

OPINION 8
DEADLOCKED
DEMOCRACY**WORLD 11**
AUSTRALIA, US, UK, CANADA CRITICISE
HONG KONG MASS ARRESTS**SPORT 14**
JADEJA OUT OF FIRST
2 ENGLAND TESTS

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Racial slur appals cricketing world

Jaspri, Siraj face abuse by crowd at Sydney Cricket Ground, 4th day's match halted for a few minutes; CA issues apology; ICC seeks report

PNS/PTI ■ SYDNEY/NEW DELHI

Cricket fans across the world were aghast at the "ill-treatment" of Indian cricketers, including two speedsters, from the crowd for a second successive day in the third Test against Australia in Sydney. The racist slurs from the crowds especially to pacer Mohammed Siraj caused a brief halt in the fourth day's play, expulsion of some spectators from the ground and an all-round condemnation of the incidents.

Siraj, still grieving the death of his father a little over a month ago, was called a "Brown Dog" and "Big Monkey" from the SCG stands, BCCI sources told PTI.

The 26-year-old, on his maiden tour Down Under, followed the protocol and promptly went up to his skipper Ajinkya Rahane and the on-field umpires, who halted play for about 10 minutes and called in the security, which evicted six people.



Indian pacer Mohammed Siraj (Jersey- 73) points towards a group of fans after he was racially abused during 4th day of 3rd Test between India-Australia at Sydney Cricket Ground
Credit: Cricket Australia Twitter

This was after the bowler and his senior pace partner Jasprit Bumrah were abused by a drunk man on Saturday. The BCCI has already complained about it to ICC match referee David Boon.

"As series hosts, we unreservedly apologise to our friends in the Indian cricket

team and assure them we will prosecute the matter to its fullest extent," said Sean Carroll, Cricket Australia's Head of Integrity and Security, in a Press release affirming zero tolerance to racism.

"Once those responsible are identified, the CA will take the strongest measures possible

under our Anti-Harassment Code, including lengthy bans, further sanctions and referral to NSW (New South Wales) Police," he added.

BCCI Secretary Jay Shah offered the first official response from the Indian Board, saying "racism has no place in our great sport or in any walk of society."

"I've spoken to @CricketAus and they have ensured strict action against the offenders. @BCCI and Cricket Australia stand together. These acts of discrimination will not be tolerated," he tweeted, tagging BCCI president Sourav Ganguly, who is recovering after undergoing an angioplasty a few days back.

In Dubai, the ICC also issued a statement, condemning the turn of events and seeking an action taken report from the CA. Senior off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin articulated the Indian players' deep sense of hurt at the end-of-play Press conference, saying it wasn't the first time in

Sydney. "Look, I would like to point out something. This is my fourth tour to Australia. Sydney, especially here, we have had a few experiences even in the past," Ashwin said.

"I personally experienced it as well. They do tend to get nasty. I don't know why or for what reason," he added and called for an iron fisted response to such diatribes.

Australia coach Justin Langer expressed his disgust too, calling racism one of his greatest pet hates.

"I mean, I have hated it as a player, I have hated it as a coach, we have seen in different parts of the world, it is really sad to see this happen in Australia," he said, disappointed that racial abuse has overshadowed the engaging cricket that has been played in the match. Australia looked on course for a victory after setting the visitors a target of 407 on Sunday. At stumps, India were two down for 98.

Continued on Page 11

Door-to-door survey to enrol out-of-school kids

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has prepared detailed guidelines on steps to be taken by the States and Union Territories for identification, admission and continued education of out-of-school children in the wake of Covid-19 outbreak. The Ministry of Education has asked the States to conduct a door-to-door survey to identify out-of-school children and prepare an action plan for their enrollment as part of efforts to mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, especially on migrants, according to officials.

The Ministry has also recommended relaxing detention norms to prevent dropouts this year as well as a slew of measures to address learning loss due to the coronavirus-induced shutdown of schools.

The move is particularly aimed at identification, admission and continued education of migrant children who have been affected during the pandemic, they said.

The Ministry in a notification said in order to mitigate

Centre issues guidelines for States, UTs for identification & admission of such children

□ The Ministry has also issued guidelines for offering support to students during the closure of schools and when they reopen

□ Exploring the option of classroom-on-wheels and classes in small groups at the village level, increasing the access of children to online and digital resources, use of TV and radio to reduce learning losses and ensuring easy and timely access to the provisions of uniforms, textbooks and mid-day meals are among the recommendations made by the Ministry for student support during the closure of schools

the impact of challenges thrown by the Covid-19 pandemic for out-of-school children, it was felt necessary for every State/UT to devise a proper strategy for preventing increased dropouts, lower enrollments, loss of learning and deterioration in the gains made in providing universal

access, quality and equity in the recent years.

"The States and UTs have been advised to carry out proper identification of out-of-school children for 6 to 18 years age group through a comprehensive door-to-door survey and prepare an action plan for their enrolment," said Ministry of Education official.

The Ministry has also issued guidelines for offering support to students during the closure of schools and when they reopen.

"To ensure that schooling children have access to education with quality and equity and to minimise the impact of the pandemic on school education across the country, the Ministry of Education has prepared and issued detailed guidelines on steps to be taken by the States and UTs during school closure and when the schools reopen," the official said.

Continued on Page 11

Farmers vandalise venue of Khattar kisan mahapanchayat



Police use water cannons to disperse farmers who were protesting against Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar's Kisan Mahapanchayat rally in Kaimla village, in Karnal, on Sunday

PTI

Haryana CM was to address people to highlight benefits of Centre's 3 agri laws

PNS ■ KARNAL (HARYANA)

Farmers protesting against the Centre's farm laws here on Sunday vandalised the venue of a "kisan mahapanchayat" where Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar was to address people to highlight "benefits" of the Centre's three agriculture laws.

The Haryana Police used water cannons and lobbed tear-gas shells to prevent farmers from marching towards Kaimla village, where the programme was to be held. The farmers, however, reached the venue and damaged a makeshift heli-

pad where Khattar's chopper was to land despite elaborate security arrangements made by police. Some protesters also uprooted its tiles.

They damaged the programme stage, breaking chairs, tables and flower pots at the venue. Police personnel were also pelted with stones and had to run for cover. They also tore BJP hoardings and uprooted banners in the presence of police. Under the banner of the Bharatiya Kisan Union (Charuni), farmers had earlier announced to oppose the "kisan mahapanchayat". Later in the evening, Khattar accused BKU (Charuni) president Gurnam Singh Charuni, the Congress and Communists for "instigating" people.

Police had made elaborate security arrangements for the Chief Minister's visit to the village where he was to speak to

people to highlight "benefits" of the new farm laws. Director General of Police (Crime) Muhammad Akil was also present at the spot. The protesting farmers earlier carried black flags and shouted slogans against the BJP-led State Government as they attempted to march towards Kaimla village.

Police put up barricades at the entry points of the village to prevent them from reaching the programme venue. However, the farmers crossed the barricade put up at Gharanda on the Kaimla road. Police had also parked several trucks carrying sand at one of the roads to prevent them from entering Kaimla village. Karnal Superintendent of Police Ganga Ram Punia also tried to pacify the agitators, but in vain.

Continued on Page 11

China seeks quick return of its soldier held by India

Army reacts PLA man was nabbed for transgressing LAC in Ladakh

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

China has urged quick return of its soldier nabbed by the Indian Army in Ladakh and said he strayed across the Line of Actual Control (LAC) due to "darkness" and tough terrain. The Indian Army said he was apprehended after transgressing the LAC in the south of Pangong Tso (lake) region near the Gurung hill in

Chushul on Friday morning and his questioning was on.

China Military Online, a news portal run by the People Liberation Army (PLA), said on Saturday the Chinese soldier went astray "due to darkness and complicated geography".

It also said the PLA notified the Indian side about it the first time, hoping the Indian side could assist in search and rescue of the lost Chinese soldier. It said India confirmed the capture of the Chinese soldier nearly two hours after he went missing. The news portal said India also said the Chinese soldier would be returned to China after "receiving instructions from the superior authority".



The news portal said India should "promptly transfer" the soldier back to China and "jointly maintain peace and tranquility in the border area".

The Indian Army said the Chinese soldier was "being dealt with as per laid down procedures". It said the circumstances under which the Chinese soldier had crossed the LAC were being probed. A stand-off is on there for the last nine months.

Incidentally, this is the second such incident since October last year. Identified as Corporal Wang Ya Long, he was apprehended in Demchok area on October 19 and was later handed over to the PLA. This area is also sensitive as armies from both sides are deployed in large numbers there since the stand-off began in May. The soldier was

returned to the PLA the next day at the Chushul-Moldo meeting point, where senior commanders from both armies have held eight rounds of talks to break the continuing logjam at the border.

"The PLA soldier was apparently moving from one location to another on the Chinese side of the LAC when he lost his way.

"He was carrying a sleeping bag, a storage device, his military identity card, and mobile with a charger. He was released after a thorough interrogation and completion of the necessary formalities," officials had said then.

Continued on Page 11

UP borders with Haryana, Raj, MP may be sealed

Waste is being collected, treated & disposed of by 198 common biomedical waste treatment facilities

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

UP borders with Haryana, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, the states affected with bird flu, are likely to be sealed to prevent vehicles bringing eggs and chicken from outside. Director of Animal Husbandry department RP Singh said they have written to the chief secretary and a notification could be issued by the state government in this regard soon.

As regards the chicken and eggs which have already reached the state and available in the markets, he said there is no risk if the food is cooked at a high temperature and then eaten. Singh said that in the last 12 years, there has been no case of avian influenza in human

Continued on Page 11

33K tonnes Covid waste generated in India in 7 months, Maha tops

Waste is being collected, treated & disposed of by 198 common biomedical waste treatment facilities

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Covid-19 biomedical waste is "viral load". Around 33,000 tonnes of Covid-19 biomedical waste was generated in the country in the last seven months with Maharashtra contributing the maximum (3,587 tonnes) to it, according to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data.

Covid-19 biomedical waste could include PPE kits, masks, shoe covers, gloves, human tissues, items contaminated with blood, body fluids like dressings, plaster casts, cotton swabs, beddings contaminated with blood or body fluid, blood bags, nee-

dles, syringes etc., among others. Over 5,500 tonnes of Covid-19 waste was generated across the country in October — the maximum for a month so far.

According to the data received from the State Pollution Control Boards, since June 2020, all States and Union Territories have generated 32,994 tonnes of Covid-19-related biomedical. The waste is being collected, treated and disposed of by 198 common biomedical waste treatment facilities (CBWTFs).

Sources said while waste generated from the hospitals is being managed properly, it is the waste from the Covid-19 patients under home quarantine are posing problems, in the absence of dedicated bins in neighbourhoods, PPE suits, gloves and masks are often dumped along with routine garbage in municipal vans used for door-to-door collection.

According to the data, Maharashtra generated 5,367 tonnes of Covid-19 waste, followed by Kerala (3,300 tonnes), Gujarat (3,086 tonnes), Tamil Nadu (2,806 tonnes), Uttar Pradesh (2,502 tonnes), Delhi (2,471 tonnes), West Bengal (2,095 tonnes) and Karnataka (2,026 tonnes).

Continued on Page 11

89 sites finalised to roll out vaccination drive in Delhi: Jain

New Delhi: Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain on Sunday said the city Government has finalised 89 sites to roll out the Covid-19 vaccination drive in the national Capital from January 16. Jain said 36 Government hospitals and 53 private hospitals will have a vaccination site each.

Maha Govt slashes security of Fadnavis, Raj Thackeray, State BJP president

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The Maharashtra Government has reduced the security cover of Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Devendra Fadnavis and his family, former UP Governor Ram Naik and MNS president Raj Thackeray, and withdrawn the security cover of state BJP chief Chandrakant Patil.

State BJP spokesman Keshav Upadhye termed it as "vendetta politics", while former Chief Minister Fadnavis said this would not impact his plans to travel and meet people.

Now, Suriname Prez R-Day chief guest

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

President of the Republic of Surinam, Chandrikapersad Santokhi, is expected to be the Chief Guest at India's Republic Day parade on January 26.

The Indian-Origin Santokhi was also the Chief Guest at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention organised earlier this week by the Ministry of External Affairs.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who was to be the Chief Guest at the R-Day celebration, cancelled his India visit to manage the alarming Covid-19 situation in his country after the dis-



covery of a new strain of the virus. A former Dutch colony Suriname has a huge number of people of Indian descent.

Poultry products price dips over flu fears

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

From Kerala to Maharashtra and Gujarat to Uttar Pradesh, prices of poultry products such as meat and eggs have taken a beating over the past couple of days as consumers have started shunning them amid scare of bird flu.

According to poultry traders association, the farm gate prices of chicken was ₹90 and ₹100 a kg till last week, it is now being sold for ₹50-60 a kg. Even the consumption is down by 50 per cent.

In Delhi, egg dealers said the sale of eggs has dropped from 200-300 trays per day to just 100-150 per day in the last two days. According to the



Ministry of Animal Husbandry, the presence of avian influenza or bird flu has been confirmed in seven States so far.

On Saturday, the bird flu was confirmed in several districts of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. In a State report, the

Ministry said bird flu confirmed in migratory birds were reported in Shivpuri, Rajgarh, Shajapur, Agar, Vidisha district of Madhya Pradesh, Zoological Park, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh and Pratapgarh and Dausa districts of Rajasthan. Two poultry of

Panchkula district, Haryana also confirmed bird flu. At least 900 hens have died at a poultry farm in Murumba village in Parbhani district of Maharashtra.

Poultry traders said the daily consumption of chicken in north India is 2.5 crore kg to 3 crore kg. Egg prices in Mumbai have dropped to ₹5.45 from ₹5.65 for the last two days, while in Delhi they have slipped to ₹5.55 per egg from ₹6.00 on January 2 and ₹5.65 on January 4. Prices of live bird also dropped by ₹20-30 per kg at farm gate. "In just the last two days, the sale per day has come down to ₹2,000 from ₹8,000," informed a chicken soup owner in Delhi.

Continued on Page 11

Nepal will get back territories from India: Oli

Kathmandu: Amid efforts to restore normalcy in bilateral relations that soured over a bitter border row, Nepal's Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli said on Sunday that he will get back the territories of Kalapani, Limpiyadhura and Lipulekh from India.

Oli's remarks during an address to the National Assembly, or upper house, comes just days ahead of the Nepalese foreign minister's visit to New Delhi on January 14 - the senior most political leader from Nepal to visit India after strain in bilateral ties.

Committed to providing better health facilities to poor: Yogi

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Reiterating the commitment of his government to providing better health services to the poor, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday said they are doing it with all the resources and without any discrimination. “My government is striving hard to provide benefits of all the welfare schemes to everyone without any discrimination on the basis of caste and creed,” he said.

Inaugurating the ‘Mukhya Mantri Arogya Mela’ at Sankisa in Farrukhabad, the CM said it is just another platform to reach out to people and ensure that all medical facilities are made available to them under one roof. Arogya melas had started on February 2 last year and seven such melas had been organised till March 15 after which lockdown was announced in view of the coronavirus pandemic.

Over 32 lakh people have benefited from these melas, which are organised every Sunday.

“Starting today, the mela will be organised every Sunday at 3,480 PHCs of the state. People will be getting all kinds of medical consultancy, primary pathology testing facilities and medicines,” Yogi said.

Officials said that kit-based pathology tests will also be conducted at the melas and serious patients will be referred for higher treatment. It will also be a platform to inform people about the Ayushman Card Scheme, Mukhya Mantri Aawas Yojana and other government schemes.

Taking a jibe at the opposition, the CM said now there will be no place for those who used to spread fear and terror in the state.

“We consider 24 crore people of the state as our family. People who used to spread fear among people are now going

to police stations with placards in their neck begging for mercy. Bulldozers are now razing the properties of mafia and their henchmen,” he said.

He alleged that during the previous regime, the government jobs were only meant for a specific community.

“Our government does not discriminate between anyone. We aim to provide 4 lakh jobs to people in the coming days,” the CM said. He congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi for leading the country in the fight against Covid-19, saying India’s Covid management has set an example for the world to follow. He pointed out that India has been the only country in the world to develop two vaccines.

“Vaccination will roll out from January 16 and we aim to cover each and every person under the drive. It will also be ensured that all the guidelines of the Central government are followed

during the vaccination drive,” Yogi said. The CM said that there are immense possibilities related to religious tourism in Farrukhabad. “Sankisa should also be developed like Kushinagar, Sarnath, Kapilwastu and Kaushambi. Sankisa is considered as a place of pilgrimage for Buddhism and this is why the mela has been started again from the sacred soil of Buddha. Along with the mela, Sankisa can also be developed as a Buddhist pilgrimage,” he said.

Yogi also directed officials to chalk out a plan to develop Sankisa as a Buddhist pilgrimage place. “A route map should be made from Gautam Buddha Nagar to Sarnath connecting it to Sansika. After the development of Sankisa, employment opportunities will also be created at local level and youths will not have to migrate to other places in search of employment,” the CM said.

NCRB data a shot in arm for govt

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The new data released by the National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) has given a boost to the Yogi Adityanath government’s claim of improvement in law and order.

The report claims that UP has the lowest figure in terms of crime against women, as compared to 21 major states of the country. The state also has fewer cases of crime against women than the national average.

“The UP government, which has been continuously making efforts for safety and self respect of women, has been successful to a great extent in curbing crime against women in the state, and the latest figures of NCRB are a testament to it,” a government spokesman said on Sunday.

He said that in 2019, the country’s overall average for crime against women was recorded at 62.4 cases per one lakh, while UP stood at 55.4 per one lakh. If the figures of

crime against women in 2019 are seen in the other major states of the country, other states are worse. The average crime per one lakh in Maharashtra during this period stood at 63.1, West Bengal 64, Madhya Pradesh 69, Rajasthan 110.04 and Kerala 62.7.

“Statistics also show that the Yogi government has taken a hard stand in curbing crime against women and the police and judicial process is also made accessible to women,” the spokesman said.

According to the NCRB data, in 2016, as many as 3,289 rape cases were reported in UP. However, the figures dropped to 2,232 in 2020.

“As compared to the previous government, the Yogi government was successful in bringing it down by 32 per cent,” a government official said.

Similarly, there were 11,121 female abduction cases in 2016 and the government brought it to down 11,057 in 2020.

While five rape accused have been hanged, others in 193 similar cases are serving life terms. Besides, the government has also given strong defense on the basis of which the punishment was handed to culprits in 721 cases.

“The Nirbhaya Fund was set up by the government to fix the safety and security of women and girls in eight cities including the state capital Lucknow. Along with this, deployment of anti-romeo squad across the state, deployment of women cops in plain clothes, UP 112, pink patrolling, pink booths at main intersections, women help desk at police stations and other similar steps taken by the government hit its stand on the issue of women safety, security and dignity. Ever since its formation, the Yogi government seems determined to not spare any one found involved in crime against women and the statistics are a testament to the fact,” BJP MLC Vijay Bahadur Pathak said.

UP setting new records in ease of doing crime: Lallu

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Congress chief Ajay Kumar Lallu on Sunday attacked the BJP government over law and order, saying the state is setting new records in “ease of doing crime”. In a statement issued here, Lallu said, “Anarchy and crime are at their peak in the state. As far as the law and order situation in UP is concerned, Uttar Pradesh is setting new records in ease of doing crime.”

Lallu said instead of fixing the shattered law and order problem, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath declared rather stubbornly that the poor people in the state are getting jus-

tice while the mafia and their sympathisers are feeling afraid. The statement of the chief minister is not only laughable but also plays with sentiments of people, Lallu told reporters in Barabanki.

The UP Congress chief said farmers are sad and worried under the BJP rule and on January 15, his party workers will “gherao” the UP Raj Bhavan. Lallu’s statement came hours after Adityanath justified the drive against land mafia, claiming that sympathisers of such people are feeling worried, in an indirect attack on SP president Akhilesh Yadav. **PTI**



Additional DG Recruiting of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand Major General NS Rajpurohit called on CM Yogi Adityanath and briefed him on various aspects of recruitment in Indian Army. The way forward for recruitment rallies in UP was also discussed. The CM assured full cooperation and support of state administration during recruitment rallies

Minister hits out at Akhilesh for remarks against anti-mafia drive

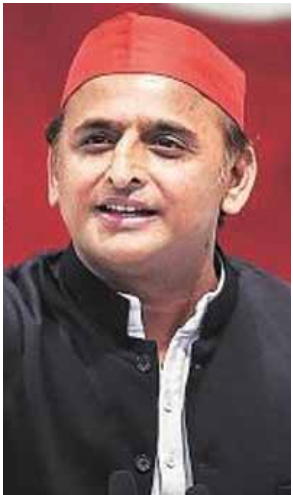
PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Minister Sidharth Nath Singh on Sunday lashed out at Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav for criticising the anti-mafia campaign by the Yogi Adityanath government. He said it’s unfortunate that Akhilesh Yadav is feeling the pain of land mafia when the state government is razing down the illegal structures occupying public land.

“Akhilesh Yadav’s statement is unfortunate as he is the former chief minister. Why is he feeling the pain of land mafia when bulldozers are being used against them? The seed which Bua (Mayawati) had sown and Akhilesh tended to is being removed by the Yogi government. People are happy but why is Akhilesh Yadav unhappy?” Singh asked.

Yadav had earlier said that the BJP government was using bulldozers to raze properties belonging to the opposition and that he would use bulldozers against BJP when he came to power.

“Women are safe in Uttar Pradesh. This is the same police that were under the previous Samajwadi Party government, but there was ‘jungle raj’ when Akhilesh Yadav was the chief minister. When a case is registered, police take action and



their work is being commended all over the state. Akhilesh Yadav is wearing the glasses of opposition,” he added.

On the gang-rape and murder in Badaun, Singh said: “Law has taken its course. Akhilesh Yadav has forgotten that his father Mulayam Singh Yadav had said ‘boys are boys, they may commit mistakes’”

Singh said the Badaun incident was unfortunate and should not have happened. “An impartial investigation has been conducted in this case and action taken. The guilty are in jail and law is taking its course,” he said.

On farmers’ protests, Singh

said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has repeatedly said that the farm laws are in the interest of farmers. “This is the second stage of the green revolution. The farmers will be benefitted from these laws,” he added.

SP TO MOBILISE YOUTHS

Samajwadi Party will organise a programme for mobilising the youths across the state on the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda on January 12. The programme has been named ‘Yuva Ghera’ in which meetings and seminars will be organised at degree colleges and universities and issues related to youths will be discussed.

SP president Akhilesh Yadav said on Sunday that party’s youth wing leaders would lead the programme. He said several issues like ever-growing cost of higher education, unemployment, atrocities on youths, and growing political interference in higher education would be discussed. He said promotion of a particular ideology in colleges and universities would also be discussed on the occasion.

Yadav said that the students would also be apprised of the development works and works for youth welfare done during the Samajwadi Party regime.



शिक्षा व्यवस्था में बढ़ते कदम

वर्चुअल स्कूल

कक्षा-10 एवं 12 के विद्यार्थियों के लिए दूरदर्शन, उत्तर प्रदेश (DD UP) चैनल और कक्षा-9 एवं 11 के विद्यार्थियों के लिए चैनल e vidya-9 एवं e vidya-11 पर शैक्षणिक वीडियो के माध्यम से

11.01.2021 से 15.01.2021 तक ई-लर्निंग प्रसारण का इक्कीसवां चरण

दूरदर्शन, उत्तर प्रदेश (DD UP) चैनल पर यू.पी. बोर्ड की कक्षा-10 एवं 12 हेतु शैक्षणिक प्रसारण की समय-सारिणी								
	कक्षा-10				कक्षा-12			
दिनांक तथा समय	अपराह्न 1:00 से अपराह्न 1:30 बजे तक	अपराह्न 2:30 से अपराह्न 3:00 बजे तक	अपराह्न 4:00 से अपराह्न 4:30 बजे तक	सायं 5:30 से सायं 6:00 बजे तक	अपराह्न 1:30 से अपराह्न 2:00 बजे तक	अपराह्न 3:30 से अपराह्न 4:00 बजे तक	अपराह्न 4:30 से सायं 5:00 बजे तक	सायं 6:00 से सायं 6:30 बजे तक
11-01-2021 सोमवार	हिन्दी अध्याय-8 पुष्प की अभिलाषा भाग-2	विज्ञान अध्याय-14 ऊर्जा के स्रोत भाग-1	विज्ञान अध्याय-14 ऊर्जा के स्रोत भाग-2	विज्ञान अध्याय-14 ऊर्जा के स्रोत भाग-3	गणित अध्याय-5 सांतत्य एवं अवकलनीयता, भाग-5	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-10 हेलोऐक्लेन तथा हेलोऐरीन, भाग-2	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-10 हेलोऐक्लेन तथा हेलोऐरीन, भाग-3	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-10 हेलोऐक्लेन तथा हेलोऐरीन, भाग-4
12-01-2021 मंगलवार	सामाजिक विज्ञान अध्याय-4 औद्योगीकरण का युग भाग-1	सामाजिक विज्ञान अध्याय-4 औद्योगीकरण का युग, भाग-2	सामाजिक विज्ञान अध्याय-4 औद्योगीकरण का युग, भाग-3	गणित अध्याय-11 गणित-रचनाएँ भाग-1	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-10 हेलोऐक्लेन तथा हेलोऐरीन, भाग-5	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-10 हेलोऐक्लेन तथा हेलोऐरीन, भाग-6	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-10 हेलोऐक्लेन तथा हेलोऐरीन, भाग-7	इतिहास अध्याय-1 बंधुत्व जाति तथा वर्ग, भाग-1
13-01-2021 बुधवार	गणित अध्याय-11 गणित-रचनाएँ भाग-2	गणित अध्याय-11 गणित-रचनाएँ भाग-3	विज्ञान अध्याय-5 तत्वों का आवर्त वर्गीकरण भाग-1	हिन्दी अध्याय- (हिन्दी गद्य) गद्य साहित्य का इतिहास, भाग-1	इतिहास अध्याय-1 बंधुत्व जाति तथा वर्ग भाग-2	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-5 पृष्ठ रसायन भाग-1	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-5 पृष्ठ रसायन भाग-2	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-5 पृष्ठ रसायन भाग-3
15-01-2021 शुक्रवार	मिशन शक्ति महिला सशक्तिकरण आत्मरक्षा प्रशिक्षण भाग-1	विज्ञान अध्याय-8 जीव जनन कैसे करते हैं भाग-1	हिन्दी अध्याय-काव्य खण्ड-1 सूरदास भाग-1	अंग्रेजी अध्याय- Grammar Part of Sentence भाग-1	भौतिक विज्ञान अध्याय-2 स्थिरवैद्युतविभव एवं चारिता भाग-2	भौतिक विज्ञान अध्याय-2 स्थिरवैद्युतविभव एवं चारिता भाग-3	भौतिक विज्ञान अध्याय-2 स्थिरवैद्युतविभव एवं चारिता भाग-4	भौतिक विज्ञान अध्याय-2 स्थिरवैद्युतविभव एवं चारिता भाग-5

नोट : DD-UP, अब आप इन चैनलों पर भी देख सकते हैं, डी डी फ्री डिश-45, डेन-137, नेटविजन-138, डिश टीवी-229, लखनऊ 9-237, बिग टीवी-250, एयरटेल-400, हाथवे-400, सिटी केबल-671, वीडियोकॉन डी 2 एच-889, टाटा स्काई-1195

चैनल e vidya-9 पर कक्षा-9 एवं चैनल e vidya-11 पर कक्षा-11 यू.पी. बोर्ड हेतु शैक्षणिक प्रसारण की समय-सारिणी			
	कक्षा-9		कक्षा-11
दिनांक तथा समय	प्रातः 8:30 से प्रातः 9:00 बजे तक	प्रातः 9:00 से प्रातः 9:30 बजे तक	सायं 6:30 से सायं 7:00 बजे तक
11-01-2021 सोमवार	अंग्रेजी अध्याय-1 The Fun They Had (Beehive Textbook) भाग-1/2	सामाजिक विज्ञान अध्याय-2, संविधान निर्माण (नागरिक शास्त्र-लोकतांत्रिक राजनीति-1) भाग-1/3	अंग्रेजी अध्याय-1 (Reading skills) The Portrait of a Lady (Hornbill Textbook) भाग-1/3
12-01-2021 मंगलवार	अंग्रेजी अध्याय-1 The Fun They Had (Beehive Textbook) भाग-2/2	सामाजिक विज्ञान अध्याय-2, संविधान निर्माण (नागरिक शास्त्र-लोकतांत्रिक राजनीति-1) भाग-2/3	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-9 (रसायन भाग-2) हाइड्रोजन भाग-1/2
13-01-2021 बुधवार	अंग्रेजी अध्याय-1, Parts of a Sentence (Words and Expressions-1 Workbook) भाग-1/1	गृह विज्ञान अध्याय-4 अर्थव्यवस्था-परिवार की मूलभूत आवश्यकताएँ भाग-1/1	हिन्दी अध्याय-1 (Reading skills) The Portrait of a Lady (Hornbill Textbook) भाग-2
15-01-2021 शुक्रवार	अंग्रेजी अध्याय-2, Articles (Words and Expressions-1 Workbook) भाग-1/1	सामाजिक विज्ञान अध्याय-2, संविधान निर्माण (नागरिक शास्त्र- लोकतांत्रिक राजनीति-1) भाग-3/3	रसायन विज्ञान अध्याय-9 (रसायन भाग-2) हाइड्रोजन भाग-2/2

नोट: e vidya-9, जियो टीवी एप, डिश टीवी चैनल-950, वीडियोकॉन चैनल-447, एयरटेल चैनल-440, फ्री डिश-128 तथा टाटा स्काई चैनल-756 पर उपलब्ध है। e vidya-11, जियो टीवी एप, डिश टीवी-952 तथा NCERT OFFICIAL YouTube पर उपलब्ध है।

माध्यमिक शिक्षा विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश की एक पहल



NOTICE

I have changed my name Saurabh Sinha from Saurabh Kumar Sinha. In future I should be known as Saurabh Sinha S/o Jitendra Kumar Sinha R/o ML-59 Barra-5 Kanpur Nagar.

NOTICE

I Shila Singh wife of Ramji Singh R/o Sharda Nagar, P.O. Nilmatha, Lucknow- 226002 have change my name from SHILLA DEVI to SHILA SINGH vide affidavit date 06.01.2021 before Civil Court Lucknow.

Final rehearsal for vaccination today

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The final dry run before the actual Covid-19 vaccination will be held at 61 centres in Lucknow on Monday. District Magistrate Abhishek Prakash said both the urban and rural sectors have been divided into 61 sectors while sector & zonal magistrates deployed at various points. Route charts have been made for taking the vaccine to the centres.

The DM said that the first dry run was a learning experience and it was followed by the second one. “Now for the final rehearsal, 170 vaccination points have been made at 61 centres. We are also including Anganwadi workers and it will be a proper team work,” the DM said. He said all the teams have to reach their respective centres 30 minutes before the exercise. The DM said the teams should also make people aware that vaccination will be conducted in phases. He said officials must also maintain social distancing, wear masks and ensure other Covid-19 protocols on duty.

A senior health official

said that the dry run will begin at 10 am and conclude by noon. “There are 22 cold storage points in the district from where police will escort dummy vaccines to the 61 centres where the final rehearsal will be carried out,” he said.

KGMU spokesperson Dr Sudhir Singh said that there will be 34 booths for the dry run at Abdul Kalam Centre. There will be 15 persons per booth and 100 persons per booth will be given the vaccination in the dry run.

As far as bed occupancy in the Covid hospital is concerned, Dr Singh said of the 503 beds, 152 were occupied.

RMLMS spokesperson Dr Shrikesh Singh said they have nine vaccination booths and the dry run will witness the participation of over 300 health workers. “The total number of health workers to be vaccinated in the actual drive will be 1,700. We have made the arrangements at three big halls of the hospital,” he said.

Meanwhile, president of People’s Health Organisation Dr Ishwar Gilada said that the death of a volunteer nine days

after he was administered vaccine in Bhopal may have sent shock waves across the country, but people should not be worried because the cause of death is yet to be ascertained.

“At the same time, it should be decoded as to whether the volunteer was given a vaccine or a placebo, because it is a randomised, double-blinded and placebo-controlled trial in which neither the volunteer nor the investigator knows if he or she received the candidate vaccine or a placebo. Only during such emergency situations the principal investigator can decode it,” he said.

“In this particular case, the volunteer had incessant vomiting and frothing from the mouth nine days after he received the first dose. Vomiting and frothing just prior to death means the cause of death is acute. This can be organo-phosphorous poisoning or head injury or epilepsy. In any case, the forensic analysis of viscera will certainly guide the investigation. Let us not spread rumours or form any opinion that discourages people from taking vaccines,” he said.

165 more test Covid positive



PNS ■ LUCKNOW

As many as 165 persons tested positive for coronavirus in Lucknow on Sunday while 146 patients recovered, taking the number of recoveries to 76,480. City death toll stands at 1,133 while there are 2,254 active cases.

The fresh cases included 19 from Rae Bareilly road, 11 each from Gomtinagar & Ashiyana, and 10 each from Alambagh, Aliganj and Hazratganj. Across the state, 699 persons tested positive, including 24 each in Kanpur & Gautam Buddh Nagar, 28 in Ghaziabad, 30 in Varanasi and 49 in Meerut, taking the UP case tally to 5,93,171. There were 13 deaths in the state, including two in Lucknow, and one each in Prayagraj, Varanasi, Meerut, Moradabad, Muzaffarnagar, Lakhimpur Kheri, Sitapur, Maharajganj, Pilibhit, Chandauli, Fatehpur & Banda, taking the state toll to 8,495. Besides, 769 patients recovered, taking the recovery figures to 5,73,542. There are 1,134 active cases in the state.

Flu scare: Bird enclosures out of bounds for zoo visitors

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Bird enclosures have been closed for visitors at Nawab Wajid Ali Shah Zoological Garden in the wake of two positive bird flu cases at Kanpur zoo. Lucknow zoo director RK Singh said they have made extensive arrangements for bird flu prevention.

“Keepers and cleaners at the bird enclosures will wear PPE kits while entering bird enclosures to feed them,” he said. He added that no outside vehicles would be allowed inside the zoo premises. “The entire zoo area is being sanitised regularly, especially the bird enclosures. For some time, looking into the bird flu scare, eggs and chicken will not be given to the inmates,” Singh said.

He added that if any bird is found dead in any enclosure, all the protocols issued by the Central government will be followed and keepers will be made aware about the virus.

“The food being given to the animals is washed with potassium permanganate and immunity-boosting medicines are also being given to birds,” he said. He added that a separate isolation ward has been created because of the bird flu scare.



Bird enclosures barricaded for visitors due to bid flu scare

Pioneer

Epileptic seizure proves fatal for labourer

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

An epileptic seizure proved fatal for a 55-year-old construction labourer who fell off the second floor of his employer’s house in Jankipuram on Sunday. The deceased was identified as Rampal Yadav of Sitapur. He was hired for house construction work by Vijay Bahadur Singh, who is a retired

teacher. Police said Rampal suffered the epileptic seizure around 11:30 am on Sunday while working on the second of the house and fell on the first floor. He suffered head injuries to which he succumbed later. “Kin of the deceased have been informed while the body has been sent for autopsy,” a police spokesman said.

Meanwhile, two groups

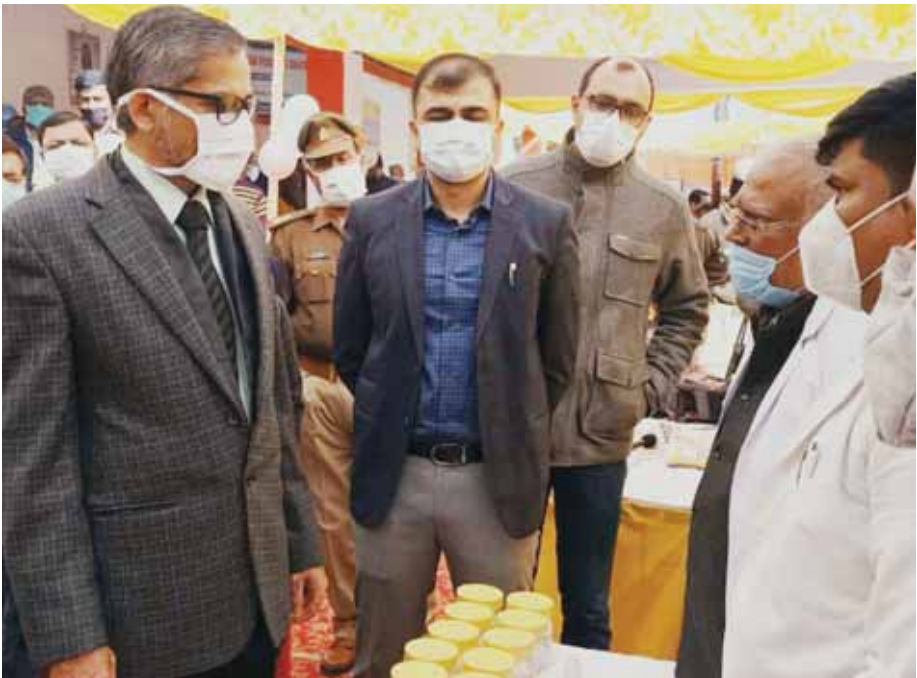
clashed at a graveyard in Thakurganj on the intervening night of Saturday and Sunday. Reports said Tilak Kashyap of Gomtinagar, along with some family members, reached Gullala Ghat for some *tantra puja* and was spotted by caretaker and priest Vishal Pandey.

Pandey objected to the *tantra puja* following which a verbal spat followed and blows

were also exchanged. Later, Vishal Pandey’s supporters damaged Tilak’s car. Three persons injured in the incident were hospitalised.

Meanwhile, a canteen employee was found dead inside a hostel room in Bakshi-Ka-Talab police station area on Sunday. The deceased was identified as Akhilesh Kumar of Sitapur. Reports said

Akhilesh was with some inmates of a hostel on Saturday night and was found dead on Sunday. His wife Neelam suspected foul play and alleged that Akhilesh was given some poisonous substance. The body was sent for autopsy and further probe was underway. Police said they were interrogating three youths in this connection.



Chief Secretary RK Tiwari and DM Abhishek Prakash at Mukhya Mantri Arogya Mela which was inaugurated at Gomtinagar primary health centre on Sunday

Pioneer

‘Right history can show right path’

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Right history can show the right path. India has a glorious history which needs to be told to the younger generation.

This was stated by keynote speaker Nand Kumar, all-India convener of Pragy Pravah, at the 25th Foundation Day of Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar Central University on Sunday.

“This university, established in the name of Babasaheb, is progressing every day and the entire university family deserves appreciation. Most people know Babasaheb only as the father of the Constitution and for uplift of the downtrodden, but his contribution to the society is much more than that. He was a great economist, editor, linguist, law-maker, philosopher, great leader and great personality. He was self-reliant and confident.

Today, our country is moving towards self-reliance and we have attracted many countries of the world by making Covid vaccines,” he said.

About getting the right guidance for progress, he said that the history written by British historians needs to be rewritten correctly because that does not reflect the real India.

Chancellor Dr Prakash C Baratunia, who was also the chief guest, said that the university is progressing in many areas. “Our university has made it to the ninth position in the list of best central universities in the country. It has also got the green certificate, the NIRF ranking has also improved and eight teachers, including the vice-chancellor, are on the list of world’s best scientists. These achievements have given a new identity to

our university and every member deserves kudos,” he added. Vice-Chancellor Sanjay Singh said: “We are developing a sense of *‘Shiksharth aaiye, sevarth jaiye’* among our students and not only academic work but social welfare work has also been done in the university in this direction.

“Many efforts are being made by the university to gain new dimensions in the field of education and also to be included in the list of leading universities. We are considering many points like selecting students through CAT in management studies, starting new departments in the university and also in its satellite campus and how to do better in educational activities. We are also thinking about expanding in the field of defence education and research & development,” he said.

‘New excise policy will promote fruit wine industry’

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The recently approved excise policy promotes the production of wine made out of locally produced fruits by exempting the excise duty for five years. Central Institute for Subtropical Horticulture (CISH) director Shailendra Rajan said the new policy will also pave the way for low alcoholic content beverages made from fruits.

“Permission for the sale of low alcoholic beverages may also promote the production of cider. The cider made from amla and guava is of excellent quality and the production of both the fruits in UP sufficient to support the manufacturing industry,” he said.

He added that CISH has developed technology for making wine and ciders from fruits. “Wine from mango, bael and jamun have been found to be excellent, whereas low alcoholic product cider is produced from guava, amla and bael. The global market of cider is dominated by apple cider and it is in huge demand. The guava and amla ciders are also some of the products which can now be produced in the state and it was not possible before the amendment made in the policy,” he said.

Rajan said many entrepreneurs interested in cider and wine technology of the institute could not progress further because of the past policy, although entrepreneurs from Maharashtra and West Bengal could make efforts for getting the technology for wine production from mango due to

their state policy. “Maharashtra already exempted the excise duty on grape wine. In India, grape is the most important fruit being utilised for wine production. Maharashtra and Karnataka are leading producers of grape wine. Since UP has almost negligible area under the grape production, alternative fruit wine production is possible by utilising crops like mango, guava, jamun, bael, amla and mulberry. UP is one of the leading fruit-producing states and raw material for the industry is sufficiently available in the state. The industry may be developed in the important production clusters for different fruits. This provides employment opportunities also,” he said.

The CISH director said that fruit wines are being prepared for thousands of years and fruits containing a good amount of fermentable sugar can be converted into excellent fruit wine. “Fruits like mango, bael and jamun are suitable for wine-making because of their flavour and a good balance of sugars and tannins. With the increasing use of wines for prevention of coronary diseases, the fruit wine has its own scope because of being rich in many well-known bioactive compounds. Fruits can be converted into various types of wines with different flavours, aroma and colour. In India, the fruit wine industry is in its infancy stage and gradually it will be coming up and thus not only helpful in the production of health products but also several value-added products of the wine industry,” he added.

UP govt demotes 4 additional district info officers after their promotions found illegal

Lucknow: The UP government has demoted four additional district information officers after their promotions over six years ago were found to be illegal, an official said on Sunday. In a statement issued here, the state government said rules were violated in the promotion of these four officials done on November 3, 2014. The decision was taken on January 6.

Narsingh who was posted

as additional district information officer in Bareilly has been demoted as a peon, while Dayashankar who was posted in Firozabad has been asked to resume his duty of previous posting as watchman. Vinod Kumar Sharma posted in Mathura and Anil Kumar Singh in Bhadohi have been demoted to cinema operator cum publicity assistant, according to a statement said.

PTI

7-month pregnant rape survivor dies

Bareilly: A 15-year-old rape survivor who was seven months pregnant died of pregnancy-related complications at the district hospital here, police said on Sunday. She was admitted to the hospital on Saturday night and passed away on Thursday night, they said.

Additional Director and Superintendent In-Charge of the hospital Dr Subodh Sharma said the girl was brought to the hospital in serious condition and her health deteriorated further. Despite best efforts by the doctors, she could not be saved, he

added. Senior Superintendent of Police, Bareilly, Rohit Singh Sajwan said, “The post-mortem report says that the death took place due to infection.”

“The viscera of the victim has been preserved,” he added. The father of the girl, who was mentally unsound, said the family came to know about their daughter being six-month pregnant on December 6. He said she was raped allegedly by a 30-year-old man in a sugarcane field in June last year when she had gone out of the house for some work. The accused

had threatened her that he will kill her family members if she revealed the incident to them. The victim’s father filed a complaint at Fatehganj West police station regarding the rape of his daughter on December 4, following which a case under the POCSO Act and the IPC was registered against the accused, police said. The accused was arrested on December 6, they added. Station House Officer of Fatehganj West police station Ashwani Kumar said a charge-sheet has been filed in the case.

PTI

Govt to set up IT parks at all divisional headquarters

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The UP government intends to establish IT parks at all divisional headquarters of the state in collaboration with Software Technology Parks of India (STPI). The objective is to have IT parks in all divisions under IT & Start-up Policy, 2017. Additional Chief Secretary, IT and Electronics, Alok Kumar said on Sunday that it has been proposed to set up an IT park on 3 acres of land in Palkhni industrial area being developed on 200 acres in Saharanpur, with plug-and-play and other facilities, as per the STPI parameters.

He said that the work of setting up IT parks in Meerut and Agra was almost complete and Gorakhpur and Varanasi IT Parks are expected to be set up by September this year. The state government has provided land free of cost for all above-mentioned IT parks and the process of selecting local information technology and start-up companies for these IT parks is also being done simultaneously.

He said that the transfer deed of Jawaharlal Nehru Commercial Complex of Varanasi Development Authority in favour of IT and Electronics Department is under process for the establish-

ment of IT Park in Varanasi, while STPI would soon commence construction on the land available in Kanpur (Panki) and process was on for obtaining land of Indian Turpentine and Rosin Company for the IT park project in Bareilly.

It is estimated that IT parks under construction at present would attract an investment of about Rs 200 crore and create 15,000 employment opportunities. Kumar said that STPI centres with plug-and-play facility in Lucknow and Prayagraj were already functional while that in Lucknow had recorded exports to the tune of Rs 230 crore in the year 2019-20 as a result of the state government’s investment-friendly policies and improvement in ease of doing business.

It may be noted that 20 IT/start-up companies are operating from Lucknow STPI centre, which has 50 plug-and-play seats with raw furnished work space in about 2000 sq ft whereas, 10 IT or ITeS (information technology enabled services) companies are functional in Prayagraj STPI centre with 50 plug-and-play seats and 5000 sq ft of raw furnished work space.

The IT park in Gorakhpur has been developed on 3.58 acres of Gorakhpur Industrial

Development Authority (GIDA) land, out of which 3,432 sq ft has been earmarked for plug-and-play facility and 5,568 sq ft is raw furnished work space. It is expected to provide employment to 4,000 people over a period of five years and export revenue is estimated at Rs 5-10 crore per year.

Almost complete, Meerut’s IT park has been set up in an area of 2.5 acres with 25,074 sq ft built-up area and 131 plug-and-play seats, along with raw furnished work space in 3,640 sq ft area. An estimated annual export of Rs 6-10 crore and creation of 5,000 employment opportunities is expected in this IT park.

Similarly, the IT park in Agra is being set up in an area of two acres, in which built-up area is 23,000 sq ft with 122 plug-and-play seats and 2,330 sq ft of raw furnished work space. It is expected to generate 5,000 job opportunities over the five years and Rs 6-10 crore worth of exports annually. Moreover, efforts are being made to arrange sites in government buildings, in vacant buildings of engineering or polytechnic institutions, etc as well as the land of the Irrigation department to set up IT parks in Aligarh, Azamgarh and Jhansi divisions.

SGPGI to focus on infectious disease, vaccine development

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

SGPGI will be setting up a Centre of excellence for Infectious Disease and Vaccine Development. Director Dr RK Dhiman with coronavirus fear looming large, what new or resurgent infection strikes is unknown.

“We must prepare in advance for these eventualities. The Infectious Disease and Vaccine Research Centre is a step in this direction. The UP government has accepted the proposal and we hope we get the required budget,” he said, adding that they are also planning a comprehensive haemophilia care in UP which will receive an impetus by the NHM grant of Rs 52 crore to the department of Haematology.

“Under UMMID, the department of Medical Genetics has started an outreach screening programme for genetic disorders and newborn screening for five genetic disorders in district hospitals in Bahraich and Shravasti,” he pointed out.

He said that under tele-health medicine, two MoUs signed by SGPGI with STPI and Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd are a step in this direction.

“An MoU was signed with Power Grid Corporation India Ltd for the creation of tele-ICU

services for UP based on HUB and SPOKE model. Power Grid Corporation India Ltd, under the CSR fund, has given Rs 7 crore for this ambitious project. Tele-ED, tele-ICU, tele-OPD, tele-OT, tele-education and tele-skill training is the future ahead and we must embrace it with open arms,” Dr Dhiman said. He added that the School of Tele-medicine and Bioinformatics at SGPGI has highly advanced technical infrastructure created to support tele-health care, distance education and skill training and sharing.

“Through its e-OPD, 26 departments of SGPGI provided tele-consultations to old and new registered patients six days in a week last year. A total of 42,000 patients benefited using this system. All the departments of SGPGI have utilised the tele-medicine facility for e-learning activities, preparation and sharing of course material, didactic lectures, and case discussions,” he said. He added that during financial year 2019-20, the institute received a total of Rs 761 crore, of which Rs 679 crore was their expenditure.

HDFC BANK We understand your world	Department For Special Operations 1st Floor, Pranay Towers, Darbari Lal Sharma Marg, Lucknow-226001
POSSESSION NOTICE (FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY) (As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002) Whereas, the Authorised Officer of HDFC Bank Ltd., under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(2) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued demand notice dated 5.11.2019 calling upon the borrower Wealth Mantra Ltd. through Shri Sanjeev Agarwal, Smt. Sumita Agarwal and Smt. Beena Agarwal to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs. 41,02,536/- (Rupees Forty One Lakhs Two Thousand Five Hundred And Thirty Six Only) and future interest and incidental expenses, cost as per the sanction terms till the date of payment within 60 days of the receipt of the said notice. The Borrower/Guarantor(s)/Mortgagor(s), having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Guarantor(s)/Mortgagor(s) and the public in general, that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules, on this 8th day of January, 2021 at Lucknow. The Borrower/Guarantor(s)/Mortgagor(s), in particular, and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of HDFC Bank Ltd. for an amount of Rs. 41,02,536/- (Rupees Forty One Lakhs Two Thousand Five Hundred And Thirty Six Only) and future interest and incidental expenses, cost as per the sanction terms till the date of payment. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.	
DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY Description of property : Premises No. 17-A, on the first floor of the building known as 'Pragati Kendra' measuring approx. 31.37 Sq. Mt. of constructed area, situated at Block No. 3, Kapoorthala, Aliganj, Lucknow owned by Smt. Sumita Agarwal Place: Lucknow, Date: 8.01.2021	
Authorised Officer, HDFC Bank Ltd.	



DM KR Sharma inspecting Arogya Mela at PHC Shivpur in Varanasi on Sunday

Pioneer

DM inspects Arogya Mela at Shivpur

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

With the aim of providing better health facilities to the people, Mukhyamantri (Chief Minister) Arogya Mela was organised at all primary health centres in the district here on Sunday. District Magistrate (DM) Kaushal Raj Sharma did a surprise inspection of the Arogya Mela at Primary Health Centre (PHC), Shivpur. During his inspection, DM said that along with OPD services, information related to TB, malaria, dengue, meningitis, Kala azar, filaria and leprosy,

necessary screening treatment and information was also provided to the people at these Arogya Melas. On this occasion, information about Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana and Mukhyamantri Jan Arogya Yojana campaigns and golden card distribution to eligible beneficiaries was also given to the people apart from providing pregnancy and prenatal counselling services. Appropriate action for the identification and treatment of malnourished children was also ensured along with information given to the people

towards prevention and treatment of diarrhea and pneumonia in children.

According to the DM, in view of the diminishing effects of COVID-19 pandemic, the government has once again decided to organise Arogya Mela. In this sequence, the same was organised in all the urban and rural primary health centres and it would also be conducted on every Sundays. He informed that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the fair held on every Sunday was postponed from the last March but now it has once again

started again. He has directed the Health department to ensure the following of all COVID-19 guidelines and Covid Help Desk should be set up compulsorily at every health fair. The system of clinical and pathological examination of flu and respiratory patients should be isolated from normal patients.

The availability of infrared thermometers, pulse oximeters, masks and sanitizer must be ensured at the help desk. Corona examination must be done at every health fair.

Tourism dept to start organising Sangeet Sandhya programme

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Aiming at giving a boost to the tourism in the city, the Tourism department will soon start organising the programme of 'Sangeet Sandhya' at holy ghats where the tourists could enjoy the music like sitting in open theatre.

'Kashi is City of Music' and thus, there is a plan to hold the programme of 'Sangeet Sandhya' at holy ghats to attract the tourists coming from various parts of the country and abroad, the UP Minister for Tourism, Culture and Religious Affairs (Independent Incharge) Dr Neelkanth Tiwari informed adding, there will be such an arrangement that the tourists could feel enjoying the music like sitting in an open theatre. Kashi is known to have a number of personalities of various fields and the list of such 90 personalities of arts and music has been prepared, he informed adding, a museum will soon be constructed where the tourists could know about these per-



UP Minister Neelkanth Tiwari being honoured by TWA in Varanasi on Saturday

sonalities at one place. Dr Tiwari was speaking at a programme organised at a hotel in Maldahia here by Tourism Welfare Association (TWA) honoured him for organising the Dev Deepawali on a grand level which drew the attention of tourists from abroad too.

While welcoming the minister, the president of TWA Rahul Mehta said that the many places in the district

have been developed as new tourist destinations such as Kashi Vishwanath Corridor, Light & Sound Show in Sarnath, museum in TFC, Bada Lalpur, and Heritage Walk in Kabirchaura but there is a need to include these spots in the tour package to increase the night stay of tourists.

The minister gave his consent to his proposal of TWA and directed the officers of

tourism to prepare a list of such spots and take the tour operators there by inviting them on the auspicious occasion of Mahashivratri s as the tourists could stay here for 4-5 days to see these tourist destinations. The members of the association thanked the minister for considering their proposal. The work of Kashi Vishwanath Corridor, the dream project of the PM Narendra Modi and the CM Yogi Adityanath in progress and after the completion of the construction it will give a new recognition to the tourism sector of the city, the minister said adding there is an immense possibilities of tourism across the holy river Ganga and the project to develop Khidiya Ghat in view of the tourism, will soon be started.

The representatives of hotel business, travel agents, tourist guides and various airlines attended the programme besides the tourism officer Kirtiman Srivastava and Director of India Tourism Amit Gupta.

Untreated sewage water being drained into Ganga & Yamuna

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

After seeking information from the PMO, Central Pollution Control Board about the blackening of Ganga water at Sangam Nose and other ghats, the concerned departments are engaged in rescue. Claims are being made by the Regional Officer of the Pollution Control Board that the Ganga water has a BOD standard. The truth is completely different from this fact.

The Samta drains dump directly in the Ganga at Rasulabad, Salori, Daraganj, Naini, Jhuns, Phaphamau and the dirty water of STP exposes the tall claims of the concerned authority. The untreated sewage water is being drained into the Ganga and Yamuna too when there is only one week left in the beginning of the Magh Mela.

After questioning the PMO, senior officials of the Central and State Pollution Control Board directed to check the purity of the Ganga water. Regional officials of the Pollution Control Board took

samples of bickers and bottles of water from various ghats of Ganga and Yamuna on Friday for testing throughout the day. The designated institution on behalf of the Municipal Corporation also carried out cleaning on the ghats.

According to the valleys and pilgrimage of Ramghat, Dashashwamedh Ghat, the Ganga water was milky and clean in the month of November last year. The situation has worsened since 15 days. The colour of the Ganga water has changed to black. Visiting the banks of the Ganga at Phaphamau, Rasulabad, Salori, Daraganj, Naini and Jhuns revealed that the main reason for changing the colour of Ganga water is the dirty drains and STP water being drained into the river.

Locals showed on the spot that the dirty black coloured stream next to the dam road at the Nagavasuki end of Daraganj was flowing like the Ganga. On one side is the main stream of Ganga and on the other side black dirty water with a very foul smell is flow-

ing. This dirty water is changing the colour of the Ganga by smearing it.

Talking about only Daraganj located in the fair area, the dirty water of five small drains is being dropped directly into the Ganga without treatment. Here the water of pumping station and Salori STP coming from Allapur is causing pollution in the Ganga water.

According to Purohit, who has been sitting at Ramghat for decades, the colour of the Ganga water was milky last November. The water used to shine when the sunlight came. There was a continuous stream of Nirmal Ganga on the edges, not just the middle edge. Now the water colour has changed on the ghats. Devotees also complain about this, but they definitely take a dip in the faith, also fills water in the water-box. The priests said that the stream of Ganga water should be clean like Kumbh.

Regional Officer of Pollution Control Board Pradeep Vishwakarma arrived at Ganga Ghats along with

team members from Friday morning and collected the water samples. He collected a sample of Yamuna water along with Sangam nose for examination. He claims that the amount of BOD in the Ganga water is less than three as per the standard. In the previous report, its scale has been found from 2.2 to 2.5. The PH and DO reports are satisfactory. According to him, the report of Ganga water is of B category. On a question of colour of the water being black, he says that the black, beige and green colour of the water is visibly clear after filling it in a beaker or bottle. There are other reasons for this. We have been checking the quality of Ganga water regularly since January 1. Reports of water samples taken on Friday will come three days later, he added. Just opposite the Sangam Ghat, a large rivulet next to the Arail coast of Naini is polluting the Ganga. At the same time under the new bridge, a drain in Naini is falling in the Yamuna. Dirt falling directly into the Ganga is polluting the water.

Maurya lays foundation stone of railway over bridge

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya laid the foundation stone for the construction work of the railway over bridge to be constructed from Teliarganj / Mazar to the Chhota Baghara / Salori road from coming under North Central Railway on Saturday. The total cost of this project is ₹ 5280.12 lakh and the length is 737.525 meters.

Addressing the people present there on the occasion, the

Deputy Chief Minister said that due to the construction of this over bridge, the residents of the city and especially the Salori region will get convenience in traffic and get rid of traffic jams. He said that before this, the foundation stone of the railway over bridge was laid at Bakshi Dam railway crossing, whose construction work has also started. Similarly, the construction of 6 lane bridge from Malak Harhar Phaphamau to Ganga river has also started.

The Deputy Chief Minister has instructed the officials of

Setu Nigam to complete the construction work on time with quality. On this occasion, MP Phulpur Kesari Devi Patel, MLA from North constituency Harsh Vardhan Bajpai, MLA Phaphamau Vikramajit Maurya, President of city unit BJP Ganesh Kesharwani along with other people's representatives, officials of concerned departments were present.

56 LAKH STUDENTS TO APPEAR IN HS, INTER EXAM: As many as 56,30,813 students will take the High School and Intermediate

Examination 2021 of the UP Board of Secondary Education (Madhyamik Shiksha Parishad Uttar Pradesh).

Out of the above 56 lakh plus students, 29,94,312 will appear at the High School Examination of class Xth. The High School examinees include 16,74,022 boys and 13,20,290 girl students.

For Intermediate Examination of Class XIth the number of examinees will be 26,09,501, out of which 14,73,771 will be boys and 11,35,730 will be girls.

26 more test positive in Prayagraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

As many as 6,355 people were tested for COVID-19 in the district. And of them, the report of 26 people came positive in 24 hours. About 37 people beat the infection on the same day. One infected died during treatment. According to CMO Dr Prabhakar Rai, out of the 37 people who have overcome the infection, eight people were discharged from Covid hospitals. At the same time, 29 people completed home isolation. So far 20,882 people have been healthy by staying in home isolation.

The prevalence of corona infection in the district is decreasing. On Saturday, the number of active patients has come down to 434, the same figures which stood six months

ago. At the same time, the number of people who lost their lives from Corona has increased to 378. At present, 42 Covid infected patients are admitted to L3 SRN Hospital, 16 in Beli Hospital, nine in United Medcity and four in Kalindipuram Covid Care Centre.

Nodal Officer for Corona Dr Rishi Sahai said that the infected included a Primary School teacher in Handia and Inter College teacher at Rasulabad. The Covid report has come positive for many people, including a constable of RPF Prayagraj, a home guard posted at Handia police station, an assistant in the Georgetown-based cooperative department.

Meanwhile, the Corona infection has knocked in the Magh Mela area, but prepara-

tions of the Health department are still incomplete. Covid testing centres and general hospitals have not been established here. The first bathing of the fair will take place on January 14 on Makar Sankranti, but no complete arrangements could be made for the corona examination and treatment of devotees in the fair area. The risk of infection has increased after the Covid report of five homeguards of the Mela Police Line arrived positive. In such a situation, it is currently difficult to follow the Corona Protocol and the mandate in the fair area.

On Sunday, Health department teams conducted a Covid check of jawans and home guards in the Police Line located in Magh Mela area. There was a stir when the report of

five homeguards came positive. The order of the Corona testing will continue in the Police Line. Devotees will start coming to Magh Mela area from far flung areas right from Purnima. A large number of people including devotees, Kalpavasis will visit the Mela area.

According to the government's guide line, the Covid testing report has to be shown before entering the fair area. The Mela administration had said to make Covid Hospital and Testing Centre in every sector, but this has not been done at the moment. The responsibility of testing, setting up of hospitals in the fair area and following the Covid protocol, has been entrusted to the Health department, but hospitals have not been prepared in any sector.

Committee formed to monitor bird flu

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

A committee under the Chairmanship of the District Magistrate has been constituted to monitor avian influenza (bird flu) in the district. In this, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) and Executive Engineer Irrigation Department have been made members. On this, the DFO has issued a guideline to all the forest officers of the Forest department to mark the water bodies.

He asked the officials for strict monitoring of small pond, rivers and canals in rural areas. Although not a single case of bird flu has come to light in Prayagraj, but the Health department and the district administration have made complete preparations for prevention. People are also becoming aware that as a result, with the decrease in the sale of chicken, the price has also come down.

DFO YP Shukla said that not a single case of bird flu has been reported in the district so far. All the range officers of the department have been asked to mark the water bodies in their area. Besides, it was asked to provide information to the

Animal Husbandry department and Forest department immediately about finding dead birds anywhere. Apart from this, postmortem of dead birds has been asked to be done by the Forest department and Husbandry department. Awareness programmes are also being organised at various places to keep distance from the dead birds.

DFO YP Shukla said that migrant birds coming to the bird sanctuaries have also been asked to trap. Also, instructions have been given to send its serum to Bhopal for examination.

Building of Ejaz Akhtar demolished: Yet another active member of the Atique gang was targeted on Sunday by the district administration and the demolition squad of the Prayagraj Development Authority. An imposing building of Ejaz Akhtar, a close associate of mafia don Atique Ahmed was razed to earth by JCB machines in Umri area under the Dhoomanganj police station. This building was raised without any approved blue-print.

Ejaz is a hardcore criminal and is closely associated with the Atique gang. Dozens of

cases have been registered against him under serious sections at Dhoomanganj police station of Prayagraj and at different police stations of the neighbouring district of Kaushambi.

About a couple of years ago Ejaz had made an attempt to flee from the jail van by attacking the guards near Shivkuli during hearing of a case, but the cops had foiled his attempt.

Umri is a minority dominated locality under the Dhoomanganj police station and is famous for producing twins with almost similar faces.

AKHARAS GIVE FINAL SHAPE TO PROGRAMMES OF HARIDWAR KUMBH: Different Akharas gave final shape to their programmes of the Haridwar Kumbh at a meeting and finalised the dates of Shahi Snans.

Office-bearers of Juna, Ahvan, and Agni Akharas met the national general secretary of the Akhara Parishad Srimahant Hari Giri ji Maharaj and discussed the programmes of Nagar Pravesh, Bhumi Pujan, Dharma Dhawja and Peshvai dates. Srimahant Hari Giri ji Maharaj said that Juna Akhara, Ahvan Akhara and Agni Akhara used to take

Shahi Snan together. Dharma Dhawja and Chhavani of the above three are established in the premises of the Juna Akhara.

With Juna Akhara, the other two — Ahvan and Agni Akharas will enter Haridwar on January 25 from the Najeeabad road. Before Nagar Pravesh the Akharas will visit the Prem Giri Ashram in Kangdi village where a special puja will be performed for all the divine being, Maa Ganga, Maa Chandi Devi, Siddha Kali Peeth, Gauri Shankar Mahadev, Maya Devi, and Daksha Mahadev. The Ramta Panch will lead the joint Nagar Pravesh procession of Juna, Ahvan and Agni Akharas.

Bhumi Pujan will be performed on February 16 from 10.23 am to 2 pm, and then the three Akharas will hoist their Dharma Dhawjas.

The Peshvai procession will be taken out on February 27 at 12.40 pm from Pandewala Jwalapur to Juna Akhara. The Ahvan Akhara will take out its Peshvai on March 1 at 2 pm from Pandeywala Jwalapur.

Kinnar Akhara and Dandi Swami will also join the Juna Akhara for Shahi Snan along with Ahvan and Agni Akharas.

22 new Covid cases in Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

As many as 22 new COVID-19 patients have been detected in the district on Sunday, increasing the total number to 21,622. The day also saw one more death, increasing the toll to 370. During the day, the follow-up negative reports included 35 and all of them have been recovered from home isolation, increasing the number to 17,909. As no patient has been discharged from any hospital, the number remained at 2,938. The total number of patients who have been recovered so far is 20,847, leaving 405 active cases. The recovery rate is 96.41 per cent, while the mortality rate is 1.71 per cent.

In the first report of the day, 22 positive patients were found out of 2,159 reports received. Till then, the total test reports received were 5,45,660 and the results of 3,052 are awaited. Out of them, 5,24,038 were negative, while 21,622 were positive. The total number of samples collected was 5,71,789. Earlier, a female aged 70 from Bhitari succumbed to COVID-19 at Sir Sundarlal Hospital, Banaras Hindu University (SSH BHU). As no new red zone has been seen, the total number of hotspots has remained at 2,660 including 178 red zones. Five green zones have been converted into the red zones again. There are 2,482 green zones with 10 new ones.

Meanwhile, mass / group corona antigen tests continued and all the 139 tests were found negative at SSPG Hospital Kabirchaura apart from 13 at CHC Shivpur, 40 at Vivekanand Hospital Bhelupur and 25 at SSH BHU. However, one out of 152 tests has been found positive at LBS Hospital Ramnagar. Along with this, samples of 137 from SSPG, 36 from Vivekanand and 150 from LBS Hospital have been sent for RTPCR investigation. Besides, for safety, respect and self-confidence of women under the 'Mission Shakti' campaign being run in the district, the girls/ women of various schools / colleges and public places in different police station areas were made aware by giving

information about the helpline numbers (112, 1098, 1090, 181, 1076, 108, 102) issued by the government through posters / banners / pamphlets / audios / video clips. A total of 5,801 women / girls were mobilised at 192 places and 754 leaflets were distributed. A total of 1,462 women / girls were sensitised by the Anti-Romeo Squads at 167 places. As many as 135 eye teasers were warned. Apart from this, the police arrested 29 persons under Section 151 of CrPC while challaned under Section 188 and took action under Section 51 of Disaster Management Act against 10 persons. During checking at various points, 1,016 vehicles were challaned and 14 seized.

Webinar on agri development ends

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Two-day international webinar on agriculture development during the climate change and food and nutritional security concluded at Institute of Agricultural Sciences, Banaras Hindu University (IAS-BHU) here on Sunday in collaboration with National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and International Rice Research Institute (IRRI).

The chief guest of inaugu-

ral function, Prof Narendra Singh Rathore, Vice-Chancellor of Maharana Pratap Agricultural University, Udaipur, said that it is absolutely necessary to develop agricultural technologies according to the climate and reach farmers' fields.

According to him, there are many important factors affecting the climate such as carbon dioxide and methane gas and climate change is occurring due to their 90 per cent emissions which have affected the sowing

of Rabi crops declining its productivity by 15-17 per cent. 'There is a need to boost production and exports by providing food security to the 135 crore people of the country by developing discernment and technology according to this changed climate so that agriculture can be given an industrial status,' he suggested.

Prof Ramesh Chand, IAS-BHU Director, called for developing various technologies suitable for farmers in the changing environment.

'Farming can be made profitable by conserving water in the field,' he said, adding that we all have to make the farmers technically strong for the upcoming challenges. Dr Sudhansu Kumar Singh, Director of Varanasi Regional Centre of IRRI, emphasised the need for climate change to be included in the plans for the development of agriculture and there is a need to reduce the cost of farming by using resource conservation techniques.

Sale, purchase of poultry suspended

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Kanpur Divisional Commissioner, Raj Shekhar has directed all the health and zoo authorities to take all precautionary measures and containment of Bird Flu and directed the district administration to ensure that all possible help needed should be provided without any delay. He said the entry of poultry and poultry products should not be allowed inside the city limits and the police had been assigned the task of monitoring

of this work. He said all sale and purchase of poultry will remain suspended till further orders.

It may be informed here that the sudden steps were being taken in view of the report of samples sent for laboratory for Bird Flu had come positive and thus the Kanpur Zoological Garden had been shut down till further notification with immediate effect.

He said the zoo authorities have been asked to declare on km radius as containment zone and as per the medical norm

culling of the affected birds be done with full precautions and care. He said the authorities have been directed to performing culling of the birds and they be disposed as per norms and the report with evidences submitted to the District Magistrate.

He said five RRT teams have been set up which will be in touch with the DM and ensure they provide him with all details at that end of the day. He said apart from this the area will be sanitised and the birds in the periphery of one km

radius will be culled as per the norms and details will be provided to the DM the same day.

He said Additional CMO, Subodh Prakash had been made the nodal officer and the CMO will ensure the availability of the anti-viral drugs. He said the hospitals and the Medical College had bee put on high alert and Flu Corners have been activates at these places. He said the task force had been set up and they will remain active and vigilant to ensure that there was no spread of Bird Flu in the city.

Skill Development Mission a farsighted approach of Modi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Skill Development Mission was the farsighted approach of the Prime Minister, Narendr Modi and since then it had been making effort to ensure they made the existing youth employable. Currently the UP Government was focusing on the promotion of agriculture and leather technology and a special proposal has already been forwarded to the government to introduce special courses in the two special fields.

This was stated by the District Manager, Skill Development Mission, Mukesh Srivastava, while addressing a meeting at Vikas Bhawan. He said India was world's second largest producer of leather gar-

ments and footwear and it accounted for about 13 per cent of the world's leather hides production. He said the industry had major subsectors like footwear, leather goods and garments, finished leather, saddlery and harness. He said thus there was enough growth possibilities and opportunities to employ youth after providing them special training under SDM.

He said the leather industry was extensively skill-based and for a person to work in this industry, one must have the requisite skills. He said however there was a prevailing skill gap that needed to be bridged. He said the main objective was to build capacity for high productivity and compliance with global standards.

He said skill in agriculture

was also an area which needed special focus so as to ensure further development in establishing entrepreneurial ventures among progressive farmers and rural youths in the country which would be the backbone for future economic development. He added that Indian agriculture was at cross-roads and the need of the hour was not only to make farming as profitable venture but to attract and retain those who want to quit farming but also enhance agricultural productivity and hence income to solve the issue of disguised unemployment in agricultural work force of India. He said the possible solution to this problem can be skill development in agricultural sector.

Srivastava said the agricultural sector in India needed

most to produce more and better food in order to safeguard food security of a growing population. He said while large proportions of the population earn their livelihood in agriculture related activities, productivity and income generation in this sector remained low. He said one of the core problems was the lack of knowledge about modern production and management techniques at the farm and the small and medium enterprise (SME) level. He said thus thrust had to be laid on imparting skills in these two areas. He said the new focus areas will be agricultural technique, animal husbandry, artificial insemination, labour department where as in leather computer skills, accountancy and supervisory skills.

6 held for attack on supervisor

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Vidhnu police have arrested six persons, including the mining mafia, for their involvement in life attack on the supervisor of Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation late on Saturday night. Accused had also damaged the three DFCC vehicles and escaped. On coming to know about the incident, when police launched raid and caught the assailants red-handed having dinner in a dhaba in Uriyara village, they indulged in scuffle with the cops. Thereafter, police have arrested six assailants while three of their accomplicated managed to escape from there. According to reports, Ramdayal Jat of Newta, Jaipur (Rajasthan) is appointed DFCC supervisor in Koriya village to look after the work of mud supply for the under-construction corridor. According to him, he received a call from mining mafia Babu Singh



Vidhnu police arrest six mining mafiaso for attack on DFCC supervisor. Pioneer

Yadav alias Guddu on Saturday evening when the latter demanded goonda tax of ₹50,000 per month from the former. When Ramdayal refused to pay the amount due to work being related to the

Railway Department, Guddu abused him giving threats for his life. Late in the night, when the work of mud digging was going on in Koriya village, mining mafia Guddu along-with his 10 armed accomplices

including Pankaj Yadav, Ajay Parihar, Raman Yadv, Monu Rajput and Vinay Yadav riding on three cars reached there. Guddu asked him to stop the digging and disappear from the spot if he did not want to pay goonda tax. On protest, they began to damage the DFCC vehicles. Meanwhile, Guddu shot at Ramdayal who anyhow saved himself by hiding behind the vehicle. Suddenly, seeing the force, all the assailants escaped from there. Station Officer Pushpraj Singh said on the complaint of Supervisor Ramdayal, FIR against the assailants had been lodged. Many other cases for illegal mining, Arms Act and attempt to murder were already lodged against Guddu with the Vidhnu police station.

Police have recovered three cars, two country-made pistols and ₹10,000 cash from the accused. All the six accused have been sent to jail on Sunday, SO said.

TU leaders demand allocation of funds for Kanpur's closed mills

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Trade Union leaders led under the banner of Joint Forum of Central Trade Unions have demanded to allocate funds in the forthcoming Union Budget for the restart of Kanpur's closed mills. They handed over a memorandum, addressed to the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitaraman, to the Deputy Labour Commissioner Pankaj Singh Rana to this effect here on Saturday. Speaking on the occasion, senior trade union leader Rajesh Kumar Shukla said the government had decided to close the Lalimli and Kanpur Textiles Mills due to its anti-labour policies. Whereas, on the other hand, it was locating ways to provide employment to unemployed youths. He said Kanpur's glorious past could be revived by handing over the management of these closed mills to the local Defence factories. Like in Jabalpur, Shaktiman vehicles were being manufactured for the Army, Kanpur mills can also cater to the demand of textile products for armymen. He also demanded to revoke the old pension scheme and strictly enforce the labour laws. Dy.Labour Commissioner Pankaj Singh Rana assured to apprise the Central Government of their



Trade Union Leaders handover memorandum to Deputy Labour Commissioner Pankaj Singh Rana on Saturday Pioneer

demands. The delegation comprised RP Kanaujia, Ram Prakash Rai, Arvind Trivedi, Rajiv Khare, Rashmi Bajpai, SAM Zaidi, Asit Kumar Singh, Gaurav Dixit, RD Gautam, Pratap Sahni and Om Prakash.

Earlier on Friday, they lodged protest against the newly set up Shram Bandhu committee and handed over a memorandum to the Additional Labour Commissioner SP Shukla at his Sarvodaya Nagar office. Union Leader Rajesh Kumar Shukla said the representatives of Central Labour Federations and their affiliated unions were not included in the newly set up Shram Bandhu committee

of Kanpur Division. Instead, it included those who had never been a part of labour movements. Expressing resentment, he said the inclusion of members in Shram Bandhu committee was done at the behest of the state government which has no legal entity. He demanded to resolve the issue by replacing the existing members with the genuine ones. He said the Forum had also been pressing for convening a meeting of Shram Bandhu for the past several years. The delegation comprised RP Kanaujia, Asit Kumar Singh (convener of the Joint Forum), Ram Prakash Rai, Kuldeep Saxena, SAM Zaidi, Dinesh Verma,

Dharmdeo, Om Prakash and Dinesh Singh Bhole.

APPOINTED : Prof Neelima Gupta, Vice-Chancellor, CSJM University, Kanpur, has been appointed the Member of Planning and Monitoring Board of Mahatma Gandhi Central University, Bihar, for a term of three years. She has been appointed in place of Prof Manjula Rana, Head, Department of Hindi, HNB Garhwal University, Srinagar (Garhwal) and former member, Uttarakhand State Public Service Commission, who had been earlier nominated on the Executive Council of Mahatma Gandhi Central University, Motihari (Bihar).

Shahi makes surprise visit to CSA University

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The State Minister for Agriculture, Surya Pratap Shahi who made a sudden visit to the Chandra Shekhar Azad University of Agriculture and Technology in view of the proposed visit of the Governor, Anandiben Patel reviewed the progress works for her visit. He then interacted with the Vice-Chancellor, Dr DR Singh and directed him to ensure that all the development works should be accomplished timely in view of the fast approaching end of the financial session.

He said the government had proposed the setting up of two Kisan Kalyan Kendra one at Rawatpur and the other had Bilhaur and directed that they be completed timely without fail. He also directed the V-C that the government was committed to the farmers of the state and thus the projects like Kisan Beej Anudan, solar pump distribution and Kisan Utpaday Sangathan should be stepped up and special training be imparted to ensure it was smoothly carried out on time.

He took a feedback from the Animal Husbandry department of the varsity and also inquired about the dairy products and animal feeds. He said farmers were highly dependent on farming and animal husbandry and thus the government was focusing on efforts to improve these two areas so that the farmers' profits were increased manifolds. He said the farm universities had a major role to play and said the research carried out in the laboratories should reach the agricultural fields as well.

Shahi said the farmers can be facilitated by ensuring they were provided irrigation facilities, DAP, fertilisers on time and on reasonable rates. He said the authorities should remain vigilant that the farmers did not face any problem. Prominent other who were present in the meeting were Director Research, Dr HG Prakash, Joint Director, Dr DK Singh, and several other officials.

NMMTA for reforms in medical MSc courses

KANPUR (PNS): The National MSc Medical Teachers' Association (NMMTA) expressed concern after the National Medical Commission (NMC) excluded non-medical teachers from the para-clinical specialties of pharmacology and microbiology in its latest guidelines. The Association had asked for reforms in medical MSc courses to the Indian government. Officials from the government had ensured the association that their concerns will be addressed. The association had filed a writ petition in the Delhi High Court challenging these regulations, which will be heard on February 17.

Dr Sridhar Rao, president of the Association said medical MSc courses, which were conducted in the medical colleges on the lines of MD courses needed reforms. He said ever since MCI silently abandoned regulating these courses, they were now regulated by individual health universities. He said in the absence of a regulating scientific council, there were variations in these courses with respect to the mode of admissions, duration of courses, dissertation, etc.

He added that the curriculum needed to be upgraded with the changing times and said although the UGC recognised these courses, the Education Ministry had done little as these courses came under the ambit of medical colleges. He said reforms and regulations were needed for these courses and only medical colleges must be permitted to run them. He said PhD aspirants those who wished to appear for NET examination for PhD were forced to take an exam on Life Sciences as no separate subjects were available for those who pursued Medical MSc subjects.

He added that General MSc and Medical MSc were different as the former was the core life sciences and the latter was specialised to suit the medical field.

Special trains for Magh Mela

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

The railway administration for the convenience of passengers on the occasion of Magh Mela will run the following special trains. All coaches in them will be of reserved category and passengers will have to follow the Covid-19 guidelines, CPRO PK Singh said.

05153 MANDUADIH-PRRB SPL: The 05153 Manduadih-Prayagraj Rambag (PRRB) special train will on January 13 and 27, February 10, 15 and 26 and March 10 depart from Manduwadih at 22.30 hrs, Kachhwa Road at 23.07 hrs, Madhosingh at 23.25 hrs, Gyanpur Road at 23.42 hrs, second day Handia Khas at 00.52 hrs, Jhusi at 01.45 hrs and reach Prayagraj Rambag at 02.30 hrs. During the return journey 05154 Prayagraj Rambag-Manduadih special train will on January 14 and 28, February 11, 16 and 27 and March 11 depart from Prayagraj Rambag at 11.00 hrs, Jhusi at 11.25 hrs, Handia Khas at 12.00 hrs, Gyanpur Road at 12.27 hrs, Madhosingh at 12.42 hrs, Kachhwa Road at 13.02 hrs and will reach Manduadih at 14.20 hrs. A total of 10 coaches, including eight of general second class and two of SLRD will be attached in the train.

05151 MANDUADIH-PRRB SPL: The 05151 Manduadih-Prayagraj Rambag special train will on January 14 and 28, February 11, 16 and 27 and March 11 depart from Manduadih at 06.00 hrs, Kachhwa Road at 06.40 hrs, Madhosingh at 07.13 hrs, Gyanpur Road at 07.40 hrs, Handia Khas at 08.32 hrs, Saidabad at 08.48 hrs, Jhusi at 09.35 hrs and reach Prayagraj Rambag at 10.05 hrs. During the return journey the 05152 Prayagraj Rambag-Manduadih special train will on January 14 and 28, February 11, 16 and 27 and March 11 depart from Prayagraj Rambag at 07.20 hrs, Jhusi at 07.55 hrs, Saidabad at 08.10 hrs, Handia Khas at 08.22 hrs, Gyanpur Road at 09.20 hrs, Madhosingh at 09.45 hrs, Kachhwa Road at 10.00 hrs and reach Manduadih at 10.30 hrs. A total of 10 coaches, including eight of general second class and two of SLRD will be attached in the train.

05157 GKP-PRRB SPL: The 05157 Gorakhpur-Prayagraj Rambag special train will on February 10 depart from Gorakhpur at 15.30 hrs, Chauri Chaura at 16.10 hrs, Deoria Sadar at 16.35 hrs, Bhatni at 17.00 hrs, Salempur at 17.14 hrs, Belthara Road at 17.42 hrs,

Spl trains to run for Sankranti Mela

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

The railway administration for the convenience of people will run the following special trains in view of the mela to be organised on the occasion of Makar Sankranti. All coaches in these trains will be of reserved category and passengers traveling in them will have to follow the Covid-19 prevention guidelines, CPRO PK Singh said.

GKP-NAUTANWA SPL: The 05081 Gorakhpur-Nautanwa special train will on January 13, 14 and 15 depart from Gorakhpur at 07.00 hrs, from Nakha Jungle at 07.14 hrs, from Maniram at 07.22 hrs, from Peppeganj at 07.36 hrs, from Campierganj at 07.52 hrs, from Anandnagar at 08.10 hrs, from Lachmipur at 08.37 hrs and will arrive at Nautanwa at 09.15 hrs. During the return journey the 05082 Nautanwa-Gorakhpur fair special train will on January 13, 14 and 15 depart from Nautanwa at 21.00 hrs, from Lachmipur at 21.30 hrs, from Anandnagar at 22.00 hrs, from Campierganj at 22.12 hrs, from Peppeganj at 22.26 hrs, from Maniram at 22.40 hrs, Nakha Jungle at 22.57 hrs and reach Gorakhpur at 23.15

Kiriharapur at 18.00 hrs, Mau at 18.25 hrs, Dullahapur at 18.44 hrs, Jakhnian at 18.54 hrs, Sadat at 19.07 hrs, Aunrihar at 19.40 hrs, Sarnath at 20.02 hrs, Varanasi City at 20.15 hrs, Varanasi at 20.35 hrs, Manduadih at 20.50 hrs, Madhosingh at 21.38 hrs, Gyanpur Road at 22.27 hrs, Handia Khas at 23.00 hrs, Jhusi at 24.00 hrs and will arrive on second day at Prayagraj Rambagh at 00.45 hrs. During the return journey the 05158 Prayagraj Rambag-Gorakhpur special train will on February 11 depart from Prayagraj Rambagh at 05.20 hrs, Jhusi at 05.45 hrs, Handia Khas at 06.32 hrs, Gyanpur Road at 07.12 hrs, Madhosingh at 07.30 hrs, Manduadih at 08.15 hrs, Varanasi at 08.40 hrs, Varanasi City at 08.55 hrs, Sarnath at 09.07 hrs, Aunrihar at 09.30 hrs, Sadat at 10.05 hrs, Jakhnian at 10.18 hrs, Dullahapur at 10.28 hrs, Mau Jn at 10.55 hrs, Kirihharapur at 11.32 hrs, Belthara Road at 12.04 hrs, Salempur at 12.32 hrs, Bhatni at 12.55 hrs, Deoria Sadar at 13.25 hrs, Chauri Chaura at 13.47 hrs and reach Gorakhpur at 14.30 hrs. A total of 10 coaches, including eight of general second class and two of SLRD will be attached.

BHATNI-PRRB SPL: The 05155 Bhatni-Prayagraj Rambagh mela special train will on February 10 depart from Bhatni at 20.40 hrs, Salempur at 20.14 hrs, Belthara Road at 20.00 hrs, Kiriharapur 21.02 hrs, Mau 21:35 hrs, Dulhapur at 21.57 hrs, Jakhnian at 22.10 hrs, Sadat at 22.28 hrs, Aunrihar at 22.54 hrs, Sarnath at 23.22 hrs, Varanasi City on second day at 00.10 hrs, Varanasi at 00.40 hrs, Manduadih at 01.00 hrs, Madhosingh at 01.50 hrs, Gyanpur Road at 02.07 hrs, Handia Khas at 02:52 hrs, Jhusi at 03:35 hrs will reach Prayagraj Rambag at 04.55 hrs. During the return journey the 05156 Prayagraj Rambag-Bhatni mela special train will on February 11 leave Prayagraj Rambagh at 09.00 hrs, Jhusi at 09.25 hrs, Handia Khas at 09.50 hrs, Gyanpur Road at 10.17 hrs, Madho Singh at 10.45 hrs, Manduadih at 11.40 hrs, Varanasi at 12.10 hrs, Varanasi City at 12.30 hrs, Sarnath at 12.42 hrs, Aunrihar at 13.05 hrs, Sadat at 13.30 hrs, Jakhnian at 13.47 hrs, Dulhapur at 13.57 hrs, Mau Jn at 14.30 hrs, Kiriharapur at 15.07 hrs, Belthara Road at 15.26 hrs, Salempur at 15.49 hrs and will reach Bhatni at 16.00 hrs. A total of 10 coaches, including eight of general second class and two of SLRD will be attached in this train.

hrs. A total of 10 coaches, including eight of general second class, and two of SLRD, will be attached in it.

GKP-BARHNI SPL: The 05083 Gorakhpur-Barhni special train will on January 13, 14 and 15 depart from Gorakhpur at 11.00 hrs, from Nakha Jungle at 11.14 hrs, from Maniram at 11.22 hrs, from Peppeganj at 11.36 hrs, from Campierganj at 11.51 hrs, from Anandnagar at 12.20 hrs, from Bridgemanganj at 12.34 hrs, from Uska Bazar at 12.45 hrs, from Siddharthnagar at 12.57 hrs, from Chilhia at 13.15 hrs, Shohratgarh at 13.28 hrs, Parsa at 13.42 hrs and reach Barhni at 14:20 hrs. During the return journey 05084 Barhni-Gorakhpur Mela special will on January 13, 14 and 15 departs from Barhni at 17.00 hrs, from Parsa at 17.16 hrs, from Shohratgarh at 17.29 hrs, Chilhia at 17.39 hrs, Siddharthnagar at 17.57 hrs, from Uska Bazar at 18.09 hrs, from Bridgemanganj at 18.20 hrs, Anandnagar at 18.40 hrs, Campierganj at 18.50 hrs, Peppeganj at 19.08 hrs, Maniram at 19.30 hrs, Nakaha Jungle at 19.42 hrs and reach Gorakhpur at 20.05 hrs. A total of 10 coaches, including eight of general second class and two of SLRD will be attached in the train.

Mankapur-Prayagraj Sangam spl to run from today

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

The railway administration will for the convenience of passengers run 04233 Prayagraj Sangam-Mankapur daily special train till March 14 and 04234 Mankapur-Prayagraj Sangam daily special train from January 11 to March 15. All coaches will be of reserved category and passengers will have to follow the Covid-19 guidelines, CPRO PK Singh said.

PYGS-MANKAPUR SPL: The 04233 Prayagraj Sangam (PYGS)-Mankapur special will daily till March 14 leave Prayagraj Sangam at 18.10 hrs, Prayag at 18.30 hrs, Phaphamau at 18.49 hrs, Mau Aima at 19.13 hrs, Bishnathganj at 19.27 hrs, Pratapgargh at 19.50 hrs, Khundaur at 20.22 hrs, Piparpur at 20.49 hrs, Sultanpur at 21.20 hrs,

Kurebhar 21.48 hrs, Khajurhat at 22.10 hrs, Maletthu Kanak at 22.24 hrs, Faizabad at 23.20 hrs and the second day Ayodhya at 00.02 hrs and reach Mankapur at 00:50 hrs. During the return journey 04234 Mankapur-Prayagraj Sangam special will from January 11 to March 15 daily leave Mankapur at 02.50 hrs, Ayodhya at 03.40 hrs, Faizabad 04.15 hrs, Maletthu Kanak at 04.47 hrs, Khajurhat at 05.02 hrs, Kurebhar at 05.24 hrs, Sultanpur at 05.53 hrs, Pipurpur at 06.14 hrs, Khundaur at 06.34 hrs, Pratapgargh at 07.12 hrs, Bishnathganj at 07.29 hrs, Mau Aima at 07.45 hrs, Phaphamau at 08.10 hrs, Prayag at 08.28 hrs and reach Prayagraj Sangam at 08.50 hrs. A total of 13 coaches, including 10 of general second class, one AC chair car, and two of SLRD will be attached in it.

PYGS-BST SPL: The 04231 Prayagraj Sangam-Basti (BST)

special train will from January 12 to March 16 depart from Prayagraj Sangam every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday at 04.55 hrs, Pratapgargh at 05.55 hrs, Sultanpur at 07.20 hrs, Faizabad at 09.00 hrs, Ayodhya at 09.25 hrs, Mankapur at 10.10 hrs, Babhnar at 10.40 hrs, Gaur at 10.49 hrs, Tinich at 10.58 hrs and reach Basti at 11.00 hrs. During the return journey, 04232 Basti-Prayagraj Sangam special train will from January 12 to 16 every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday leave Basti at 13.50 hrs, Tinich at 14.07 hrs, Mankapur at 15.05 hrs, Ayodhya at 16.05 hrs, Faizabad at 16.30 hrs, Sultanpur at 17.55 hrs, Pratapgargh at 18.52 hrs and will reach Prayagraj Sangam at 20.45 hrs. A total of 12 coaches, including one of AC third, two of sleeper class etc will be attached in it.

Laxman rules the roost

PNS ■ VARANASI

During the inter-departmental T20 cricket tournament going on at the Mini Stadium of North Eastern Railway (NER) under the joint aegis of Manoranjan Institute and Divisional Sports Association (DSA), a match between the Commercial and Electricity departments was played on Saturday. Batting first the Electrical Department scored 89 runs for 9 wickets in 20 overs. Ramesh contributed 17 runs. For the Commercial Department Laxman took three wickets and Amit and Meena two wickets each. In reply, the team of the Commercial Department made 90 runs in 13 overs for the loss of three wickets and won the match by seven wickets. Amit contributed 23, Laxman and Kaabil contributed 16 runs each. For the Electrical department Ramesh took one wicket. The Man of the Match Award was presented to Laxman Yadav for his all-round performance by Senior Divisional Operations Manager Rohit Gupta and Assistant Commercial Manager AK Suman.

Sainik Sammelan held

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

A Sainik Sammelan and a crime meeting were held at Police Lines on Saturday. The main focus in the meeting was on ensuing panchayat election in view of which the cops were told to deal seriously with disputes even if they were related petty issues as they could become a major issue later and keep a close watch over the activities of poll aspirants and not promote any groupism. The SP said large scale preventive action should be taken without any discrimination. The SP directed SOs to take action against the criminals to ensure peaceful conduct of panchayat elections. He told them to tighten the noose around the gangsters and if formalities were completed properties of such elements should be confiscated. The meeting was attended by the DM, ADM(F&R) ASPs, COs, all SHOs and others.

WELCOMED: Vice-Chairman Scheduled Caste Commission of the state Mani Ram Kol welcomed the decision of the Union government to increase the budget for education of ST students nearly five times from the FY 2020-21. Interacting with media he said around 1.36 crore students will get the benefit in the form of scholarship. Under the scheme the union government will contribute 60 per cent and state governments 40 per cent, he said. According to it the benefit had to be provided through DBT mode. As per the provision audit of the institution had been made mandatory, he said. During the press conference he was accompanied by Lalchand Saroj, Satwant Bhatti, Gulab Pasi, Gyan Prakash Dubey and district president BJP, Braj Bhushan Singh.

Tragedy averted as IED detonated in Poonch

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

A major tragedy was averted along the Line of Control in Mendhar tehsil of Poonch on Sunday after security forces timely detected and defused an improvised explosive device possibly planted by the over ground workers of terror outfits desperately trying to revive militancy in the region.

The IED was detected close on the heels of recovery of several cache of arms and ammunition in the frontier district in the last few days. Terrorist handlers sitting across the line of control had earlier directed their OGW's to disturb peace in the region by targeting religious places.

According to official sources, an IED was detected near Gohlad-Mendhar road

link early Sunday morning. Initially, local residents in the area had raised an alarm after spotting some suspicious material lying on the roadside in the area. Soon after the different teams of security forces including the members of the Bomb Disposal squad of the Indian army were rushed to the area to neutralise the explosive material. The vehicular movement was also suspended in the area to prevent any collateral damage. After conducting thorough reece and mandatory searches in the close vicinity the members of the Bomb disposal squad defused the IED by detonating the same.

Meanwhile, in Kashmir valley security forces unearthed a well carved out hideout in the cowshed of a house located in Chandhara village of Pampore, Awantipora.

According to a police spokesman, "based on credible input regarding presence of terrorists of proscribed terror outfit LeT in a hideout constructed in a particular house in village Chandhara Pampore, Awantipora Police along with 50 RR and 110 Bn CRPF launched a search operation today early morning. During search one large hideout of LeT outfit was found in the cowshed and was destroyed subsequently. "One terrorist associate identified as Adil Ahmad Shah resident of Chandhara Pampore of proscribed terror outfit LeT was also arrested" during the operation..

"Incriminating material and cache of ammunition including 26 rounds of AK-47 were recovered from the busted hideout", the spokesman added.

Maha downgrades Fadnavis, Raj Thackeray's security; sparks row

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a development that unnerved the Opposition, the Uddhav Thackeray-led MVA Government on Sunday slashed the security of several BJP leaders including leader of Opposition in the Assembly Devendra Fadnavis, and MNS President Raj Thackeray, as part of what it called the annual review of the State VVIP security.

While the Maharashtra government downgraded Fadnavis' security from Z-plus to Y-plus with escort, it also reduced the security of his banker-wife Amruta and daughter Divija who have now been given X-security from the earlier Y-plus with escort. The state government withdrew the security cover of Fadnavis' aunt Shobhatai Fadnavis's security.

Similarly, the state government slashed the security of leader of the Opposition in the State Legislative Council Pravin Darekar of the BJP, while it withdrew the security of several others, including that of State BJP President Chandrakant Patil.

Upset by the move, the Opposition BJP dubbed the move to either reduce or withdraw security covers of its leaders as "politically motivated".

The state government reduced the security of MNS

president and chief minister Uddhav Thackeray's cousin Raj Thackeray from Z to Y-Plus with escort.

The other BJP leaders, whose security cover has been withdrawn arte Minister of State Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Raosaheb Patil-Danve, former Chief Minister Narayan Rane, former Finance Minister Sudhir Mungantiwar, former Congressman Kripshankar Singh, close Fadnavis aide and MLC Prasad Lad, BJP MLA and spokesperson Ram Kadam and state BJP Vice President Madhav Bhandari.

Similarly, the security cover of Uttar Pradesh's former Governor Ram Naik has been reduced from Y-Plus to Y, while the security covers of Deepak Kesarkar and Ashish Shelar had been slashed from Y-Plus to Y and that of Suryakant Shinde from Y-Plus to X.

Reacting to the development, Fadnavis said: "I have no complaints (about the reduction of my security cover). Just because the state government has slashed my security does not mean that I will reduce my travel. Hence the state government's decision will have no bearing on me," Fadnavis said.

"Giving security or otherwise to the Opposition is based on threat perceptions. In our

previous government, we used to adopt this policy. However, this government is giving more security to people who do not face any threats," he said.

"I had never taken security in the past. After I became the chief minister, I was given security cover. After the execution of Yakub Memon in July 2015 and drive against Maoists in eastern Maharashtra, my security was enhanced and this was done based on the directives by the Centre," the former chief minister said.

Former minister senior BJP leader Sudhir Mungantiwar, whose security has been withdrawn, had a dig at the Uddhav Thackeray government: "I was given security because I come from a Maoist-hit district. It has been withdrawn, so it appears that Maoist activities are over. But the (government) must ensure security for the common masses".

However, the state government has upgraded some others. While senior lawyer Ujjwal Nikam's Y-plus with escort cover has been upgraded to Z, film actor and Congress leader Shatrughan Sinha's Y-plus cover has been upgraded to Y-plus with escort.

Deputy Chief Minister and NCP leader Ajit Pawar's wife Sunetra has been accorded X-category cover.

Chairman of state Legislative Council Ramraje

Naik-Nimbalkar will now get Y-plus with escort, Relief and Rehabilitation minister Vijay Wadettiwar will get Y-plus with escort while in Mumbai, Shiv Sena legislator Vaibhav Naik who had defeated Narayan Rane in Assembly polls gets X-security cover.

Justifying the changes made in the security covers given to the Opposition leaders, Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh said that the state government had made the changes based on the recommendations of a five-member committee of officers that reviewed the security and came out with a new recommendation.

Maharashtra's former chief minister Narayan Rane, whose security has been withdrawn said: "My security has been

removed...I have no issues nor have any complaints. But, if anything happens to me, then the state government will be responsible for it".

Slamming the BJP for making an issue of slashing security of its leaders, State Congress spokesperson Sachin Sawant said "The BJP leaders should shout and scream if their security cover is reduced or removed considering the reduced threat perceptions to them".

"Though the Gandhi family and ex-Prime Minister Manmohan Singh face threats, the BJP acted vindictively and reduced their security after which the BJP people had rejoiced But the MVA government doesn't have such vindictive attitude," Sawant said.

Pawar asks MVA Govt to slash his security cover

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Amid the Opposition BJP's criticism of the MVA Government's move to slash the security covers of its leaders, NCP chief Sharad Pawar has asked Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh to reduce his security.

Talking to media persons, Deshmukh disclosed: "Pawarsaheb had called me

and asked me to reduce his security". "Till four years ago, Pawar saheb never had an escort, or a pilot, even when Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar was holding no post for five years, he had no security. There is absolutely no politics in the whole thing. The security is given to people by the government on the basis of threat perceptions," Deshmukh said.



Flamingos fly in Navi Mumbai on Sunday

PTI

Maha: 3 hurt as 4 robbers open fire, loot jewellery shop

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

At least three persons were injured when a four-member gang of desperadoes opened fire and attacked the owner and staff at a jewellery shop at Ambernath in the neighbouring Thane district with choppers, and decamped with gold ornaments worth Rs 12.77 lakh on Sunday afternoon.

In an incident that sent shockwaves through Ambernath township, four gangsters -- who came on two motorbikes -- fired seven rounds and attacked the owner and staff members of the staff with choppers.

Ulhasnagar's Deputy Commissioner of Police Prashant Mohite said that the gangsters decamped with 250gms of jewellery worth Rs. 12.77 lakh.

"Of the persons injured, the condition of the two is serious," he said.

The incident took place at

around 1.45 pm. "The four-some entered the shop and engaged the counter sales staff in small talk and asked to be shown some jewellery for purchase.

Later, a couple of gangsters whipped out revolvers, pointed them towards the owners and staffers at the shop and grabbed the jewellery. When the shop owners and staffers resisted the attempt, the gangsters opened seven rounds of fire and also assaulted them with choppers.

The injured -- identified as Vasani Singh (26), Laxman Singh (30), both owners and Bhairav Singh (25) -- were rushed to the Ulhasnagar Central Hospital.

While Laxman suffered bullet wounds, the other two suffered injuries during the chopper attack on them.

"We have formed four teams to look out for the four gangsters. We have enforced a Naka bandi in the entire region," the DCP said.

AMU student shot dead

PRADEEP SAXENA ■ ALIGARH

Police are on the lookout for the attackers after the shooting of the AMU student close to Zubair, who was associated with Munir gang, was shot late on Saturday night. In this case, the police have also taken into custody two suspects and they are being questioned. The student was on his way home on Scooty at the time of the incident. The attackers targeted him a lane before the house. The killed student was jailed in 2018 for killing a young man. The police believe that the incident is going on in his counterpart.

Victim was a BA honors final year student

Atif Khan, the 25-year-old son of Mohammad Jamil Ahmed, a resident of Zakir Nagar street No 5, was a BA Honors Final Year student at AMU. On Saturday night at around 10:30, he was coming home on Scooty to Zacharia Market leaving friend Zaid. Just then, the four attackers already standing there stopped him and fired sharply at him, targeting Atif. Atif had two shots in his back and shoulder.

UP man stranded in Iran returns home with help of Indian embassy

Shahjahanpur: A young man from Uttar Pradesh who was stranded in Iran after being duped by a recruitment agent has returned home with the help of Indian embassy there, a BJP MP said on Sunday.

According to BJP MP from Shahjahanpur Arun Kumar Sagar, Rinku, a resident of Jakhiya village in the district, had gone to Iran on December 14 after being promised a job in the merchant navy by the Mumbai-based agent.

Rinku was introduced to the agent by a man who had taken Rs 3.50 lakh from him. On reaching Iran, Rinku was

given a job in a small boat and his employers took away his passport and other documents. Having realised that he has been duped, Rinku narrated his situation to his father who, in turn, approached the parliamentarian for help.

The MP said he spoke to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and "the Indian embassy sent Rinku to India from Iran on January 2."

Speaking to PTI over phone, Rinku said he had done a course for a job in the merchant navy and that the agent sent him to Iran with the promise of a job in the sector. PTI

Subramaniam's NAF revolutionises 3L farmers' lives

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

More than three lakh farmers spread across the States of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Maharashtra are in cloud nine thanks to an initiative by late C Subramaniam, the Bharat Ratna awardee and former Union Minister of Food and Agriculture. Subramaniam could integrate the services of farmers and buyers without any hassles through his initiative National Agro Foundation (NAF).

There were and there are no Mandis or APMC in Tamil Nadu even now! Farmers in Cauvery Delta (the rice producing districts of the State) and elsewhere complain about the elusive Minimum Support Prices announced by the Governments. But the NAF compensates for it.

Subramaniam had held the portfolio of food and agriculture during the most critical phase of India, 1962-67, a period known as "days of ship to mouth existence". If the ships laden with wheat from USA fail to turn up at Indian ports, the country's population would starve as domestic food production was at its lowest ebb thanks to the socialist-permit raj. The grain production in the country was a mere 80 million tonnes which made India to move around in international market with a begging bowl.

Subramaniam along with farm scientists like M S Swaminathan had launched the Green Revolution by introducing advanced rice and wheat varieties so that farmers could get more yield per hectare. It helped the nation tide over the food crisis, though temporarily.

The man who saved Indian agriculture with "out of the box" ideas, was disappointed

because of the failure of the policy makers by the 1990s as he saw thousands of farmers committing suicide because of crop failure, high debts and poor returns.

In the year 2000, on his 90th birthday, Subramaniam, who was leading a retired life at Chennai, launched the National Agro Foundation, an institution which he hoped would play a small role in helping farmers in the State rejuvenate their farms and supplement their income. This correspondent was a witness to the small function held at his residence where the legendary Nani Palkhivala and APJ Abdul Kalam (then the scientific advisor to Government of India) were present.

The NAF, with the help of farm scientists like M Ramasubramanian and Kalpana Rajesh has emerged as a silent but powerful establishment that has revolutionised the lives of three lakh farmers in the

seven States. The NAF team tests the soil and advise farmers which crop would be ideal for their farms while their management team facilitates the farmers to sell their crops directly to buyers.

Scientists and managers of NAF tour the villages like missionaries and evangelize the villagers about selection of crops, how and when to start the farming operations and how to nourish the crops. "We study soil fertility of each location and analyze the local climate before asking the farmers which crop to select. All our efforts have been fruitful," said M R Ramasubramanianm, CEO, NAF.

The soil is tested in the state-of-the-art chemical laboratory to find out the soil fertility. "By analyzing the soil, we can also find out the ideal crop which could be grown in the area. Details like shortage of nutrients and micro-nutrients

could be understood from these studies," said R Kalpana, NAF's soil scientist.

"It is the farmers who negotiate and fix the prices of their crops with the buyers. They know at the time of sowing itself what they would get as prices," said S S Rajasekhara, NAF's trustee and son of late Subramaniam.

Amritraj of Endathur village in Kancheepuram, a farmer who cultivates watermelon and Reghu, a farmhand who made profit through muskmelon farming owe their prosperity to NAF. All these happen in Tamil Nadu where politicians and farmers complain of water shortage and wasteland.

"There is no wasteland or dryland. They are all under-utilised land," said Rajasekhara. He said he was indebted to corporate houses and trade bodies which help NAF to sustain itself as part of their corporate social responsibility.

Prahlad slams Mamata Govt over law and order in WB

New Delhi: Union Culture and Tourism Minister Prahlad Singh Patel strongly criticised the Mamta Banerjee Government regarding the law and order. He attacked the wage board of the workers of the tea gardens and the Bengal Government for their lease problems. Patel accused the State Government of indifference for cultural activities in Darjeeling. He was talking to the media during his stay in Darjeeling.

There is no improvement in the status of tea garden workers

Union Culture and Tourism Minister Prahlad Singh Patel alleged that the government of Bengal has nothing to do with social concerns. He said that nature has given everything to Darjeeling, but this area has been the victim of neglect of the state government. He told that he had come to Siliguri about 10 years

ago to join the program of the Bharatiya Janata Mazdoor Mahasangh. Since then, there has been no improvement in the condition of the people of the tea gardens. He criticized the state government saying that the problem of people of tea gardens has remained the same for years, people have not even got the lease of the land. He told that the Central Government has implemented a minimum wage board for the plantation employees, which will be implemented soon.

This time 200 times Mr. Patel said that our manifesto is our resolution letter. None of our work goes out of tenure. Whatever promises we make, we fulfill within tenure. He said that we will find a permanent political solution to the Gorkha case. On the answer of a question, he said that on the request of the MP here, we gave the money for his scholarship to Nepalese



research scholars in 3 days, till then there was no question of elections. Mr. Patel said that many types of taxes are collected here since the time of the British, but facilities are not available. He alleged that anti-MPs in Bengal cannot spend their MP funds in the interest of the people here. He said that this is the reason that the people of Bengal want change that

will happen. Government of Bengal should pay attention to culture, said Patel

Union Culture and Tourism Minister Prahlad Singh Patel said that there is no platform for conducting cultural activities in Darjeeling. Mr. Patten demanded that the state government provide a place like Tagore Culture Space and said that if the state gov-

ernment provides the land, then his ministry can do a lot of work here in the field of art. He said that the culture of Bengal is very rich but there is no such academy through which the artists of this place can know about the culture of the place, and can further improve it.

Mr. Patel said that when tourists from India and abroad come to any area, they do not just want to see the beauty, but also want to know about the cultural heritage, which has no system here. He said that when his party comes to power in Bengal, a lot of work will be done here.

Earlier, Shri Patel offered prayers at Mahakal Temple and paid tribute to the martyrs by going to the War Memorial. During this time, Darjeeling MP and Bharatiya Janata Party national spokesperson Raju Bisht was also present with him.



A worker sprays disinfectant in an enclosure of Assam State Zoo in the wake of avian influenza outbreak, in Guwahati on Sunday

PTI

Co-WIN to form foundation for anti-Covid jab plan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day before Prime Minister Narendra Modi is to hold a meeting with Chief Ministers on Monday in the run up to the launch of the vaccination drive on January 16, the Centre on Sunday said Co-WIN, an online platform for monitoring Covid-19 vaccine delivery, shall form the foundation for the anti-coronavirus inoculation programme which shall be citizen-centric so that the vaccine is available anytime and anywhere.

The Prime Minister will chair the meeting slated to begin at 4 pm. He will be apprised by the CMs on the roll-out of coronavirus vaccine as well as the COVID-19 situation in their respective states.

The digital meet would be significant, coming ahead of the roll-out of two COVID-19 vaccines from January 16 and two dry-run of the vaccine pan India.

It is the first interaction between Modi and the CMs after the Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) gave restricted, emergency-use approval to two vaccines - Oxford Astrazeneca's vaccine 'Covishield', manufactured in India by Pune's Serum Institute of India, and Bharat Biotech's 'Covaxin'.

The Union Health Ministry said that Co-WIN, an online platform for monitoring COVID-19 vaccine delivery, shall form the foundation for the anti-coronavirus inoculation drive which shall be citizen-centric so that the vaccine is available anytime and anywhere.

As part of preparations

India's Covid deaths continue to fall

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With less than 300 new Covid-19 deaths being recorded in the country for the last 16 days, India's fatality rate continues to witness a sustained decline, dropping to 1.44 per cent. This, the Union Health Ministry said on Sunday could be possible due to focused efforts of the Centre, States and Union Territories on effective clinical management of the hospitalised cases.

Owing to effective containment strategy, aggressive testing and standardised clinical management protocols based on holistic standard of care protocol across Government and private hospitals, the number of new deaths have dipped, it stated.

As part of the COVID-19 management and response policy, there has been a sharp focus of the Centre on not only containing the viral disease but also to reduce deaths



and to save lives by providing quality clinical care to the critical and severely diseased patients.

Collaborative efforts of the Centre, States and UTs have resulted in strengthening of health facilities across the country, the health ministry said.

"India has one of the lowest deaths per million population (109). Countries like Russia, Germany, Brazil, France, the USA, the UK and Italy have much higher deaths

per million population," it said.

The total number of recovered cases in the country has surged to 10,075,950 and the national recovery rate has improved to 96.42 per cent.

India's current active caseload of 2,23,335 was just 2.14 per cent of its total cases. Recovery of 19,299 patients in 24 hours has led a decline of 855 cases from the total COVID-19 active caseload. Maharashtra recorded the

maximum positive change with an addition of 1,123 cases, whereas Rajasthan shows maximum negative change with a reduction of 672 cases.

Ten states and UTs contributed 79.12 per cent of the new recovered cases.

Kerala saw 5,424 people recovering from COVID-19 in a day, followed by 2,401 in Maharashtra and 1,167 in Uttar Pradesh.

Also, 10 states and UTs have contributed 82.25 per cent of the 18,645 new cases recorded in a day across India. Kerala reported 5,528 new cases in the last 24 hours, followed by Maharashtra 3,581 and Chhattisgarh reported 1,014.

The ministry said that 73.63 per cent of the 201 fatalities reported in a span of 24 hours were from seven states and UTs. Maharashtra reported the maximum 57 deaths, followed by 22 in Kerala and 20 in West Bengal.

ICU patients suffered from delirium, coma in early pandemic stage: Study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Covid-19 patients admitted to intensive care in the early months of the pandemic experienced a higher burden of delirium and coma than is typically found in those hospitalised with acute respiratory failure, according to a largest study of its kind to date.

The research, published in The Lancet Respiratory Medicine journal, tracked the incidence of delirium and coma in over 2,000 Covid-19 patients admitted before April 28, 2020, to 69 adult intensive care units across 14 countries.

According to the scientists, led by those at Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC) in the U.S., the choice of sedative medications and curbs on family visitation played a role in increasing acute brain dysfunction for these patients.

They said ICU delirium is associated with higher medical costs and greater risk of death and long-term ICU-related dementia. Nearly 82% of the patients in the study were comatose for a median of 10 days, and 55% were delirious for a median of three days.

The scientists noted that

acute brain dysfunction lasted for an average of 12 days. "This is double what is seen in non-COVID ICU patients," said study co-author Brenda Pun from VUMC.

The scientists believe Covid-19 could predispose patients to a higher burden of acute brain dysfunction. However, they also noted that patient care factors, some of which are related to pressures posed on health care by the pandemic, also appear to have played a significant role.

With respect to Covid-19, the scientists believe there has been widespread abandonment of newer clinical protocols that are proven to help ward off the acute brain dysfunction that usually affects many critically ill patients. "It is clear in our findings that many ICUs reverted to sedation practices that are not in line with best practice guidelines and we're left to speculate on the causes," Pun said. "Early reports of Covid-19 suggested that the lung dysfunction seen required unique management techniques including deep sedation. In the process, key preventive measures against acute brain dysfunction went

somewhat by the boards," she added.

Analysing patient characteristics from electronic health records, and care practices and findings from clinical assessments, the scientists found that about 90% of patients tracked in the study were invasively mechanically ventilated at some point during hospitalisation, and 67% on the day of ICU admission.

Patients receiving benzodiazepine sedative infusions were at 59% higher risk of developing delirium, they added. In comparison, the patients who received family visitation were at 30% lower risk of delirium, the study noted.

"There's no reason to think that, since the close of our study, the situation for these patients has changed," said study senior author, Pratik Pandharipande. "These prolonged periods of acute brain dysfunction are largely avoidable. ICU teams need above all to return to lighter levels of sedation for these patients, frequent awakening and breathing trials, mobilisation and safe in-person or virtual visitation," Pandharipande added.

a digital record on who gets vaccinated by whom, when and which one, Sharma stressed.

Under India's vaccination drive, one crore healthcare

workers and two crore front-line workers would be inoculated in the first phase. The Centre plans to also vaccinate 27 crore other persons who are at a greater risk of contracting

the virus.

PM-CARES ((Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations) Fund may be used to purchase the vaccines.

2 in CBI net for alleged sale, purchase of child pornography over Instagram

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has arrested two accused persons in an ongoing investigation of a case related to alleged sale/purchase of child sexual abuse material over Instagram and other social media platforms.

The two arrested accused are Neeraj Kumar Yadav (named as accused in the FIR) and another person Kuljeet Singh Makan. Yadav is a B.Tech. engineer.

Both the arrested accused were produced before the Competent Court at Saket here and the duo was remanded to judicial custody till January 22.

The CBI registered a case against Yadav, a private person, under provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 and the Information Technology Act, 2000 on the allegations that the accused was advertising over Instagram account for sale of objectionable material including child pornographic material, officials said.

"It was further alleged that the said accused had purchased



large volume of data, from another accused person, which was stored over cloud-based websites containing objectionable material including the child pornography material and made payment to him through Paytm for the same," the CBI said.

Thereafter, the accused allegedly published an advertisement for sale of said material over Instagram. On receipt of payments via Paytm / Google Pay among others from the customers/ seekers, the accused was allegedly sharing the said objectionable material with them through WhatsApp, Telegram,

Instagram and other social media platforms. It was also alleged that he has gained monetary benefits and was indulging in these activities since 2019, it added.

A Special Unit "Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Prevention/ Investigation (OCSAE)" has been created in CBI, New Delhi for probing offences relating to online child sexual abuse and exploitation. Apart from receiving various references/information, the unit is undertaking investigation of various offences relating to online child sexual abuse and exploitation.

SC to hear pleas on farm laws, ongoing farmers' agitation at Delhi borders today

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Amid a deadlock in the Government's negotiations with protesting farmer unions, the Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on Monday a clutch of pleas challenging the new farm laws as well as the ones raising issues related to the ongoing agitation at Delhi borders.

The eighth round of talks between the Centre and the farmer unions on January 7 appeared heading nowhere as the Centre ruled out repealing the contentious laws while the farmer leaders said they are ready to fight till death and their 'ghar waapsi' will happen only after 'law waapsi'.

The Monday hearing on the pleas by a bench headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde assumes significance as the Centre and the farmer leaders are scheduled to hold their next meeting on January 15.

The top court, which had observed that there is no

improvement on the ground regarding farmers' protests, was told by the Centre on the last date of hearing that "healthy discussions" were going on between the Government and the unions over all the issues and there was good chance that both sides may come to a conclusion in the near future.

The court had then assured the government of an adjournment on January 11 provided it urges so saying that the settlement through talks was a possibility.

"We understand the situation and encourage the consultation. We can adjourn the matters on Monday (January 11) if you submit the same due to the ongoing consultation process," it had said.

After the eighth round of talks, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar had said no decision could be reached as the farmer leaders did not present alternatives to their demand for the repeal of the laws.

Yediyurappa meets Shah to finalise BJP's candidates for upcoming K'taka bypolls

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa on Sunday met Home Minister Amit Shah here to finalise the BJP's candidates for the upcoming bypolls in the State, the Cabinet reshuffle-in-waiting and also to discuss the latest political situation in the State.

The Chief Minister was meeting Shah soon after the BJP's success in the 'Gram Panchayat' poll in Karnataka.

"I am going to discuss the political situation in Karnataka. Recently, we won the gram panchayat elections in a very big way. Within a month, we are going to face two parliamentary and an Assembly by-polls. We have to finalise the candidates. We will discuss all these issues with Amit Shah and other important leaders," the Chief Minister said before his meeting the former party president.

The BJP leader said he will also try to meet the party national president J P Nadda.

Nadda who returned from his one-day West Bengal poll campaign tour is flying to



The BJP leader said he will also try to meet the party national president JP Nadda

Assam for a two-day visit on Monday where he would also address a rally at Silchar.

Asked about the steps taken

to check the spread of COVID-19 in the state, the Karnataka Chief Minister said, "In Karnataka, the COVID-19 situation is under control. We are taking all precautions."

Earlier, he hinted that the cabinet expansion may also be on the table for discussion during his meeting with the party high command. The cabinet expansion in the state has been on the cards for over a year.

Yeddiurappa has been facing dissidence from within the party for quite some time.

All-women cockpit crew set out on historic San Francisco-Bengaluru flight



PTI ■ BENGALURU

An all-women cockpit crew set out on a historic journey, operating Air India's inaugural San Francisco-Bengaluru flight, going over the North Pole and taking the Atlantic route to reach the Karnataka capital at the other end of the world.

The flight number AI176 left San Francisco on Saturday at 8.30 PM (local time) and would arrive in Bengaluru at 3.45 AM on Monday, according to Air India sources.

Union Minister for Civil

Aviation, Hardeep Singh Puri tweeted, "Way to go girls! Professional, qualified & confident, the all women cockpit crew takes off from San Francisco to Bengaluru on @airindiain flight to fly over the North Pole. Our Nari Shakti achieves a historic first."

Air India has said this will be the longest commercial flight in the world to be operated by it or any other airline in India.

The total flight time on this route will be more than 17 hours depending on the wind speed on that particu-

lar day, it had said in a statement on the eve of the historic flight.

Members of the crew are: Captain Zoya Aggarwal, Captain Papagari Thanmai, Captain Akansha Sonaware and Captain Shivani Manhas.

Air India too expressed its elation when it tweeted, "Imagine this: -All Women Cockpit Crew. -Longest flight into India. -Crossing the North Pole It's here & happening! Records broken. History in the making by AI176 from @flySFO to @BLRAirport. AI 176 is cruising at 30000 feet.

NEP set to become reality by 2021-end

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

National Employment Policy (NEP) could become a reality by this year-end following the implementation of four labour codes and completion of four major surveys, including one on migrant workers.

The NEP, to be given shape by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, will draw a broad road map for improving job opportunities in the country, mainly by various initiatives like skill development, bringing investment in employment intensive segments and other policy interventions.

Last year, Parliament passed three labour codes on Industrial Relations, Social Security and Occupational Health Safety & Working Conditions (OSH).

The Code on Wages was approved by Parliament last year and its rules have been framed up. But the implementation of the rules for Code on Wages was held back because the government wanted to implement all four labour codes in one go. These four codes are likely to be

implemented from April 1 this year.

The implementation of these four labour codes would provide a conducive legal framework for universalisation of social security and other safeguards for the entire workforce of over 50 crore in the country.

But for job creation, a broad NEP would be required to exploit the potential of each segment of different sectors of the economy. This would require up-to-date data on employment across the sectors in the country. This gap would be bridged by the four employment surveys to be conducted by the Labour Bureau, a wing of the ministry.

Talking to PTI, Director General, Labour Bureau, D S Negi told PTI that the bureau has begun spadework on the four surveys and field work would begin by March and the results would be out by October-end this year only.

He said the NEP would take a shape based on the data inputs of these four surveys by December this year only.

Thereafter, the NEP would be sent for the approval

of the Union Cabinet.

The document is expected to aid employment generation in the country to a great extent, especially when the government is grappling with the issue of job loss especially due to the pandemic.

Earlier last month, Labour Minister Santosh Gangwar had also said that the four all India surveys on migrant workers, domestic workers, employment generated by professionals and transport sector which will be launched by early March, 2020 and the results of these will be available by October 2021.

The Minister had opined that for any evidence-based policy making for these workers, "authentic data" on employment in organised and unorganised sector enterprises is highly called for.

The minister had also informed that the bureau will soon launch an "All India Quarterly Survey" on Employment of Enterprises" that will provide comprehensive data on the employment numbers in both the organized and unorganized sectors to address these data needs.

SC judgement on pleas seeking review of verdict upholding validity of Aadhaar scheme today

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court is scheduled to pronounce on Monday its verdict on pleas seeking review of a verdict upholding the Centre's flagship Aadhaar scheme as constitutionally valid but striking down some of its provisions, including its linking with bank accounts, mobile phones and school admissions.

A five-judge bench, comprising Justices A M Khanwilkar, D Y Chandrachud, Ashok Bhushan, S A Nazeer and B R Gavai, will take up in-chambers a batch of review pleas challenging the September 26, 2018 verdict.

A five-judge Constitution bench headed by then Chief Justice Dipak Misra held that while Aadhaar would remain mandatory for filing of Income Tax Return and allotment of permanent account number (PAN), it would not be mandatory to link Aadhaar number to bank accounts and telecom service providers cannot seek its linking for mobile connections.

In a 4-1 verdict that also quashed some contentious

provisions of the Aadhaar Act, the top court, however, had held Aadhaar would be needed for availing facilities of welfare schemes and government subsidies.

Ruling that seeding of Aadhaar would not be required for opening bank accounts, availing mobile services, by CBSE, NEET, JEE, UGC and for admissions in schools and free education for children, the top court had observed that Aadhaar had also become a household name and that its use has spread like a "wildfire".

It had struck down as unconstitutional the portion of Section 57 of the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016 that permitted private entities like telecom companies or other corporates to avail of the biometric Aadhaar data.

Justice D Y Chandrachud, who was part of the bench, had given a dissenting judgement in which he ruled the Aadhaar Act should not have been passed as a Money Bill as it amounts to fraud on the Constitution and is liable to be struck down.

Trumpism is here

Twitter has banned the US President but can it disregard its own role in fanning the fire that led to chaos at DC?



Social media platform Twitter may have banned US President Donald Trump and, in turn, been accused of being a liberal Democrat plank to undercut him but the fact remains that it has served as his greatest propaganda tool and created a phenomenon called “Trumpism”. Enough for the outgoing President to propagate on a new platform that he has threatened to float and evangelise in the way he knows — Begin with subterranean tactics and legitimise them subsequently. In that sense, both Twitter, which respected his high office and the traction it generated, and Trump, who used it to connect to his constituency and negate a critical media, have benefited. In that sense, the damage has already been done; one that will easily outlast the latest insurrection on Capitol Hill or Twitter’s righteous stand to course-correct and stand neutral. Meanwhile, both have reaped more than the harvest they wanted. For Trump, Twitter’s short format and instant reactiveness helped his demagoguery without the need to explain his policies. It helped him mainstream a largely White supremacist idea and co-opt it as part of a larger American dream. It helped him justify his brand of divisive politics; one which posited liberalism as elitist and excluded the working class Americans and their concerns, one where he made diversity of talent irrelevant simply because it “stole” jobs from White Americans. In the run-up to the 2016 presidential election, Trump used Twitter for free media coverage worth \$2.2 billion.

As Trump became a “Twitter” President, the social media giant first justified disseminating his content on the ground that he was among the most influential of elected leaders who it made exceptions for and then “it may be in public interest to allow people to view tweets that would otherwise be taken down”. The truth is it did not want to be in conflict with the US President despite the latter breaching its rules, and has only now realised that enough is enough. Even Facebook has indefinitely suspended Trump’s account. But both the platforms cannot disregard that they helped fuel the sentiment since 2016 that led to the storming of the Capitol Hill. Or that they are feeling emboldened by the regime change and keen to be on the good side of President-elect Joe Biden. The Democrat leader feels big tech majors are not doing much to control either fake news or hate speech. Had these platforms self-policed earlier, things would not have come to such a pass. They may have pushed Trump to the edges but fringe radicalism has now taken the centre stage and can survive without him. True, the share of Trump’s critics may have gone up among the Republicans but they, too, can hardly ignore the new voter base he has cultivated, the Latin Americans for example, or ignore the populist sentiments he has stirred. They cannot tame the mobocracy that he has let loose, dilute the prejudice which he has turned into a matter of pride or rethink aggressive capitalism that he has marketed as a virtue bigger than socialism. And by appealing to the Church belt, he has made Biden look anti-God. Republicans may sideline him for harbouring delusions of grandeur but they are under more pressure to be aggressive, considering they have now lost two Senate seats from Georgia, their one-time bastion. After #BlackLivesMatter, there has been an unprecedented mobilisation of Black voters. So it would be difficult to undo the destructive impact of the Trumpian years. The larger question is: Can social media ever again claim to be an open platform of free-flowing speech and ideas, considering it has gotten deeply embedded in all aspects of our life and, therefore, cannot be but an influencer in itself? Also, such is their combined monopoly that while Facebook generates far too much money from paid political adverts, Twitter capitalises on the negative publicity of Facebook and banning such adverts. Either way, both parties are capitalising on their huge database, a heaving monster that is beyond anybody’s control.

Bucking the trend

Elon Musk is now the world’s richest person, and the good news is that he plans to spend on public welfare projects



The year 2020 was financially challenging for many people around the world, with the pandemic wreaking havoc on countless businesses, lives and livelihoods. The new year, too, seems to be going the same way for the hoi polloi. But for some of the world’s wealthiest people, the story, as usual, is set altogether differently. The latest to make a big splash in the pool of endless riches is multi-billionaire Elon Musk. The maverick boss of Tesla created headlines when he recently overtook Amazon boss Jeff Bezos to become the world’s richest person. Though the eccentric, bad boy billionaire — who shocked the world by smoking weed during a podcast — reacted in a matter-of-fact manner to the big news which had the world’s Twitterati and chatterati in a whirl, the fact remains that at a time when many have seen their net worth erode in front of their eyes, Musk has actually seen his value grow exponentially in the pandemic year and at the beginning of this year too. The new decade saw a 7.9 per cent rise in Musk’s electric vehicle (EV) company Tesla’s share price in the hope that the Democrat-controlled US Senate would usher in a new green agenda and introduce tax credits for EVs, besides joining the green agenda already set by many European nations. The expected tax credits would benefit Tesla, which has a vice-like grip on the EV market. At the beginning of 2020, Musk’s net worth was just \$30 billion but Tesla’s brilliant year sent the EV maker’s stock exploding by over 650 per cent since the start of the year. As Musk owns roughly 20 per cent stake in Tesla, the company’s surge had him laughing all the way to the bank as did his stake in SpaceX. As a result, the 49-year-old entrepreneur’s soaring net worth saw him toppling Bezos. Another reason that Bezos lost the top slot was that his divorce with Mackenzie Scott cost him roughly \$38 billion in Amazon stock. The company’s stocks are up more than 70 per cent since then, so if the couple were still married Bezos would have still been far ahead of Musk.

However, it was not just Musk and Bezos who improved their fortunes during the pandemic year. Many other billionaires saw their net worth rise, too. Among them is Chinese billionaire Zhong Shanshan, who founded and chairs Nongfu Spring. His value soared by \$62.6 billion in 2020. Similarly, Colin Huang, another Chinese billionaire, added \$33 billion to his net worth, bringing it to nearly \$53 billion. Dan Gilbert, the 58-year-old owner of the NBA’s Cleveland Cavaliers and the co-founder of Quicken Loans, saw his worth rise by \$28.1 billion as did Facebook co-founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg, whose net worth jumped by over \$26 billion to \$105 billion overall, making him the fifth wealthiest person in the world. Where Musk is concerned, his asset value can only rise going forward as the world battles climate change and tries to undo the damage done by fossil fuels by switching over to EVs. The future is green power and green tech and it will not surprise anyone if the coming decade sees more and more “green billionaires” emerging. And when a person like Musk makes more money, it really doesn’t pinch so much as the “cash poor” billionaire wants to spend half his money to “help (solve) problems on Earth & half to help establish a self-sustaining city on Mars to ensure the continuation of life (of all species) in case Earth gets hit by a meteor...or WW3 happens & we destroy ourselves”. So, one can only wish him the best. May he continue to play the Good Samaritan and get “back to work” so he can save the world!

Deadlocked democracy

The Govt can still salvage the situation if the PM personally steps in and breaks bread with the farmers, like Vajpayee would have done



INDRA SHEKHAR SINGH

With the failure of the 7th round of talks between the agitating farmers and the Narendra Modi Government, Indian democracy is once again at a crossroads. The impasse has been created because the Prime Minister, in a cavalier manner, forced three “black laws” upon the farmers. As the “peace army” of farmers started for Delhi from Punjab, the members were hit by water cannons and harassed by police, yet unafraid — like true *Satyagrahis* — they marched on with one demand on their lips: “Repeal the laws.” While the farmers’ demand remains unchanged, the Government has tried all the tricks mentioned by Chanakya but failed to uproot the farmers from the Capital’s periphery. As despondency grows within the Government and class traitors are exposed, the farmers’ protest evolves.

Several Machiavellian schemes have failed to end the stalemate. All invectives hurled at the protesting farmers stand discredited. With time, the protest has grown to become sort of a revolution, greater than the Arab Spring. In fact, it is arguably the largest “occupy” movement in the history of human race. Yet the target of the American “occupy” movement and farmers’ revolution in India is the same — one per cent.

Mussolini defined fascism as the marriage between a corporation and the State (political power). But in just a little over a month, the farmers have exposed the robber-barons and their political pawns. Neo-con elite and lazy economists may think that there is still hope for Modi and that the farmers will be routed, but people with ears on Chilla or Singhu borders know the tide has turned.

Nevertheless, let’s contemplate the Government’s strategy to tackle the crisis on hand. From the farmers’ side, the demand for repealing the laws remains unchanged; the Government is again stressing on considering amendments but saying an emphatic “no” to rolling back the laws. So, we have a deadlock. The Government understandably prefers the option of getting the matter heard by the Supreme Court. But the farmer leaders, without challenging the apex court, would rather have the Government deal with the issue. Even if the



Supreme Court is roped in, can it effectively remove the blockade? At least the farmer leaders don’t think so.

The Government’s advocates may carp that the farmers are blocking essential roads and causing public nuisance. But this is not true. The blockades at all points are allowing vehicular traffic to pass and, in fact, the police are obstructing traffic as seen in the media. Even if the SC issues an order, what will be the basis for it?

Judging from its earlier statements, the apex court will also act with caution. Even one wrong word could go a long way in eroding its own credibility and integrity. If any complicity is seen between the courts and the Government, it shall only spur the revolution. If the courts remain impartial, the farmers have nothing to fear.

We must also remember that the world community is closely watching every development as India is only just breaking in her shoes at the United Nations Security Council. There could be serious questions and political ramifications at any sign of any collusion by the Government. Canada’s PM Justin Trudeau has twice already signalled the mood of the international community to Modi. The Government should be very careful and ensure that a strict and proper judicial process is followed.

But, considering for a minute that the Supreme Court orders for the eviction of farmers and removal of blockades, the orders can be carried out only by the police, paramilitary or finally the army (God forbid it comes to that). Rakesh Tikait has already issued a statement that if the police came down to evicting them, “We (the farmers) are ready to face the bullets on our chest but we won’t leave until the laws are repealed.”

But the moot point is if the Government can afford to be violent or fire at the peaceful and unarmed farmers. In modern times, even if one farmer is killed by a police bullet funded by the tax-payer, the country might erupt in anger and Modi — forget about being remembered like Shivaji or Dadabhai Naoroji — will go down in history as “General Dyer 2.0” and Delhi’s borders will resemble Jallianwala Bagh. While the Government must be very cautious against using even a single bullet, the farmers should ensure that their protest remains peaceful and disciplined.

The next point to ponder is that at what stage would the Delhiites sympathetic to the farmers start protesting? Is the Modi Government ready to have farmers protesting at Delhi’s borders and citizens on the streets? To prevent this from happening, the Government should set an

example and punish all those who are spreading conspiracy and the “Khalistani” discourse in public. It will boost the nation’s confidence and build trust between the Government and farmers.

If things do go awry, it’s Catch-22 for Modi. The only way he can remove the farmers without repealing the laws is if he uses the State’s might on them; he can say goodbye to politics if he does that.

There is also a third probability, even more ghastly: What if the troops are called in but they refuse to fire on the farmers? Will there be court-martials or a *coup d’etat*? Do keep in mind that most uniformed personnel, especially in the Delhi Police, have propinquity with farmers. Is the Indian Government ready to forsake the Constitution for the sake of three laws? An astute politician wouldn’t do it. The *kisan* and the *jawan* are entwined; the Government must not pit one against the other. This will not only result in an egregious crime but also seed the rot within our food and military systems.

One might feel that troops from the South or Northeast could be mobilised but if that is done, the Modi Government will use the exact same tactics as employed by the East India Company to quell the 1857 Revolution. The Government should not call any additional troops into or around Delhi.

That would be a disaster as the farmers’ networks are very strong and they are aware of such tactics. Either way, the Government is slowly nearing the end of the stalemate unless it softens its position.

Modi also needs to end the dissent within his own party, for they are now starting to splinter; some of them have secretly started aiding the farmers and leaking information.

The Government can still salvage the situation if Modi steps in personally and breaks bread with the farmers, like Atal Bihari Vajpayee would have done. He needs to win the farmers’ trust by repealing the laws rather than patronising them. He would do well to convene a special session of Parliament and mollify dissent. By doing so, he would win not only electorally but also morally. This will be a happy lesson in democracy for the ages to come. But if this is not done, the Indian democracy will resemble a kleptocracy at best. The farmers are highly organised, managing to do what the Opposition couldn’t achieve.

If the righteous farmers are killed or defeated now, the rest of us don’t stand a chance. With demonetisation, our cash was taken away; with GST, the incomes of our small and medium businesses eroded; and finally, with the new farm laws, each morsel of food will be under corporate control, our farmers will become indentured labour in their own fields and the urban populace would have to pay through the nose each time the price of *dal* hits ₹200/kg. The middle class and the poor stand to lose the most.

If the common citizens think that they are unconnected to this farmers’ revolution, one urges them to think again: This movement is not only about the farm laws, it is a litmus test for Indian democracy. It is farmers for now; in the next round of “reforms” we could be targeted and then there will be no one to remonstrate for us.

The Government needs to logically analyse the situation and keep ego out of it. To end the stalemate, the Government needs to repeal the new laws. The farmers are relentless and, in the coming days, their resolve will only grow. They refuse to be Hitler’s Jews.

If farmers win, we all win; if they lose, democracy dies in India!

(The writer is Director, Policy and Outreach, National Seed Association of India. The views expressed are personal.)

SOUNDBITE

The Indian diaspora helped in the country’s fight against the pandemic by contributing to PM CARES. It is being used to strengthen the health infrastructure in the country.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi



It’s frightening to see cases rise at home and around the world, day after day. We need to make sure we’re getting vaccine doses as quickly as possible.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau



It is difficult to break away from stereotypes. You do a certain role or you do something that people enjoy, and then that is what you keep getting because that is ringing the box office.

Actor Arshad Warsi



Pujara’s slow batting is putting too much pressure on other Indian batsmen. I think he needed to be a bit more proactive with his scoring rate.

Australian cricketer Ricky Ponting



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Time to abolish NBFCs

Sir — It refers to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) annulling licences of three Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) while six other NBFCs have surrendered licences on their own. The question that jumps to mind is why at all is the RBI continuing with the concept of NBFCs which have no role other than being a mid-body in the business of lending?

It unnecessarily adds to the interest rates and some NBFCs are even said to have been earning huge profits from the lending business by having interest rates as high as 25 per cent or more.

There must be a blanket ban on public sector banks financing NBFCs and fetching undue profits. Further, the NBFCs adopt illegal processes for recovery of loans from defaulters. These entities file recovery suits in cities other than the one where the loan is given just for harassing the loan-takers. Hiring goons as executives or recovery agents is another common practice for the NBFCs. These illegal recovery agents often pose as police officers and threaten to arrest the innocent borrower.

Madhu Agrawal
Delhi

TN Government puts people at grave risk

At a time when the COVID-19 pandemic is still raging, one wonders how the Tamil Nadu Government took the decision to allow movie theatres and multiplexes in the State to function with full occupancy.

The Centre must ask the ruling All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) to scrap the order and to refrain from diluting the guidelines and standard operating procedures (SOPs) outlined by the Union Home Ministry for dealing with the contagion. As per the Ministry’s instructions, only 50 per cent of the seats in cinema halls can be booked, and that too only in those that are situated outside the containment zones.

It is indeed foolhardy to allow movie halls to function at full capacity. We all know that one of the primary ways to combat COVID-19 is to maintain social distancing so that the deadly virus is not transmitted easily from one person to other.

Under such circumstances, how will Tamil Nadu Government ensure social distancing in cinema halls, where people are seated so close to each other? Merely wearing masks will not help. Unless adequate precautions are taken, proper social-distancing is maintained



and strict sanitisation protocols are followed, allowing cinema halls to run at their full capacity is nothing short of committing mass suicide. The State Government’s decision is highly irresponsible and shows that Government is playing with the lives of people in a very casual manner just for making the entertainment business run and for filling its coffers.

Bhagwan Thadani
Mumbai

Protect wildlife

Sir — It refers to the editorial ‘Dying humanity’ (January 9). Such gruesome incidents are a blot on humanity and terming it merely “shocking” would be an understatement. When a tiger or leopard turns a man-eater, killing or capturing it is justified but when a purely harmless creature like dol-

phin is mercilessly beaten to death, there can be no justification except that those involved in the incident are worse than wild beasts.

More shameful is the act of those who were standing nearby and capturing the incident on their mobile phones. They are no lesser culprits and they should also be booked under stringent laws and

brought to justice. Filming of the vicious attack shows our misplaced priorities.

It is mentioned in the Directive Principles of State Policy to “protect and improve the environment and safeguard forests and wildlife.” We must protect our wildlife at any cost.

Bal Govind
Noida

Help Govt in vaccination

Sir — Despite all adverse comments from the Opposition parties, the Government is taking all steps to make the vaccination drive successful. Citizens need not worry as there will be a number of checks and counterchecks before the launch of the inoculation drive.

It is a good step that priority will be given to healthcare and frontline workers, who are estimated to be around three crore in numbers. Followed by, those who are above 50 years of age and those who are below 50 years but are with comorbidities.

The Opposition should not make unnecessary, unfounded and politically motivated allegations to demoralise the Government and should rise above petty politics. It should give all possible support to the Centre and States in this hour of crisis. We, as citizens must trust our vaccine and should wholeheartedly cooperate with the Government to make the inoculation drive a big success.

Gundu K Maniam
Ghaziabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

No need to cry for America

Democracy in the US will most probably survive its current difficulties. Democracy as the default mode in the world certainly will



GWYNNE DYER

If I have to read one more hand-wringing article about the “crisis being faced by American democracy” and what it means for the rest of the world, I’m going toretch. The last straw was an article in *The New Yorker* this week by Adam Gopnik, an accomplished journalist whom I usually admire. It was called *‘What we get wrong about America’s crisis of democracy’* and the strapline read: “The interesting question is not what causes authoritarianism but what has ever suspended it?”

No, that’s the wrong question. It assumes, as Gopnik says, that: “The default condition of humankind is not to thrive in broadly egalitarian and stable democratic arrangements that get unsettled only when something happens to unsettle them. The default condition of humankind, traced across thousands of years of history, is some sort of autocracy.”

The obvious way to continue this article would be to point out that US President-elect Joe Biden won the election fair and square, that thanks to the run-off elections in Georgia the Democrats will control both the Houses of Congress and that the joint session of Congress withstood the assault of outgoing US President Donald Trump’s storm troops on Wednesday.

All that is true, but Gopnik is correct in saying that American democracy is still in serious trouble and that the populist tide is running strongly in the world. The problem is with his view — and that of many other journalists and opinion writers like him — of the rest of the world and America’s place in it. Gopnik grew up in Canada but he seems to have drunk the American Kool-Aid. That is the familiar mythology in which the US is not only the first mass democracy but the indispensable one, the shining example without which the others would wander hopelessly in the darkness.

That’s not true. Democracy, not autocracy, is the default mode political system, even though it is “the worst form of Government except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time,” as Winston Churchill said in the House of Commons in 1947 while quoting an unknown predecessor.

Almost every dictator in the world holds fake elections so he can claim legitimacy, however fraudulently. No democratic leaders falsely claim to be dictators or tyrants (although some, like Trump, President Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán of Hungary and President Rodrigo Duterte in the Philippines, secretly aspire to it). So default mode democracy wins in a walk.

This was not true before the 18th century. There are indeed “all those thousands of years of history” when the norm was “some form of autocracy.” But before that there are all those hundreds of thousands of years of pre-history when all humans lived as equals, reaching their decisions by discussion and consensus, in little hunter-gatherer bands. We know this because some of those bands, living in out-of-the-way places, survived long enough for anthropologists to study them — and they were all egalitarian. In fact, they had no formal leaders and the worst social crime was for one adult man to give an order to another. They didn’t hold elections, because the bands were hardly ever more than a hundred strong and they could just talk things over. But the core belief of democracy is that everybody has equal rights including a share in the decision-making process and our distant ancestors all believed that. They believed it for so long that it became a basic human value. That basic human belief went underground when the first mass societies appeared around 6,000 years ago. The only way to run them was from the top down, by force, because without mass communications (and they hadn’t even invented writing yet) there was no way for tens or hundreds of thousands of people to make decisions together as equals.

So the tyrants took over and had a very long run. But the belief in equality never died, as all the slave and peasant revolts attest. And by the 18th century a kind of mass communication had finally emerged. Just the printing press plus mass literacy. But that meant everybody could get back to making decisions together as equals and so the democratic revolutions began.

The US was the first, perhaps because it then had the highest rate of literacy in the world. The far more radical French Revolution came only 13 years later (it even abolished slavery), and democracy just kept spreading. By now half the governments on the planet are genuinely elected and the other half pretend to be. Democracy has nothing to do with being American or Western. China was the first country with printing and if it had also had mass literacy it could well have been the first country to have a democratic revolution. American democracy will probably survive its current difficulties. Democracy as the default mode in the world certainly will.

(Gwynne Dyer’s new book is *‘Growing Pains: The Future of Democracy and Work’*. The views expressed are personal.)

THERE ARE SOME INDIANS WITH THE SAME MENTALITY AS THE TRUMPIST MOB, WHO USE THE FLAG AS A WEAPON AND SLAM ALL WHO DISAGREE WITH THEM.

—CONGRESS MP
SHASHI THAROOR



UNFORTUNATELY, MOST LIBERALS HAVE FLAGRANTLY IGNORED WARNINGS OF ITS MISUSE IN ANTI-NATIONAL PROTESTS IN INDIA AS WELL.

—BJP MP
VARUN GANDHI

Close the big data gender gap

As both surveillance and marginalisation have heightened during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is more pertinent than ever to look at data protection from a gendered lens



SHEFALI MEHTA

TRISHA PANDE

As policymakers push for privacy to be at the heart of the data protection debate, it is vital that this understanding of confidentiality should not include some citizens more than others. That is to say, whilst “privacy by design” is the need of the hour when it comes to data protection, there is similarly a need to conceptualise it in terms of “gender by design.” By including a gendered perspective to data protection, policymakers will by default include women and sexual minorities who have been unequally subjected to both surveillance and marginalisation over the years. As both surveillance and marginalisation have heightened during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is more pertinent than ever to look at data protection from a gendered lens. It must be done in order to capture the violation of the fundamental right to privacy accorded to all citizens by the Constitution of the country and to ensure that the technological progress of our society does not mean that the already existing gender divide widens further.

Surveillance and Marginalisation: Sadly, approaches to big data often try to obscure how gendered oppression can appear in Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) programmes. Often, lack of consent equals women being unaware that they appear on certain data sets, and the other end of the spectrum is also possible — that training data fails to account for diversity and bases codes without counting women and minorities. Intersectional feminism is relevant to understand this issue thoroughly, although women are generally excluded from training data. Some of the reasons for this exclusion are that there is a dearth of women respondents and they are not a priority for data analysts, among other things. It is much more likely that the representation of women who belong to specific castes, regions and tribes will be much lesser than that of urban, privileged women and those belonging to the upper caste. It is ultimately a simple problem of representation — though women are excluded in society, some are excluded more than others by virtue of their position in the “kiryachy” — and this marginalisation is represented in datasets.

In the same manner that society reflects the grasp of patriarchy on the everyday lives of women, data does, too. There is no dearth of data collected on women, especially around the time of pregnancy. Their past vaccinations, body weight, husband’s name, expected delivery date and a whole gamut of other data points are recorded. For social interventions or enhancing public delivery schemes, this data is passed around without much regard for the gold standards of data protection. Often, there is no sinister motive at play — it isn’t necessary that companies or Governments have an agenda to collect and share intimate and sensitive data pertaining to women — however, not accounting for the possibility of surveillance is as much of a disservice towards gender equality as explicitly misusing such data.

There could be a number of reasons where collecting more data or using technology for a seemingly “good” motive could appear reasonable. For instance, when the Delhi Government proposed installing CCTV cameras in classrooms so that working parents could monitor their children and feel at ease, they weren’t trying to kick up a debate on privacy which inevitably ensued.

“IN ALL KINDS OF POLICYMAKING, THERE IS A NEED TO WIDEN THE CONVERSATION BEYOND JUST GROUPS OF WOMEN AND BRING IT TO THE MAIN TABLE. THAT IS THE ONLY WAY ONE CAN TRULY ENSURE THAT FUTURE LEGISLATIONS ARE RESPONSIVE TO GENDER AND INCLUSIVE TO ALL



While the outcome is safety, policymakers must account for how women — especially in their teen years — feel while being constantly watched, recorded and monitored. Similarly, a data set which encompasses the private details of one’s life, can start a domino effect of feeling surveilled, which can lead to anxiety, paranoia, anguish and even a mental breakdown.

Additionally, marginalisation of women doesn’t limit itself to the actual technology or its implications on rights and experiences, it even extends to representation in the industry. Technology, specifically the information technology industry is a male dominated one. This is an extension of the pre-existing gender disparity faced by women in technical fields across sectors. Such disparity exacerbates other fundamental issues such as the core technology itself having discriminatory implications, as the biases carried by individuals often translate into the algorithms or technologies they create. The lack of female representation and women-friendly practices at technology organisations discourages them from undertaking their education in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), thereby, further promoting gender bias and acting as a barrier to the entry of women.

This process starts right from school, where coders are usually boys, and carries on to colleges and universities where computer science graduates are mostly men. Gender disparity in STEM widens, especially when it comes to coding and technology design.

This lack of representation or having a seat at the table also restricts these technologies from understanding women-specific problems that may arise as a result of such innovations. Thus, to truly make the tech-space more favourable for women, in terms of the scientific knowledge they offer

and the environment they perpetuate, we must encourage and make the sector more favourable for them.

Being mindful of gender inclusivity while drafting laws: As more conversations and research bring to the forefront the bias faced by women in digital space, this change is not reflected in technology or its regulation. It is important that these developments are adapted from the nascent stage of formulation of policies and regulation, in the effort to prevent such biases and further the concept of “gender by design.” If we inculcate a broader perspective and engage more women and individuals from marginalised sexual identities right from the nascent stage and also provide them with more agency and a voice in the various institutions that implement such laws, we can create a truly inclusive system.

Especially in the context of the data protection debate, we often see that gender finds itself mentioned as a side note. The European Union General Data Protection Regulation (EU GDPR), which is considered to be the forerunner globally in comprehensive data protection frameworks, often saw gender being viewed in silos rather than as an integral aspect of the larger picture.

It is not surprising that such an attitude persists as everything — from data collection, design of data intensive technologies like AI and ML and data interpretation — is viewed from a skewed gender lens, thereby impacting their final products and/or women/marginalised identities’ experiences.

The Indian story: As the country begins its own journey in this regard, we may not be able to repeat the same mistakes and be conscious of the gender bias at the stage of inception. The Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019, is a step in the right direction which envisions creating a more accessible poli-

cy, however, there is definitely more work required. On examination of the legislation on its face value, there are two issues that need immediate attention: Representation and the need to explore gendered concerns around data collection, analysis, processing and storage at large. This will help identify problems and experiences specific to women.

The institutions prescribed in the Personal Data Protection Bill, the Select Committee responsible for establishing the Data Protection Authority and the Authority itself, need to provide for specific representation of women. This is indicative of a larger issue in policymaking and governance in our country, with a large majority of Indian regulatory authorities being predominantly male dominated. The lack of representation at these stages and in the institutions, contributes to a myopic understanding of the specific issues that may be faced by the community. It will also help put in place certain preventive measures, as women just like the physical society, are susceptible to a greater extent of harm even in online spaces.

How can we be better in future?: In order to truly incorporate “gender by design”, it is necessary that the Government and civil society recognise that these are not token conversations but they must actively change their mindset to include these issues in the main conversation. In all kinds of policymaking, there is a need to widen the conversation beyond just groups of women and bring it to the main table. That is the only way one can truly ensure that future legislations are responsive to gender and inclusive to all.

(Mehta is Strategic Engagement and Research Coordinator and Pande is Policy Manager, The Dialogue. The views expressed are personal.)

A community’s tragic slide into myopia

Islam’s rational past defies views of fundamentalists who challenge modernity by romanticising its history to project themselves as authentic



NADEEM PARACHA

In a 2012 lecture at the Institute of Advanced Studies, the late Danish-American historian Patricia Crone described Omer Saeed Sheikh as an “acculturated native” who had rebelled against his adopted cultural mores.

Sheikh is a British citizen who was arrested in Pakistan for his role in the kidnapping and murder of American journalist Daniel Pearl in 2002. Sheikh was born in London to Pakistani parents who had migrated to England in 1968. They quickly adopted British cultural norms and established a successful clothing business there. Sheikh was enrolled at a prestigious private school in London and was then sent to Lahore’s equally prestigious Aitchison

College. He returned to England and enrolled at the famous London School of Economics. But he soon dropped out and travelled to a war-torn Bosnia in the early 1990s. This is when Sheikh threw himself completely into becoming a radical Islamist.

According to Crone, acculturated natives embrace cultural norms of their adopted societies. They do so to advance their status in these societies. These natives may be living in regions where they do not have roots, or in their ancestral regions that have been colonised by foreign powers. But when, despite integrating the foreign cultural ethos, they feel that their progress is being restricted by the producers of these ethos, they walk out from their acculturated selves, rebel against it and adopt their ancestral culture.

However, what they believe is their authentic, ancestral culture is often a romanticised concoction, or even an unintentional caricature. In their rebellion against their former acculturated selves, they may begin to dress in the manner they believe peo-

ple in their ancestral culture do (or ought to), or they may begin to follow their religion in a more overt manner.

To Crone, the acculturated non-European native’s anger, triggered by his inability to achieve prestige and success despite adopting the ethos of a dominant western culture, is a rebellion against modernity. On the other hand, according to Crone, it is also a failure of Western modernity. The failure in this respect is its inability to hold on to non-Europeans who had willingly adopted modernity but then walked out to rebel against it.

Crone says this is because of a fear within the purveyors of modernity that their positions of power might be usurped by those who had adopted their ideas but were not from its race of origin. To Crone this is not an irrational fear, but one that the West needs to let go of if modernity is to retain converts and grow. In her 2014 book, *The Nativist Prophets of Early Islamic Iran*, Crone writes that one of the main reasons behind the rapid growth of Islam was the fact that its purveyors had made it extremely simple to convert to

the new faith. The religion’s first century was dominated by Arabs who lived in garrison cities, away from the natives they had conquered. But the natives could enter the garrison cities and enjoy all of its perks and power by adopting Islam.

The acculturated native, in this context, did not face any hindrances to progress or in his rise to a position of power. According to Crone, this is why the native retained his acculturated self and did not walk out or rebel against it, despite his dislike of Arab hegemony. He may have rebelled against the Arabs but not the idea that he had converted to.

Indeed, the huge influx of non-Arab natives into the fold of Islam consequently overthrew the hegemony of its original purveyors (the Arabs) — especially after the Abbasid Revolution in 750 CE. But the faith continued to grow. In Pakistan, however, from the mid-1970s onwards, certain political and constitutional developments have led to the growth of a particular non-inclusive strand of Islam, alienating those who may follow a different one

or may belong to a different faith.

They believe that even if they acculturate themselves with this dominant sect, they will not be able to achieve the kind of success or position that those who were born into this denomination can. They are thus more likely to walk out and leave the idea of nationhood based on this strand vulnerable to contraction. And it has been contracting.

From the 18th century onwards, Islam as an imperial power began to stagnate. Its nemesis was the Muslim community’s slide into myopia. It was eventually overwhelmed by European colonialism, powered by economic, militarist, political and social modernity based on the principles of the ‘Age of Enlightenment’ i.e. rationalism, science, democracy, secularism and capitalism.

This saw vast sections of colonised Muslims acculturating themselves to this modernity, so that they were not left behind. But because of reasons pointed out by Crone, many walked out of it, giving birth to radical Islamist ideas based on romanticised notions of

their faith and its history.

Interestingly, according to the British academic Jonathan Israel, in the anthology *The Secular State and Islam in Europe*, Muslims who had adopted modernity were actually integrating ideas that were originally inspired by ancient Muslim rationalists. This was also often pointed out by 19th century Muslim modernists such as Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and Muhammad Abdull.

Israel writes that: “As the seeds of the Enlightenment were being sown in Europe, there were European thinkers who were challenging monarchism and the Church by debunking their hostile perceptions of Islam, and informing their audiences that Islam was a rational and inclusive faith.”

According to Israel, not all purveyors of the Enlightenment agreed. But 18th century Enlightenment philosophers such as Pierre Bayle, Henri de Boulainvilliers and Denis Diderot presented Islam as a rational and tolerant faith. Israel writes that these men were inspired by certain ancient Muslim thinkers and their ideas seeped into the

overall construct of Enlightenment philosophies, producing modernity.

Muslim modernists have often reiterated this narrative, pointing out that, by adopting Western modernity, Muslims were simply acculturating themselves with an Islamic past that had been repressed by conservatives. Sir Syed understood this as a battle between *aqal* (reason and logic) and *naqal* (copying tradition and rituals).

According to the 20th century Islamic modernist and scholar the late Fazal-ur-Rehman Malik, Islam’s rational past does not fit the world view of “fundamentalists” and radicals who, to challenge modernity, have constructed a largely romanticised past to tout their disposition as being “authentic.”

In other words, those who rejected acculturation (to modernity) by claiming it was alien, were rejecting a repressed Islamic tradition that had inspired this modernity and falling back on a mythical understanding of the faith’s history to justify their rebellion.

(The views expressed are personal. Courtesy: Dawn)

‘Indian economy heading towards V-shaped recovery’

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's economy is showing decisive signs of a 'V-shaped' recovery in 2021 with the return of consumer confidence, robust financial markets, an uptick in manufacturing and exporters braving it out in the global market with never-say-die spirit, ASSOCHAM said on Sunday. The industry chamber said it expects immense accruals of economic benefits from the COVID-19 vaccination programme about to be rolled out.

"The high-frequency data is a strong pointer to a V-shaped recovery in 2021 with the seeds bursting into green shoots over the last two months of 2020 itself," ASSOCHAM Secretary General Deepak Sood said. India's GDP is estimated to contract by a record 7.7 per cent during 2020-21 as the COVID-19 pandemic severely hit the key manufacturing and services segments, as per government projections released on Thursday.

"With India about to roll out its vaccination programme



with approvals of the two vaccines, the accruals of the economic benefits would be significant, especially to sectors such as hospitality, transportation, entertainment, which were hit hard during the pandemic," Sood said.

According to ASSOCHAM, the most definitive of the data is the record collection of Rs 1.15 lakh crore in the Goods and Services Tax (GST) during December.

"The state-wise collection showed the fightback spirit in consumer confidence. Illustratively, the largest consumption state of Maharashtra, which was amongst the severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, has posted a healthy

growth of seven per cent in GST collection; even as the total GST mop-up was up 12 per cent year-on-year," Sood said.

He said the Budget for 2021-22 would be a major catalyst. "Great focus on healthcare, agriculture and revival of demand would be imperatives in Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's Budget".

The entire healthcare value chain from hospitals to medical education, primary health centres, scientific laboratories and further to the pharmaceutical industry along with the logistics is most likely to receive a booster shot of support from the forthcoming Budget, Sood added.

Manufacturing, infra push to boost logistics in India

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

The logistics sector is at the cusp of the next phase of growth on the back of the push for manufacturing and infrastructure development in the country, market players feel.

With the country emerging out of the pandemic, and technology taking a whole new meaning in this post-Covid world, they feel, automation will be the next big thing in logistics.

"Multinationals and global supply chains in the reviving times are finding India an attractive location to establish their manufacturing base which will certainly prove instrumental for our economic growth and will have direct impact on the growth of logistics industry," said Pawan Jain, Founder & Chairman, Safexpress.

He added that government initiatives like 'Atmanirbhar Bharat', setting up of logistics corridors, giving infrastructure status to the industry among others are driving economic growth of the country. "Resilient and adaptive systems

and proactive readiness for future, triggered through technology and automation will be the key approach for 2021, an outcome based on the learnings of 2020 after getting exposed to our weaknesses and gaps during the pandemic," Jain said. Lancy Barboza, MD of Flomic Global Logistics noted that logistics and freight forwarding segment saw a dip in business volumes during the month of April 2020, mainly due to the pandemic spread out followed by the nationwide lockdown, but once the restrictions on the movement of goods were eased, it picked up steadily. He was of the view that the year 2020 has taught many lessons to entrepreneurs and business leaders who would implement these lessons in their business strategy for 2021 and beyond.

"One learning will be to adopt digitalisation of transactions. May it be banking transactions, foreign exchange remittances, or even the internal working in the organisation which till Covid was heavily paper-oriented. The paperless, faceless initiative introduced by Indian Customs will be a game-

changer in the coming days in the faster and smoother clearance of import and export cargoes," Barboza said.

Ambrish Kumar, Founder of Zipaworld and Group CEO of AAA 2 Innovate Private Ltd was of the view that 2021 is ought to see more digital transformation to facilitate the new normal, be it small and medium enterprises or large enterprises. He also noted the pivotal role likely to be played by the logistics sector in the distribution and transportation of Covid-19 vaccines.

Noting that several countries are banking on India in terms of supply of vaccines, he said: "However, due to the supply chain challenges like capacity crunch and shooting up of air freight prices coupled with the container shortage scenario for ocean freight, India seems like losing the opportunity and lagging in the competition." In 2021, according to Soham Chokshi, CEO and Co-founder at Shipshy, the major themes which will dominate will be vaccine procurement and distribution along with supply catching up with the demand as economic activ-

AUTOMATION TO BE KEY IN 2021

ities come to full swing. "We expect demand to keep building up till the Q2 of this calendar year with rates normalcy kicking in towards the end of summers. The record low interest rates globally would help businesses, as also witnessed in rising commodity prices, it looks like 2021 will bring in strong positivity and economic growth," Chokshi said. Naman Vijay, CEO and Co-founder of ClickPost, emphasised impact of the e-commerce business on the logistics sector.

"E-commerce sector has seen unprecedented adoption of technology during the pandemic and we see three major trends that will dominate logistics in 2021. Firstly, online retailers will prefer working with multiple courier partners to increase reach and reduce shipping costs," Vijay said.

Secondly, the online shoppers will expect real-time shipment tracking for their orders, and thirdly, e-commerce companies will invest significantly in automating logistics processes to improve long-term profitability, the ClickPost CEO said.

Petrol, diesel prices remain unchanged across metros

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

Retail fuel prices across the four metro cities remained unchanged for the third consecutive day.

In the national capital, petrol was sold at the record high of ₹84.20 per litre, reached on Thursday (January 7).

In Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata, the fuel was priced at ₹90.83, ₹86.96 and ₹85.68 per litre, respectively.

Petrol and diesel prices had increased on two successive days last Wednesday and Thursday taking gasoline to record high levels in Delhi while keeping its prices very close to record high levels in other metro cities. The rise came amid rising crude oil prices. Currently, Brent crude price is high near the \$56-per-barrel mark. Diesel price also was the same for the third consecutive day across the metros. In Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata, diesel was priced at ₹ 74.38, ₹81.07, 79.72 and ₹77.97, all unchanged levels since Thursday.

FMCG cos look to hike prices to offset inflationary pressure on raw material inputs

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Consumers may have to shell out more money for their daily use products as FMCG firms, which are facing inflationary pressure on their key raw material inputs, are considering marginal hike on their products price to offset it.

Some FMCG companies like Marico and others have already gone for price hike, while some which include Dabur, Parle and Patanjali are closely monitoring the situation.

FMCG players have been trying to absorb the price increase of raw material inputs such as coconut oil, edible oil and palm oil, but they are unlikely to hold the prices of their commodities for a long time as that will impact their gross margins.

"We have seen a significant rise in input cost and especially edible oil in the last three to four months and that is putting pressures on our margins and costs. As of now, we have not taken any price hike but we are closely monitoring it and if it goes like this then probably, we may go for a price hike," Parle Products Senior Category Head Mayank Shah told PTI.

According to him, these commodities are cyclic in

nature.

When asked about the price hike, Shah said: "It will be across products as edible oil is being used in all products. It would be at least 4 to 5 per cent."

Dabur India CFO Lalit Malik said the recent months have seen inflation inching up for some key raw materials like amla and gold.

"Going forward too, we expect some inflationary pressure in key commodities. Our efforts will be to absorb the raw material price increase through our synergies and cost efficiencies, and undertake only selective and judicious price hikes, which will also depend on the competitive scenario in the market," said Malik.

While for Haridwar-based Patanjali Ayurveda, it's still a 'wait and watch' situation and yet to take a final call on this but hinted that it is also moving in that directions.

"We always try to absorb the market oscillation but if compelled by the market factors, we would take a final decision on that," said Patanjali spokesperson S K Tijarawala.

Marico, which own brands as Saffola and Parachute, has faced inflationary pressure and had to go for an effective price hike.

Macro-data to drive equities, Q3 results to give directions

IANS ■ MUMBAI

Macro-economic data points along with expectations of healthy quarterly results and developments surrounding the rollout of anti-Covid vaccine are expected to give further impetus to the current market rally.

However, observers cited that even volatility on account of profit booking will likely trigger in bottom fishing, thereby reigniting the up move.

"The results season began on Friday with TCS coming out with excellent Q3FY21 numbers. As more companies come out with their numbers, the focus could shift from index to individual stocks and peer stocks," said Deepak Jasani, Head of Retail Research at HDFC Securities.

"There is still no reversal signal for the index. Another two odd weeks of gains seem plausible though not at the same pace." The week ahead will be heavily influenced by Q3FY21 corporate earnings as companies like HCL Tech, PVR, HDFC Bank, Wipro and Infosys are expected to announce their quarterly results.

"The focus of the Indian markets have currently shifted to third quarter earnings. Healthy business figures reported by banking and auto sectors have led to a better quarterly outlook which is likely to continue in the coming week keeping the sectors in the limelight," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geogit Financial Services.

Apart from the healthy Q3 results, the Central Statistics Office (CSO) is slated to release the macro-economic data points of Index of Industrial Production (IIP), Consumer Price Index (CPI) on January 12.

Besides, investors will look forward to the macro-economic data points of WPI (Wholesale Price Index) and India's trade figures.

"Next week a lot of macro data will be out including India's Inflation, loan growth and Industrial output," said Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Retail Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services.

"As the long term market structure remains positive, we would advise investors to adopt Buying on Dips strategy to accumulate quality stocks."

RBI raises concerns over zero-coupon bond for PSB recapitalisation

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has expressed some concerns over zero-coupon bonds for the recapitalisation of public sector banks (PSBs) and discussion is on between the central bank and Finance Ministry to find a solution, according to sources.

The Government resorted to recapitalisation bonds with a coupon rate for capital infusion into PSBs during 2017-18 and interest payment to banks for holding such bonds started from the next financial year.

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

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

However, the RBI has raised some issues with regard to calculation of an effective capital infusion made in any bank through this instrument issued at par, the sources said.

Airtel appoints Pradipt Kapoor as Chief Information Officer

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

Telecom major Bharti Airtel on Sunday announced the appointment of Pradipt Kapoor as its Chief Information Officer (CIO).

In his new role, Kapoor will drive Airtel's overall engineering strategy and be a key player in helping realise the company's digital vision, Bharti Airtel said in a statement.

He will be member of the Airtel Management Board and report to Gopal Vittal, MD & CEO, Bharti Airtel.

Govt creates special unit in I-T dept for probe into undisclosed foreign assets

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A special unit has been created by the Government in the countrywide investigation wings of the Income Tax department for focussed probe in cases of undisclosed assets held by Indians abroad and possession of black money in foreign shores, officials said. The Foreign Asset Investigation Units have been recently created in all the 14 investigation directorates of the tax department located in various parts of the country that are primarily tasked to undertake raids and seizures, and develop intelli-

gence to check tax evasion done by various methods. A total of 69 existing posts in the tax department were "diverted" by the Central Board of Direct Taxes in Nov last for the creation of this unit after approval from Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, a senior officer told PTI. The CBDT frames policy for the Income Tax department." The FAIUs have been created as new wings within the various investigation directorates of the tax department to bring focus on cases of undisclosed assets held abroad by Indians and black money stashed abroad.

SRM Institute of Science & Technology partners with iSchoolConnect Technologies

Chennai: SRM Institute of Science & Technology, a prominent Indian higher education institution, recently announced an exclusive partnership with iSchoolConnect Technologies Pvt. Ltd., a USA and India-based company that uses AI technology to provide study abroad assistance.

This unique partnership will benefit all study abroad aspirants at SRM Institute of Science & Technology. It will provide them access to expert consultations and unique AI tools which will empower them in pursuing their higher education abroad.

Regarded as one of the top educational institutions in India, SRM Institute of Science & Technology hosts thousands

of students who later move on to pursue higher education. To encourage students to pursue the best possible educational options both in-country and abroad, SRM Institute of Science & Technology has several programs in place. Some of those international objectives include their Semester Abroad programs, Dual degree program, and alike. To broaden their sphere of international education assistance, the partnership with iSchoolConnect came into existence. On the Institute's behalf, this initiative is being led by Mr. Kartar Singh, the Director of International Relations at SRM Institute of Science &

Technology, and his team.

When asked about their motive for partnering with iSchoolConnect, Mr. Singh states, "Going overseas for higher studies is a growing ambition for many of our students, to gain new knowledge, experience different cultures, position themselves for the new age competences and skills of a dynamic work environment and to chart out their careers.



Include natural gas under GST to push for gas-based economy: Industry

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government should bring natural gas under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime to realise Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for a gas-based economy and raising the share of the environment-friendly fuel in India's energy basket, the industry has said.

Natural gas is currently outside the ambit of GST, and existing legacy taxes -- central excise duty, state VAT, central sales tax -- continue to be applicable on the fuel.

"Non-inclusion of natural gas under GST regime is having adverse impact on its prices due to stranding of taxes in the hands of gas producers/suppliers and is also impacting natural gas-based industries due to stranding of legacy taxes paid on it," the Federation of Indian Petroleum Industry (FIPI) said.

In a pre-Budget memorandum to the Finance Ministry, FIPI, which boasts of members from across the oil and gas spectrum, said the value-added tax (VAT) rate on natural gas is very high in different states -- 14.5 per cent in

Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh, 15 per cent in Gujarat, 14 per cent in Madhya Pradesh.

"Since gas-based industries do not get the benefit of tax credit of VAT paid on purchases of natural gas, it is resulting in an increase in cost of production of such industrial consumers and would have an inflationary effect on the economy," it said.

Inclusion of natural gas under the GST ambit will have a positive impact on gas-based industries, promote usage of the fuel and avoid stranding of taxes, it said.

215 held in two months in fake GST invoice fraud cases

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 215 persons have been arrested in the last two months across the country in a drive against fake GST invoice fraud cases perpetrated through fake entities and fly-by-night operators who fraudulently availed input tax credit (ITC) in multi-layered scams.

Those arrested by the Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI) and the CGST Commissionerates include six Chartered Accountants and one Company Secretary, sources said.

Others arrested include 71 masterminds, 81 proprietors, 36 Directors or Managing Directors, 15 partners, three CEOs, and one each broker and GST practitioner, the sources added.

GST intelligence authorities have also registered around 2,200 cases and unearthed more than 6,600 fake GSTIN entities. Authorities have also seized more than Rs 700 crore from these fraudsters.

The sources said that those arrested included operators of fake entities and end-beneficiaries who connived with these frauds in running the business of fake invoices on commission basis.

Use of data analytics, data-

sharing and AI along with BAFTA tool enabled the GST ecosystem and intelligence authorities to identify layer-by-layer activities of these fake entities and pinpoint the fraudsters with precise input.

To further tackle the menace of fake invoice frauds and misutilisation of ITC, the Union government has acted on the recommendations of Law Committee of GST Council and placed qualified restrictions of 1 per cent on the use of ITC for tax liability in a manner that does not impact ease-of-doing business for genuine taxpayers.

DGGI sources said that in the last two days, 17 arrests have been made in fake invoice frauds and further investigations are on. So far, a maximum of 23 arrests have been made in Mumbai zone.

In the last two days, Ahmedabad Zonal Unit officials have registered 14 cases and initiated actions against AK Impex, Mannat Impex, Roselabs Bioscience, among others.

At least eight companies were found non-existent but had availed or utilised ITC of more than Rs 113 crore through fake invoices in garments, copper waste, medicines, ferrous waste, cement and coal, the sources said.

Minimum support price for Kodo-Kutki will also be declared: CM Bhupesh Baghel

Raipur: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel said that the minimum support price of Kodo-Kutki will also be declared from this year. The announcement was made by the Chief Minister in Bijapur. He announced Kutru and Gangalur as tehsils in Bijapur district. He sanctioned funds for deepening and beautification of 12 ponds of the district including development work being carried out in Bijapur for upgrading and beautification of Loha Dongri, Mahadev Talab and development of 10 roads in the district and bus stand in Bhairamgarh, Awapalli and Mander.

Chief Minister approved setting up of procurement centers for paddy procurement at Tongpali and Bhadrakali. On the occasion, Chief Minister Mr. Baghel said that there will be no shortage of funds for development works in Bastar division. He said that along with the promotion of culture and civilization of people of

this region, Education, Health and Sports will also be promoted with highest priority.

He said that there is no shortage of talent in Bastar and the talents needs to be given opportunity. The government is committed to provide opportunities for the betterment of Bastar people. He said that forest rights community and individual pattas are being given by the government.

The government is giving the right to land to the landless people in Bastar. He said that power has become a part of the basic needs of the people in today's era. The work of providing electricity in this area is going on a war footing. Closed schools have been restarted by the government. Local youth are being given employment opportunities. The amount of DMF is being used for education, health and livelihood.

Trump legacy on race shadowed by divisive rhetoric, actions

Chicago: President Donald Trump repeatedly claimed in the final months of his presidency — and without a trace of irony — to have done more for Black Americans than anyone with the “possible exception” of Abraham Lincoln.

He boasted that the African American unemployment rate dropped to record lows under his watch before the coronavirus pandemic ravaged the economy.

Trump heralded his administration's criminal justice overhaul for shortening mandatory minimum sentences for nonviolent drug offenses and leading to the release of thousands of incarcerated people, mostly Black Americans. Trump also relished that he increased funding for historically black colleges

and universities.

But in the end, historians say Trump's legacy — and his electoral undoing — will be largely shaped by rhetoric aimed at stirring significant swaths of his white base that tugged at the long-frayed strands of race relations in America. His strategy of divisiveness was on display this past week as he urged supporters, mostly white men, to descend on the U.S. Capitol in the name of his baseless claims of election fraud.

After the pro-Trump mob stormed the hallowed halls of Congress, Trump did not immediately condemn the violence. He did not denigrate the rioters as “THUGS” or warn that he was prepared to greet them with “vicious dogs” and “ominous weapons” as he had

threatened largely peaceful Black Lives Matter demonstrators after the police killing of George Floyd this year.

Instead, his initial response was a series of tepid tweets and video messages in which he asked his violent loyalists to “go home in peace,” let them know he felt their “pain” and told them he loved them.

Trump was frequently explicit in using race as a cudgel.

He claimed without evidence that Barack Obama, the nation's first Black president, wasn't born in the United States, has said Mexican immigrants were “bringing crime” and were “rapists” and argued there were “very fine people on both sides” after violence at a white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, left

one counterprotester dead.

He privately questioned why the United States would accept more immigrants from Haiti and “shithole countries” in Africa rather than from places such as Norway. Trump even wrote in a tweet that appeared to be intended for a group of then-first-term lawmakers — progressive Democrats and women of color — to “go back and help fix the totally broken and crime infested places from which they came.”

“Since the Black civil rights movement of the mid-20th century, there has been this kind of tacit agreement in the American political conversation that one could appeal to racial animus, but you had to do so in a particular sort of way,” said Eddie Glaude, Jr., chairman of Princeton University's African American studies program. “Trump made that all explicit again. He brought it to the fore.

He mainstreamed certain assumptions about race that were driving our politics anyway.” Human rights activists say that the Capitol siege was the macabre ending of a presidency that embraced white supremacist groups and extremists and fanned the flames of chaos and violence “This is a moment of reckoning for the United States,” said Bob Goodfellow, interim executive director of Amnesty International USA. “President Trump has repeatedly encouraged violence and disorder by his supporters. These are not the actions of a leader, but an instigator.” The New York real estate tycoon rose to the presidency despite his complicated past with his hometown's Black and Latino communities. There was his refusal to apologize for harsh comments in 1989 about five Black and Latino men who as teenagers were wrongly convicted in a jogger's brutal rape in New York City's Central Park.

Trump paid for newspaper advertisements back then calling for New York state to adopt the death penalty after the attack. Early in his real estate career, Trump and his father were sued by the Justice Department for violating fair housing laws by discriminating against Black applicants. The Trumps ultimately entered a consent decree but did not admit guilt.

Trump's 2016 White House win over Democrat Hillary Clinton was aided by the first decline in Black voter turnout in 20 years. Since his November loss to President-elect Joe Biden, he has made unsubstantiated allegations of voter fraud in large urban centers such as Detroit, Milwaukee and Philadelphia — all areas with big African American electorates — that proved critical to Trump's defeat.

There has been no evidence of the massive fraud or gross error that Trump and his team alleged in scores of lawsuits that judges, whether appointed by Republicans, Democrats or Trump himself, systematically dismissed.

Still, the Republican National Committee, in the aftermath of Trump's loss, has tried to cast the Trump era as one in which the GOP loos-

ened the Democratic grip on Black voters. “Because of his leadership we have changed the political map forever and Republicans have a road map on how to be competitive and victorious in nontraditional communities,” RNC spokesman Paris Dennard said in a statement.

The Rev. Marshall Hatch, a civil rights activist in Chicago, said that Trump's defeat at the polls brought a moment of relief.

But Hatch said his joy quickly was eclipsed by the recognition that some 74 million Americans were OK voting for Trump even though he repeatedly has played down white supremacy, vilified women of color and tried to diminish the issue of racial injustice in American policing. **AP**

US lifts self-imposed restrictions on contacts with Taiwan

Washington: The US has lifted the “self-imposed restrictions” on contacts between American and Taiwanese diplomats and officials, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has announced, ending a long-standing policy to “appease” China.

The move on Taiwan is likely to anger China and increase tensions between Washington and Beijing as the Trump administration enters its final days ahead of the inauguration of Joe Biden as president on January 20.

China regards Taiwan as a breakaway province that must be reunified with the mainland, even by force. But Taiwan's leaders assert that it is a sovereign state.

In a statement on Saturday, Pompeo said, “for several decades the State Department has created complex internal restrictions to regulate our diplomats, service members, and other officials’ interactions with their Taiwanese counterparts.”

The US has maintained close ties with Taiwan since it split from mainland China in 1949 after the end of a civil war. But until recently Washington has avoided major displays of friendship so as to not antagonise Beijing, which continues to view the self-governing democracy of around 24 million people as an inseparable part of its territory. Referring to Taiwan as a “reliable” and “unofficial” part-

ner, Pompeo, a staunch critic of China, added that the US executive branch agencies should consider “contact guidelines” regarding relations with Taiwan previously issued by the State Department to be “null and void.”

“The United States government took these actions unilaterally, in an attempt to appease the Communist regime in Beijing. No more,” he said.

“Today I am announcing that I am lifting all of these self-imposed restrictions,” the US top diplomat said. The United States government maintains relationships with unofficial partners around the world, and Taiwan is no exception, he said. **PTI**

Chinese state media blast latest Pompeo move on Taiwan

Beijing: China's state media lashed out at the latest move on Taiwan by the departing Trump administration, accusing US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo of “seeking to maliciously inflict a long-lasting scar on China-US ties.”

A writer for the official Xinhua News Agency said in a commentary on Sunday that the lifting of longstanding restrictions on US government contacts with Taiwanese counterparts proves that Pompeo “is only interested in stoking unwarranted confrontations, and has no interest in world peace.”

A commentary posted online by CGTN, the English-language channel of state broadcaster CCTV, called Pompeo's announcement “a

cowardly act of sabotage” of the next US administration.

“The Trump administration, in its continuing efforts to burn the house down before leaving office, has crossed a dangerous red line with China days before incoming President Joe Biden takes office,” the commentary read in part.

Biden takes office on January 20.

There was no immediate comment from the Chinese government on Pompeo's decision to end State Department restrictions on how US officials can interact with Taiwan, which he said had been implemented to appease the Communist regime in Beijing. **AP**

Landslides in Indonesia leave at least 11 dead

Jakarta: Two landslides triggered by heavy rain in Indonesia left at least 11 dead and 18 injured, officials said Sunday. The second landslide in Cihanjuang village in the Sumedang district of West Java province occurred as rescuers were still evacuating people following the first disaster on Saturday, said National Disaster Mitigation Agency spokesman Raditya Jati.

Rescuers were among the victims, he said. The rain stopped on Saturday night. A bridge and roads were blocked by the landslides as authorities struggled to bring in heavy equipment to clear the debris. Seasonal rains and high tide in recent days have caused dozens of landslides and widespread flooding across much of Indonesia, a chain of 17,000 islands where millions of people live in mountainous areas or near fertile flood plains close to rivers. **AP**

Trump to visit US-Mexico border to laud border wall

Washington: President Donald Trump is expected to travel to the US-Mexico border on Tuesday to highlight his administration's work on the border wall, the White House said Saturday.

Trump will travel to the town of Alamo, Texas. He will mark the completion of 400 miles of border wall and his administration's efforts to reform what the White House described as the nation's broken immigration system. Trump's campaign for the presidency in 2016 focused extensively on the president's desire to construct a border wall. He also promised that Mexico would pay for the wall, but it has been paid for by US taxpayers.

While most of the wall went up in areas that had smaller barriers, the government has built hundreds of miles of fencing as high as 30 feet (9 meters) in a short amount of time — most of it this year.

The administration prioritized areas where the wall could be built more quickly, and crews have blasted hills and bulldozed sensitive habitats in national wildlife refuges and on American Indian land to do it.

The visit will likely be the president's first public appearance since he addressed supporters on Wednesday riling up a crowd that later staged a violent siege of the U.S. Capitol. He is anxious to highlight accomplishments as his presidency winds down. **AP**

Farmers vandalise venue of Khattar kisan mahapanchayat

From page 1

“All farmers are here to whom the CM ‘sahib’ intends to explain the farm laws. We will not allow the government to hold this programme,” a protester said. The farmers criticised the state government, saying it was holding a programme over the laws at a time when farmers across the country protesting against these.

The government is trying to rub salt into our wounds with this “kisan mahapanchayat”, another protester added. Some local villagers and BJP workers also had a face-off with the protesters when they reached the venue.

Police also resorted to mild cane charge to disperse them. Addressing the media in Chandigarh, Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar said he gave directions to land his chopper in Karnal keeping in mind the law and order situation.

He held the Congress and Communists responsible for

this incident, saying such “andhergardi” is not acceptable. “If anybody is involved in this agitation, it is the Congress and Communists,” he claimed. Khattar said some farmer leaders who had assured not to disrupt the event backtracked from their promise. “I want to state that there is a strong democracy in the country and everybody has the right to put forth his point,” he said. He said those who were behind the act have defamed the farming community. “Our farmers do not involve in such things,” he said.

The CM said whatever he wanted to say to people in the “kisan mahapanchayat” was said by party leaders who were present there.

To a question, Khattar denied that there was any intelligence failure behind this incident. Reacting to the incident, Leader of Opposition Bhopinder Singh Hooda said the government should avoid confrontation with farm-

ers.” Farmers have certain apprehensions over the new farm Acts.

The government should rather repeal these Acts as desired by farmers and avoid confrontation with them by holding functions like the mahapanchayat,” he said.

The former CM reiterated his demand of convening a session of the state assembly. “This government has lost the faith of its legislators and people.

The Congress wants to bring a no-confidence motion against the Khattar government,” he said.

Haryana Congress chief Kumari Selja said the mahapanchayat convened by Khattar did not get support from people. “The government has lost the trust of people,” she said. AICC general secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala said the proposed mahapanchayat was a “government sponsored” event which has been shown “its true picture” by the protesters.

UP borders with Haryana, Raj, MP may be sealed

From Page 1

beings reported in India.

He said that only two samples from Kanpur zoo have tested positive, confirming the presence of bird flu. “Fifteen samples had been sent to the high security lab at Bhopal and 13 tested negative,” he pointed out. He further said that there is no reason to panic because it is only at one spot in UP so far. “We will be able to control it completely in the next three days as rapid response teams have already been activated,” he said. He added that the action plan has been made and will implement it, wherever required.

“Task force meetings have already been held and presided over by DMs in various districts with the representatives of Irrigation, Health, Forest department and Environment departments,” he said.

“One kilometre area from the point where the birds were detected with flu in Kanpur zoo has been declared the infected zone and birds within that area will be culled and given deep burial. Sanitisation work will be continuously carried out in that area.

The area between 1-10 kilometres has been declared the surveillance zone and all the birds in the area will be surveyed and put under surveillance,” he said.

Meanwhile, president of Uttar Pradesh Poultry Farmers’ Association Nawab Ali Akbar said with two cases of bird flu being detected in Uttar Pradesh, the sale of chicken and eggs has been impacted. “The sale has dipped by 10-15 per cent,” he said.

No respite from cold in North India

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Cold weather conditions continued to sweep the northern belt, as some parts of Kashmir Valley received another spell of snowfall on Sunday.

Light rain occurred at isolated places over eastern Uttar Pradesh and in almost all divisions of Madhya Pradesh. The national Capital's minimum temperature dipped to 7.8 degrees Celsius as cold winds from snow-clad Western Himalayas swept through the plains, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

The mercury is likely to drop to five to six degrees Celsius by January 14 in the city, it said.

The cloud cover over Delhi has prevented a steep decline in the minimum temperature so far, the IMD said.

Meanwhile, some parts of the Kashmir Valley, including Srinagar, received another spell of snowfall—an unexpected spell of back-to-back snowfall after light snow on Saturday and the heavy snowfall earlier in the week, officials said.

They said Srinagar recorded about an inch of snow till 8.30 am. Some areas, especially in south Kashmir, also received snowfall which, however, stopped after some time, they said.

The officials said there were no reports of snowfall at the famous ski-resort of Gulmarg, in north Kashmir, and Pahalgam tourist resort in the south.

While the MeT office had forecast very light rains or snowfall at isolated places in Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, there was no such forecast for Sunday.

There is no forecast of any major snowfall and the weather is

likely to stay mainly dry till January 14, the MeT office said. Srinagar city -- the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir -- recorded a low of minus 2.6 degrees Celsius, up from minus 4 degrees Celsius the previous night. Keylong and Kalpa in Himachal Pradesh continued to shiver at sub-zero temperatures, the meteorological department said.

The tribal Lahaul and Spiti's administrative centre Keylong was the coldest place in the hill state yet again at minus 8.8 degrees Celsius, Shimla MeT centre director Manmohan Singh said.

Kalpa in Kinnaur district recorded a low of minus 4.3 degrees Celsius respectively, he said.

Shimla registered a low of 5.5 degrees Celsius, the official said. Meanwhile, the highest temperature in the state was recorded in Sundernagar at 23.2 degrees Celsius.

Door-to-door survey to enrol out-of-school kids

From Page 1

Exploring the option of classroom-on-wheels and classes in small groups at the village level, increasing the access of children to online and digital resources, use of TV and radio to reduce learning losses and ensuring easy and timely access to the provisions of uniforms, textbooks and mid-day meals are among the recommendations made by the Ministry for student support during the closure of schools.

Similarly, the guidelines for student-support when schools reopen after prolonged closure include preparation and running of school readiness modules and bridge course for the initial period so that they can adjust to the school environment and do not feel stressed or left-out.

Identifying students across different grades based on their learning levels and relaxing detention norms to prevent drop out this year have also

been recommended.

The Ministry has also suggested encouraging children to read books beyond the syllabus and indulge in creative writing and problem solving for ensuring reading with comprehension and numeracy skills.

Large-scale remedial programmes and learning enhancement programmes should be held to mitigate learning loss and inequality, the Ministry has recommended.

Poultry products price...

From Page 1

The industry, though, is confident of recovering from the setback within 8-10 days as India has always succeeded in preventing any major outbreak of bird flu.

“Reports of unusual mortality of birds have been received from State of Chhattisgarh in the night of 08/01/2021 and morning of 09/01/2021 in poultry and wild birds in Balod district, Chhattisgarh. The State has constituted RRT teams for emergency situation and also sent the samples to designated laboratory. Further, reports of unusual mortality in ducks have also been received from Sanjay lake, Delhi. Samples have been sent to the designated laboratory for testing. Samples of dead crows have also been sent to NISAD from Mumbai, Thane, Dapoli, Parbhani and Beed districts of Maharashtra for confirmation of Avian Influenza,” the Ministry said.

Meanwhile, five crows were found dead in a drain in the Sitabpura area in Uttarakhand's Pauri Garhwal district. Samples of the dead birds have been sent to a laboratory in Bhopal for testing. Over 350 birds were reported dead in Rajasthan on Saturday, taking the death count to 2,512.

A drive to cull over 1.60 lakh poultry birds at five poultry farms commenced in Haryana's Panchkula district on Saturday. The move comes after samples of some birds in two poultry farms at Kheri and Ganauli villages in Panchkula tested positive for the H5N8 strain of avian flu on Friday. “The process (to cull birds) started by the State's animal husbandry department,” Panchkula Deputy Commissioner MK Ahuja said.

The Ministry said that Chief Secretaries / administrators were requested to arrange to issue appropriate advisories to quell consumer reactions, affected by rumors and increase awareness regarding safety of poultry or poultry products that are safe for consumption following boiling/cooking procedures.

215 migratory birds found dead in Himachal

PTI ■ SHIMLA

Carcasses of 215 migratory birds were found in Pong Dam Wildlife Sanctuary in Himachal Pradesh's Kangra district on Sunday, taking the total number of such birds suspected to have died of avian influenza to 4,235, officials said. Each day, hundreds of migratory birds were found dead in the lake area since December 29. Last Monday, the samples tested positive for H5N1, they said. Also, for the fourth day in a row, a large number of dead poultry birds were found dumped by the side of the Chandigarh-Shimla highway in Solan district.

The remains of the birds were buried according to safety protocol and their samples sent to a disease diagnostic laboratory in Jalandhar.

Earlier, dead chickens were found dumped twice near Chakki Mor and once at Barog bypass near the district headquarters. A joint team of animal husbandry officials from the Centre and the state visited Siyal in Dhameta wildlife range and Guglara in Nagrota Surian range of the sanctuary on Sunday to assess the situation, Chief wildlife warden Archana Sharma said. A number of crows were also found dead in different parts of the state over the last few days. Carcasses of over 60 crows were found at Pong Lake sanctuary in Kangra.

China seeks quick return of its soldier

From Page 1

As regards the latest incident, the Army also said troops from either side are deployed along the LAC since friction erupted last year due to unprecedented mobilisation and forward concentration by Chinese troops.

India and China have a 1,700 km long LAC in Ladakh sector and most of it is now heavily guarded by both sides. More than one lakh troops of both the armies are facing each other besides tanks and heavy artillery guns also amassed in operational areas close by. This has led to more tension and several rounds of military and diplomatic level talks have so far failed to reduce friction leading to disengagement and de-escalation.

Incidentally, in a pre-emptive move on August 29 and 30 last year, the Army occupied some unoccupied heights in the Chushul sector from Thakung to Rechin La within the Indian perception of the LAC foiling the PLA attempts to dominate the heights and change the status quo.

The Indian troops also occupied heights in the south of Pangong Tso thereby putting the Chinese at a disadvantage there. Moreover, the Indian troops have also strengthened their positions

on the north bank of the Pangong lake in last few months. The lake is one of the points where the face-offs began in May last year. The Indian and Chinese patrols came to blows there.

As the Ladakh sector remains tense, India has consistently pushed for comprehensive disengagement at all flashpoints and restoration of status quo ante of early April during the ongoing military talks. The Chinese insist the Indian Army first pulled back its troops deployed on strategic heights on the southern bank of Pangong Tso.

With no solution in sight at the moment, India is not willing to take any chances and is prepared for long haul. Additional troops trained in mountain warfare are now stationed in Ladakh.

In an effort to enable the soldiers to withstand harsh winter there with temperature dipping to minus 20 to 30 degrees, the army has ensured enough winter clothing besides prefabricated huts.

The Defence Ministry recently said the Army has complete Advance Winter Stocking (AWS) and winter preparations and troops are “well-entrenched to counter any misadventure by Chinese forces.”

Racial slur appals cricketing world

From Page 1

The incidents of racial abuse revived memories of the infamous ‘Monkeygate’ episode during the 2007-08 series. Incidentally, that controversy too flared up during the Sydney Test when Andrew Symonds claimed that Harbhajan Singh hurled the racial slur at him multiple times.

However, the Indian off-spinner, who denied the charge, was cleared after a hearing on

the matter.

On Saturday, the abuses were directed at Bumrah and Siraj while they were fielding during the Australian second innings. India's regular skipper Virat Kohli, who is on paternity leave right now, offered his support to the team via social media. Kohli was at the receiving end of some abuse during the 2011-12 Test series and had copped criticism for responding to it with an obscene gesture towards the crowd.

“Racial abuse is absolutely unacceptable. Having gone through many incidents of really pathetic things said on the boundary lines, this is the absolute peak of rowdy behaviour.”

“It's sad to see this happen on the field,” Kohli tweeted.

The series is currently locked 1-1 and the finale is scheduled in Brisbane from January 15.

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“It's sad to see this happen on the field,” Kohli tweeted.

The series is currently locked 1-1 and the finale is scheduled in Brisbane from January 15.

Trend Slazer

Kiara feels charged for 2021

Actor **KIARA ADVANI** has turned on her beast mode for 2021, and she sure looks all charged-up for the year ahead.

Kiara posted a video on Instagram, where she is seen working out in a gym in sports bra and lycra pants.

"Charged for 2021," she wrote as the caption.

Kiara's recent release was *Indoo Ki Jawaani*, which revolves around a Ghaziabadi girl's fixation with dating apps.

She has three films lined up over the next months — *Shershaah* opposite Sidharth Malhotra, the Kartik Aaryan-starrer *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2* and *Jug Jugg Jeeyo* co-starring Anil Kapoor, Neetu Kapoor and Varun Dhawan.



'The play Sakubai made me recall a time in my life when I had bonded with a house help

who, like me, had lost her husband. Like her, I too had started wearing white constantly till I realised, I had to embrace colour once again for the sake of my daughters. I gifted her a few sarees and slowly, she too stopped wearing white.'

—Sarita Joshi

Actor **URVASHI RAUTELA** will try to bring alive an updated avatar of Bollywood legend, late Madhubala, in a music video of the recreated version of the classic song *Ek Ladki Bheegi Bhaagi Si*.

"It is truly a culmination of one of my dreams — stepping into the legendary beauty icon Madhubala ji's shoes, and that too for *Ek Ladki Bheegi Bhaagi Si*, a cult classic cult, and giving my own vocals along with Kishore Kumar sir's original voice. The year has started out with a bang for me," said Urvashi.



Ed Sheeran to turn deejay?

Singer **ED SHEERAN** is reportedly going to turn a deejay with a remix for singer Passenger.

Sheeran has put a spin on his friend Passenger's song *Sword From The Stone*, which is expected to be out next week.

His first remix is under the alias *Gingerbread Mix*.

"They have been friends for years after meeting when they were teenagers and have covered songs together before but never done anything like this," a source said about the collaboration between Sheeran and Passenger, whose real name is Mike Rosenberg. The remix news comes just over two weeks after Sheeran released his new song *Afterglow*.



TECH-AWAY FOOD

Corporate cafeterias are going to see a lot of digitalisation and automation this year, say experts

This year will be characterised by two phases. The early part of which will be a continuation of 2020 where employees will refrain from coming to work and organisations will still be somewhat lackadaisical in calling back people. However, as the vaccine programme rolls out and by the first half of the year if it has been established that the vaccine has helped in controlling the pandemic then people would start coming back to work around July. The new norm, as people start coming back to work, is going to be around the role that technology will play in enhancing the safety standards of food at work. As people begin coming back to work, there will be three key

drivers for the adoption of new technology solutions in ensuring the safety of the food which is served in the workplace.

The first one will be the need for digital platforms to crack the behaviours which are needed in the post-pandemic world eyeing to continue for allowing social distancing to take place, ensuring there isn't crowding in the cafeteria and lastly to minimise contact in the delivery of food. This can only be facilitated through digital platforms which have algorithms that can track the flow of traffic in office cafeterias. Hence, most of the organisations will be looking for foodservice providers who can use technology in ensuring that the

food served at work is safe.

There is going to be another critical role that technology will play which will be at the back end. Increasing use of technology-driven solutions to enhance the nutritive value of the food and to monitor the calorific intake of employees. Digital platforms will help track consumption behaviours at an individual level and therefore, provide granular data to organisations on food consumption trends at the workplace. This will help in recipe development for boosting immunity through natural means, as also enhancing the sensitivity of employees towards consuming healthy food. One of the biggest challenges in India has been that taste always

triumphs over health but in the post-pandemic world health will triumph over taste, a key driver of that will be the use of safe ingredients in cooking. This is going to be the single biggest change in the post-pandemic world.

Before the pandemic, employees in large cities were very comfortable consuming unhealthy food. For example, in the city of Mumbai, you could see scores of people consuming food from the food carts lying alongside the roads. These food carts typically use water from the toilet on the ground floor of the offices in front of which they park their carts. Such behaviours are going to be catastrophic in the post-pandemic world as the spread of infection of any kind will



We all get stereotyped as actors: Arshad

Actor Arshad Warsi feels it is easy to get stereotyped as an actor, and very difficult to break away from it. The actor says he has managed to evade the image trap despite his overwhelming popularity in comic roles only because his serious roles were equally loved.

"It is difficult (to break away from stereotypes). We all get stereotyped — all of us do, every actor does. That's how it is. You do a certain role or you do something that people enjoy, and then that is what you keep getting because that is ringing the box office," Arshad said.

"It becomes difficult to get out of it. Fortunately for me, I've managed to do that purely because people have enjoyed my serious acting as well as my comedy," he added.

The actor continued, "Usually, when somebody does comedy, a lot of (his/her) serious roles don't work because you can't get that person out of the head." Opening up about his way of doing it, Arshad said, "I tend to get into the character so much that I make you forget who I am. I make you forget what my previous one was, and that works for me. In *Asur*, people just accepted me in such a serious role as a forensic scientist. And then *Durgamati: The Myth* was on the same lines, I got to do something completely different from what I'm usually offered, which is a breath of fresh air and it feels wonderful."

Before entering Bollywood as an actor, Arshad worked as an assistant director and choreographed a song for the 1993 film *Roop Ki Rani Choron Ka Raja*. He made his acting

debut in 1996 with *Tere Mere Sapne*, which was a box office success.

Over the years, he has impressed the audience and critics alike with varied characters in films like the *Munna Bhai* series, the *Ishqiya* films, the *Golmaal* series, *Dhamaal*, *Jolly LLB* and *Seher*.

Last year, he made his digital debut with psychological thriller *Asur*. He was also seen in the role of a politician in film *Durgamati: The Myth*, which ditched traditional route of release and premiered digitally on Amazon Prime Video.

Asked how his life changed in the COVID-19 era, he said, "It hasn't, but I'm glad it has changed the lives of the world. I have lived like this even when there was no pandemic. I stay in my room, I do my films, I come back home, I like hanging out with my kids. So I enjoy doing that. I got to do that at a large scale with the kids at home. It was really nice. So, my life has been like that."

"I'm glad that the rest of the world got a chance to experience the whole feeling of not being in a rush to live your life, to sit down and relax and not do anything. It's nice to do that. It's really nice to just sit down and not let life just pass you by and enjoy it a little bit," he added.

Arshad is currently shooting for *Bachchan Pandey* along with Akshay Kumar, Kriti Sanon and Jacqueline Fernandez in Jaisalmer. Shoot will continue till March. The team is expected to shoot at places like the Gadisar Lake and Jaisalmer.

—IANS



WEBBED



COMING 2 AMERICA

Set in the lush and royal country of Zamunda, newly-crowned king Akeem (Eddie Murphy) and his trusted confidante Semmi (Arsenio Hall) embark on an all-new hilarious adventure that has them traversing the globe from their great African nation to the borough of Queens, New York — where it all began. It releases on March 5 on Amazon Prime Video.



FATE: THE WINX SAGA

Determined to master their enchanting powers, a group of teens navigate rivalry, romance and supernatural studies at Alfea, a magical boarding school. Starring Abigail Cowen, Hannah Van Der Westhuisen and Precious Mustapha, it releases on January 22 on Netflix.



OUTSIDE THE WIRE

In the near future, a drone pilot sent into a war zone finds himself paired with a top-secret android officer on a mission to stop a nuclear attack. Starring Anthony Mackie, Damson Idris and Emily Beecham, it releases on January 15 on Netflix.

PLANT A TREE

Here are a few tips on growing your garden with seeds

How exciting to think of a full-size tree locked up within each seed still clinging to the branches of sugar maples, hornbeams, oaks, sycamores and other trees at the end of summer.

It was with such visions that I dropped an apple seed into some potting soil in an eight-inch clay flowerpot one autumn day years ago.

I wish I could write that the seed has now been transformed into a majestic tree. But no, the seed germinated, started to grow, then stalled at about four inches high.

The reason for the lack of growth was that apple seeds, like the seeds of many other trees native to cold climates, need pre-treatment before they will germinate or grow well. I was lucky the seed germinated at all!

Since then, I've learned the tricks of growing trees from seeds.

FOOL THE SEED

If an apple or maple seed grew as soon as it touched ground in late summer or early fall, the life of the tender young seedlings would be short indeed, snuffed out with the first frost. So most tree seeds that ripen in fall are able to stay dormant until they're convinced that winter is over.

You can fool such seeds into growing sooner by keeping them cool and moist for a couple of months. Pack the seeds into plastic bags with moist potting soil, then put the bag in the refrigerator or garage. This process is called "stratification" because nursery growers used to do it by alternating layers of seeds with layers of soil in boxes.

Of course, you could also just sow seeds directly

outdoors and let them wait out the winter naturally, but then they face hazards like squirrels, birds, flooding and more.

It is cool, not cold, temperatures that awaken a seed from sleep. Hours of chilling accumulate only when it's between about 32 and 50 degrees Fahrenheit. So chilling might begin in autumn but not finish until late winter or spring, thus reducing the likelihood of a seed sprouting during a February warm spell. Or all the chilling might take place in late winter or spring.

FURTHER CONSIDERS IN SEED GERMINATION

Some seeds have a hard coating which must be made permeable to water before the seed is stratified. One way to let water into redbud, juniper, hornbeam and other hard-coated seeds is to nick them with a small file.

Dank warmth will accomplish the same thing as nicking with a file. Pack the seeds into plastic bags, as directed above, but leave them in a warm room for two or three months before stratification.

Sycamore and catalpa are among the few fall-ripening seeds that don't need stratification. Perhaps this is because they hang on the trees late enough into winter so that, by the time they drop to moist ground, temperatures are too cold for germination. Or else it is spring, and just the right time for germination.

SPROUTING IS THE FIRST STEP

Stratified seeds usually sprout as soon as they have accumulated the number of chilling hours they need. For sugar maple, that means three to four months; for dogwood, four months; for



apple, two to three months. Keep an eye on stratifying seeds, because one week they'll be asleep and a week later — bingo! — they're sprouting fat, white

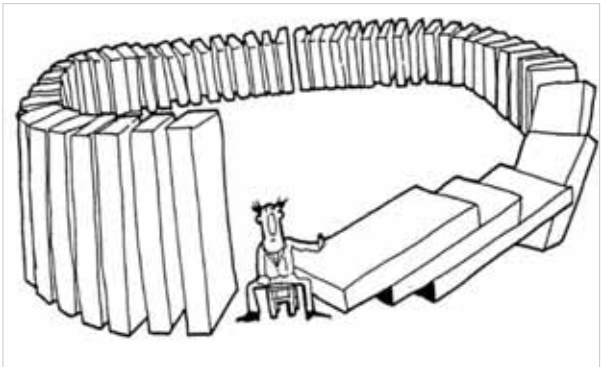
roots. Once seeds sprout, either pot them up or keep them cool enough to hold back growth until it's time to plant them outdoors.

You might wonder, why

go to the trouble of planting these seemingly delicate seeds when you can just buy a sturdy young tree at a nursery? Hey, you're reading this, aren't you? You're a gardener; you like to

grow plants. Not to mention the satisfaction you'll get years from now as you look up into the branches of a tall tree you planted from seed.

—AP



FOLLOW THE LAW OF KARMA

Through wrongdoings, humans are deceiving themselves in many ways and are thus sowing the seeds of sorrow and suffering for generations to come, says RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJ JI

The buzz around the web series, Scam 1992, which is based on the Indian stock market scam or the security scam of 1992, refuses to die down even after months. The story reminded all of us about the plain truth that every action — good or bad — bears fruit, sooner or later. No one, however high or mighty, can escape the result of his or her actions. Of course, every action takes its own time to ripen, yet no action remains totally barren for life. Moreover, one may escape the clutches of law for some time or the government of the day may favour a person and may leave him/her without taking any action against him/her but the law of action, or what is called the 'principle of Karma' is inviolable and no government, however unwilling and mighty, can stand in its way. It will take its course and punish an evildoer, ultimately.

There is no iota of doubt that the people involved in the case of the security scam were very influential. They had contacts with those who occupied the seats of power. They themselves had the power of money. They had friends and well-wishers who held great positions in society. Also, no one suspected these people to be doing such crimes and anti-social activities until the scam was out in open. But we all have seen that a time came when the situations became such that even their best friends could not help them and their power of money, which they had considered as a great boon. Money eventually turned into a deep curse for them as they had earned it through criminal or sinful methods. They had thought that they had been able to fool the government, hoodwink the people in authority, escape the attention of the invigilators and gag those who were expected to raise voice. However, in fact, they had been leading themselves nearer and nearer to a situation of great horror and severe retribution and punishment. Thus, they felt shocked when they discovered that they had landed themselves in trouble of great and unimaginable magnitude.

Most of us do not realise that evil actions cloud a person's intellect and judging abilities. It deludes a person's mind. Instead of feeling shameful about their acts, one looks at it as a proud or a successful moment — as if one is rising high on the ladder of social positions and gaining economic power. Ultimately, sooner or later, a day arrives when the ladder suddenly breaks under one's weight and he falls down from "great heights." And the result is certainly grievous. He bleeds with pain and shock. His honour gets badly fractured. His face gets smeared with dust. He feels humiliation, which is worse than death. He thinks that his friends and well-



wishers are mere spectators who could not save him from this steep fall. He does not dare stand and look at his kith and kin because he has guilty conscience and thinks that he had been hiding his true picture even from them and had been projecting himself as a great figure. Thus, he wishes that the earth opens up and makes way for him to lie deep under it rather than go back to the society, where he has now been declared a criminal.

And the outcome of the scam, what happened? We all know that a promising entrepreneur, who introduced the term 'scam' to India, spent much of his time in earning by sinful ways, against his conscience. He tried hard to hide this money from the watchful eyes of the tax authority. He lost his peace of the day to earn and his sleep of nights to the fear of being caught. For a while, he got some make-believe respect from those whom he had bofooled. Even this respect was not relished by him because, deep in his mind, he knew that he was not an honourable man. And, then, at the end of all his endeavours, he stood humiliated, rejected, dejected and utterly disappointed.

Alas, the man understood the inexorable law of Karma well and in time. The multitude of mankind does not even bother to understand it. Some, who have a cursory knowledge of it, do not act according to this knowledge. Others lay the paltry knowledge of this aside when they act. And a vast majority of men and women internally violate this law because they think that others also are doing it or because they think that no one knows that they have done something wrong. Still others think that they are doing a sinful action for a noble cause. Thus, man is deceiving himself in many ways and is thus sowing the seeds of sorrows and sufferings. May the scam and many such events serve as another powerful reminder for the humankind that a good act is inherently good and is a precious attainment and a bad act is a loss and a punishment from the time it is done till the time of its final settlement.

A new study has revealed that religious people are making use of some of the same tools that psychologists have systematically identified as effective in increasing well-being and protecting against distress, anxiety and depression.

Religious people look for positive ways of thinking about hardship, a practice known to psychologists as "cognitive reappraisal."

They also tend to have confidence in their ability to cope with difficulty, a trait called "coping self-efficacy."

Both have been shown to reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, said the team from University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in the US.

"This suggests that science and religion are on the same page when it comes to coping with hardship," said Florin Dolcos, a professor of psychology at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

The research was prompted in part by earlier studies demonstrating that people who are religious tend to use a coping strategy that closely resembles cognitive reappraisal.

For example, when someone

Faith, fact go hand in hand

A new study has revealed that religious people cope well with distress, anxiety and depression



body dies, a religious person may say, 'OK, now they are with God,' while someone who isn't religious may say, 'Well, at

least they are not suffering anymore.'

In both cases, the individual finds comfort in framing

the situation in a more positive light, said Dolcos in a paper published in the Journal of Religion and Health.



To reach this conclusion, the researchers recruited 203 participants with no clinical diagnoses of depression or anxiety.

Fifty-seven of the study subjects also answered questions about their level of religiosity or spirituality.

The researchers asked participants to select from a series of options describing their attitudes and practices.

The researchers also evaluated participants' confidence in their ability to cope and asked them questions designed to measure their symptoms of depression and anxiety.

"If we are just looking at

the relationship between religious coping and lower anxiety, we don't know exactly which strategy is facilitating this positive outcome," said study co-author Sanda Dolco.

"The mediation analysis helps us determine whether religious people are using reappraisal as an effective way of lessening their distress."

The study should be of interest to clinical psychologists working with religious clients. "I hope this is an example of where religion and science can work together to maintain and increase well-being," Florin said.

—IANS

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All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them.

—Walt Disney

”

EMOTIONAL ADS DON'T IMPROVE MEMORY

Debunking a long thought that an appeal to emotion sparks a call-to-action that motivates viewers to become consumers, a new study suggests that emotionally arousing advertisements may not always help improve consumers' immediate memory.

The findings, published in the American Journal of Advertising, indicates that an ad's emotional arousal can have a negative effect on immediate memory but a positive effect on delayed memory — but only if the level of emotional arousal elicited by the ad is congruent with the ad's claims.

"Emotionally arousing appeals have long been used in advertising, but the impact of those appeals on consumers' memory has always been a bit unclear," said the researcher, Hayden Noel, Assistant Professor, at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in the US.



ENJOYING ALCOHOL MAY LEAD TO DISORDER

Do you find drinking alcohol pleasurable? If so, you are more likely to develop an alcohol use disorder (AUD), a new study suggests.

The findings, published in the American Journal of Psychiatry, indicate that individuals developing an AUD are more likely to be sensitised to the effects of alcohol — that is, they experience a stronger positive response — rather than habituated to the substance with a lower level of response.

"These pleasurable alcohol effects grow in intensity over time, and do not dissipate, in people progressing in excessive drinking," said lead author Andrea King, Professor at the University of Chicago in the US.

"This tells us that having a higher sensitivity to the rewarding effects of alcohol in the brain puts such individuals at higher risk for developing an addiction," King added.



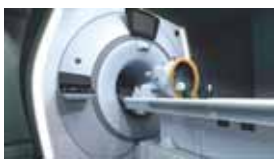
FOCUSED ULTRASOUND HELPS TREAT PARKINSON'S

Researchers have found that a scalpel-free alternative to brain surgery has the potential to benefit people with Parkinson's disease symptoms that are much more severe on one side of the body.

According to the team more testing is needed but the approach, which uses a technology called focused ultrasound, could offer a new option for patients whose symptoms are poorly controlled by medications and those who cannot or do not wish to undergo traditional brain surgery.

"This small brain region, the subthalamic nucleus, had a very strong and potent effect on parkinsonian symptoms when we targeted it with precise, focused ultrasound energy," said researcher Jeff Elias from the University of Virginia in the US.

Focused ultrasound offers a minimally invasive alternative to traditional surgery approaches, according to a paper published in the journal New England Journal of Medicine.



BP MEDICATION CAN SAFELY FOR COVID PATIENTS

Medications to treat high blood pressure (BP) do not affect outcomes among patients hospitalised with COVID-19, researchers have claimed.

The study, published in The Lancet Respiratory Medicine journal, shows that there is no risk for patients continuing these medications while hospitalized for COVID-19.

"Our trial results importantly show that these medications can be safely continued for patients hospitalized with COVID-19," said a researcher, Julio A. Chirinos, MD, PhD, Associate Professor at the University of Pennsylvania in the US.

"Observational studies were rapidly done, but randomised trials are important to set up a definitive answer regarding the potential impact of these commonly used blood pressure medications in the setting of Covid-19," Chirinos added.



STOP SMOKING TO REDUCE COVID SYMPTOMS

If you smoke, you are at an increased risk of catching COVID-19 symptoms than non-smokers, a new study suggests.

The findings, published in the journal Thorax, showed that smokers were 29 per cent more likely to report more than five symptoms associated with COVID-19.

And 50 per cent more likely to report more than ten, including loss of smell, skipping meals, diarrhoea, fatigue, confusion or muscle pain.

"Our results clearly show that smokers are at increased risk of suffering from a wider range of Covid-19 symptoms than non-smokers," said the lead researcher, Mario Falchi from the King's College London.

For the study, the team analysed data from an app. Of the participants of the app, 11 per cent were smokers. This is a lower proportion than the overall UK population of 14.7 per cent.



Nasty behaviour in Sydney not a first for India



Police, top, remove spectators from the game during play on Day 4 of the third Test between India and Australia at the Sydney Cricket Ground in Sydney on Sunday

AP

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Seasoned off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin on Sunday said racist abuse from the crowd at the Sydney Cricket Ground is not new and needs to be dealt with an iron fist after some spectators were asked to leave for targeting Indian players during the ongoing third Test against Australia here.

Speaking at the end of the fourth day's play, Ashwin said the Indian players have faced racism in Sydney earlier too and "disappointment" will be a "mild word" to describe how they are feeling after young pacer Mohammed Siraj was subjected to racial slurs on two consecutive days.

"Look, I would like to point out something. This is my fourth tour to Australia. Sydney, especially here, we have had a few experiences even in the past," Ashwin said at the virtual press conference to a query as to how the team is looking at the unsavoury incident.

Local media reported that six people were expelled from the ground by the security during the nearly 10-minute halt in the on-ground proceedings during the fourth day of the ongoing Test. On Saturday, the BCCI lodged a complaint with the ICC after Siraj and Jasprit Bumrah were abused. "They have been quite nasty and have been hurling abuses as well. But this is the time when they have gone one step ahead and used racial abuses," the senior member of the team said.

It's a shame, one of my greatest pet hates: Langer on racism

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Australia coach Justin Langer on Sunday called it a shame and one of his greatest "pet hates" after some spectators directed racial abuse at Indian players during the third Test and were expelled from the Sydney Cricket Ground for their behaviour.

Reacting to the two episodes of racism against the visiting team in as many days, Langer said it was a shame that such a hard-fought series was tarnished by incidents like these.

"Sorry, it is upsetting and it is disappointing," he asserted.

"...It is one of my greatest pet hates in life, that people can think they can come to a sporting event, whether it is cricket or any kind

and pay their money and think that they can abuse or so whatever they like.

"I mean, I have hated it as a player, I have hated it as a coach, we have seen in different parts of the world, it is really sad to see this happen in Australia," he said.

Langer said it is especially frustrating when the cricket itself has been nothing less than exciting so far.

"I think our series so far has been played in such great spirit, it has been brilliant to watch on field, it's been really played in good spirit between both the teams.

"It's a shame to see (the series) getting marred by incidents like that we are hearing about today and last night."

"It is not acceptable in this day and age when we have seen a lot," said Ashwin.

He said in no unequivocal terms that this needs to be dealt with an iron fist.

"This roots back to upbringing and the way one sees, this needs to be definitely dealt with iron fists. We must make sure it doesn't happen again."

Ashwin said that the team didn't face any racism in the earlier Test venues like Adelaide and Melbourne.

"Personally, I think Adelaide and Melbourne weren't as bad but like I said this has been a continuous thing at Sydney. I personally experienced it as well. They do tend to get nasty, I don't know why or for what reason."

Ashwin was surprised that the security personnel didn't round up the perpetrators at the first instance and let it linger for a long time.

"Unless people don't find the necessity to look at it in a different way, in fact I was surprised that a section in crowd continuously did and they were not made to surround or pulled up for it.

"They needed to be dealt with and yes, disappointing is actually a very mild word, I must say," he said.

Ashwin then went on to narrate some of his own experiences on previous tours.

"If I take myself back to the first tour of 2011-12, I had no clue about racial abuse and how you were made to feel small in front of so many people and people actually laugh at you and another set of people who laugh along when these things happen. I had no idea at all what this was," he said.

"When you stood at the boundary line, you wanted to come in 10 yards inside to avoid all these things. As things have moved on and we have toured more and more, this has definitely been not acceptable," he said.



Racism has no place in our great sport or in any walk of society. I've spoken to @CricketAus and they have ensured strict action against the offenders. @BCCI and Cricket Australia stand together. These acts of discrimination will not be tolerated.

—JAY SHAH

Racial abuse is absolutely unacceptable. Having gone through many incidents of really pathetic things said on the boundary lines, this is the absolute peak of rowdy behaviour. It's sad to see this happen on the field. The incident needs to be looked at with absolute urgency and seriousness and strict action against the offenders should set things straight for once.

—VIRAT KOHLI

Tum karo toh Sarcasm, aur koi Kare toh Racism. Very unfortunate with what some of the Australian crowd has been doing at the SCG and spoiling the vibes of a good test series.

—VIRENDER SEHWAG

Disappointing to see that my teammates were subjected to racial abuse repeatedly in Sydney. There is no place for racism in today's world and it is not acceptable. I hope that strict action is taken against those who misbehaved. #TeamIndia

—MOHAMMED SHAMI

I personally have heard many things on the field while playing in Australia about Me My religion My colour and much more..This isn't the first time the crowd is doing this nonsense..How do u stop them ?? #AUSvIND

—HARBHAJAN SINGH

Com'on spectators, we can all do better. The game of cricket is about celebrating EVERYONE and not abusing. #Unacceptable P.s. Getting to watch cricket live from the stadium is a privilege in these difficult times, honour it.

—SHIKHA PANDEY

Mohammed Siraj's father died from a lung condition in November. Siraj missed the funeral to stay on this tour and broke through for a Test debut on Boxing Day. A monumental sacrifice, and it would be so disappointing to have that achievement soured by racism at the SCG. #AUSvIND

—SAM LANDSBERGER

"So when Siraj brought it up, Ajinkya, Rohit and myself, we all got together and reported the matter to the umpires. A new boy like Siraj knows, this is a line someone cannot over-step. We were quite happy that these people were evicted," the eloquent Chennai man said.

India need 309 to win

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Cheteshwar Pujara was left to summon his trademark doggedness with skipper Ajinkya Rahane after India lost their openers in pursuit of an improbable 407, setting the stage for an intriguing final day of the third Test against Australia in which the visitors will primarily try to bat out three sessions here.

Having drawn flak for his 50 off 176 balls in the first innings, none would mind such an effort from India's Test specialist after the visitors finished the fourth day on 98 for 2 largely due to a 71-run opening stand between Rohit Sharma (52) and Shubman Gill (31).

Rohit's untimely dismissal at the fog end, trying to pull Pat Cummins, did hurt India but it's two best defensive players Pujara (9 batting off 29 balls) and skipper Ajinkya Rahane (4 off 14 balls) were at the crease when stumps were drawn.

The pitch, with variable bounce and the dark patches acting like snake pits for Nathan Lyon, would pose its own set of challenges for a team with two injured batsmen in their line-up.

Both Rohit (52 off 98 balls) and Gill (31 off 64 balls) showed admirable application under pressure but most importantly didn't let the bad deliveries go un punished. The three cover drives off Rohit's blade and a cross-batted straight drive of Gill were out of top drawer.

Rohit, for good measure, pulled Cameron Green over mid-wicket for a six and they both looked comfortable while negotiating the Australian attack.

It was after 53 years that an Indian opening pair had struck two 50 plus partnerships in the same Test Down Under.

Last time also it was in Sydney where Farokh Engineer and Syed Abid Ali had a decent outing albeit in a lost cause.

It took a peach of a delivery from Josh Hazlewood (1/11 in 8 overs), coming for his second spell, which straightened

3rd Test, Day 5
Live from 4:30am IST
SONY TEN 1, 3 & SIX

after pitching and the resultant nick, ended an impressive 71-run stand.

Pujara, just after coming in, successfully asked for a DRS review after being adjudged leg before.

A delectable chip shot coming down the track off Lyon helped Rohit bring up his half-century but his dismissal in the next over left fans yearning for more.

As far as Australia are concerned, they hardly put a foot wrong during the two sessions that they batted.

Steve Smith (81 off 167 balls) missed out on a second hundred but rookie Cameron Green played a hapless Indian attack with a well-made 84 off 132 balls that had four sixes. They declared at the stroke of tea, having scored 312 for 6.

Marnus Labuschagne (73 off 118 balls) once again batted positively during his second century partnership of the match (103 runs) with mentor Smith, who employed a more cautious approach.

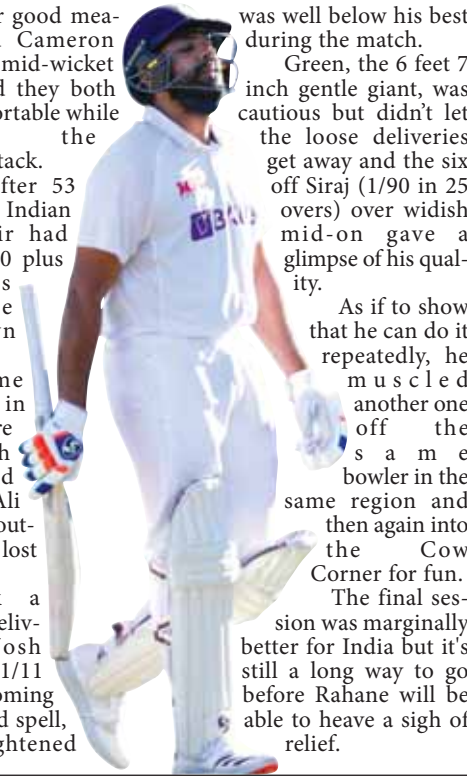
The butter-fingered Indian fielders also didn't help the bowlers' cause as Hanuma Vihari, vice-captain Rohit and Rahane missed regulation catches at square leg, slip and gully respectively.

While Ravichandran Ashwin (2/95 in 25 overs) can take solace in the fact that he denied Smith a hundred with a successful review, he would be the first to admit that he was well below his best during the match.

Green, the 6 feet 7 inch gentle giant, was cautious but didn't let the loose deliveries get away and the six off Siraj (1/90 in 25 overs) over wishy mid-on gave a glimpse of his quality.

As if to show that he can do it repeatedly, he muscled another one off the same bowler in the same region and then again into the Cow Corner for fun.

The final session was marginally better for India but it's still a long way to go before Rahane will be able to heave a sigh of relief.



Raina, Bhuvneshwar shine in UP's loss

PTI ■ ALUR

Suresh Raina's half-century and a three-wicket effort from Bhuvneshwar Kumar went in vain as Punjab defended a modest 134 against Uttar Pradesh in their opening match of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy here on Sunday.

Punjab posted 134 for seven in a Group A game with opener and wicketkeeper Simran Singh scoring 43 off 41 balls. Anmolpreet Singh (35 off 27) was another batsman who made a valuable contribution.

Bhuvneshwar, who had to pull out of the IPL with a thigh muscle injury, was impressive in his comeback game, returning with figures of three for 22 in four overs.

However, UP fell short of the target and ended at 123 for five in 20 overs to lose by 11 runs.

Raina, playing his first competitive game in over 18 months, made an unbeaten 56 off 40 balls but it wasn't enough to take his team over the line.

In other Group A matches, Karnataka beat Jammu & Kashmir by 43 runs, while Railways chase 170 run against Tripura to win by six wickets.

CAPTAIN KRUNAL STARS

Vadodara: Krunal Pandya's all-round show helped Baroda beat Uttarakhand by five runs. Put into bat in a Group C game, hosts Baroda first rode on Pandya's blazing 76 to post a competitive 168/7 on the board before the bowlers held their nerves to restrict Uttarakhand to 163/6 despite a fighting 77 by Dikshanshu Negi.

Krunal, who is Baroda's captain, also contributed with the ball handsomely to return with figures of 3/33.

For Uttarakhand, right-handed batsman Negi hammered nine boundaries and

BCCI increase hosting and participation fee

New Delhi: The BCCI on Sunday decided to increase the hosting fee of the six state associations staging the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy from ₹2.5 lakh to ₹3.5 lakh besides hiking the participation fee of teams from ₹50,000 to ₹75,000. The tourney is played across six cities and in a bio-bubble, which increases the cost for the host association. "After receiving the feedback from the staging associations at the recently held AGM in Ahmedabad and the subsequent discussions with my colleagues at the BCCI, I am pleased to announce an increase in the hosting fee for Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 tournament for 2020-21 season from the existing ₹250,000 to ₹350,000," wrote BCCI secretary Jay Shah to the six hosting associations. PTI

six in his 57-ball 77 run knock, while Kunal Chandel, who came in at number seven, stuck a 26-ball 48 but the two could not take their side home.

In same group match at Motibaug Ground Gujarat won by 29 runs against Maharashtra.

TN TROUNCE J'KHAND

Kolkata: Host Bengal began their campaign with a thumping nine-wicket win against Odisha in an Elite Group B match.

In another match in the group, Tamil Nadu posted a crushing 66-run win over Jharkhand, courtesy opener C Hari Nishanth's unbeaten 92-run knock and an all-round effort by the bowlers. Debutant medium-pacer R Sonu Yadav picked up three for 31 to star in the winning start.

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Australian head coach Justin Langer on Sunday said the dismissal of India opener Rohit Sharma late on day four was a huge wicket for the hosts and hoped that off-spinner Nathan Lyon will help them take a 2-1 series lead on day five of the third Test here.

"It was a bit of a relief for us to see Rohit Sharma out there in the end, that's a huge wicket for us because we know he's a world class player. We know he's one of the all-time great one-day players so if he was out there, he's going to keep scoring quickly," Langer said at the virtual post-day press conference.

The former Australia opener hoped that the surface would start spinning more on day five to make their task easier.

"There's very little in this wicket, we've seen that throughout the whole Test match. Great credit to the bowlers but we're going to have to squeeze really hard, keep the pressure on and



Pat Cummins celebrates the dismissal of Rohit Sharma

AP

hopefully the ball will start spinning a bit more again tomorrow for Nathan Lyon.

"And we'll just keep doing what we're doing. There's a lit-

tle bit of variable bounce, hopefully that plays a part for us tomorrow as well," said Langer.

According to the head coach, Lyon's role will be crucial

Messi, Griezmann net 4 for Barca

AP ■ BARCELONA

First it was Pedro 'Pedri' González shining with his assists. Then the injury-prone Dembele Ousmane earned a spot in the attack. Now the oft-maligned Antoine Griezmann is back to scoring goals.

All in all, Barcelona is slowly showing signs this season might not be a wash after all.

Griezmann scored a brace and set up Lionel Messi for one of the Argentine's two goals on Saturday to lead Barcelona to a 4-0 win at Granada.

Barcelona's first three-match winning run in the league under Ronald Koeman put it four points behind leader Atlético Madrid, whose home game scheduled for Saturday against Athletic Bilbao was postponed due to a blizzard that has shut down the capital



and made transit almost impossible through much of central Spain.

"Our situation is still complicated, but the team is betting better. We have had three

games on the road and won all three," Koeman said.

"We are more focused from the start of the games now, and when we are focused and move the ball with pace, there are few teams that can control us."

Second-placed Real Madrid was one point behind Atlético after being held at Osasuna to 0-0 in a match played in steady snowfall and with barely any scoring chances for either side.

Griezmann got Barcelona started with his first goal in nearly a month in the 12th minute when a pass by Sergio Busquets was deflected to him by a Granada defender.

Griezmann set up Messi to double the lead with a left-footed shot from the edge of the area in the 36th.

Messi got his league-leading 11th goal in the 42nd

when he drove a free kick under two players who jumped in the defensive barrier. It was his first goal from a free kick this season.

Griezmann rounded off the big win in the 64th when he beat goalkeeper Rui Silva from a tight angle after Dembele played him clear with a lobbed pass.

It was Griezmann's first multi-goal game in nearly a year.

"They weren't going in for me, and now they are. I hope they keep coming," Griezmann said.

Granada played the last 12 minutes minus Jesús Vallejo, who was sent off for fouling Martin Braithwaite with only Silva to beat. Braithwaite had gone on in the 65th to give Messi a rare bit of rest with the game well in hand for the visitors.

Jadeja out of first 2 Eng Tests

Sydney: Senior India all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja, who dislocated his left thumb on day three of the third Test against Australia on Saturday, has been ruled out of the first two games in the upcoming series against England.

Jadeja was not able to bowl in Australia's second innings after a short ball from Mitchell Starc hit him on the gloves, requiring immediate medical attention.

"Ravindra Jadeja is out of first two Tests against England. He will need 4-6 weeks minimum to recuperate and complete rehab which rules him out of first two tests," a BCCI source said.

The four-Test series against England starts with a double header in Chennai from February 5.

The left-handed cricketer, who made a valuable 28 and took four wickets in the first



innings might take a painkiller injection and come out to bat on the final day of the game at SCG as India seek to save the Test.

"He might bat if needed with injection to save the Test," the source added.

Rishabh Pant, who suffered an elbow bruise while bat, confirmed senior player Ravichandran Ashwin.