headed by the CDS as its ex officio secretary, to deal with issues pertaining exclusively to military matters. While a year is insufficient to comment on the efficacy of these changes, suffice it to say that General Rawat has not distinguished himself in his new role.

However, the unilateral and partially successful attempt by China to alter the *status quo* along the LAC thrust a wholly unprepared military into the deep end, pushing all other concerns out of the window. Till the commencement of this imbroglio, the substantial tract of disputed territory that we claim was regularly patrolled by our security forces as per the mutually accepted protocols that have been in place for over two decades. Also, make no mistake, despite all the talk of mutual withdrawal and easing of tensions, there is little doubt that the Chinese have no intention of withdrawing from the occupied areas, especially in the Depsang and Galwan sub-sectors, without making us pay a heavy price.

The PLA now poses a clear and present danger to our positions at Daulat Beg Oldi. Its loss in any future conflict would adversely impact our ability to continue holding on to the Saltoro Ridge, west of the Siachen Glacier. That would be a serious strategic setback as currently our occupation of the Saltoro Ridge allows us to dominate the entire region up



to the Karakoram Pass, including the Shaksgam Valley that has been illegally ceded to China by Pakistan. Our existing posture threatens the security of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) passing through this region as it is vulnerable to interdiction. Its importance to both China and Pakistan cannot be overestimated given the massive investments made, which could be motivation enough for collusive or collaborative action by the two neighbours.

Despite the Army having been caught napping in the initial stages, its speedy and robust response — especially after the horrendous loss of lives at Galwan — was commendable. Subsequently, under the ambit of "Operation Snow Leopard", it raised the stakes considerably by occupying dominating heights along the Kailash Range in the Chushul and Pangong Tso sub-sectors which has negated some of the PLA's earlier advantages. While these heights are well in depth within our territory and have never been claimed by the Chinese, they do dominate both banks of the Pangong Tso as well as the important Chinese administrative base at Moldo. Most importantly, it allows us to choke off the Spanggur Gap, the area through which the PLA's mechanised elements could otherwise have advanced towards our positions at Chushul, thereby opening up an approach to Leh. However, the shoe is now

on the other foot, as it provides us a suitable launch pad for a riposte towards Moldo and the Chinese depth areas, if the situation so warrants.

However, we should not be misled by the selective rhetoric which suggests that the Chinese are on the back foot, the PLA is demoralised and their leadership floundering for a way out of the impasse without loss of face. While our action does give us a tactical advantage and has stabilised the situation, it has by no means robbed the PLA of the inherent advantages it enjoys, given the superior economic strength and its military size. However, they may be in for an unpleasant surprise, given the extended lines of communication and difficulties of combat at such high altitudes, apart, of course, from the fact that they face an extremely tough and battle-hardened opposition with ample experience in mountain warfare.

On our part, we have to accept that our Government has always had a very defensive mindset when it comes to China. In fact, the Modi Government has shown excessive restraint at the present time, not only refusing to name China but going so far as to try and delink the Depsang intrusion from the transgressions elsewhere in an attempt to justify the ongoing negotiations, which appear to be restricted to troop withdrawals from the Chushul-Pangong Tso sub-sector. Even

our occupation of the Kailash Range was only in response to the PLA's transgressions in the vain hope that it would deter further attempts at ingress or escalation. On that occasion, the PLA probably miscalculated our willingness to stand up to their provocative behaviour and was thus caught off guard by our robust response. At that time, they just did not have the requisite force levels in place to react before the onset of winter.

In similar circumstances, a more determined Government would probably have responded to such aggression by mirroring the Chinese and resorted to "salami slicing" actions along the LAC by occupying disputed areas along our claim line where the PLA has no permanent presence. This could have then been used as a bargaining chip during negotiations to ensure an equitable delineation of the LAC which, in time, would have allowed the Prime Minister to negotiate and resolve the border issue to our advantage.

The Government's unwillingness to take the initiative is partly explained by its fear of Chinese reaction as well as driven by the fact that it has no illusion as to the poor state our military is in; something that cannot be rectified in short order by loosening the purse strings. Unfortunately, misperceptions, lack of clarity and sheer disinterest in strategic affairs have been the hallmark of our political leadership, which finds little time for

anything other than domestic politics. This has resulted in a superficial understanding of the geopolitical complexities surrounding the issue of national security at the institutional level.

The Armed Forces have borne the brunt of this ignorance, being subjected to neglect by successive Governments over the years. In all likelihood, it has been premised on the belief, however misconceived, that a powerful military poses an existential threat to the political dispensation in power. It must, therefore, be kept in check and out of decision making. However, far more damaging has been the political leadership's belief that the military's utility has been severely constrained, if not rendered irrelevant, as chances of a conventional conflict have greatly diminished with the advent of nuclear weapons in the region. A belief which has been given considerable boost by the Army leadership's almost single-minded focus on counter-insurgency operations; even to the extent of accepting a gradual degradation of our conventional capabilities without protest.

As to the future, there is little scope for optimism as a few months from now will herald the start of a new campaigning season along the LAC as the snow melts. Given our defensive mindset, our choices will be wholly limited to dancing to the PLA's tune. Their options are many; they could, for example, play a waiting game and do nothing at all for now, having already forced us to concede territory. On the other hand, they could exert pressure elsewhere along the LAC to ensure that we respond in much the same manner we did this year. In fact, their biggest error would be to escalate the situation to teach us a lesson as then Modi would be forced to respond in kind, to avoid his reputation being tarnished.

However, if President Jinping does not cross that Rubicon, the Modi Government will continue to do what it does best, focus on increasing its footprint by winning the forthcoming Bengal elections. Undoubtedly, it will resort to dissimulation regarding the LAC situation, using every means at its disposal to push the narrative that our borders are quiet, safe and inviolate. It will then be back to business as usual and the CDS could then return to the onerous task of simplifying military uniforms and badges of rank.

(The writer is a military veteran, who is a consultant with the Observer Research Foundation and Senior Visiting Fellow with The Peninsula Foundation, Chennai. The views expressed are personal.)

## SOUNDBITE

I would remain the Chief Minister for the next two years. There is no doubt among the legislators or the public. There is doubt only among the media.

Karnataka Chief Minister — BS Yediyurappa



The challenges that the world faced this year testified to the importance of broad international cooperation. Russia and the US can contribute much to enhancing stability and security.

Russian President — Vladimir Putin



Not having any expectations from the New Year will be the best way to move into it and live it accordingly!!! I want to live life and characters to the best of my ability.

Actor — Manoj Bajpayee



(Jasprit) Bumrah is showing signs of maturity. He is a thinking bowler and the way he has done well in all formats is remarkable. I thought he'd get hurt but his core is very strong.

Former India bowler — Atul Wassan



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Forward movement

Sir — The talks between the Centre and farmers' unions have borne some fruitful results with the Union Government accepting two of the demands. The agreements reached are on decriminalising stubble burning and ensuring that the subsidies for electricity remain.

The farmers in Punjab and Haryana had been complaining of being unfairly targeted over stubble burning, for which there are few alternatives. The Electricity (Amendment) Bill that the Centre has in the works is another bone of contention and the Centre aims to move the subsidy offered by the States to farmers into the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mode.

However, the key issue of minimum support price and guaranteed procurement of agricultural produce remains. Though the farmers have confirmed that the agitation will continue, the agreements mark some forward motion in talks that have remained deadlocked for weeks.

CK Subramaniam  
Mumbai

### Countdown to inoculation in India begins

Now that the UK Government has given approval to the Oxford vaccine, we can reasonably expect the Indian Government to approve the Covishield — the Indian version of the Oxford vaccine — soon. It would be a New Year's gift to the nation.

The Indian drugs regulator has hinted at imminent vaccine approval with his remark that India will probably enter the New Year with something in hand. Clearly, inoculation against the virus in India is in the offing. The Serum Institute of India has already manufactured 40-50 million doses of Covishield which would ensure the supply for the start of the drive.

The programme is a mammoth task that requires huge logistics support, effective coordination and public cooperation. A range of requirements, taking into account the ground realities, has to be factored in and taken care of. The process of vaccinating millions of people in a vast and disparate country like ours entails huge challenges in terms of cold storage facilities, transport and delivery arrangements, deployment of adequate health professionals and crowd management. The mass vaccination mission must be meticulously planned and diligently carried out as it

### A new-look Britain

Sir — After the House of Commons overwhelmingly endorsed the 1,200-page agreement, the House of Lords has also voted in favour of the British ratification. The approval of a trade deal between the United Kingdom and the European Union was hurried through the British Parliament in just a day on

Wednesday, a decisive but rushed conclusion to a long Brexit story that has divided Britons and convulsed their politics for more than four years now.

Despite the lack of time for scrutiny, the ease with which the pact sailed through the House of Commons was in stark contrast to many knife-edge votes held before last year's general elections

when Parliament was gridlocked over Brexit.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson will now surely enjoy his India visit as the deal will lead to rearrangement of the UK's foreign economic policy and international relations, which offers a happy opportunity to India too.

Yash Pal Ralhan  
Jalandhar



involves public health and safety.

The Government must ensure that the programme encompasses all people and bears the entire cost, whatever it is. The success of the vaccination drive is crucially important for preventing COVID-19, to increase immunity and regenerate the economy. The people must be made aware and given all the information they need for them to feel confident that the job is safe and will protect them from the life-threatening disease.

G David Milton  
Kanyakumari

### Battle-ready India

Sir — The Union Government's two-day dry run for the Covid-19 inoculation drive was aimed at end-to-end testing of the vaccination process and included planning and preparations as per the operational guidelines. It involved the creation of facilities and users, session site creation and mapping of sites, healthcare workers' data upload, receipt of vaccines and vaccine allocation, session planning, deployment of vaccination teams and logistics mobilisation at the session sites.

The objective of the dry run is also to undertake and confirm field implementation and guide the way forward prior to the actual implementation. The exercise was expected to provide insights on any gaps or bottlenecks during the actual conduct of vaccination.

Now, the Government needs to prioritise its vaccination plan according to select population groups such as healthcare workers, frontline workers and senior citizens.

Bhagwan Thadani  
Mumbai

Send your feedback to: [letterstopioneer@gmail.com](mailto:letterstopioneer@gmail.com)

## FIRST COLUMN

## A booster dose for healthcare

The new decade may witness a more advanced stage of digitisation of health sector infrastructure and services



GURPREET SANDHU

The year 2020 was an extremely eventful one for the healthcare and pharma industry, and for humanity as well. The world faced the deadliest pandemic in recent history which killed 18,00,114 people worldwide and, it seems, will continue to wreak havoc in 2021, too. As we enter the new year, it is time to look at some of the trends that could dominate in terms of health technologies, organisations, businesses, regulatory authorities, products and services. One overarching theme that flows right through this whole transformative process is technology in the form of Artificial Intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), big data, robotics and cloud computing, among others.

The new decade may be witness to a more advanced stage of digitisation of healthcare infrastructure and services. With the Government and private players, both ploughing in a substantial amount of money with the intention of wholesale overhauling of legacy Information Technology (IT) systems, hitherto chiefly used for recording payment of bills, the next decade will be marked by a greater number of services related to healthcare being delivered through advanced IT-based systems. While digital therapeutics could increasingly underpin remote diagnosis and treatment, digital solutions such as Electronic Health Records (EHRs) and Electronic Medical Records (EMRs) would become more routine. Purely in terms of infrastructure, a combination of traditional brick-and-mortar hospitals and a modular and scalable network of healthcare givers and community healthcare hubs will come into being. Traditional hospital buildings would more likely be fronted by unmanned reception facilities, face recognition systems and automated disease screening kiosks. There could even be robotic and autonomous healthcare assistants in hospitals, a phenomenon highly likely in developing countries which typically face a shortage of healthcare professionals. At the same time, remotely guided tele-ICUs and Smart ICUs would become more common. Although foldable and portable hospital units have already been developed in our country, they would become more sophisticated and advanced in the coming decade. Rising on the back of connected devices — remote monitoring devices and wearables, combined with applications and software — the resultant Internet of Medical Things (IoMT) would increasingly become the change agent in the coming decade. With wireless technologies such as Wi-Fi and Bluetooth establishing a 24x7 connection between patients (using stationary medical devices, implanted and wearable external ones) and practitioners and caregivers, virtual/remote care would visibly become more commonplace. Some of these devices such as blood pressure monitors, pulse oximeters and blood glucose monitors would also give a fillip to self-monitoring of health. Significantly, AI-based mental wellness medical-grade chatbots are already being used to help people with psychiatric disorders such as anxiety and stress. They would become more commonplace in the coming decade.

Also, with increasing digitisation and application of advanced analytics across the value chain including research and development (R&D), manufacturing, quality, supply chain and sales, the pharma industry is set to wear a new look. With the need for instant delivery of pharmaceutical products regardless of the location and time, companies would need to strengthen their supply chains and align with hospitals and care centres evolving a new integrated model for ePharma. The coming decade would see a large-scale shift to digital marketing tools such as videos, mobile marketing, digital content, social media, high impact visuals and live sessions on social media for pharma products and services. The new decade would also witness a greater collaboration and partnership between drug companies and health technology firms. This would be a natural development. Technologies such as AI, big data and ML would not only compress the time required between drug research and product development, including clinical trials, testing and so on, these would also be able to churn a staggering amount of data previously unheard of for R&D while also streamlining processes and reducing wastage. In the coming decade, drug R&D would also entail more of gene-based experimenting which would map how the genetic makeup of a person responds to a medicine. Related to the above, genomics in combination with AI and big data would be increasingly deployed for treatment of a patient accounting for the individual characteristics of a person in terms of variability in genes, environment and lifestyle. By the next decade, these technologies would have to a great extent found answers to several forms of cancer, neuro-degenerative diseases and so on. At the same time, as R&D in biotechnology and biopharma including vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics get spurred by the unprecedented pandemics, AI and big data would also be used in epidemiological research and forecasting on a larger scale.

The coming decade will see the legalisation of medical marijuana by more countries in addition to the existing ones. Finally, taking lessons from the outbreak of COVID-19, given the commonality of the challenge posed to humanity, the pharma regulatory authorities across the world would increasingly evolve a more cooperative framework to deal with any future pandemic.

(The writer is president, Council for Healthcare and Pharma. The views expressed are personal.)

₹15 LAKH IN EVERY ACCOUNT AND TWO CRORE JOBS EVERY YEAR.' FARMERS DON'T TRUST MODI DUE TO HIS LONG HISTORY OF 'ASATYAGRAHA.'  
—CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI

## POINTCOUNTERPOINT



I KNOW MORE THAN RAHUL ABOUT FARMING. I AM THE SON OF A FARMER AND WE CANNOT TAKE DECISIONS AGAINST FARMERS.  
—DEFENCE MINISTER RAJNATH SINGH

## Take a bipartisan view

Both India and China must shed their nationalistic stand; else the border dispute would remain unresolved. A lot of confusion was caused by politics after the Galwan incident



SIMI MEHTA

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown in India, the month of June brought a rude shock for the country when Chinese and Indian soldiers confronted each other in the disputed area on the Galwan river valley. There were casualties on both sides and a violation of decades of mutual faith and understanding between the countries on the use of firearms.

**The Indian perspective:** New Delhi maintains that the territorial dispute has been elevated by China by claiming that it was related to the latter's sovereignty. Further, Beijing's negative comments on the abrogation of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution and terming of the creation of Ladakh as a Union Territory as "illegal" have not gone down well with New Delhi. For India, these are all internal issues. It calls for fairness in understanding of the situation as India did not react when China reorganised the Tibetan provinces in 1965. India is also concerned about the repeated mention of Arunachal Pradesh as southern Tibet since 2005.

China has also expressed its criticism over India building a feeder line from Daulat Beg Oldi to Darbuk-Shyok in 2019. On the other hand, China has continued to build such feeder lines for the last 20 years. Hence, New Delhi does not understand the logic behind Chinese objections to India's construction activities. It realises that China would not want the Indian Armed Forces to reach the Line of Actual Control (LAC) swiftly.

However, Beijing wants smooth movement of Chinese patrol personnel belonging to the People's Liberation Army. If China continues with such a stance, India believes that the border negotiations would not be very fruitful.

Another area of contention is Chinese investment in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in the Gilgit-Baltistan area which is a sovereign territory of India and the subject of a long-running conflict between Pakistan and India. Beijing has retorted that these are commercial investments but India is not convinced because China has deployed over 36,000 security personnel in this area.

There is a feeling in New Delhi that China wants to teach a lesson to India because it has decided against joining the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and instead focussed on improving US-India ties, especially amid the 2+2 dialogue process, foundational defence agreements, Quadrilateral Security Dialogue or QUAD and other such arrangements. Also, because of the asymmetry in power relations, China is showing its military might to India.

**The Chinese perspective:** While the June event was acknowledged as being unfortunate, the official position of the Chinese leadership was that the Indian side triggered the confrontation, which raised tensions. Unlike New Delhi, Beijing did not announce the casualties on its side in the Galwan clash because of the understanding that the situation would be blown out of proportion through the media.

The fundamental reason that the border continues to be a disputed matter between India and China is the asymmetry in the thinking that prevails on both sides. While India seeks to verify the LAC first and then engage in discussing veritable solutions, China's thinking is top-down.

“FOR INDIA, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE LEADERSHIP DOES NOT GIVE IN TO THE PRESSURES OF VERTICAL OR HORIZONTAL ESCALATION AND CONTINUES WITH NEGOTIATIONS AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL. IT MUST INSTITUTIONALISE THE CONFLICT RESOLUTION MECHANISM IN ORDER TO SETTLE THE DISPUTE ONCE AND FOR ALL, SO THAT GALWAN-LIKE INCIDENTS DO NOT RECUR”



It wishes to arrive at a mutual understanding first and then build a mutual political consensus to demarcate the LAC. Beijing fears that if it agrees to the Indian line of thinking, then China would lose a large part of the territory.

In China's strategic calculations, India's position is that of a rising power guided by its increasing national military strength. Despite this, for Beijing, India is not a competitor, especially after the US has become a strategic challenger for China. Further, its aims to maintain peaceful ties with New Delhi because its BRI network has to pass through India on land and in the Indian Ocean.

In fact, during a webinar conducted by the RAND Centre for Asia Pacific Policy, it was clear that the Chinese have refuted the prevailing narrative in the international western media that China was making use of the pandemic to become more assertive and aggressive.

A renewed vigour in the QUAD ties arising out of concerns of aggression by China has also been dismissed by Beijing, as each of the four countries, India, Australia, Japan and the US would not compromise their bilateral relations with it.

The warmth in Indo-US ties has also been downplayed by China as "superficial." According to Chinese analysts, China does not want US involvement in the dispute.

While there is no need for China to make use of its military strength to prevail over India at any time through border skirmishes, yet with all clarity it subscribes to the notion that the size of the territory is immaterial but what holds immense value in its strategic calculations is honour, interest and fear.

**The way forward:** According to the Indian perspective, it is important to respect the previous agreements of 1993, 1996, 2005 and 2013 and to ensure disengagement and tranquillity along the border by ensuring the retreat of 60,000 troops in violation of the previous agreements.

There is a need to define and clarify the LAC to avoid such incidents again. It is necessary to have new Confidence Building Measures as was decided in the Xiamen BRICS meeting of 2017.

However, the Chinese think that under no circumstances should either side fire in the sky or at each other. They must reduce frontline deployment of troops unlike the current situation. There has to be an increased coordination of the soldiers at the frontier to avoid confrontation by giving them authority to resolve tensions. And finally, setting up a hotline between the two countries is pertinent as China has such a communication channel with the US, Russia and other countries.

**Conclusion:** India and China must take a step forward and shed their nationalistic stand; else the border dispute would remain unresolved. A lot of confusion was caused by politics after the Galwan incident. Therefore, it is important to understand the situation with a bipartisan view. Perhaps, they can take lessons from their own recent history, wherein they had demonstrated their maturity to resolve border disputes in exchange of peace and tranquillity.

For instance, India peacefully resolved its border disputes with Bangladesh. China settled border disputes peacefully with Russia and Tajikistan, among other countries. While both India and China recognise

the clarification of the LAC as a crucial step in dispute resolution, yet, since 2002, China has been unwilling to continue with exchange of maps with India. New Delhi says that this has been deliberately discontinued by China to occupy more land under the garb of ambiguity.

A major concern in India is trying to understand why China has been so strident in occupying disputed territory. India's position that the Galwan incident was a premeditated action by the Chinese troops is the reason behind the comprehensive economic consequences on bilateral relations, for example, ban on some mobile applications, restrictions on infrastructure investments and so on.

This demonstrates an opposing official position and this has been at the core of non-resolution of disputes. As a reaction, India has increased its military capabilities to thwart Chinese incursions into its territory and must continue with its preparedness, especially with the change in guard of the Western Theatre Command (WTC) and appointment of General Zhang Xudong.

For India, it is important that the leadership does not give in to the pressures of vertical or horizontal escalation and continues with negotiations at the highest level. It must institutionalise the conflict resolution mechanism in order to settle the dispute once and for all, so that Galwan-like incidents do not recur. If China continues with its expansionist autocratic tendencies *vis-à-vis* India, New Delhi must go to the International Court of Justice for arbitration of land under dispute.

(The writer is CEO and Editorial Director, IMPRI. The views expressed are personal.)

## Govt, farmers must negotiate with an open mind

This isn't the first protest and it won't be the last either. But it would define the way growers resolve their issues



GYANESHWAR DAYAL

ing them from the biting cold. From Singhu Border to Panipat, National Highway NH44 wears the look of a makeshift township. Community kitchens are busy dishing out food and beverages while medical camps are distributing medicines and giving first-aid. And yes, pizza distribution is going on at Singhu Border, much to the amusement of the social and national media. Milling about in the largely rural crowd of growers and Nihangs are people in western outfits as support pours in from people who do not have any connection with agriculture. A group of young girls from Ludhiana is lending support by performing "sewa."

The sit-in so far is peaceful even though more than 30 of them are said to have died during the protest so far. The farmers want nothing less than the repeal of the three farm laws and legal status for the Minimum Support Price (MSP). The Government insists that it has no intention of withdrawing MSP and the new laws would help achieve the target of doubling the income of farmers by 2022, the target

set by the Prime Minister.

The "godli media" is abuzz with stories that the people protesting at the Singhu Border are anything but farmers. They maintain that the growers of the country are happy with the Government. How else would you explain the recent victories of the BJP in Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Goa? Meanwhile, the two sides seem to be digging in their heels. The farmers are in for a long haul as the Government wants this agitation to fizzle out like others before it. To be honest, both sides are not helping their cause. The farmers asking for total repeal and not negotiating would not get what they want. The Government says the three laws will end the free run of middlemen and give growers the choice to sell their produce anywhere. In this situation, the Government must take the initiative to ease the situation, as discrediting the protesters doesn't help in mitigating it.

One thing is for sure, all is not well with Indian agriculture. It provides a livelihood to 70 per cent of the country's 1.3 billion people, with 82 per cent

of farmers being small and marginal. Most farmers in such a scenario are as good as meagre wage earners. Parties may be winning elections but it does not mean that farmers are happy. At least 10,281 people involved in the farm sector ended their lives in 2019, accounting for 7.4 per cent of the total number of suicides in India, says the National Crime Records Bureau's *Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India* report for 2019. People commit suicide out of utter helplessness and despair looms large over Indian agriculture, big time.

If one looks at the price structure, it becomes very clear where the problem lies. Everything which comes from the farm sells at a good price to the end consumer. But the farmer gets just 10 to 40 per cent of the price that the consumer pays. The reason being that farm produce changes hands four to five times before it is purchased by the end consumer for use.

"It is pathetic that the producer gets a pittance while the middlemen make money," says Sahajdeep Singh, a young farmer from Rajasthan.

"Things might not work out for the farmer even if middlemen are eliminated. It would then be monopolised by corporates. The farmer would have no negotiating status *vis-à-vis* the corporates," he adds.

He fears that corporates might monopolise the distribution chain and reap more profits than all the middlemen put together as they would have better resources to hold and release the stock when the price suits them. Prices for farmers are almost static but inflation is rising and so is the cost of agriculture inputs. The margins are thin and if you are a small or marginal farmer you don't have a choice but to take a loan. According to the National Bank of Agriculture and Rural Development data, about 52 per cent of the agricultural households in the country were estimated to be indebted. At the all-India level, about 60 per cent of the outstanding loans were taken from institutional sources which included Government (2.1 per cent), co-operative society (14.8 per cent) and banks (42.9 per cent).

True, the MSP may not be a

panacea but it certainly helps them negotiate a better price. Punjab farmers can afford smartphones as their landholding size is more and yield per acre is above average.

According to an estimate, the average Indian agricultural household income is ₹77,124 in a year. Punjab farmers earn ₹2,16,708 per annum and that of Bihar ₹42,684 or roughly ₹3,500 per month. So forget doubling, even quadrupling their income would not be enough. The farmers would still be dangling below the poverty line.

Indian agriculture sector needs funds. It needs investments in cold storage, an efficient transportation system, irrigation facilities, research and facilities for scientific practices. Despite big talk about the farmers' income, the actual investment in the sector is going down. So the powers that be provide short-term succour that people can remember when they go to vote. The UPA did it and the NDA is doing it now.

The biggest problem with Indian agriculture is that by the time it is harvest season, farmers are neck-deep in

debt as they take loans from banks or a local moneylenders-cum-middlemen to purchase, seeds, fertilisers, pesticides and diesel. So when the harvest comes, they have no option but to sell the whole crop immediately. They cannot wait for prices to swing in their favour.

Sadly, real issues are swept under the carpet and farmers become a pawn in the games political parties play. So far the protest is free from any political influence, consciously or otherwise. It is also non-violent even though farmers are dying of cold. In a protest of this size, things could change instantly. It would, therefore, be in everyone's interest to resolve the impasse soon. Both must talk with an open mind, keeping the arrogance of power aside. History tells us that farmers' protests have always been turning points in a nation's life. This isn't the first protest and it won't be the last either. But this would define the way farmers resolve their issues.

(The writer is a columnist and documentary film-maker. The views expressed are personal.)

# 61% of Joe Biden's WH appointees are women

## 54% people of colour

**Washington:** Sixty-one per cent of the new White House appointees are women and 54 per cent are people of colour, President-elect Joe Biden's transition team has said, asserting that the Biden-Harris administration will prioritise diversity of ideology and background, and foster talent to address the nation's most complex challenges, it said.

The Biden-Harris administration will prioritise diversity of ideology and background, and foster talent to address the nation's most complex challenges, it said.

The White House staff represents a small percentage of the total number of Biden-Harris appointees that will serve across the federal government, said the transition team.

"The first 100+ White House appointees, including those announced today, represent America in the following ways: 61 per cent are women, 54 per cent are people of colour, AAPI appointees represent more than twice their share of the national population,

and is ready to deliver results for working families on day one, Biden's transition team said.

LGBTQ+ appointees account for 11 per cent of all White House staff," it said.

According to the statistics released by the Biden transition, almost 20 per cent of appointees are first-generation Americans and about 40 per cent of White House senior staff have children at home.

"From the beginning, Vice President-elect Harris and I have sought to build an administration that looks like America. Building a diverse team will lead to better outcomes and more effective solutions to address the urgent crises facing our nation.

The appointees named today will draw from their expertise and life experiences to help us build the country back better. Moving forward together, there's nothing we can't accomplish," Biden said. **PTI**

# China accuses US of show of force with Taiwan Strait passage

**Beijing:** China accused the US of staging a show of force by sailing two Navy warships through the Taiwan Strait on Thursday morning.

The Navy said the Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyers USS John S. McCain and USS Curtis Wilbur "conducted a routine Taiwan Strait transit" in accordance with international law.

Their movement "demonstrates the US commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific," the Navy said in a statement on its website.

China's Defence Ministry called the move a "show of force" and a provocation that "sent the wrong signal to the Taiwan independence forces and seriously endangered peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait area."

"We firmly oppose this," the ministry said in a statement on

its official microblog, adding that it monitored the ships' passage from the air and sea.

"The Chinese People's Liberation Army at all times maintains a high level of alert and can respond at any time to any threat or provocation and resolutely defend national sovereignty and territorial integrity," while China claims Taiwan as its own territory, the busy Taiwan Strait is generally considered an international waterway.

China fiercely opposes any signal of US military support for Taiwan, a self-governing republic that relies on Washington for defensive weapons and political backing in the face of Chinese threats to annex the island by force. Taiwan's Defence Ministry issued a statement saying it had observed the passage of the ships passage and that "the situation is normal." **AP**

# 30 held over attack on Hindu temple in northwest Pakistan

**Peshawar:** Pakistani police have arrested over 30 people, most of them belonging to a radical Islamist party, after a Hindu temple was vandalised and set on fire by a mob protesting its renovation in northwest Pakistan.

A central leader of radical Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam party, Rehmat Salam Khattak, is among those arrested in police raids following the attack on Terri temple and Samadhi of Shri Paramhans Ji Maharaj in Karak area of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP) on Wednesday, police said.

The mob, led by some local clerics and the supporters of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam party (Fazal ur Rehman group), protesting the expansion work of the shrine, demolished the newly constructed work alongside the old structure.

Over 350 people have been named in the FIR, Provincial Police Chief KPK Sanullah



Abbasi has said.

The Samadhi of Shri Paramhans Ji Maharaj is considered very sacred by the minority Hindu community in Pakistan. It is dedicated to Shri Paramhans Ji Maharaj and was built where he died in 1919 in Terri village of Karak.

The controversy over the Samadhi of Shri Paramhans Ji Maharaj erupted many decades ago. According to the details submitted to the Supreme Court in 2014 in a case about it, the Hindus had been visiting the shrine till 1997 when it was dismantled by the locals.

The Supreme Court in 2014 ordered the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government to restore and reconstruct the Hindu shrine.

The order was issued over a petition of a Hindu lawmaker who had claimed that the shrine had been occupied by an influential cleric of the area.

According to police officials, a meeting of clerics was held at Shanki Adda in Terri, Karak before the attack.

The enraged people were raising slogans, vowing they would not permit any construction work at the shrine.

The protesters were peaceful in the initial stage but on the provocation of some clerics, they turned violent and attacked the shrine, police said.

Meanwhile, the country's Supreme Court on Thursday took notice of the attack on the temple and ordered the local authorities to appear before the court on January 5. **PTI**

# HK media mogul's bail revoked

**Hong Kong:** Hong Kong media tycoon Jimmy Lai has had his bail revoked after prosecutors succeeded in asking the city's highest court to send him back to detention.

Lai had been granted bail on Dec 23 after three weeks in custody on charges of fraud and endangering national security. His appeal hearing is slated for Feb 1.

The court said on Thursday that it was "reasonably arguable" that the previous judge's decision was erroneous and that the order of granting bail was invalid.

Lai was charged with fraud on Dec 3 for allegedly violating the lease terms for office space for the Next Digital, the media company he founded. He was later charged again on Dec. 12 under the sweeping national security law imposed by Beijing on suspicion of colluding with foreign forces and endangering national security. **AP**

# China confirms Uighur doctor jailed over terrorism charge

**Beijing:** A Uighur Muslim doctor has been jailed on terrorism charges, Beijing confirmed on Thursday, a day after her family told US politicians she had been sentenced to 20 years.

Gulshan Abbas vanished into detention two years ago, but her relatives told a US congressional committee Wednesday that the 58-year-old had been sentenced to 20 years in prison because of activism on behalf of Uighurs.

Rights groups say an estimated one million Uighurs and other Turkic minorities languish in detention camps in China's northwestern Xinjiang region in prison-like conditions. China insists they are "vocational training centres", but activists say inmates face torture and forced labour.

"Gulshan Abbas has been sentenced according to the law by Chinese judicial organs for taking part in organised terrorism, aiding terrorist activities and seriously disrupting social order," foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin told reporters.

He did not give further details of her alleged crimes.

"We urge US politicians to respect facts, stop fabricating lies to smear China, and stop using the Xinjiang issue to interfere in China's domestic affairs," he added.

Various Western countries and organisations including the US, EU and UN have criticised China's policies in Xinjiang, most recently highlighting alleged forced labour practices involving Uighur Muslims. **AFP**



Fireworks explode over the Sydney Opera House and Harbour Bridge as New Year celebrations begin in Sydney, Australia on Thursday **AP**

# Pak court remands former Foreign Minister Khawaja Asif into NAB custody for 14 days

**Lahore:** Pakistan's former foreign minister and opposition Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PM-N) stalwart Khawaja Muhammad Asif was on Thursday remanded in the custody of the anti-graft body for 14 days in the assets beyond means case.

Asif, 71, was arrested by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on Tuesday in Islamabad in connection with the charges of possessing assets beyond his known sources of income.

The Accountability Court Lahore on Thursday accepted the plea of NAB and granted it

14-day remand of Asif, the close aide of deposed prime minister Nawaz Sharif who condemned the arrest. "The arrest of Khawaja Asif is a result of the nexus between the selectors (army and ISI chiefs Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa and Gen Faiz Hameed) and the selected (Imran Khan). Such belittle acts reflect the Government's state of panic, but it is moving even closer to its end through such actions," Nawaz said in a tweet from London where he has been living in self-exile after the Khan Govt declared him absconder. **PTI**

# Trump extends visa sanctions on countries refusing to repatriate their nationals

**Washington:** US President Donald Trump has indefinitely extended the visa sanctions on countries refusing to repatriate their citizens who violated laws in the United States.

The visa sanctions on such countries were set to expire on December 31.

Trump issued a memorandum on April 10 which empowered the Secretary of State and the homeland security secretary to deny visas to countries refusing to accept

their citizens who violated American laws.

"In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the continuing public health risk it poses to Americans," Trump said in a memorandum issued on Wednesday that his April 10 "memorandum shall continue in force until terminated by the president".

According to the April 10 memorandum, the secretary of state is authorised to "initiate a plan to impose the visa sanc-

tions" if the Homeland Security Department determines a country not accepting returnees is delaying or impeding operations "necessary to respond to the ongoing pandemic".

The April 10 memorandum noted that countries "denying or unreasonably delaying" the repatriation of their citizens would be deemed to be causing "unacceptable public health risks for Americans". **PTI**

# Minneapolis police shoot, kill man during traffic stop

**Minneapolis:** Police in Minneapolis shot and killed a man during a traffic stop on the city's south side on Wednesday night, stirring anxiety about renewed protests following the first police-involved death in the city since George Floyd's death while being arrested in May.

Police said the man died in an exchange of gunfire, and Chief Medaria Arradondo said witnesses said the man fired first. He said the officers' body cameras were turned on and promised to release the video on Thursday.

"I want our communities to see that so they can unite for themselves," he said. Until then, Arradondo said, "Please allow me, the (state) investigators, allow us the time, let us get the evidence, get the facts, so we can process this."

Police spokesman John Elder said the incident happened about 6:15 pm. **AP**

# Harsh winter can bring illness, death to Afghan kids: Report

**Kabul:** More than 3,00,000 children in war-ravaged Afghanistan face freezing winter conditions that can lead to illness and death without proper winter clothing and heating, a humanitarian organisation said on Thursday.

The ongoing military conflict in Afghanistan has destroyed many homes and forced thousands of children to shelter in camps for the homeless. There they are at risk of not only hunger and disease, including COVID-19, but also death from freezing temperatures.

Chris Nyamandi, Afghanistan country director for Save the Children, said in a statement Thursday that early snow in northern Afghanistan has impacted children particularly badly.

"The most vulnerable children are those whose schools have shut because of the worsening winter conditions," he

said. "Their families don't have the money to buy winter clothing. Instead children are forced to huddle at home to escape the bitter cold."

Schools are closed until March in the coldest parts of Afghanistan, where the temperature can plummet to as low as minus 27 degrees Celsius (minus 16 degrees Fahrenheit).

Save the Children has provided winter kits to more than 100,000 families in 12 of Afghanistans 34 provinces. The kits include fuel and a heater, blankets and winter clothes for children including coats, socks, shoes, hats.

"The situation is bleak for children forced to live in camps in places like Balkh province. It is already very cold in this northern province with overnight temperatures as low as minus ten. But it will get much colder before March," Nyamandi said. **AP**

# Yemeni PM accuses rebels, Iran of deadly Aden airport blast

**Sanaa (Yemen):** Yemen's prime minister renewed accusations on Thursday that the country's Shiite rebels and Iran were responsible for the deadly explosion at the airport in the southern Yemeni city of Aden the previous day that killed at least 25 people and wounded 110.

The explosion took place as Cabinet members were disembarking from a plane that had landed in Aden just minutes earlier on Wednesday. AP footage from the scene showed many ministers rushing back inside the plane or running down the stairs, seeking shelter. None of the Cabinet members were hurt.

Hours after the blast, the country's internationally recognised government said the Iran-backed Houthis rebels had fired four ballistic missiles at the airport. Rebel officials have so far not responded to requests from comment and there has been no claim of responsibility for an airport attack. **AP**

# Around the Globe

**Bangkok:** Thailand will receive the first 2 million doses of a coronavirus vaccine in February, as the country grapples with a surge in cases. Health Minister Anutin Charnvirakul made the announcement Thursday but did not identify the manufacturer.

**London:** As Britain prepares to split from the European Union, the father of Prime Minister Boris Johnson appears to be seeking closer ties with the bloc by applying for French citizenship. Stanley Johnson told broadcaster RTL on Thursday that he was in the process of "reclaiming" his French identity.

**Beijing:** China has given conditional approval to a coronavirus vaccine developed by state-owned Sinopharm. The vaccine is the first one approved for general use in China.

**Dubai:** For the second consecutive day, the United Arab Emirates has shattered its single-day record of new coronavirus infections, with 1,730 cases recorded ahead of New Year's Eve celebrations expected to draw tens of thousands of revelers to Dubai from around the world.

**SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE**

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

**Whereas** The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Bhawna Sood/ Sneh Sood/ LBDEL00003005510	Flat No T9/402, 2nd Floor, Sunworld Arista, Gh 01/C, Sector- 16B, Noida./ December 30, 2020	August 27, 2020 Rs.3,07,703/-	Del/ Ncr
2.	Ravi Sharma/ Yashoda/ LBDEL00004878179	No III/175-A EWS First Floor, Nyay Khand, Indirapuram, Ghaziabad./ December 30, 2020	August 27, 2020 Rs.10,05,687/-	Del/ Ncr

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

Date : January 01, 2021 Place: Delhi/ NCR Authorized Officer ICICI Bank Limited

**GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE**

SR. No.	NAME OF BOARD/ CORP./ AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT / EMD (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./ AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/ CONTACT DETAILS/ EMAIL
1	HEALTH	TENDER FOR CANTEN & CAFETERIA SERVICES AT SIHFV HARYANA	01.01.2020 25.01.2020	EMD 10000/-	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	8872681448 smo.sihfvy@gmail.com
2	DIRECTOR GENERAL SUPPLIES AND DISPOSALS	PURCHASE OF ELECTRONICS LAB SYSTEMS	29.12.2020 15.01.2021	NIL	dsndharyana.gov.in	9988506409 supplies@hry.nic.in
3	IRRIGATION KATHAL	WORK FOR CONSTRUCTION OF 10 NOS. RAIN WATER HARVESTING/INJECTION BOREWELLS STRUCTURE IN CANAL COLONY/REST HOUSE IN VARIOUS VILLAGES + 1 OTHER WORK	CLOSING DATE 07.01.2021	88.14 LACS	www.etenders.hry.nic.in	0174622384 xentkt@gmail.com
4	GM./HR. ROADWS, HSR.	PUTTING HOARDINGS, UNIPOLES ETC.	05.01.2021 04.02.2021	2 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	8708123443 hrhshr@hry.nic.in
5	DIRECTOR GENERAL SUPPLIES AND DISPOSALS	COMBINED HIGH PRESSURE JETTING -CUM-SUCTION(VACUUM) TYPE HYDRAULICALLY OPERATED SEWER CLEANING MACHINES.	01.01.2021 03.02.2021	NIL	dsndharyana.gov.in	9988506409 supplies@hry.nic.in

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in** RO NO. 1180

**SEARCH FOR MISSING**

General public is hereby informed that a boy (depicted in the photo), **Name:** Shivam S/o Sh. Ajay Kumar R/o F-2A, Sanjay Colony, Bhatti Mines, New Delhi has been missing since 28.11.2020 from his house. In this regard a case vide FIR No. 286/20 u/s 363 IPC dated 28.11.2020 has been registered at P.S. Maidan Garhi, New Delhi. His physical description is as under:-

**SHIVAM**

Age : 9 Years 8 Months, Height: 3'5", Complexion : Black, Face : Round, Built : Thin, Wearing : Blue colour T-shirt, & sky blue colour jeans pant.

Any person having any information/clue about this missing boy, may inform SHO, Maidan Garhi, New Delhi at E-mail : [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) or website: <http://cbi.nic.in>

**SHO**  
Phone: 011-24368638, 24368641 P.S. Maidan Garhi, New Delhi  
Fax No. 011-24368639 South Distt. Delhi  
DP/345/SD/2020 Ph. 011-26645050, 7827710234

**PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON**

**See Section 82 Cr. P. C.**

Whereas complaint has been made by me that accused person namely **Rajdev Gupta S/o Bhagwati Prasad Gupta** R/o H.No. D-86, Gali No. 05, Baprola Vihar, New Delhi & Permanent resident of village Soraha, Kushora Bazar, Distt. Basti, U.P. has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence under case **FIR No. 0222/12 U/s 420/468/471/34 IPC dated 16.09.2012**, has been registered at **P.S. Ranhola, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said **Rajdev Gupta S/o Bhagwati Prasad Gupta** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said, **Rajdev Gupta S/o Bhagwati Prasad Gupta** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Rajdev Gupta S/o Bhagwati Prasad Gupta** **FIR No. 0222/12 U/s 420/468/471/34 IPC**, required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before **09.03.2021**.

**By Order,**  
**Sh. Aakash Sharma, MM-08,**  
**Room No. 30, Ground Floor,**  
**Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi**

**DP/584/OD/2020**

**F. No. A-32014/01/2020-CGHS-I**

**Government of India**  
**Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**  
**CGHS Division**  
**(CGHS-I Section)**

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Nirman Bhawan, New Delhi  
Dated 31/12/2020

**INDICATIVE ADVERTISEMENT**

Applications are invited for filling up nine posts of Administrative Officer in the Central Government Health Scheme under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare as per details given below, on deputation basis from the person holding analogous post under Central Government, autonomous bodies, semi-government organizations or institutions under Central Government.

2. The details of the posts proposed to be filled, eligibility criteria and desirable qualification/experience, etc. can be viewed in the Ministry's website viz <http://mhfw.gov.in>

3. Applications of suitable officers, who can be released in the event of their selection may be forwarded through proper channel in the prescribed form to the Under Secretary (Admin.), Central Government Health Scheme, Room No. 511, 'A' Wing, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Nirman Bhawan, New Delhi- 110011 within forty-five days from the date of publication of the advertisement in the Employment news. Advance copies of the application will not be entertained. Applications received after the last date or without requisite documents or otherwise found incomplete will not be considered.

**Sd/-**  
**(Manoj Kumar Verma)**  
Under Secretary to the Govt. of India

Davp 17139/11/0005/2021

**APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION**

General public is hereby informed that one male namely **Bhanu Lal S/o Kishor Lal R/o Unknown**. Age about 70-75 years, Height 5'6", Face oval, Complexion wheatish, Built medium, wearing Dark grey colour kot, linedar shirt and Blue colour lower was found dead at 56 Pahadi Aruna Nagar Rainbasera, Majnu Ka Tilla, Delhi.

**Bhanu Lal**

In this regard a DD No. 29-A dated 19.12.2020 U/s 174 Cr.P.C. has been lodged at PS Civil Lines, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this deceased person may kindly inform to the undersigned at the address or telephone nos. given below.

**SHO**  
**PS Civil Lines, Delhi**  
**Ph. 011-23815444, 23814543**

DP/839/N/2020

# Core industries' output contracts 2.6% in Nov

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
Contracting for the ninth consecutive month, the output of eight core infrastructure sectors dropped by 2.6 per cent in November, mainly due to decline in production of natural gas, refinery products, steel and cement. The production of eight core sectors had recorded a growth of 0.7 per cent in November 2019, data released by the commerce and industry ministry showed on Thursday. Barring coal, fertiliser and electricity, all sectors -- crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, steel and cement -- recorded negative growth in November 2020. During April-November,

the sectors' output dropped by 11.4 per cent as compared to a growth of 0.3 per cent in the same period of the previous year. The output of crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, steel and cement declined by (-)4.9 per cent, (-)9.3 per cent, (-)4.8 per cent, (-)4.4 per cent, and (-)7.1 per cent, respectively, in November this year. On the other hand, coal and electricity sector output grew by 2.9 per cent and 2.2 per cent during the month under review. Fertiliser sector growth stood at 1.6 per cent as against 13.6 per cent in the same month last year. The eight core industries account for 40.27 per cent of the IIP.

In October, the output of these eight key sectors had contracted by 0.9 per cent, while there was a 0.1 per cent dip in September this year. Aditi Nayar, Principal Economist, ICRA, said that in line with the core sector performance, the pace of growth of many other indicators slipped in November, reflecting a combination of the base effect, fewer working days on account of a shift in the festive calendar, and a potential step-down in production following the saturation of pent-up demand. "Based on the available information, we expect the IIP to revert to a temporary but unpalatable 2-5 per cent contraction in November 2020," she said.

# EPFO begins crediting 8.5 pc interest for 2019-20

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
Retirement fund body EPFO has retained 8.5 per cent interest rate on employees' provident fund (EPF) for 2019-20 for its over six crore members as decided earlier, and also began crediting the same into their accounts on Thursday. A large number of the members of the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) would be able to see their updated EPF accounts with credit of 8.5 per cent interest for 2019-20, from Friday, a senior official told PTI. The official further said the labour ministry has already sent the direction to credit the 8.5 per cent interest on EPF for 2019-20 to the EPFO, and the body has already started cred-

iting interest into the members' account for the last financial year. Labour Minister Santosh Gangwar said, "We had said that it would be our endeavour to provide 8.5 per cent interest rate on EPF for 2019-20. We have issued a notification to provide 8.5 per cent rate of interest on EPF for 2019-20. We have also begun the process to credit the said rate of interest into subscribers' account." The minister added that he has asked to ensure that all those members who are retiring on December 31 also get 8.5 per cent rate of interest for 2019-20. The process for capital gains for a payment of 0.35 per cent interest for 2019-20 has also been completed, he added. The EPFO in September 2020 decided to retain 8.5 per

cent interest rate. But, it had split the rate of return into two components of 8.15 per cent (from debt income) and 0.35 per cent (from capital gains) (exchange-traded funds), subject to their redemption by December 31, 2020. The EPFO had earlier planned to liquidate some of its investment in ETFs to provide 8.5 per cent interest for the last financial year. However, it could not do so because of the choppy market conditions amid the lockdown, induced by the COVID-19 pandemic. The official said the market conditions are more than favourable these days. Earlier in the day, Gangwar approved the 8.5 per cent interest rate for last financial year after receiving the finance ministry's concurrence.

# Interest rates on PPF, NSC, other small savings schemes unchanged for Q4

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
The Government on Thursday kept the interest rates on small savings schemes, including PPF and NSC, unchanged for the January-March quarter amid moderating bank deposit rates. Public Provident Fund (PPF) and National Savings Certificate (NSC) will continue to carry an annual interest rate of 7.1 per cent and 6.8 per cent, respectively. Interest rates for small savings schemes are notified by the finance ministry on a quarterly basis. "The rates of interest on various small savings schemes for the fourth quarter of 2020-21 ending on March 31 shall remain unchanged from those notified for the third quarter (October

1-December 31, 2020)," the ministry said in a notification. Accordingly, the interest rate for the five-year Senior Citizens Savings Scheme has been retained at 7.4 per cent. The interest on the senior citizens' scheme is paid quarterly. Interest rate on savings deposits has been retained at 4 per cent annually. The girl child savings scheme Sukanya Samridhi Yojana will offer 7.6 per cent rate during the fourth quarter of the current fiscal. The annual interest rate on Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP) has been retained at 6.9 per cent. Term deposits of one-five years will fetch interest rate in the range of 5.5-6.7 per cent, to be paid quarterly, while the interest rate on five-year recurring deposit is pegged at 5.8%.

# Sensex, Nifty end flat on last trading day of 2020

## CLOSE YEAR WITH 15 PC GAINS

**PTI ■ MUMBAI**  
Equity benchmarks Sensex and Nifty closed almost flat on the last trading day of 2020 on Thursday, capping off a tumultuous year with handsome gains of around 15 per cent. In choppy trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex inched up by 5.11 points 0.01 per cent to its new closing record of 47,751.33. After opening on a firm footing, the index hit its all-time high of 47,896.97 during the day. The broader NSE Nifty crossed the 14,000 level for the

first time, touching a record intra-day peak of 14,024.85. The 50-issue index pared gains to close at 13,981.75, down by just 0.20 points. The indices, however, finished the year 2020 with overall gains of around 15 per cent. The Sensex gained 15.7 per cent while the Nifty jumped 14.9 per cent in the year. HDFC was the leading gainer among Sensex stocks on Thursday, rising by 1.65 per cent, followed by Sun Pharma, ICICI Bank, Asian Paints, Titan and Infosys. TCS was the biggest loser, shedding 1.33 per cent. Ultratech Cement, Bharti Airtel, Kotak Bank and Tech Mahindra were among the other major laggards. "Markets reached an all-time high on the final day of a

tumultuous 2020 which was filled with deep market corrections and unexpected rebounds. However, the European markets lost steam on the final trading day owing to the pandemic and reports regarding an increased tariff on EU products by the United States. "Despite the havoc created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the economy is expected to recover in 2021 giving a boost to the equity markets in addition to upgrades in corporate earnings," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services. Sector-wise, BSE realty, consumer durables, metal and healthcare gained up to 1.18 per cent, while telecom, FMCG and energy closed in the red.

## Rupee surges 24 paise to 73.07 against US dollar

**PTI ■ MUMBAI**  
Rising for the sixth straight session, the rupee spurted 24 paise to end at a nearly four-month high of 73.07 against the US dollar on the last day of the year on Thursday, supported by a weak American currency and rise in risk appetite. Traders said market sentiments improved on hopes of global economic recovery following the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines and extraordinary fiscal and monetary stimulus.

# Fiscal deficit touches 135.1 pc of FY21 target at Nov-end

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
The Union Government's fiscal deficit soared to ₹ 10.75 lakh crore, or 135.1 per cent of the 2020-21 Budget Estimates (BE), at the end of November 2020, mainly on account of low realisation of revenue due to disruption in business activities amid the coronavirus pandemic. The fiscal deficit at the end of November 2019 had stood at 114.8 per cent of 2019-20 BE. In absolute terms, the fiscal deficit stood at ₹10,75,507 crore at the end of November 2020, according to the latest data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA). The lockdown imposed to

curb the spread of coronavirus had significantly impacted business activities and, in turn, contributed to sluggish revenue realisation. The fiscal deficit, or gap between the expenditure and revenue, had breached the annual target in July this year. The government's total receipts stood at ₹8,30,851 crore (37 per cent of BE 2020-21) till the end of November 2020. This included ₹6,88,430 crore tax revenue (net to centre), ₹1,24,280 crore of non-tax revenue and ₹18,141 crore of non-debt capital receipts. Non-debt capital receipts consist of recovery of loans and disinvestment proceeds. The tax revenue collection was 42.1 per cent of BE of

2020-21, compared with 45.5 per cent of BE (2019-20) during the corresponding period a year ago. Non-tax revenue was 32.3 per cent of BE. During the corresponding period of the last fiscal, it was 74.3 per cent of BE 2019-20. During the corresponding period last fiscal, the total receipts were 48.6 per cent of 2019-20 BE. According to the data, over Rs 3.34 lakh crore were transferred to state governments as devolution of share of taxes by the Government of India up to November 2020. The CGA data said the total expenditure incurred by the government stood at ₹19,06,358 crore or 63 per cent of BE.

## RAJ GOVT GIFT ON NEW YEAR OCCASION

### Selection list released on 603 newly created posts of clerical grade II

**Jaipur:** The State Government has created 603 new posts in clerical grade II recruitment giving gifts to the unemployed in the new year. The result has also been released today by the Rajasthan Staff Selection Board after selecting these candidates. These include 345 posts of general category, 223 of other backward classes and 35 posts of scheduled tribes. Now including these posts, for the recruitment of clerical grade II, 12 thousand 601 candidates have been sent by the Staff Selection Board for the recruitment of 12 thousand 601 candidates and 726 candidates for the total 13 thousand 327 posts in the scheduled area. It is worth mentioning that after the administrative reforms department sent the meaning for recruitment to the posts of clerical grade II, the Rajasthan Staff Selection Board had sent a recommendation for 10 thousand 763 posts in non-scheduled areas and 1278 posts in scheduled areas in February 2020.

# Covid-19: Sebi extends certain compliance timelines for trading, clearing members

**New Delhi:** Markets regulator Sebi on Thursday extended timelines for compliance with certain regulatory requirements by trading members and clearing members in view of the prevailing situation due to the coronavirus pandemic. The deadline for maintaining call recordings of orders or instructions received from clients has now been extended till February 28, 2021. As per the norms, KYC (Know Your Customer) application form and supporting documents of clients need to be uploaded on a system of KRA (KYC Registration Agency) within 10 days. In this regard, Sebi said the period of exclusion will be

from January 1, 2021 to February 28, 2021. A 15-day period after February 28 will be given to clear the backlog. Stock exchanges and clearing corporation have been asked to direct their members to clear the backlog, if any, by January 31, 2021, with regard to KYC application form and supporting documents of the clients to be uploaded on system of KRA by the members. The decision to extend timelines for compliance with regulatory requirements has been taken in view of the prevailing situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic and representation received from stock exchanges, Sebi said in a circular. **PTI**

# FDI equity inflow up 21% to USD 35.3 bn in April-Oct : DPIIT

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
Foreign direct investment (FDI) equity inflows into India grew 21 per cent to USD 35.33 billion during April-October period of the current financial year, according to an official data. In the year-ago period, FDI equity inflows stood at USD 29.31 billion, as per the data of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). Simultaneous purchase and sale of G-sec under OMOs,

# RBI to conduct simultaneous sale-purchase of Govt securities next week

**PTI ■ MUMBAI**  
The RBI on Thursday announced it will conduct simultaneous purchase and sale of government securities under Open Market Operations (OMO) for Rs 10,000 crore each on January 7, 2021. The decision was taken after a review of current liquidity and financial conditions, the Reserve Bank said in a statement. Simultaneous purchase and sale of G-sec under OMOs,

# Bank credit grows 6%, deposits by 11.3% during Dec 5-18

**PTI ■ MUMBAI**  
Bank credit grew 6.05 per cent to ₹105.49 lakh crore, while deposits rose 11.33 per cent to ₹144.82 lakh crore during December 5-18, RBI data showed. In the fortnight ended December 20, 2019, bank credit stood at ₹99.47 lakh crore and deposits at ₹130.09 lakh crore. In the fortnight ended December 4 this year, bank credit grew 5.73 per cent to ₹105.04 lakh crore and deposits by 11.34 per cent to ₹145.92 lakh crore. In October, non-

# Bank credit grows 6%, deposits by 11.3% during Dec 5-18

food credit grew 5.6 per cent compared to a growth of 8.3 per cent in the same month of the previous year. Growth in loans to agriculture and allied activities accelerated to 7.4 per cent in the month from 7.1 per cent last year.

# Govt directs ED, RBI to act against Amazon, Flipkart for violation of FDI, FEMA

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
In a significant development related to war between e-commerce giants and traders of India, the Union Government has directed the Enforcement Directorate and Reserve Bank of India to take necessary action against Amazon and Walmart-owned-Flipkart. The Centre has taken strong cognizance of various complaints made by the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) for blatant violation of FDI Policy and Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA) by these companies. CAIT National President B.C. Bhartia and Secretary General Praveen Khandelwal informed that on several complaints made by the CAIT to Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal in the recent past against Amazon & Walmart-owned-Flipkart, the Department of Promotion of Industries and Internal Trade (DPIIT) of the Ministry of Commerce in its letter issued on December has asked both Enforcement Directorate and Reserve Bank of India to take necessary action against Amazon and Flipkart.

# GST officers arrest 3 persons for ₹12.90 cr ITC fraud by fake invoicing

**New Delhi:** GST investigation officers have arrested three persons for fraudulently claiming Rs 12.90 crore input tax credit by issuing fake invoices, the Finance Ministry said on Thursday. "The Directorate General of GST Intelligence, Gurugram has arrested three persons -- Alok Bhargava and his sons Akul and Atin Bhargava, owners of M/s Delhi Foils, M/s Abinox Industries and M/s Matalax Industries, Wazirpur, New Delhi," it said in a statement. These firms had cumulatively taken input tax credit of Rs 12.90 crore fraudulently, involving invoice value approximating ₹72 cr on the strength of invoices issued by non-existent firms without the actual receipt of material with an ulterior motive to defraud the government exchequer, the ministry said. **PTI**



**जल संसाधन विभाग**  
कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय  
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, मुजफ्फरपुर  
E-mail - [www.division2014@gmail.com](mailto:www.division2014@gmail.com) / [7463889909](tel:7463889909)  
अल्पकालीन पुनर्विनिर्माण सूचना संख्या - 10/2020-21  
राष्ट्रीय स्पर्द्धा निविदा  
(केवल ई-टेंडर पद्धति के अनुसार वेबसाइट [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर)

क्र.सं.	कार्य का नाम	प्रारंभित राशि (लाख रु. में)	अग्रदान की राशि (लाख रु. में)	परिमाणु-विषय का मूल्य (केवल ऑन लाईन मोड में मुद्रित) रु. में	केवल ऑन लाईन मोड में मुद्रित) रु. में	कार्य समाप्ति की तिथि
1	बूढ़ी गंडक दया तटवर्ष अस्वाभाविक से उत्तर 30.00-31.00 किमी के बीच गोसाईपुर घाट, 38.00-39.00 किमी के बीच अजनाकोट, 47.00-48.00 के बीच पहाकर एवं 31.00-32.00 किमी के बीच मोरही मंडी स्थल पर कटाव निरोधक कार्य। एजेडा सं-168/04/2021 एवं एजेडा सं-168/05/2021	692.19	13.844	10000.00	5900.00	15.05.2021
2	बूढ़ी गंडक दया तटवर्ष अस्वाभाविक से नीचे 24.00 किमी मोहमनपुर एवं 26.30 किमी गिखी स्थल पर कटाव निरोधक कार्य। एजेडा सं-168/19/2021	482.02	9.641	10000.00	5900.00	15.05.2021
3	बूढ़ी गंडक दया तटवर्ष अस्वाभाविक से उत्तर 18.00-19.00 किमी के बीच सुप्रिया ग्राम स्थल पर कटाव निरोधक कार्य। एजेडा सं-168/02/20	391.82	7.837	10000.00	5900.00	15.05.2021
4	बूढ़ी गंडक दया तटवर्ष अस्वाभाविक से उत्तर 12.00-13.00 किमी के बीच सोनपुरा एवं 8.00-10.00 किमी के बीच सलेमपुर एवं बगही स्टूडेंट गेट स्थल पर कटाव निरोधक कार्य। एजेडा सं-168/10/2021	367.30	7.746	10000.00	5900.00	15.05.2021

2. निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना निर्गत करने की तिथि : दिनांक: 28.12.2020  
 3. निविदा कागजात उपजमा करने की तिथि (सिर्फ वेबसाइट पर) : दिनांक: 05.01.2021 से दिनांक-09.01.2021 के 3.00 बजे अपराह्न तक  
[www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर  
 4. प्री-बिड मीटिंग का समय, स्थान एवं तिथि : दिनांक: 07.01.2021, 12.00 बजे अपराह्न में, कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, मुजफ्फरपुर।  
 5. निविदा अपजमा करने की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक: 11.01.2021 समय 3.00 बजे अपराह्न तक (सिर्फ वेबसाइट पर) [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर  
 दिनांक: 13.01.2021 समय 3.30 बजे अपराह्न।  
 6. तकनीकी बिड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : (सिर्फ वेबसाइट पर) [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर  
 7. वित्तीय बिड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर  
 8. निविदा खोलने का स्थान : [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) पर  
 9. निविदा की वैधता अवधि : 120 दिन  
 ( निविदा प्रस्ताव की अंतिम तिथि से )  
 10. निविदा प्रस्ताव का पत्राचार एवं पता : कार्यपालक अभियंता, बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, मुजफ्फरपुर।  
 11. बिडिंग जानकारी प्राप्त करने हेतु वेबसाइट [www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in](http://www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in) एवं वेबसाइट [www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar](http://www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar) पर देखा जा सकता है।

**कार्यपालक अभियंता**  
बाढ़ नियंत्रण प्रमंडल, मुजफ्फरपुर

PR. No. 010367 (WRD) 2020-21

बादाय समझी-संस्करी किरी तह की आजकरी अरुदा सुसुवा हेतु दूरभाष संख्या 0612-2217636 पर सम्पर्क किया जा सकता है।

**SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED GIRL**

General Public is hereby informed that one girl (depicted in the photo) namely **Shilpa D/o Lt. Raj Bahadur R/o H.No. 242, Gali No. 2, Village Ghondli, Krishna Nagar, Delhi Aged- 13 Years 8 Months** has been reported missing/kidnapped on 21.12.2020 at 12.30 pm from her house vide **FIR No. 585/20, U/s 363 IPC Dated 22.12.2020** has been registered at Police Station Krishna Nagar, Delhi. Her physical description is as under:-

**Complexion:** Fair, **Height:** 5'1", **Face:** Round, **Hair:** Brown, **Built:** Medium, **Wearing:** Black coloured sweater, black coloured jeans and black coloured slippers in feet.

Any person having any information/Clue about this missing/kidnapped girl, may inform SHO, Krishna Nagar, Delhi at E-mail : [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) or website : <http://cbi.nic.in>

Tele No. : 011-23014046(Direct), Sd/-  
011-3015229 & 23015218 extn. 210 SHO, Krishna Nagar, Delhi  
FAX No. : 011-230111334 Tel.: 011-22093224, 22093887  
DP/315/SHD/2020 Mob.: 7065036025

**NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
**TENDER NOTICE**  
Invitation of Tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement System)

1. Name of work with its location	Replacement of badly corroded rivets & members i.e. Lateral bracing angles, Cross frames & Gusset plates of Br. No. 1137 DN (North) line & No. 1137 UP (South) line on BE-MB section under jurisdiction of AXEN/BLMB.
2. Approx. Cost of work	Rs. 35,86,427.81
3. Earnest Money	Rs. 71,700/-
4. Completion period of the work	(04) Four Months
5. Cost of Tender form	Rs. 3,000/- Note:- Cost of EMD & Tender Form should be in the form of net banking or payment gateway only. (FDR will not be accepted as cost of tender invited on IREPS as per Railway Boards letter no 2015/CE-IC/15/1 dated 31.08.2016).
6. Date & time for submission of tender & opening of tender	Upto 15.00 hrs. on 25.01.2021. Opening of tender after 15.00 hrs. on same day.
7. Website particulars where complete details of Tender can be seen & downloaded	Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a> .

No.: 32-W-BR-1137-MB Date: 31.12.2020 2906/2020  
Serving Customers with a Smile

  
**ASSAM UNIVERSITY: SILCHAR**  
(A Central University)

Employment Notification No 5/2020 Dated 15th December, 2020  
Online applications are invited from the eligible Indian Citizens and Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs) for various positions at the university.  
HQ. Silchar:

1. Finance Officer\*(1, UR)
2. Associate Professor (1, SC)-History
3. Assistant Professor (1, UR)-Education (Zoology)
4. Section Officer (1, OBC)

**Diphu Campus:**

1. Professor (1, UR)-History

The stakeholder may see the general instructions, minimum qualification, experience, pay level and other details available at [www.aus.ac.in](http://www.aus.ac.in) and <http://assamu1.uacanapply.com>. "The post of Finance Officer is a five years tenure post. Those who have already applied for the post of Finance Officer against advt no 3/2020 dated 21.9.2020 need not apply again. Application Fee - Rs. 1000 (for General/OBC/EWS category). SC, ST and Women candidates are exempted from payment of application fees. The closing date of submission of online application is 1st February, 2021. Sd/-  
Registrar  
davp-21240/11/0021/2021

**Municipal Corporation Jodhpur-North/South**  
Nagar Nigam Bhawan, Inside Polytechnic college campus, Residency Road, Jodhpur-342004  
Phone No:- 0291-263 1464 Fax: 0291-265 1464 e-mail:-semcill@gmail.com

S.No.: 10099 DLB 2021/WSOB20025 Date: 24/12/2020

**ONLINE NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

Online tender are hereby invited by Municipal Corporation Jodhpur for the following work from eligible/experienced contractors as per bid conditions. Tender are to be submitted duly digitally signed in electronic format only on website <http://eproc2.rajasthan.gov.in>. The tender document are available for downloading on above mentioned website form ..... last date and time of online submission of tenders is upto ..... up to 6:00PM

No.	Work Description	Estimated Cost	Earnest Money	Tender Cost	Processing Charges
1.	Design, Construction, Operation & maintenance of processing & recycling facility of Construction & Demolition waste (C&D Waste) for implementation of Construction and Demolition waste management Rules 2016 & revised time to time on PPP Basis	1.25 crore	Rs. 2,50,000/-	Rs. 1000/-	Rs. 1000/-

**Important Dates**

S.No.	Events	Date and Time
A.	Availability of tender document	29/12/2020
B.	Last Date and time of online submission of tender	18/01/2021
C.	Submission of tender fee, R/S, charges and EMD in physical form through of DD/B/C only	18/01/2021/12.00PM
D.	Date and timing of Opening of Online bid	18/01/2021/3.00PM

**Terms and Conditions**

1. Bidders who wish to participate in online bidding will have to procure digital certificate as per IT Act 2000 to sign their electronic bids. Offers which are not digitally signed will be accepted.
2. The cost of tender document as mentioned against each NIT is to be paid in the form of DD/B/C in the name of "Commissioner, Municipal Corporation, Jodhpur" payable at Jodhpur in the manner prescribed in the tender document and processing charges as mentioned against each NIT is to be paid in DD in the tender document of "Managing Director, RIS" Payable at Jaipur.
3. Eligibility Criteria: As per tender conditions
4. Tender and process fee is not refundable
5. The bid validity period is upto 120 days from the date of opening of tender.

Commissioner  
Raj.samwad/C/6343/2020-2021 Municipal Corporation Jodhpur North/South

Trend Blazer

'Ramprasad ki Tehrvi an important film'

Iconic actor **NASEERUDDIN SHAH** will be seen in the forthcoming comedy drama, *Ramprasad Ki Tehrvi*, which marks the directorial debut of actor **Seema Pahwa**. The veteran actor says it is an important film that sketches a portrait of reality.

"I believe that important film *woh hoti hai jo apni duniya, apne zamane ki sachi tasveer khiche aur yeh film waisi hai*," said Shah.

He added, "Seema has seen the instances of the film in her life, and you will get to see the gist of those instances which show what happens after a death in the family takes place and absurd conversations begin when the entire family meets."



**'During pregnancy, you are more connected to your body. Changes are mind-boggling.'**

**I am someone who likes to read a lot and research. I've chewed my doctor's brain. Many times we don't have knowledge. But somewhere, it's important to have a medical perspective rather than just follow beliefs and patterns.'**  
—Anushka Sharma



Actor **AMIT SADH** is all set to rule in 2021. He has now helmed the role of an unsung real life hero of the Indian Armed Forces, Major Deependra Singh Sengar, for ZEE5's web show, *Jeet ki Zidd*.



His look has been transformed for the role as he holds crutches by his sides and is seen in action in the Olive Green uniform.

Amit said, "It has been an extremely challenging role. Since it's a true story, I had to be vigilant on portraying the role. This is a very pertinent story. If the story positively influences people, we'll achieve our objective."

**The Weeknd's new album about Covid**

Singer **THE WEEKND** says his next album will be inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement and COVID-19 pandemic.

The singer, whose After Hours tour was postponed due to the pandemic, shared what to expect in his new album.

"I have been more inspired and creative during the pandemic than I might normally be while on the road... The pandemic, the Black Lives Matter movement and the tensions of the election have mostly created a sense of gratitude for what I have and closeness with the people near me," he said.



In 2021, probably for many more than a year after pandemic restrictions, most workers and students will return to campuses, offices and other workplaces. Left behind will be pets who have become accustomed to humans staying home with them.

Here are some tips on how to prepare them and signs of distress to watch for.

The Purdue University professor has studied and taught about animal behaviour for some two decades and consults with many veterinarians and others who work with household animals.

Left behind  
Here's how to prepare pets for a post-pandemic life

**Begin from now**

- Start practicing to give them a routine and sense of predictability, taking small steps incrementally.
- Provide them with toys and treats to focus on while you work in a different room.
- Take walks without them; don't take them on every car ride.
- Even if the weather isn't good



for driving, pull your car out of the garage and sit for awhile.

- If you don't drive, find another venue to create space.
- If you feel your pets will find it hard to adjust, consult your veterinarian to make a plan.

**Signs for concern after returning to workplace**

- Changes in eating or drinking habits.
- For cats, common signs of distress are inappropriate urination or defecation outside the litter box.
- For dogs, excessive whining and barking, leaving treats

untouched, changes in toileting habits.

- Destructive behaviour.
- Acting abnormally frantic when you return home.

**What to do if the pets are able to adjust**

- Call your veterinarian before things get worse.
- Use baby-type monitors to check on your pets remotely.
- Have a friend or paid dog-walker stop by.
- Leave on soft music playing or TV talk shows (not the kind where they yell at each other).

A PRET PORTER'S JOURNEY

SUNIL SETHI, president of FDCI, recalls late French couturier PIERRE CARDIN's venture into the Indian market and his sensibilities that are going to stay alive in the heart of every fashion enthusiast. By TEAM VIVA

The clothes that I prefer are the garments that I invent for a lifestyle that does not yet exist, the world of tomorrow," said late French couturier Pierre Cardin once. As the year ends with the sad news of his demise at 98, we look back at how Cardin brilliantly possessed an inventive artistic sensibility balanced with a perfect sense of business.

He has been the only veteran in fashion who felt more proud while stating how he earned more through a pair of stockings than a haute-couture gown or an ensemble with a six-figure price tag. The entrepreneurial designer, who passed away on Tuesday, understood the important role his exclusive haute couture shows played in stoking consumer desire and became an early pioneer of licensing. His name emblazoned hundreds of products, from apparel, accessories, pens, perfumes to other home goods. He said in an interview in 1970, "Fashion is always ridiculous, seen from before or after. But in the moment, it's marvellous."

Designer Jean-Paul Gaultier, who made his debut in Cardin's maison, paid tribute to his mentor on Twitter, "Thank you Mister Cardin to have opened for me the doors of fashion and made my dream possible."

The 1970s saw a huge Cardin expansion that brought his outlets to more than 100,000, with about as many workers producing under the Cardin label worldwide. He was in the vanguard in recognising the importance of the Asian market, both as a manufacturing

**'FRENCH DESIGNERS IN THE 70S AND THE 80S WERE KNOWN TO BE VERY UNAPPROACHABLE AND ONLY BELIEVED IN DEALING WITH THE RICH AND FAMOUS CUSTOMERS. BUT CARDIN APPEALED TO THE MASSES'**

hub and for its consumer potential. He was present in Japan starting in the early 1960s, and in 1979 became the first Western designer to stage a fashion show in China.

Well, as much as the visionary had a mark on the rest of the world, his influence on the Indian fashion industry too was deep. It was his belief in the Indian audience that he expanded his businesses here. He said, "With the opening of the Indian economy, I have believed that the potential for growth here is greater than almost anywhere else in the world." Well, Cardin himself referred to India as the "Paris of Asia!"

The country welcomed the priest of fashion, launching his ready-to-wear garments and accessories outlet in New Delhi in 1994.

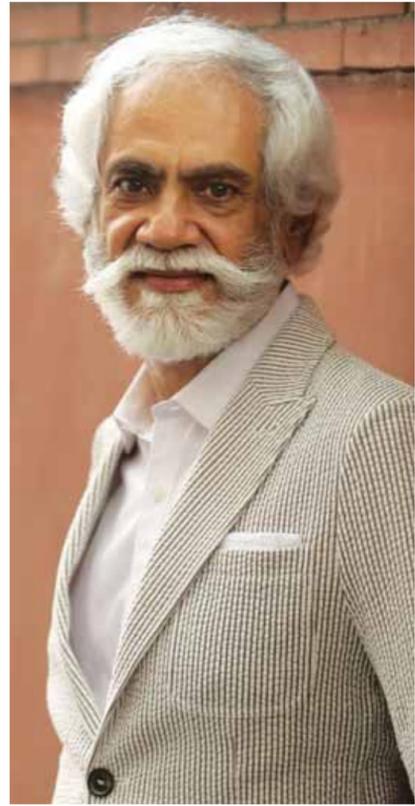
Sunil Sethi, President of the Fashion Design Council of India, recalls his stint with the couturi-



er when he came to showcase in India. "Even when I was not an active part of the Indian fashion

fraternity, I was invited to his show in New Delhi, which was in the backdrop of the Hauz Khas ruins,

in 1994." For the show, he fashioned garments out of various Indian weaves and fabrics.



He says, "French designers in the 70s and the 80s were known to be very unapproachable and only believed in dealing with the rich and famous customers. But Cardin appealed to the masses by making his products in the pret line and at an affordable price."

Sethi believes that he had a lot to offer to the Indian fashion industry when he first got popularised here in the 70s. "Europe was abuzz with his creations in the 60s itself. However, in India he became popular only in the 70s and the 80s. People across the world had started to know his sensibilities already. Even though we didn't know much about his fashion, we were able to recognise his aspirational design brand, especially through his other products like his writing instruments and perfumes. Even to this date, his pens are the most-owned products in India. I'd say he was one of the few designers who held such a sensibility even such a long time ago."

Designer Archana Jaju extends my deepest condolences to the family and friends of the legendary designer. She says, "His avant-garde style is unparalleled and has inspired a revolution in the industry. I will always fondly remember him as one of my first role models. Along with an acute understanding of the craft, Pierre's market wisdom was one to admire as well. When the world was obsessed with haute couture, he perceived the need of the hour and shifted to designing pret-a-porter. The industry has truly lost a stalwart."

A rough year



KUSHAN MITRA



The Indian automotive industry saw zero sales in April yet 2020 was not a dead loss



Before I start with which cars I enjoyed driving through the year, I would like to wish all automotive enthusiasts and readers a very Happy 2021! I sincerely hope that all of you can enjoy driving in the coming year and also get the vaccination as soon as possible. Of course, driving in 2020 was a lot less hectic than one presumed. And despite a few launches early in the year, the Hyundai Aura and the Kia Carnival followed by the Auto Expo 2020, which will go down in recent history as the last big bash of the industry, we never saw this coming. I remember going out on March 29, 2020 and driving through central Delhi, stunned looking at the empty roads of the capital. Having spent most of my life here, I had never seen Delhi like this.

Not that empty roads were an excuse to drive like a maniac but that brings me to the car that accompanied me for a majority of the lockdown — the Hyundai Elantra petrol. While it was launched late last year and now plays in the large sedan segment by itself after Honda withdrew the Civic, it is a lovely car. And that is not just because it looks good. A strong naturally aspirated engine, great rear seats and boot space, it really advertises the fact that you do not need a Sports Utility Vehicle (SUV). It is fast, handles well and does everything it says on the label.

But we live in times where the SUV is king, which brings me to the more influential launches of the year — the Hyundai i20 & the Kia Sonet. Both these vehicles are a demonstration of what the Hyundai Motor Group is doing in the Indian market — loading small cars up with a host of tough-to-beat features and a commanding customer interest. Both Hyundai and Kia are not playing the price game anymore and that shows in the cars that they produce. Truth be told, splitting the i20 and the Sonet is like splitting hair. The third-generation i20 makes its predecessors proud and is the only premium hatchback in the market that you should buy, frankly speaking.

But as I said earlier, we live in the era of SUVs and as far as the market is concerned, and looking at the most influential new car of 2020, it has to be the Kia Sonet, which is my car of the year. This is in no way denigrating the new second-generation Hyundai Creta but the Sonet is in a price bracket that has never seen such stunning quality — a seven-speaker Bose audio system while now coming on all new Hyundai-Kia cars was unbelievable in such a segment.

In terms of fit, finish and performance, all while bringing price into the equation, the Sonet barely shades it against the i20 and Creta from its sister company. But this is solely my opinion. When it comes to awards such as the Indian Car Of The Year 2021 (ICOTY 2021) where I am proud to say I am a juror, I cannot second-guess my fellow jurors. We come from different publications and angles, some like the SUVs and others like the hatchbacks, some like me look at the infotainment system and plastic, others obsess about handling dynamics. This is what makes the ICOTY special. You can keep a tab over who wins via icoty.org.

Make no mistakes, this does not discount other launches. The new fifth-generation Honda City ticks

all the boxes both as a car that you can drive and be driven around in. The next-generation Mahindra Thar, all legal issues concerning the grille aside, is a vehicle that surprises you with the stunning improvements made. Mahindra has done a stunning job on the Thar, and I can't wait to take it on a long road journey even though Maruti-Suzuki will launch the Jimny next year (will they resurrect the Gypsy brand?).

While not a vehicle that I might enjoy driving is something that the market sorely needed, Kia is likely to bring in a smaller MPV this year. There is also the Tata Altroz, a car that shows how far Tata has come in the past few years. The Nissan Magnite will definitely blur the distinctions between hatchbacks and SUVs thanks to its entry-price.

When it comes to pricier segments, the vehicle that genuinely surprised me this year was the Volkswagen T-Roc. Sure, as an import, it is expensive but both cars — the T-Roc and the

Skoda Karoq — sold out in weeks displaying that the Indian customers are willing to pay for good, high-quality products in the ₹20-25 lakh bracket. There was the BMW 2-series Gran Coupe which despite being front-wheel drive, a reminder that BMWs can put a smile on your face like no other car brand can. In my only inter-



national driving trip this year, I drove the X5M and X6M, both vehicles that completely defied logic and physics and were utterly crazy. Mercedes-Benz wasn't far off too, the GLE and GLS came into the market and both were great to drive and knowing that there is a bit of India on every Mercedes-Benz sold today, thanks to the work that Mercedes-Benz Research and Development India (MBRDI) in Bengaluru does on the MBUX platform is wonderful. Audi was a bit quiet this year but the RSQ8 made sure that it was heard and 2021 will be a big year for them as well.

I'm really looking forward to 2021 and I hope you guys are too. Thanks for reading and have a superb year ahead!



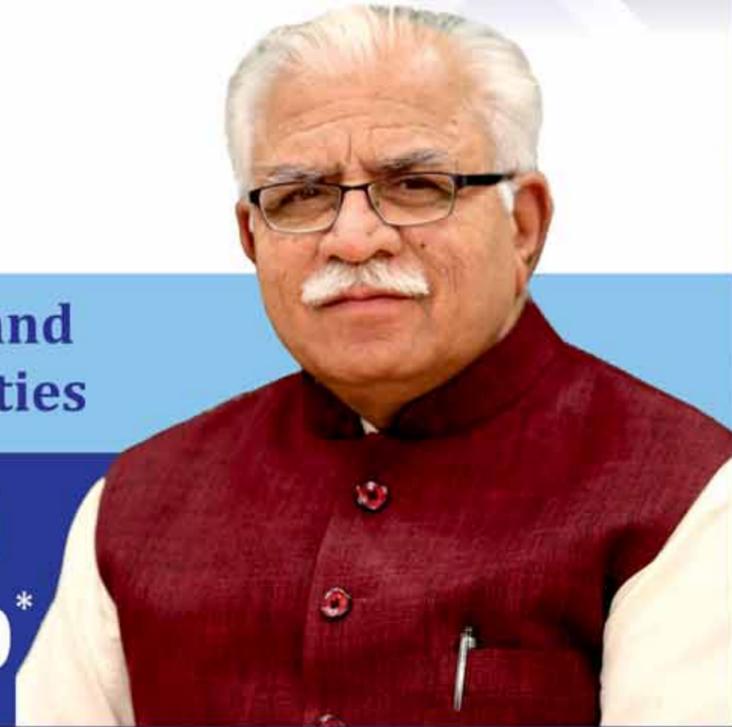
Govt. of Haryana

# NEW YEAR - 2021

## Heartiest Greetings to THE PEOPLE OF HARYANA

To Spur Economic Development and  
Generate Employment Opportunities

### Haryana Enterprises and Employment Policy-2020\*



**Focus** - Building a strong economy on the basis of Inclusive Industrial Development

**Objective** - To generate 5 lakh jobs, attract investments over RS. 1 lakh crore and double the exports to Rs.2 lakh crore

Heartiest congratulations to the people of Haryana on the occasion of New Year. My best wishes for your happiness and prosperity. On the arrival of New Year, I am hopeful that the 'Haryana Enterprises and Employment Policy-2020' will set new dimensions for progress and growth of the State. During the corona pandemic, this policy will encourage entrepreneurs & investors and will also create new opportunities of employment for the youth.

- **Dushyant Chautala**  
Deputy Chief Minister, Haryana

“ My heartiest greetings to the people of Haryana on the occasion of New Year. I wish you all a brighter future and good health. With the new resolution in this new year, the Government has launched the 'Haryana Enterprises and Employment Policy -2020'. We are fully optimistic that this policy will boost the opportunities of employment with balanced regional development and will establish Haryana as a competitive and most preferred investment sector.”

- **Manohar Lal**  
Chief Minister, Haryana

#### Major Regulatory And Procedural Reforms

- **Mega and Ultra-mega projects** shall be exempted from the purview of all labour laws except Minimum Wages Act for a period of 3 years, subject to the fulfillment of certain conditions
- Enhanced FAR from **75% to up to 200%**
- **Auto provision for transfer** of HSIIDC plots
- **Increased FAR up to 250%** for Flatted Factories
- **Increased FAR up to 250%** for Industrial plots for Labour Housing
- HSIIDC will **offer Land on Lease basis**
- Authority for estate management to **industrial park developer**
- Provisions of **Auto CLU for land area** up to 1 acre
- All business **clearances for MSMEs within 15 days** and thereafter deemed clearance on HEPC portal

#### Major Fiscal Incentives For MSMEs, Large & Mega Enterprises

- Investment Subsidy in lieu of **Net SGST upto 100%** for 8-10 years with cap up to 150% of FCI
- Investment Subsidy up to 5% of FCI for 8 years, maximum Rs. 5 Crore per year for mega projects in case of inverted duties and if Net SGST deposited is less than 5% of FCI in a year
- **Employment Generation Subsidy** up to Rs. 48,000/- per employee per year for up to 10 years
- **Stamp duty refund** up to 100%
- Electricity duty **exemption up to 20 years**
- Provision of Special Package of Incentives for **Mega and Ultra-Mega Enterprises**

#### Micro & Small Enterprises Specific Incentives

- **Interest Subsidy for Micro & Small Enterprises** 5-7% on term loan with a cap of Rs. 20 lakh per year for 7 years
- **Subsidy for Environment Compliance** up to 75%, up to Rs. 1 crore
- Under **Haryana Gramin Udyogik Vikas Yojna** 15% capital Subsidy with maximum of Rs. 20 lakh, 7% Interest subsidy with maximum of Rs. 8.00 lakh per year for 7 years and 50% subsidy on DG Set cost
- 50% subsidy up to Rs. 20 Lakh per year for the **purchase of testing equipments**
- **Energy & water conservation subsidy** @50%, maximum up to Rs. 20 Lakh
- **Collateral free credit guarantee scheme** for bank loan for the period of 5 years
- Special provisions for **Start-Ups-Interest subsidy** of 8%, maximum up to Rs. 20 lakh per year for 5 years, Seed Grant up to Rs.10 lakh per start-up, 100% Net SGST Reimbursement for 7 years with cap of 150% FCI

#### Special Provision For Import Substitution, R&D, Bio Energy And Waste Management

- **Concession for Import Substitution Enterprises** in HSIIDC Industrial plots up to 25% in 'B' blocks and up to 50% in 'C' and 'D' blocks for Mega and Ultra Mega units
- Provision for **subsidy of up to Rs. 5 crore** for Research & Development
- **Bio energy from agricultural residue** will be treated as "Industry" and provision of capital subsidy up to Rs. 2.5 Crore
- Subsidy @50% of total project cost maximum up to Rs. 50 crore for setting up of **Electronic Waste Management Projects**



#### Other Innovative Steps

For balanced regional growth, the entire State has been classified into A, B, C and D categories of blocks with provision of different scale of incentives.

The Policy has identified 08 thrust Sectors for which enhanced incentives have been offered.

New Initiatives to promote enterprises engaged in import substitution, essential goods, entrepreneurship development, research & innovation and start-up ecosystem development and rural industrial growth.

\* Refer to the policy document at <https://haryanaindustries.gov.in/> for detailed provisions



# Warner will play in Sydney

## Injured Umesh out of series; Shardul to replace him

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

A struggling Australia are prepared to risk playing seasoned opener David Warner in the third Test against India even if he is not 100% fit, assistant coach Andrew McDonald said on Thursday.

In the absence of Warner, who was recovering from a groin muscle tear, Australia's batting failed miserably in the first two matches.

"That's a real, clear option. He may not be 100 per cent fit — who is coming off an injury? You never know until you get out there," McDonald said.

"Look, if he's 90-95% fit and the conversation is that he's fit enough to be able to go out there and perform his duties for the team, then I'm sure that'll be a conversation the coach has with the player."

"Most times Justin (Langer) is pretty open with the players in terms of giving them accountability around that."

Warner has been named in the squad along with Victorian young gun Will Pucovski for the third Test as Australia look to bounce back from the eight-wicket loss in the Boxing Day Test here.

McDonald said Warner is optimistic about making a comeback in Sydney.

"He's (Warner) very optimistic that he should be ready to go, which is a great news for us. We are really excited to have him



Australia's David Warner trains during practice session file photo

## 'Pucovski has good track record after returning from concussion'

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Will Pucovski's history of bouncing back strongly from concussion-induced breaks gives Australia assistant coach Andrew McDonald confidence that the young opener will not have trouble in scoring runs if drafted into playing XI.

Pucovski, who was primed to make debut in Adelaide, was ruled out of the first two Tests after being hit on the head in the first warm-up game. That was the 22-



year-old's ninth concussion, not all from cricket. He has now been included in the squad for the remainder of the series.

"I'm sure that he's excited to come back into the group as well. There's nothing worse than being injured when you are at the top of your game as David has been over a period of time."

Pucovski, too, is set for a potential debut after the youngster suffered a concussion in the first warm-up match against the Indians earlier this month.

"He will be put through tests whatever it needs to be put through to make himself available for selection to potentially open the batting. So it's good to

have a little bit of depth out there."

One of the biggest setbacks for the Aussies so far has been a rare slump in form for batting mainstay Steve Smith, who has so far scored only 10 runs in four innings in the series.

"I wouldn't be too quick to be judging Steve Smith not looking good in the middle. He looks pretty solid and hitting the ball well at the nets," McDonald said.

Asked if life in a bio-bubble was affecting Smith, he said: "No, none whatsoever. Obviously we worked closely at UAE with the

"We do know with the history that Will has had, and with my time with him at Victoria. He had a pretty good track record of performing when he has returned," McDonald was quoted as saying by Australian Associated Press (AAP).

"I think the selectors will put a bit of trust put into the player around whether he's mentally ready. And clearly it will be up to the coach once he lays eyes on him to see where he's at in terms of being skill ready."

Rajasthan Royals and there's nothing to suggest that there's a link there.

"I'm sure ideally you would prefer to be with your family around Christmas time and Justin addressed that. Some players and staff members unfortunately are going to be disconnected from family during Christmas time, less than ideal there's no doubt."

"Yeah, it's a challenge to rebound. The world's best players usually rebound. He's (Smith) in a really good space to be honest, come Sydney Test."

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Pacer Umesh Yadav was on Thursday ruled out of the remainder of the series against Australia due to the calf injury he sustained during the Melbourne match and the Indian team management is likely to prefer Shardul Thakur over left-arm pace sensation T Natarajan for the third Test.

According to sources, senior pacer Yadav, who missed the Test due to a calf muscle tear, is heading home for rehabilitation.

The third Test begins in Sydney from January 7.

"Umesh will have to go for an extensive rehab. He has left for India," a BCCI source privy to developments in Australia told PTI on Thursday.

"While people are excited about the brilliant progress shown by T Natarajan, we mustn't forget he has played only one first class match for Tamil Nadu. And Shardul has been a seasoned domestic red ball pacer for Mumbai," the source added.

"Shardul was really unfortunate that

his Test debut against West Indies ended abruptly due to injury even before he could bowl an over. He has been shaping up well and might replace Umesh in the playing XI."

The final call will be taken by the head coach Ravi Shastri, stand-in skipper Ajinkya Rahane and bowling coach Bharath Arun after reaching Sydney.

Shardul has so far played 62 first class games and has 206 wickets to show for his efforts.

Another aspect that India would like to address ahead of the Third Test is a long tail that has affected the team.

Shardul has six first class half centuries and during his stint with the national team in white ball games, he has proved to be a decent batsman.

"Obviously the next few training sessions will be important and that's why the final call is likely to be taken in Sydney," the source said. As far as Yadav is concerned, he is expected to head off to National Cricket Academy in Bengaluru for extensive rehab programme.

The 33-year-old had hobbled off the field after suffering the injury during the third day of the Boxing Day Test.



## Rohit attends 1st practice session

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Joining the Indian team after completing his mandatory 14-day quarantine, star batsman Rohit Sharma on Thursday went through his first practice session in Australia under the watchful eyes of batting coach Vikram Rathour.

The prolific opener is expected to play the third Test in Sydney from January 7.

"The engine is just getting started and here is a quick glimpse of what lies ahead. #TeamIndia #AUSIND," BCCI tweeted with two pictures of the batsman. While he trained, the rest of the

squad took a brief two-day break after India's fine win in the second Test at MCG.

The 33-year-old Mumbaier, who had missed the limited-overs series as well as the first two Tests against Australia due to a hamstring injury that he sustained during the IPL, was seen taking catching practice in the photographs.

Three throwdown experts — Raghavindraa, Nuwan Seneviratne and Dayananda Garani — were also there to assist Rohit. Prior to meeting his teammates, Rohit had spent two weeks in quarantine in Sydney.

# Rahane, Ashwin climb in rankings

PTI ■ DUBAI

India captain Virat Kohli held on to his second position while stand-in skipper Ajinkya Rahane broke into the top 10 after gaining five places in the latest ICC men's Test batting ranking released on Thursday.

Rahane climbed to the sixth spot after scoring 112 and 27 not out to inspire India's eight-wicket series-levelling win in the second Test against Australia in Melbourne. It is just one below his career-best ranking of fifth attained in October last year.

Off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin, too, was rewarded for his five-wicket haul at the MCG as he gained two places to the seventh spot, while pacer Jasprit Bumrah rose to the ninth position.

Ravindra Jadeja, who scored a crucial 57 and captured three wickets in the second Test, remained at number three but reduced the gap with Jason Holder to seven points in the allrounder's ranking.

He, however, gained 11 and four positions to reach a career best-equaling 36th and 14th positions in batting and bowling respectively.

MCG debutants Shubman Gill and Mohammad Siraj made notable entries in 76th and 77th positions in the list for



Ajinkya Rahane waves to the crowd as he leaves the field AP

batmen and bowlers, respectively.

Gill scored 45 and 35 not out opening the innings, while Siraj finished with five wickets in the match.

India's batting mainstay

Cheteshwar Pujara's lack of form saw him lose two spots to slip to the 10th place.

Australia left-arm fast bowler Mitchell Starc's four wickets in the match helped him reach a career best-

equalling fifth position. Matthew Wade's scores of 30 and 40 as opener helped him reach 50th among batsmen from 55th, while Cameron Green gained 36 slots to reach 115th position.

New Zealand captain Kane Williamson, meanwhile, ended the year at the top position after he dethroned Australia's Steve Smith, who slipped to the third spot after managing scores of 0 and 8 in the two innings at MCG.

Williamson, who had briefly occupied the top spot towards the end of 2015, was rewarded for his player of the match effort in the first Test against Pakistan in Tauranga, which New Zealand won by 101 runs.

Williamson gained 13 rating points for his effort of 129 and 21 to go 11 points clear of Kohli, who is on paternity leave, and 13 ahead of Smith.

Ross Taylor (up three places to 14th) is another New Zealand batsman to move up, while 26-year-old fast bowler Kyle Jamieson reached the top 30 after just five Tests, following his hauls of three for 35 and two for 35 in Tauranga.

For Pakistan, Fawad Alam's valiant second-innings century has lifted him 80 places to 102nd position while wicket-keeper Mohammad Rizwan's

scores of 71 and 60 have helped him advance 27 places to a career-best 47th position.

Left-arm fast bowler Shaheen Afridi has moved from 35th to 33rd after grabbing four wickets in the first innings.

In Centurion, a knock of 199 by Faf du Plessis saw him not only win the player of the match award but also gain 14 places to reach 21st position, one behind team-mate Dean Elgar, who too gained four spots after a knock of 95.

Lungi Ngidi gained four places and is 56th among bowlers.

For Sri Lanka, Dinesh Chandimal's knocks of 85 and 25 have lifted him three places to 38th while Dhananjaya de Silva (up nine places to 34th) and Kusal Perera (up four places to 60th) have also made notable gains among batsmen.

Left-arm fast bowler Vishwa Fernando has gained two slots to reach 45th position after his three-wicket haul.

In the ICC Test team rankings, New Zealand are in line to wrest the top spot from Australia, who remain fractionally ahead since the Test team rankings are updated only at the end of each series.

Even a draw in the second Test against Pakistan could see New Zealand take the top spot.

## India Eves Oz tour postponed

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

The Indian women's team's wait to resume international cricket since the coronavirus-induced break continued with its scheduled tour of Australia getting postponed to next season, Cricket Australia said on Thursday.

The Indian team, which last played the T20 World Cup final in March, was scheduled to play three ODIs on January 22 in Canberra, January 25 in Melbourne and January 28 in Hobart.

However, the governing body added the tour will now be a part of the build-up to the 2022 World Cup, which has been pushed to March-April due to the pandemic, and will include three T20Is.

"We are very hopeful of delivering an expanded schedule between the Australian and Indian women's teams for next season, which would be an outstanding result for fans in both countries," CA interim chief executive officer Nick Hockley said in a statement.

"We had initially hoped to play India this summer, however the impact of the global pandemic made it necessary to postpone until next season."

India had lost to Australia by 85 runs in their last international outing at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

"It will be wonderful to once again host the Indian women's team, who were centre stage for that unforgettable ICC T20 World Cup final at the MCG in March, and to do so with an expanded schedule from what was originally planned," Hockley said.

Dates and venues of the postponed tour will be confirmed in due course, CA said.

## Liverpool drop points at St Mary's

AP ■ NEWCASTLE

Goalkeeper Karl Darlow pulled off a string of saves to help Newcastle hold Liverpool to a 0-0 draw as the defending champion's vaunted attacking trio came up empty.

Mohamed Salah missed two good chances when he had just Darlow to beat, and strike-partner Roberto Firmino saw two headers saved at St. James' Park on Wednesday.

Three days after struggling West Bromwich Albion earned a point at Anfield, Jurgen Klopp's team was frustrated once again, although Darlow needed some help in the form of a late goal-line clearance from Fabian Schar to deny Sadio Mane and maintain the stalemate.

Liverpool has now won only two of eight league away games this season but still tops the table, three points ahead of Manchester United.

Liverpool could have taken the lead 11 minutes before the break when Salah beat the offside trap to control the ball in front of the advancing Darlow, who got his hand on the Egyptian's shot to steer it wide of the post.

The goalkeeper then produced a fine reaction save in stoppage time to repel Firmino's header from point-blank range. Salah had another chance to break the deadlock in the 67th when he was played in by Firmino but directed his effort past the upright.



Jurgen Klopp, right speaks to Alisson after the end of the EPL football match AP

Liverpool goalkeeper Alisson Becker then had to pull off a diving save of his own 11 minutes from time when Ciaran Clark met Matt Ritchie's free kick with a downward header.

Liverpool nearly scored moments later when Darlow pushed the ball away onto Mane's leg and Schar had to hack the ball off his line before the forward

could tap into an empty net. Darlow then clawed away another Firmino header near the end to preserve his clean sheet.

It was the only Premier League game played Wednesday after Fulham recorded a number of coronavirus cases and its match at Tottenham had to be postponed.

AP ■ WELLINGTON

Fast bowler Neil Wagner played almost all of New Zealand's first cricket test against Pakistan with two broken toes but will not play the second test and is facing a six-week recovery.

Wagner was struck by Pakistan pacer Shaheen Afridi while batting on the second day of the first test at Bay Oval in Mount Maunganui, sustaining two fractures to toes on his right foot.

In spite of the injury, Wagner bowled 21 overs in Pakistan's first innings and 28 in the second, leaving the field for painkilling injections before returning to bowl again.

In the second innings he bowled a marathon spell of 11 overs, securing two vital wickets as New Zealand completed a win by 101 runs on Wednesday.

On Thursday, Wagner was ruled out of the second test at Christchurch beginning Sunday and likely will have to rest for six weeks before injury is fully mended. Pakistan captain Mohammad

# Wagner to miss 2nd Test



New Zealand's injured bowler Neil Wagner, left, is consoled by teammate Tom Latham AP

Rizwan was full of admiration for Wagner's effort of continuing to bowl in the first test despite his injury.

"I can't explain Neil Wagner," Rizwan said.

"Eleven overs in a row on an injured toe, he's a different guy. His aggressions were beautiful. He's a big bowler."

New Zealand captain Kane Williamson, who was man of the match in the first test, praised Wagner's courage and dedication.

"People talk about the size of his heart but to have a couple of broken toes ... he was in a lot of pain," Williamson said.

"We were trying to use him when the injection was taking effect. It was kind of unique for all of us, but in particular Neil."

# Hamilton knighted in year-end royal honours

AP ■ LONDON

Lewis Hamilton is now a "Sir" as well as a seven-time Formula One champion.

Hamilton received a knighthood Wednesday as part of Queen Elizabeth II's New Year's honours list, which also recognized British performers, politicians, public servants and people outside the limelight who worked to defeat the coronavirus and its devastating impacts.

Hamilton, who secured

his seventh F1 title last month to equal Michael Schumacher's record, has said his recent success was partly inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement.

The 35-year-old race car driver took the knee on the grid and wore anti-racism slogans during the season.

Hamilton told the BBC last week that "it was a differ-

ent drive than what I've had in me in the past, to get to the end of those races first so that I could utilize that platform" against racism.

Supporters have suggested Hamilton would have been knighted sooner if not for his tax status.

Hamilton's knighthood was awarded in the "overseas" section of the honours list because he lives in low-tax Monaco. His tax affairs made news in 2017 when the Paradise Papers leak showed he avoided paying more than USD 4 million in taxes on a private jet registered in the Isle of Man, a tax haven.

Motorsport U.K. Chairman David Richards said Hamilton's tax status had been "totally misunderstood" and that the racing champion was among the 5,000 highest taxpayers in the U.K.

In other honours, veteran comic actress Sheila Hancock was made a dame, the female equivalent of a knight, in recognition of her six-decade career.

Acclaimed makeup artist Pat McGrath, dubbed the "most influential makeup artist in the world" by Vogue, also received a damehood.

There was a knighthood for cinematographer Roger Deakins, a 15-time Academy Award nominee who has won Oscars for "Blade Runner 2049" and "1917."