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A 'HINDU PATRIOT'?

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LUCKNOW, TUESDAY JANUARY 12, 2021; PAGES 14 ₹3



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ACTING IS A LIE: MANAV KAUL
13 VIVACITY

Put on hold 3 farm laws or we will do so: SC

SC criticises Govt's handling of farmers' protest; all eyes on apex court's order today

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday asked the Centre to put on hold the three controversial farm laws or the court itself will do so on the recommendation of a court-appointed committee which is to be constituted. Now all eyes will be on the court's Tuesday order in the matter.

Criticising the Government's handling of the farmers' protest, the court questioned the Centre's opposition to its suggestion that the implementation of three new farm laws be held back for the time being so as to help find an amicable solution to the ongoing farmers' protest at Delhi borders.

The Bench said that till date the Centre has not told it anything on its proposal to keep the implementation of

these laws in abeyance for some time.

"We are still thinking it is equally important that we stay the implementation of law without staying the laws," the Bench said.

On December 17, the SC had asked the Centre to consider putting on hold the implementation of the three laws.

Disagreeing with the Centre's contention that court cannot put on hold laws passed by Parliament, the court referred to its last year order staying the implementation of 2018 Maharashtra law granting reservation to Marathas in education and jobs.

"We don't see why there is an insistence on implementation of the law," a Bench headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde said, adding, "We are not experts on economy and you

(Centre) tell us whether you are going to hold on these laws or we will do this".

Attorney General KK Venugopal told the Bench, also comprising Justices AS Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian, that a law cannot be stayed unless the court finds it violates fundamental rights or constitutional schemes.

"A law cannot be stayed by the Supreme Court unless the Lordships find that it violates the fundamental rights or constitutional schemes. Law has to be without the power to legislate, only then it can be stayed. No petitioners have raised any such issues," Venugopal said.

The Bench refused his contention and said, "We are doing this because you have failed to solve the problem. The Union of India has to take the responsibility. The laws have resulted into a strike and now you have to solve the strike".

The top court said it may stay the implementation of these laws as talks between the Government and farmers are "breaking down" because the

Attorney General KK Venugopal told the Bench that a law cannot be stayed unless the court finds it violates fundamental rights or constitutional schemes

The court referred to its last year order staying the implementation of 2018 Maharashtra law granting reservation to Marathas in education and jobs

The top court said it will constitute a committee headed by a former Chief Justice of India to resolve the impasse

It suggested that stay on implementation of these laws will help the committee in finding solution

Centre wants to discuss these legislations point by point, while the farmers want them to be repealed.

The SC said it will constitute a committee headed by a former Chief Justice of India to resolve the impasse. It suggested that stay on implementation of these laws will help the committee in finding solution.

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Farmers during their ongoing agitation against new farm laws at Ghazipur border in New Delhi on Monday

PTI

CAPSULE

UNION MIN HURT IN ROAD ACCIDENT, WIFE DIES

Bengaluru: Union MOS for Ayush and Defence Shripad Y Naik was injured and his wife Vijaya and personal assistant killed when their car overturned at Ankola in Uttara Kannada district on Monday night, police said. The Minister's condition was stable, they said.

QUEST TRUMP OR WE'LL IMPEACH: PELOSI TO VP

New York: US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi has served a notice to Vice President Mike Pence and the cabinet that they should oust President Donald Trump using their constitutional powers within 24 hours or she will begin impeachment proceedings in the fallout from storming of the Capitol by his supporters last week.

ANUSHKA SHARMA, VIRAT WELCOME BABY GIRL

Mumbai: Actor-producer Anushka Sharma and cricketer husband Virat Kohli on Monday announced the arrival of their first child, a baby girl, Kohli, who shared the news on Twitter, said both the baby and Sharma are healthy.

CHINESE HACKERS LURING INDIAN WHATSAPP USERS

New Delhi: In fresh trouble for WhatsApp, which is facing backlash over its upcoming user data policy in India, New Delhi-based think-tank Cyberpeace Foundation said on Monday that China-based hackers are targeting WhatsApp users in the country with the promise of "part-time" jobs.

3 cr Covid warriors to get vaccines free of cost: PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said the Central Government will bear the expenses of vaccinating nearly three crore healthcare and frontline workers in the first round and asked political representatives and VIPs not to jump the queue for getting the first dose of vaccine.

Interacting with Chief Ministers, Modi announced that over 30 crore citizens will get the jobs in the next few months in India against only 2.5 crore people who have received them in over 50 countries in around a month so far. The countrywide vaccination drive will start from January 16.

In the second phase, those above 50 years and those under 50 years with co-morbidity will be vaccinated, said Modi.

The Prime Minister did not specify who will bear the vaccination cost for subsequent rounds.

The Prime Minister informed Chief Ministers that plans were afoot to vaccinate "30 crore people in next few months."

"We should be proud that both the vaccines are made in India...four more vaccines are in progress so that we can plan

for the future," he told Chief Ministers through video-conferencing.

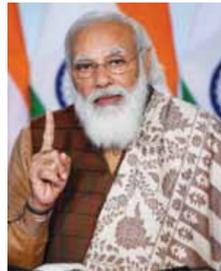
West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee sought in the meeting that the States should have greater role and involvement in the first phase of the vaccine rollout when the Centre would send vaccines to the States.

The Jammu & Kashmir Government requested for offline registration of the beneficiaries in the State.

States across the country have designated thousands of collection, storage and distribution centres for the January 16 vaccination exercise, the largest in the world. Two dry runs have already been conducted.

During the virtual meet, Modi told Chief Ministers, "I'm satisfied that we worked together by standing united in Covid crisis, quick decisions were taken with full sensitivity. As a result, Covid has not spread in India on the scale, on which it spread anywhere else in the world."

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Govt places order for 11 mn Covishield jabs @₹210 each

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After announcing January 16 as the day for launching countrywide Covid-19 vaccination drive, the Government on Monday placed a purchase order with Pune-based Serum Institute of India (SII) for 11 million doses of Covishield — anti-Covid vaccine developed by AstraZeneca and Oxford University — each costing ₹210, including GST of ₹10.

The HLL Lifecare Limited, a public sector undertaking issued the supply order on behalf of the Union Health Ministry in the name of Prakash Kumar Singh, Additional Director, Government and Regulatory Affairs at Pune-based pharma company.

The Covishield vaccine doses would be initially shipped to 60 consignment

points from where they would be distributed further.

The Ministry is also likely to soon sign a purchase order for another anti-coronavirus vaccine, Covaxin, which has been indigenously developed by Bharat Biotech. India top drug regulator DCGI had recently granted emergency use authorisation (EUA) to two vaccines, Oxford's Covishield, and Bharat Biotech's Covaxin. Both vaccines, according to a statement from the Health Ministry, have established safety and immunogenicity.

Coronavirus vaccine developed by AstraZeneca and the University of Oxford will be priced around ₹1,000 in private market once sales open up, said Adar Poonawala, CEO of its Indian manufacturer on Monday.

Continued on Page 11



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath reviews preparedness for the Covid vaccination drive by inspecting arrangements at the Civil hospital in Lucknow on Monday.

Pioneer

Bird flu spreads to 10 States

No need to curb poultry sale as humans not hit: Min to States

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

With the presence of avian influenza in Delhi, Maharashtra and Uttarakhand, the Ministry of Animal Husbandry and Dairying on Monday said bird flu has been confirmed in 10 States and stressed on increased surveillance around water bodies, live bird markets, zoos and poultry farms. Meanwhile, fresh avian deaths continue to be reported in other States too.

The Centre has urged States not to close mandis or restrict sale of poultry products as there are no scientific reports of transmission of bird flu to human beings. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has asked all State Governments to remain alert and ensure local administration keeps a constant vigil near places like water bodies, zoos and poultry farms.

"Till January 11, 2021, avian influenza has been confirmed in 10 States of the country," the Ministry said.

Continued on Page 11



A horticulture team member catches a goose for medication following reports of bird flu cases at Sanjay Lake in New Delhi on Monday

PTI

Samples confirm bird flu in Delhi, ban on sale of poultry brought from outside

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

As all eight samples sent to Bhopal lab tested positive, bird flu has been confirmed in Delhi, claimed officials on Monday. Following the development, the Delhi Government on Monday imposed a ban on sale of processed and packaged chicken brought from outside the city.

Only samples of ducks from Sanjay Lake have tested

positive for bird flu so far, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said on Monday, asking people not to panic as there is no cause for concern.

All eight samples — four from a park in Mayur Vihar Phase 3, three from Sanjay Lake and one from Dwarka — have been found positive for avian influenza, said Dr Rakesh Singh of Delhi's Animal Husbandry Unit.

Continued on Page 11

India hands back PLA soldier to Chinese army

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Army on Monday handed back to the Chinese army one of their soldiers who was apprehended on Friday for transgressing LAC. He was returned to the Chinese army at 10.10 am the Chushul-Moldo meeting point.

This was the second such incident since October last year when a Chinese soldier was nabbed after straying into India in Ladakh. In the latest incident, the Chinese soldier crossed the LAC in the south of Pangong Tso (lake) near Gurung Hill in Chushul sector. The two armies are in a stand-off in this region for the past nine months.

Announcing the safe return, the Indian Army said here on Monday, "The People's Liberation Army (PLA) soldier, who had been apprehended on January 8, has been handed over to China at Chushul-Moldo at 10.10 am today." He was in Indian custody for more than two days.

China Military Online, a news portal run by the military, last week said the soldier strayed across due to "darkness" and "complicated geography".

Foundation work of Ram temple to begin this month

'Construction to be completed in three-and-half years'

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Work on the foundation for the Ram temple at Ayodhya would begin this month and construction of the temple complex is expected to conclude in about three-and-a-half years, Swami Govinda Dev Giri ji Maharaj, Treasurer of Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teertha Kshetra Trust, said on Monday.

"How the foundation shall be built, that has been decided just now. The excavation has begun and, if not, when it is going to begin.

Asked about the total cost of the project, he said he "guessed" that the cost of the main temple within the boundary should be between ₹ 300 crore to ₹ 400 crore.

The total cost could be over ₹ 1,100 crore, which includes the ₹ 300 crore to ₹

400 crore for the main temple and the development of 67 acres (at the complex), he said.

He said the construction of the temple is likely to be completed in three to three-and-a-half years.

Giri ji Maharaj said more than ₹ 100 crore of donations has been collected as per accounts in Ayodhya.

Asked if donations for temple construction would be accepted from foreign countries as well, he said they are not being allowed at present as FCRA (Foreign Contributions Regulation Act) facility is not available.

However, FCRA facility (permissions as per FCRA) is expected to be available in two months, he said.

"We don't want to build just a temple of stones and bricks. We want to build the nation. We want to build the national spirit. The spirit of love, the spirit of philanthropy, the spirit of universal brotherhood and at the same time, spirit of might," he said.

People would listen only if

the country is strong, he said.

The temple would belong to the whole nation with donations received from all, he said.

He recalled that an industrialist had offered that his family would bear the cost of construction.

Saying that Ayodhya would be the cultural capital of the world after the construction of Ram temple, he said youths from neighbouring countries like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan would be invited to Ayodhya every year and they will be allowed to tour the country, with a view to bringing people together and promote their understanding of India.

Bandari Ramesh, convenor in Telangana for Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Mandir Sidhi Samarpan Abhiyan, said they would reach out to three crore Hindu families in the state as part of the campaign to collect donations.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi performed the Bhumi Pujan and Shila Pujan on August 5 at the Ram Janmabhoomi.

ITR filing: Govt rejects demand to extend Feb 15 deadline

New Delhi (PTI): The Finance ministry on Monday rejected demand for further extension of the last date for filing returns where audit is required beyond February 15.

Last month, the government had extended the income tax return (ITR) filing deadline for individuals till January 10, and for companies till February 15.

"CBDT passes order u/s 119 of Income-tax Act, 1961 in F No. 370153/39/2020-TPL dt 11th January, 2021, disposing off the representations for extension of due date for filing of Audit Report u/s 44AB, in compliance with the order of hon'ble Gujarat High Court dt 8th January, 2021," the income tax department said in a tweet.

This was in response to the Gujarat High Court order dated January 8, 2021 in the case of The All India Gujarat Federation of Tax Consultants versus Union of India directing the finance ministry to look into the issue of extension of due dates for filing of audit report under Section 44AB of the Income Tax Act.

CM Yogi for speedy paddy procurement

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday issued instructions to officials of the Food department to expedite paddy procurement under MSP. The CM said all permissible facilities should be made available to farmers at the paddy purchase centres. He also asked authorities concerned to ensure that the farmers are faced with no trouble when they come to sell their produce.

The CM issued these directives at a high-level meeting with officials of various departments at Lok Bhawan in Lucknow on Monday. Referring to the Varasat Abhiyan, the CM stressed that in undisputed matters, succession proceedings should be completed within stipulated timeframe. Yogi also asked the officials to be vigilant with regards to avian influenza (bird flu). He said bird flu cases should be tested at Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI) in Bareilly.



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Constable attacks BJP leader, suspended

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A constable allegedly attacked a BJP leader who went to a police station in Deoria for the release of a paan shop-owner detained by police. Local BJP leaders protested against the incident after which the constable was suspended and a probe ordered.

According to reports, Balram Chaurasiya owns a paan shop at Mahuapattan crossing under Bariyapur police station. Chaurasiya was in the shop late on Sunday night when a cop from the local police station reached there and confronted him for keeping the shop open till late night. Later, he forcibly took the shop-owner to the police station.

When the information reached Balram's family, they contacted the chairman of the SC cell of BJP in Bariyapur,

Nageshwar Paswan and sought his help. Paswan reached the police station and talked to the station house officer Deepak Kumar for release of Balram.

Nageshwar alleged that when he was sitting with his supporters at the police station, head constable Manoj Patel, who brought Balram to the police station, reached there and started hurling abuses at them.

"He appeared to be in an inebriated state. When some of my supporters asked him to mind his language, the constable got agitated and attacked Balram. When I tried to rescue him, the cop also attacked me with a stick," said Paswan, who was injured and was rushed to a hospital.

The news spread like wild fire and hundreds of his supporters reached the police station and staged a demonstration, demand-

UP govt to launch anti-land mafia software

Lucknow (PNS): With an aim to eliminate land mafia, the Uttar Pradesh government has developed an anti-land mafia software called 'DHARA'. The software will help in prevention of duplication of revenue records, which will prevent manipulation of records by officers.

Based on GIS, the software will include all the land of gram samaj, ponds, grassland, green-belt, including properties under litigation. "Once DHARA becomes operational, no land mafia will be able to transact any

land which belongs to the government or that in the category of green-belt. It will come to the knowledge of the Revenue department if some fraudulent deal takes place," a government spokesman said here on Monday. The master plan of the district and development authority can also be incorporated in the software.

District Magistrate of Muzaffarnagar Selva Kumari Jayrajan, who is instrumental in developing the software, said that the stamp data will also be

fed into the mapping so that people can roughly know the stamp rate of the plot they are going to buy. Government plot numbers can be viewed spatially by stamp officials so wrong benamas can be prevented at the initial stage itself.

She said that the primary aim is to prevent any wrong transactions of government land and expose the land-mafia, which has also been the top agenda of the government. The software will be formally launched on Makar Sankranti - January 14.

ing action against the accused. Later, district police chief Shreepati Mishra also reached the spot and to pacify the BJP workers, he immediately ordered

suspension of Manoj Patel also ordered a probe into the issue.

Mishra said the incident took place when the SHO was in a

meeting, and stern action would be taken against the cop in question. He said the injured were shifted to hospital and the shop-owner released.

Cong divides Lucknow, Kanpur, Prayagraj into two zones

Lucknow (PNS): After dividing all the youth wings of the party along with Uttar Pradesh Mahila Congress into five zones, the Congress is now doing another experiment by dividing Lucknow city unit along with Kanpur and Prayagraj into two zones each.

Senior leaders are of the view that with better and close monitoring, the party can strengthen its organisations to the ground level. Sources, however, said that most of the leaders are not happy with the decision, claiming that it creates more confusion amongst workers and will only lead to passing the buck by the president, instead of concentrating on building up the organisation.

According to party's official communiqué, on approval of the party's high command, state president Ajay Kumar Lallu, besides Mukesh Singh Chauhan, who is president of Lucknow City Congress, has also appointed Ajay Srivastava 'Ajju' as president of Lucknow City Congress (North). Now, Chauhan will be left with half of the city area.

Interestingly, Chauhan also

failed to get the names of his committee cleared from Lallu even when he was heading the Lucknow now for almost a year. Similarly, Kanpur was also divided into Kanpur (North) and Kanpur (South) while Prayagraj into Yamuna Par and Ganga Par. Sources said that the party would soon take similar decisions in other big cities like Varanasi, Meerut, Bareilly, Ghaziabad etc. Meanwhile, teams of Congress leaders have started camping in various districts to build up organisation in UP. The initiative, known as 'sangathan srijan' will continue this entire month. Under the programme, the party proposes to set up its units in all the 8,000 'nyaya panchayat' wards in urban areas to bolster its chances in the state polls to be held next year. Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra is closely monitoring the exercise and is likely to visit a district in a random manner to make an on-spot assessment.

"We are following the exercise of setting up and holding meetings of nearly 8,000 'nyaya panchayat' units under the programme which has been organ-

ised all over the state at the behest of Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. We also propose to set up nearly 60,000 village-level units by next month," Lallu said. He said there were indications that Priyanka Gandhi Vadra would soon visit various districts of the state. Five party secretaries — Zubair Khan, Dheeraj Gujar, Bajirao Khade, Sachin Naik and Rohit Chaudhary — and teams of UPCC office-bearers and other youth leaders have also begun camping in districts allotted to them. "We are closely following the exercise. No meeting of 'nyaya panchayat' is considered complete unless attendance of party's representatives of all the villages under the respective 'nyaya panchayat' is verified. As 'nyaya panchayats' will lead to setting up of nearly 20,575 member committees in 823 blocks of the state, the party will have a verified and committed team of more than 28,000 leaders ready at the grassroots level soon," Lallu said. Besides setting up the units at 'nyaya panchayat' levels, Congress also proposes to focus on forming ward units in cities.



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath releasing Ultrakhand Mahaparishad's monthly newspaper Pailaag Ultrakhand at Lok Bhawan in Lucknow on Monday

Ink attack on AAP leader

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Unidentified persons threw ink on Aam Aadmi Party leader and former Delhi minister Somnath Bharti during his visit to Rae Bareilly on Monday. AAP's UP in-charge Sanjay Singh condemned the ink attack on Bharti and said that the Yogi Adityanath government was opting for bullying tactics to stop AAP leaders exposing the misrule of BJP government.

Bharti reached Rae Bareilly on Sunday and stayed at the Irrigation department guest house. He was scheduled to attend several functions, including meeting with AAP workers and leaders, in the district. On Monday morning, Bharti was stopped by a police team when he was leaving the guest house. Bharti engaged in

a verbal spat with the policemen who stopped him from moving out. In the meantime, someone threw ink on him. The police did not allow Bharti to leave the guest house.

Singh alleged that the police did not act against the person who threw ink on Bharti.

In a tweet, Singh said that the Yogi Adityanath government had started bullying AAP leaders since they started exposing the shoddy state of schools in UP and asked the BJP ministers to have a debate with AAP ministers. He said the person who threw ink on Bharti is a BJP worker but the police arrested Bharti instead of initiating action against him. He said the BJP government was taking oppressive measures against opposition leaders.

Youth shoots brother over property dispute

Lucknow (PNS): Property dispute proved costly for a family in Baghat as a youth shot his brother on Monday morning. Police registered a case in this regard and sent the body for autopsy.

According to reports, the body of Vijay Verma, who was an operator at the agricultural equipment factory in the Baghat industrial area, was found dead outside the factory. Police reached the spot and found out that he was shot. Three empty shells were recovered from the scene.

The bereaved father said Vijay had a long-standing enmity with many people but he said he was not sure who killed his son. Later, circle officer Kadama Mangal Singh Rawat said it surfaced during investigation that Vijay Verma had a property

dispute with his brother. "Vijay was killed by his brother and he has been absconding. Efforts are on to nab him. Two teams have been formed for the task. There was a dispute between the brother duo and the family unsuccessfully tried to settle the row. However, both had a heated exchange on Monday after which Vijay was shot by his brother," police claimed.

Meanwhile, in Basti, police took three accused into custody and claimed to have worked out the triple murder case. They also recovered the murder weapon. Talking to mediapersons, IG Anil Kumar Rai and SP Hemraj Meena said three persons were found dead on NH-28 in the Cantonment police station area on Saturday.

They were later identified as potato trader Aslam, truck driver Rajkumar Gautam and co-driver Sonu Maurya. The IG and SP said that Ajit Singh alias Kallu, Arun Kumar Yadav alias Golu and Sheel Kumar Maurya alias Sheelu were arrested from Kaushambi. According to the police, the culprits had also looted Rs 6 lakh kept in the truck after executing the triple murder.

Truck owner Kumar Manoj, a resident of Barra police station in Kanpur Nagar, had told the police that his truck driver Gautam and co-driver Sonu Maurya were going to Parsauni in Bihar from Kanpur Mandi on January 6 and were murdered in the Cantonment police station area of Basti while coming back.

Public Notice
Notice is hereby given by the undersigned for and on behalf of LIC Housing Finance Ltd. Area Office, Alambagh, Lucknow pursuant to Circular No. 422/Amendment of LIC HFL that the Original sale dated 29.02.2012 executed Smt. Kanoo Lal Mishra @ Anand Prakash S/o-Late Jai Ram Mishra in favour of Smt. Zeba Sheikh W/o-Mohd. Zahid. The said sale deed is registered in the Office of Sub Registrar IVth Lucknow in Book No. 1, Volume 8670 on pages 315/332 Serial No. 3175 dated-29-02-2012 in respect to Plot No. 422/Ambagh No. 213 area 700 sq. ft. Situated at Ghazipur, Balram Ward-Faizullaganj, Dist.-Lucknow. Present owner Sachin Kumar has been lost Original sale deed dated-29-02-2012. Mehrez Siddiqui has applied for housing loan for which has proposed the said property to be mortgaged by depositing aforesaid Original sale deed dated-29-02-2012 with LIC HFL and as such any person claiming to be the said property covered by the said document may file claim before me within 15 days from the date of publication of notice failing which it will be presumed that the property in question is free from any encumbrance and the applicant in respect thereof against the applicant as mortgagor shall be void and ineffective after the lapse of 15 days of publication of the notice.
Mahendra Mohan Mishra (Advocate)
Chamber: Shop No. 4 & 5, Ground Floor, Krishna Tower, Near CMO Office, Kaitserbagh, Lucknow, Mob: 9415428214

CLASSIFIEDS
NOTICE
I Lila Devi residing at Vill-Chak Tiaswan, Po-Rajapur, Dist-Mau have changed my Name to Lilawati Devi and will be known as Lilawati Devi from have on in. I have submitted on affidavits to this effect, which was signed by on 05-01-2021.

NOTICE
I have changed my name from Umamah DOB-18.03.1999 to Umamah Saleh D/o Mohammad Saleh & actual DOB is 18.03.2000, R/O-14/19-H, Civil Lines, Kanpur Nagar. Now I would be known by this name only.

NOTICE
I. No 14833606F, Name Satya Narayan S/o Sri Kanhaiya Lal, Unit - Reserve Supply Depot, Lucknow hereby declared that in my Army Service Records my wife name wrongly mentioned as Shushma while correct name is Sushma Rathore, Shushma and Sushma Rathore are one and the same person name.

सूचना
सर्व साधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि पहले मेरा नाम RAM CHANDRA था जो अब बदलकर RAM CHANDRA PATEL हो गया है। मविष्य में मुझे इसी नाम से जाना व पहचाना जाये। Ram Chandra Patel S/o Moti Lal Dhata, Karikan Fatehpur-U.P.

NOTICE
I BEENOO SINGH Spouse of Number 16016852F Hav. DEVESH KUMAR SINGH GAUR Resident of VIII, Ratanpur Teh. Rasulabad Dist. Kanpur Dehat U.P. have changed my name from BEENOO SINGH to BEENU DEVI Vide affidavit dated 18.03.2020 before Rasulabad Kanpur Dehat Court.

NOTICE
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Year-long events to mark Chauri-Chaura centenary

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

To pay respect to the martyrs of Chauri-Chaura, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has ordered year-long events to mark the centenary year of the historic incident. Along with the beautification of Chauri-Chaura Shaheed Smarak Samiti, the chief minister said it should be developed as a heritage tourist spot. "From February 4 this year to February 4, 2022, there will be daily events reminding us of the Chauri-Chaura incident which played a decisive role in the freedom movement. All the children will be made aware of the importance of this event. Candles and lamps will be lighted at all the martyr monuments and statues of legendary leaders," a government official said in a statement. He said that the CM intends that the memorial built in the memory of the martyrs of the Chauri-Chaura incident should get fame like India Gate, Jallianwala Bagh and Cellular Jail of Andaman.

"For this, the UP government has beautified the Chauri-Chaura Shaheed Memorial at a cost of Rs 2.17 crore," the official said. Along with the Chauri-Chaura Shaheed Memorial, the CM has also beautified the memorial of Pandit Ram Prasad Bismil and Dohria Kala Shaheed Memorial at Gorakhpur jail.

"For this, the UP government has beautified the Chauri-Chaura Shaheed Memorial at a cost of Rs 2.17 crore"

After 60 years of the Chauri-Chaura incident that shook the British rule, the then government had thought of building a memorial. The foundation stone of the martyr memorial was laid on February 6, 1982, but it took 11 years to be inaugurated. Interestingly, the formalities of the inauguration were completed on July 19, 1993, but neglected by the successive governments.

As soon as Yogi Adityanath came to power, he took the initiative to make the Chauri-Chaura Shaheed Memorial a national honor. The incident took place on February 4, 1922, at Chauri-Chaura in Gorakhpur district of the then United Provinces in British India, when over 3000 protesters participating in the non-cooperation movement clashed with police who opened fire. In the protest, three agitators were martyred in this protest. In retaliation, the freedom fighters attacked a police station in which 20 cops died.

CITYBRIEFS

FIRST PRIZE



Shreya Das, a class V student of City Montessori School, Gomti Nagar Campus 1, has won the first prize in an inter-school art competition, bringing laurels to the institution. The competition was held under the educational festival 'Aashayein', organised by Shanti Asiatic School, Ahmedabad. Students of several noted schools participated in the contest to exhibit their artistic skills but Shreya outdid them and walked away with the first prize. She was awarded a certificate of appreciation.

MOOT COURT CONTEST

A two-day intra-moot court competition, organised

by the Law department, was inaugurated at Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University on Monday. The chief guest was retired district and sessions court judge Jai Prakash Narayan. The students said it was an enlightening and confidence-building event. Punya Tripathi said the event enhanced his mooting and drafting skills while Swastid Mishra said he learned to prepare a memorial. Navya Srivastava said that moot court helps enhance pleading skills and provides

information about court proceedings.

BLANKETS DISTRIBUTED

State Bank of India, Lucknow Circle, donated blankets amongst the poor and needy people in collaboration with Shanti Foundation at Nandauli Village in Mohanlalaganj on January 10. It was the fifth phase of blanket distribution which was started on January 1 by State Bank of India CGM Ajay Kumar Khanna.



ECI issues notification for legislative council polls

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Election Commission of India (ECI) on Monday issued the notification for biennial polls to 12 seats of UP Legislative Council. The polling is scheduled for January 28. The UP chief electoral officer (CEO) said that the term of the 12 seats is expiring on January 31.

The last date for filing the nominations is January 18 while scrutiny of

the papers will be done on January 19. Candidates can withdraw their nominations till January 21. If required, the polling will be held on January 28 from 9 am to 4 pm while the counting of votes from 5 pm.

All the assembly members are eligible to vote in this election. BJP is set to win 10 seats while SP one seat. If the opposition is united and fields a joint candidate, it can win the 12th seat. A candidate will have to get 32 first pref-

erence votes to win the polls in the first round.

Among the outgoing members, six are of SP, two of BSP, three of BJP and one disqualified. Present chairman of UP Legislative Council Ramesh Yadav, who is from SP, will also retire. The members whose tenure will expire are Deputy CM Dinesh Sharma, UP BJP president Swatantra Deo Singh and Laxman Acharya, Nasimuddin Siddiqui (disqualified), Dharamveer Ashok,

Pradeep Jatav (both BSP), Ahmed Hassan, Ashu Mallick, Ramesh Yadav (chairman), Ram Jatan Rajbhar, Virendra Singh and Sahib Singh Saini (SP).

BJP is set to repeat all its three sitting members while SP can repeat Ahmad Hasan. In the UP Legislative Council, SP enjoys the majority with 55 members in the total strength of 100 while BJP has 25 members.

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UP declared controlled area in wake of bird flu scare

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Principal Secretary, Animal Husbandry, Bhuvnesh Kumar said on Monday that UP has been declared a controlled area for prevention of bird flu spread and there are clear-cut instructions that vehicles loaded with birds will not be allowed to enter the state. The principal secretary said the notification in this regard has already been issued. "Transportation of birds from other states will not be permitted in the state. DMs and police must ensure that," he said. He said this step has been taken because bird flu is highly

contagious and may spread to human beings. "Bird flu is propagated largely by poultry, though migratory birds and the birds in the wild also have the avian influenza. There is a large-scale transportation of poultry and UP is quite a big importer of poultry birds and eggs. Since we do not know the source, some infected birds may well enter the state and then it will be difficult to control it. Therefore, it is better to prevent any outbreak through these restrictions," he said.

However, he said that apart from the two cases in Kanpur from among the 200-300 sam-

ples sent to the high security lab in Bhopal, there have been no other cases till now. "There are still 30-40 samples pending. The samples are being sent on a daily basis from UP. We are asking all the districts to send samples wherever a bird is found dead, irrespective of the conditions," Kumar said. He added that samples have been sent from Pilibhit, Kanpur Dehat, Barabanki, Sambhal, Bijnoor, Sonbhadra and a few more districts. Regarding crows having been found dead in Maal and Malihabad, he said their samples have not been sent for lab testing.

Two doctors who treated injured shooter detained

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Police detained two doctors — one of Gontinagar and another of Sultanpur — who had administered treatment to one of the shooters who suffered firearm injuries in the gang war. Mohar Singh, the aide of former block pramukh Ajeet Singh, who was peppered with bullets in Vibhuti Khand recently, returned fire in which one of the shooters sustained bullet injuries.

It surfaced during investigation that the injured shooter was taken to a flat in Gontinagar where a private doctor administered him primary treatment. Later, the shooter was shifted to a loca-

tion in Sultanpur where he was treated by another doctor.

Sources said the police got the lead after they successfully traced a car which was found parked at an apartment in Vibhuti Khand police station area. After detaining the suspect, the police grilled the man who helped the shooters flee the scene and clues related to the incident and prime conspirator, who is a mafia-turned-politician of eastern UP, emerged. "The mafia-

turned-politician, whose name is on police radar in Ajeet Singh murder case in Vibhuti Khand, was suspected to have crossed the path of Lucknow

named in the murder case, had submitted a surrender application in the court to avoid his arrest. "If the same is true, it cannot be overruled that the

police are very close to the accused," they said.

Earlier, the police had detained a youth, Rehan, for allegedly helping the shooters flee the city on the same night. The police said Rehan and some other persons of Mau wanted to contest panchayat elections and saw Ajeet Singh as a major hurdle. Ajeet himself was named in over a dozen crime cases and was externed from Mau in view of his criminal record.

GANG WAR FOLLOW-UP

police in 2012 in a crime case then. However, the police could not collect evidence against him then," the sources said.

They said prime shooter Giridhari Singh, who was

accused had the patronage of some cops and advocates," the sources said. They said the miscreants were constantly in touch with their mentors and making WhatsApp calls. "It is delaying their arrest. The

121 more test positive for coronavirus

Lucknow (PNS): As many as 121 persons tested positive for coronavirus in the city on Monday while 136 patients recovered. City's death toll stands at 1,136 while there are 2,236 active cases. The fresh cases included 15 from Gontinagar, 12 from Rae Bareilly road, and 10 each from Thakurganj and Chowk. Across the state, 516 persons tested positive, including 23 in Kanpur, 13 in Ghaziabad, 18 in Gautam Buddha Nagar, 14 in Varanasi and 24 in Meerut, taking the UP case tally to 5,93,680. There were ten Covid deaths



in the state, including four in Lucknow, two in Ayodhya, and one each in Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Farrukhabad & Kannauj, taking the toll to

8,504. Besides, 770 patients recovered, taking the recovery figures to 5,74,312. There are 10,864 active cases in the state.

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Factory owner held for sexually exploiting woman employee

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A factory owner was accused of sexually exploiting a woman employee on promising to marry her, in Vikasnagar police station area. Police arrested the accused after a case was registered in this connection. The accused was identified as Manzar Mirza, who is a resident of Vikasnagar and native of Azamgarh.

As per reports, the accused started making overtures towards the woman a few months back and won her confidence. He then promised to marry her in due course of time and came close to her. However, in due course of time, he sexually exploited her but never married her. Worried about her future, the woman asked Manzar for marriage, but he refused. He even thrashed her when the woman insisted for marriage. Left with no option, the woman decided to take police help and lodged a case. Manzar, who had a good rapport with lower rung cops, tried to get the investigation delayed and also threatened the woman to withdraw the complaint. However, due to

monitoring by the commissioner of police, the accused did not succeed in his bid and was nabbed on Monday.

"Manzar had fled to Madhya Pradesh to avoid arrest and was returning Lucknow stealthily on Monday when the police were tipped off by an informer and he was nabbed," the police said.

Meanwhile, in connection with the suicide case involving woman constable Urmila in Mohanlalganj police station area on Sunday, police arrested her friend, constable Jitendra on Monday. Urmila was deployed at Dial 112 and was staying in a rented accommodation. She was found hanging on Sunday and her parents lodged a case against Jitendra for abetment to suicide. The police said Jitendra was arrested on Monday and sent to jail.

THEFT

Thieves made off with furniture, water taps and other items from a school in Chinhat. The incident came to light on Monday. School owner Gaurav Dwivedi of Gontinagar lodged a case in this connection.

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The applicants who have downloaded the EOI schedules containing the tender details, terms and conditions, from the website shall submit their tender on-line on the website <https://assamtenders.gov.in>, with proof of payment of non refundable tender fee of Rs. 10000/- (Rupees Ten thousand) only in the form of demand draft/Bankers Cheque drawn in favour of Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam and payable at Guwahati. The EOI should be submitted on-line as per date and time of submission as per prescribed schedule.

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LU starts PG Diploma in Garbh Sanskar

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Institute of Women Studies, Lucknow University, formally started PG Diploma in Garbh Sanskar on Monday. The course was started due to the initiative and constant encouragement of Governor Anandiben Patel and Vice-Chancellor Prof AK Rai.

Coordinator of the institute Dr Archana Shukla said that the first class was started on Monday. The course is all about creating a proper ambience for women undergoing pregnancy. In the first class, Dr Amita Pandey of Queen Mary's, KGMU, and spiritual counsellor Dr

Shivani Mishra gave a lecture on the importance and necessity of 'garbh sanskar' in the present social context. Students of different backgrounds from graduation and post-graduation have joined this course. Research scholars, housewives, IVF Centre coordinator and retired health care professionals also joined the session. "Students had shown a lot of excitement to join the course although necessary arrangements delayed the start due to Covid curbs," she said. The course comprises five theoretical papers and an internship. It is a one-year course scheduled in two semesters.

Lohri to be celebrated with precautions

Lucknow (PNS): Lohri will be celebrated with Covid precautions at the Gurudwara Naka Hindola on Wednesday night. Jasbir Singh from the gurudwara said they have made arrangements for a wider circle around the bonfire for people in view of Covid precautions. "No bhanga dance will be allowed. The programme normally concludes early and people keep coming, joining and then leaving. Most people who have some 'mannat' come to celebrate the festival at the gurudwara," he said. He said sesame seed laddoos, peanuts and jaggery would be distributed as prasad. "Makar Sankranti will be celebrated from 6:30 am to 9:15 am on January 14," he said. Meanwhile, UPMRC has appealed to people to not fly kites near the metro corridor on the occasion of Makar Sankranti. UPMRC continuously holds awareness drives about the harmful effects of kite-flying near the metro corridor.

बर्ड फ्लू से बचाव के उपाय

क्या करें

- मृत पक्षी की सूचना तत्काल जिला स्तरीय कोविड कन्ट्रोल रूम या पशुपालन निदेशालय पर स्थापित कन्ट्रोल रूम के फोन नम्बर **0522-2741991/92** या टोल फ्री नम्बर **18001804151** पर दें।
- अच्छी तरह पकाये गये कुक्कुट या अण्डे आदि से बर्ड फ्लू नहीं फैलता है, इसलिए कुक्कुट या कुक्कुट उत्पाद को अच्छी तरह पका कर ही खायें।
- कुक्कुट पक्षियों के पालने के स्थान/फार्म के आस-पास जैव सुरक्षा, साफ-सफाई, डिसइन्फेक्शन करें।
- पक्षियों को हैन्डिल करने के पश्चात एन्टीसैपिटिक लोशन से हाथ को अच्छी तरह से धोयें।
- बर्ड फ्लू से संक्रमित पक्षी के संपर्क में आने पर चिकित्सक की सलाह पर दवा खाएं।

क्या न करें

- मृत पक्षी को छुएं नहीं।
- अफवाहों पर ध्यान न दें।
- जिन क्षेत्रों में बर्ड फ्लू की सूचना प्राप्त हो उसके आस-पास भ्रमण न करें।
- संक्रमित पक्षियों के सीधे संपर्क में आने से बचें तथा उनको हाथों से दाना आदि न खिलाएं।
- कुक्कुट या अन्य पक्षियों को खुले वाहनों में परिवहन न करें।

सूचना एवं जनसम्पर्क विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश

उठो, जागो और तब तक मत रुको जब तक लक्ष्य की प्राप्ति न हो जाये।

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सूचना एवं जनसम्पर्क विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश

Vaccination top priority of govt: Yogi

Dry run held like actual exercise

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Defining Covid vaccination as the top priority of the state government, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said they are leaving no stone unturned to ensure smooth conduct of the exercise scheduled in a week's time. The chief minister took stock of the third dry run in the state on Monday. He spoke to the DMs through video-conferencing to know about the status of preparedness for vaccination. The CM said that the guidelines issued by the Centre have to be followed in letter and in spirit and that the sequence of vaccination should not be tampered with. He also told the officers to ensure safety and transportation of vaccine and management of cold chain in the most efficient manner.

"Nodal officers have been deployed to look after the arrangements and they must report to the government," the CM said. He also delved into the training of vaccinators and asked the officials in general about the whole process, monitoring mechanism and adherence to Covid protocols.

He said no citizen should face any problem during the vaccination process.

Yogi also made a surprise visit to Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Civil Hospital in Lucknow to take stock of the arrangements in place for vaccination. The government has already issued elaborate instructions to conduct the drill as per the guidelines of Centre. As per the guidelines, 9 lakh health workers will be vaccinated in the first three days while people of the same category who are left out for any reason will be vaccinated on the fourth day.

In the second phase, police & jail personnel, home guards, sanitation workers of urban bodies and revenue personnel engaged in the work of civil defense and surveillance will be vaccinated. In the third phase, people above the age of 50 years and those suffering from serious diseases like cancer, dia-



Divisional Commissioner Ranjan Kumar and District Magistrate Abhishek Prakash taking stock of Covid vaccination dry run at KGMU on Monday

betes etc will be vaccinated. Meanwhile, the final dry run before the actual Covid-19 vaccination was conducted in Lucknow on Monday. District Magistrate Abhishek Prakash said it was carried out in the same manner as the actual drive at 200 points with the involvement of 100 per cent staff after proper training. The DM took stock of the proceedings at KGMU.

There were 200 booths at 61 centres with KGMU being the biggest one. There were 34 booths at KGMU on four floors and proper arrangements were made on each

floor, the DM said. He added that the beneficiaries would receive an SMS on the day of actual vaccination drive and they would be informed about the centres, booths and sessions. The verification will be carried out by a police team after which the beneficiaries will enter the waiting area and then the vaccination area. The vaccine will be administered after online uploading and verification. Asked about the technical glitches associated with the exercise, especially in rural areas during the vaccination process and arrangements made for the same, the DM

said: "At the centres where the connectivity is slow, dongles will be used for better connectivity." Regarding the security of vaccines at the cold storage points, he said it is being maintained 24x7 at the biggest centre from where it will go to 30 nodal points and then to booths.

Meanwhile, Director of SGPGI Prof RK Dhiman said that the department of Microbiology has provided exemplary services at the Covid hospital by routinely testing all patients suspected to be carrying coronavirus infection. "Nearly 8 lakh RT-PCR

Vaccination drive at 16 centres in first phase

Lucknow (PNS): District Magistrate Abhishek Prakash said on Monday that Covid vaccination will be carried out at 16 centres in the first phase, including KGMU, SGPGI, Maal & Mohanlalganj CHCs, and ERA's Medical College and Hospital. He said that the vaccination drive would be monitored through live feed.

In a meeting, the DM said nodal officers must inspect their respective centres on January 15 to fill the gaps as no laxity would be tolerated. He said they should check all arrangements, including route chart, media protocol and VIP treatment. He said green screens should be placed in the vaccination rooms.

The DM said that nodal officers should make proper plans for crowd management and social distancing, and connect with local police stations. He said all the centres where vaccination will be carried out have to be connected with the Integrated Control and Command Centre and report to it. He said a female constable would be appointed for each booth and all booths would be under CCTV surveillance. The DM said all the staffs have to be trained for the disposal of bio-medical waste and each booth should have a charger and power point.

and 7,000 TruNat tests have been done by the department till date," he said. He added that 33,000 consultations have been provided by 30 clinical departments in the past 10 months through the tele-health system.

"Rajdhani Covid Hospital is an apex L-3 Covid facility with 318 beds, of which 276 are ICU & HDU beds while the rest are dedicated dialysis, private and T-3 emergency beds. All ICUs and T3 emergency all are equipped with state-of-the-art monitoring and life-support devices. Round-the-clock dialysis support is also available bed-side to patients. More than 750 patients have received over 1400 dialysis sessions in the Covid hospital so far," he said.

Heritage conservation panel OK's Central Vista project

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Republic Day parade in 2022 will be at the new Central Vista Avenue," Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Monday said as he outlined that the development/redevelopment of Central Vista is being undertaken with the objective of upgrading Parliament's space, facilities and equipping it better.

Work on redevelopment of Rajpath will start soon after this year's Republic Day parade. The work is expected to be completed in the next 10 months.

As things stand, days after the Supreme Court's go ahead, the Heritage Conservation Committee (HCC) under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, has cleared the proposal for the new Parliament building under the Central Vista Redevelopment Project.

Responding to a query during a press conference, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs' Secretary Durga Shankar Mishra on Monday said the committee discussed the proposal of new parliament building and gave its approval today (Monday). "The pro-



posal was sent a few days ago, discussed and cleared after a detailed discussion," he said.

Additional secretary of the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry is the chairman of the 14-member Heritage Conservation Committee. The panel has nine government officials and four academics from School of Planning and Architecture and Delhi University. "The committee's members are the ones who look into what is provided under unified building bylaws for preserving the heritage based on which they accept, reject or suggest certain modifications," Mishra added. Notably, the HCC does not hold a public hearing. Asked whether public hearing was mandatory before granting

approval, he answered, "No". Last month, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had laid the foundation stone of the new Parliament building where the Lok Sabha chamber will have a seating capacity for 888 members, while the Rajya Sabha will have 384 seats for members. The National Emblem will crown the new Parliament building.

The Central Vista revamp, announced in September, 2019 envisages a new triangular Parliament building, with a seating capacity for 900 to 1,200 MPs, that is to be constructed by August, 2022 when the country will be celebrating its 75th Independence Day. The common Central Secretariat is likely to be built by 2024 under the project.

Holding one's breath can increase chances of Covid infection: Research

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Researchers from IIT Madras have found that holding one's breath can increase the chances of a Covid-19 infection. They said that the process of virus-laden droplets being transported into deep lung increases with decreasing breathing frequency. The research team led by Prof. Mahesh Panchagnula, Department of Applied Mechanics, IIT Madras, with his research scholars Arnab Kumar Mallik and Soumalya Mukherjee, IIT Madras modelled the breathing frequency in a laboratory and found that low breathing frequency increases the time of residence of the virus and therefore it increases chances of deposition and consequently the infection.

Also, the multiscale lung structure has a significant effect on a person's susceptibility to Covid-19, said the study which is published in the Journal of Physics of Fluids.

Elaborating on the need for such research, Prof. Panchagnula, said, "Covid-19 (the disease caused by Coronavirus) has opened a gap in our understanding of

deep pulmonological systemic diseases."

"Our study unravels the mystery behind how particles are transported and deposited in the deep lung. The study demonstrates the physical process by which aerosol particles are transported into the deep generations of the lung," he added.

Prof. Panchagnula's team worked to gain a deeper understanding of how the rate of flow of droplet laden with virus determines the deposition of the virus in the lungs.

In their research, the team reported that holding the breath and having low breathing rate can increase chances of virus deposition in the lungs. The study was conducted to pave the way for developing better therapies and drugs for respiratory infections. Previous work from the group has also highlighted the significant variability in aerosol uptake from individual to individual, suggesting a reason why some people are more susceptible to airborne diseases than others.

The IIT Madras research team imitated the droplet dynamics in the lung by studying the movement of

droplets in the small capillaries which were of a diameter similar to bronchioles.

They took water mixed with fluorescent particles and generated aerosols from this liquid using a nebulizer.

These fluorescent aerosols were used to track the movement and deposition of particles in the capillaries.

The researchers studied the movement of the fluorescent aerosol particles in capillaries of size ranging from 0.3 to 2 millimetres which covers the range of bronchiole diameters.

They found that the deposition is inversely proportional to the aspect ratio of capillaries, which suggests that the droplets are likely to deposit in longer bronchioles.

The scientists also studied how the "Reynolds Number," a parameter that quantifies the nature of flow - steady or turbulent, determines the deposition in the capillaries.

They found that when the flow of aerosol movement is steady then the particles deposit via the process of diffusion, however, if the flow is turbulent then the particles deposit via the process of impaction

Speaker urges youth to work for strengthening democracy

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Monday urged youth to work for strengthening democracy and keeping the motto of nation first.

Addressing the participants at National Youth Parliament 2021, organised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, and the Lok Sabha Secretariat in the Central Hall of the Parliament House, the Speaker said before Independence, Indian youth was at the forefront of the struggle for freedom.

"In a similar way the youth today must work ceaselessly towards taking India to the path of prosperity and progress," he said.

Birla also said that in a democracy we share our thoughts and experiences, debate and discuss and then reach a conclusion after extensive discussion. This is the strength of the democra-



tic system that gives everyone the right to express their views. He hoped that the Youth Parliament would go a

long way in strengthening the spirit of democracy in keeping with the motto of Nation First, he said. Sports Minister

Kiren Rijiju and Secretary-General, Lok Sabha Utpal Kumar Singh were also present on the occasion.

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice
 On behalf of the President of India, acting through Chief Administrative Officer/Con., North Eastern Railway, Gorakhpur invites the following E-works Tenders:
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Name of Work: CTR (P) of UP BG main line of station yard with 60 Kg, 90 UTS rails & PSC 60 kg sleeper (M+8) density including renewal of 52 kg Turn outs (switch, crossings, lead rails etc.) by 60 kg Turn outs in Taraon -Ghazipur City section to eliminate junction fish plates and maintenance of newly laid BG track - main line, loop lines and points and crossing between Aunrihar (incl.) to Ghazipur City (incl.) in Aunrihar - Ghazipur City doubling work of Varanasi division of NE Railway. **Approximate Value:** ₹ 13237940.47. **Earnest Money :** ₹ 216200.00. **Cost of Tender Form:** Nil. **Completion Period:** 06 (Six Months)
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NOTICE INVITING TENDER

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	Supply of Manpower-Public Amenities for One Year Junior Engineer (Civil, Mechanical), Surveyor Law Assistant, Sanitary Inspector, Architect.	2000/-	30,00,000/-	60,000/-	24 Hours before the opening of technical bid	02.02.2021	03.02.2021	Will be intimated online while uploading technical evaluation report

The detail may be obtain from www.cbkanpur.org.in and <http://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>.
 (A.K.Dwivedi)
 C.E.O., Kanpur Cantt.

CDS Rawat reviews operational readiness of armed forces in Ladakh

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the impasse continuing at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) for the last nine months, Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat reviewed the operational readiness of the armed forces on Monday in Ladakh. He is also likely to visit some forward areas along the border.

Incidentally, the CDS had an extensive tour of Arunachal Pradesh some days back to check readiness. He interacted with the Army and Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) troops on some of the posts maintained by air. He also reviewed some air force

bases and advanced landing grounds in the State facing China in the east. The top brass briefed him about the situation in the eastern sector.

As regards the ongoing Ladakh tour, officials said here on Monday he was apprised of the current situation on the 1,700 km LAC in Ladakh by the commanders of the Leh based 'Fire and Fury Corps'.

He was also updated about the army's preparedness to remain fighting fit during the harsh winter months. The briefing included logistical situation of winter clothing and prefabricated heated huts to enable the troops to withstand temperature dipping to minus 30 degrees.

As multiple rounds of talks at the military and diplomatic levels have so far failed to break the logjam, the Indian army was all geared up for a long haul during the ongoing winter season. At present, more than one lakh troops of India and China are facing each other in Ladakh thereby heightening tension.

During his tour of Ladakh, Rawat was also likely to interact with troops at some bases in an effort to boost their morale, officials said. He was also likely to review the readiness of some of the fighting formations.

His visit came at a time with all the three Services have ramped up their war fighting machinery.

Modi should apologise over farmers' stir: Congress

New Delhi (PNS): As the Supreme Court rapped the Centre on the three farm laws while hearing a bunch of petitions on Monday, the Congress on Monday demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi should apologise and immediately repeal the contentious farm laws which are against the interest of farmers of the country. The Congress' sharp reaction came soon after the Supreme Court said it has made up its mind to stay the implementation of the three farm laws which have led to protests by thousands of farmers at various Delhi borders.

Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala also urged the Supreme court to register cases against Modi,

Home Minister Amit Shah and chief ministers Manohar Lal Khattar and Yogi Adityanath after taking note of their actions that caused damage to public property. He said the central and state governments have dug up roads and caused blockades on the national highways around the national Capital. "PM Narendra Modi should apologise not only to the families of 65 farmers who have sacrificed themselves, but also to the 62 crore farmers of the country. The prime minister should thereafter talk to the agitating farmers himself and nothing short of it is acceptable to the 'annadatas'." Surjewala said at the AICC Press conference.

2nd phase of Covid vaccination dry run held in Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The second phase of dry run was conducted at 30 places in the district here on Monday successfully. The first phase was held at six centres on January 5 last. Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr VB Singh inspected the vaccination rehearsal at Government Women's Hospital, Kabirchaura. The dry run session was run from 10 am to 5 pm and it was rehearsed with 30 beneficiaries at each centre.

Overall 60 sessions were held at these 30 sites of urban and rural areas. Out of which, there were 20 government hospitals including Community Health Centres (CHCs) of Arajline, Narpatpur, Cholapur, Puarikala, Misirpur, Pindra (Gangapur), Hathi Bazar, Durgakund, Shivpur, Primary Health Centre (PHC) Baragon, Urban Primary Health Centre (UPHC) Manduadih, SVM Hospital Bhelupur, LBS Hospital Ramnagar, District Women's Hospital, Deen Dayal Upadhyay (DDU) Hospital, IMS BHU 1, IMS BHU 2, IMS BHU 3 (Trauma Centre), BLW Railway Hospital and Military Hospital Cantt while 10 private hospitals including IMA Varanasi, Heritage Hospital Lanka, Heritage Medical College 1, Heritage Medical College 2, Apex Hospital, Galaxy Hospital, Oriana Hospital, Ashirwad, RK Mission Hospital and Shubham



A participant being monitored after completion of dummy Covid vaccination at BLW Hospital in Varanasi on Monday

Hospital (Maqbool Alam Road).

According to ACMO Dr Sanjay Rai said that the Adverse Event Following Immunisation

(AEFI) kits were made available at all vaccination centres where physicians and ANMs used the AEFI kits containing adrenalin and hydrocortisone

injections, disposable syringes, needles, normal salines, 5% dextrose, drip sets, cotton, bandage, medications and all other essentials. The nodal officers deployed at each centre were present to ensure completion of entire procedures of dry-run successfully. Earlier, the ANMs checked the list of 30 beneficiaries from the Co-Win App.

Dry run was also organised as a rehearsal at the Central Hospital, Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW). Listing the 30 health workers as per COVID-19 protocol under this dummy vaccination, all the targeted steps were duly taken. In this programme, the first enlisted personnel were awaited in the seminar hall of the hospital after verifying the records, the security personnel allowed two persons to go to the vaccination room at a time. Necessary guidelines were given to all the participants in the waiting room and after completing the formalities, everyone was kept monitoring for 30 minutes so that if he/she showed any side effect, they could be treated immediately.

In addition to the physicians and paramedical staff of the hospital, Dr Piyush Rai, ACMO on behalf of District Health Committee, Dr Sujit Malik, Chief Medical Officer of BLW Hospital, ACMO Dr Devesh Kumar, Divisional Medical Officer Dr SK Maurya and Assistant Divisional Medical Officer Tanmay Anand were also present.



Devotees feeding Seagulls in the Ganga river on a cold morning in Prayagraj

Pioneer

Crowd management team activated to prevent spread of corona infection

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Most preparations are being made for the Prayagraj Magh Mela 2021 which is approaching fast. Millions of devotees are expected to visit on the Makar Sankranti, the first bathing festival of Magh Mela. This bathing festival is falling three days later i.e. on January 14. Mela administration has started preparations for this festival. The crowd management team has been activated

to prevent the spread of corona infection through this bathing festival.

Makar Sankranti is the first bathing festival of Magh Mela in the corona period. In view of the recent festival, officials are expecting lakhs of crowd to take a holy dip on Makar Sankranti. It will be difficult for the officials to know how to follow the COVID-19 protocol in the coming crowd. Many ghats are being built along the Ganga to follow this guidelines. As

crowds increase, devotees will be diverted to different ghats. At the same time, there will be strict police arrangements.

Mela Adhikari Vivek Chaturvedi said that the guidelines of COVID-19 will have to be followed. The team is ready for this. The devotees will not be allowed to unite in one place. Barricading is being made from the entrance to the Mela area. Shops have been removed from bathing ghat. The ghat is not crowded, so people will be constantly

made aware through loud speakers.

The Mela Adhikari informed that Paush will start from Kalpavas from Poornima (January 28). Therefore Kalpavasi will come here from January 28.

Their arrival will increase the crowd in the fair. At present, people will be appealed on Makar Sankranti to come in minimum number, so that the infection of corona can be prevented, added Mela Adhikari.

15 more test positive in Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

As many as 15 new COVID-19 patients have been detected in the district on Monday, increasing the total number to 21,637. The day also saw one more death, increasing the toll to 371. During the day, the follow-up negative reports included 64 and 54 of them have been recovered from home isolation while 10 from the hospitals, increasing the number to 17,963 and 2,948

respectively. The total number of patients who have been recovered so far is 20,911, leaving 355 active cases. The recovery rate is 96.64 per cent, while the mortality rate is 1.71 per cent.

In the first report of the day, 11 positive patients were found out of 1,555 reports received. Till then, the total test reports received were 5,47,831 and the results of 2,674 are awaited. Out of them, 5,26,198 were negative, while 21,633

were positive. The total number of samples collected was 5,73,944.

Earlier, a male aged 63 from Ramakrishna Mission succumbed to COVID-19 at Sir Sundarlal Hospital, Banaras Hindu University (SSH BHU). With the addition of one new hotspot, the total number has increased to 2,661 including 178 red zones. Five green zones have been converted into the red zones again. There are 2,483 green zones with six

new ones.

Meanwhile, mass / group corona antigen tests continued and all the 142 tests were found negative at SSPG Hospital Kabirchaura apart from 28 at CHC Shivpur, 45 at Vivekanand Hospital Bhelupur, 104 at LBS Hospital Ramnagar and 155 at SSH BHU. Along with this, samples of 142 from SSPG, 28 from CHC Shivpur and 146 from SSH BHU have been sent for RTPCR investigation.

Ban on feeding grains to migratory birds

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

As a precautionary measure in view of the bird flu scare, the District Magistrate Kaushal Raj Sharma on Monday imposed a restriction on feeding the food to migratory birds in the river and directed the chief veterinary officer to send all the veterinary officers in the field to collect the samples. The mobile numbers of all the veterinary officers should also be displayed at all the police stations so as the people could contact in case

any matter relating to bird flu comes to fore, he added.

Chairing a meeting at Rifle Club, here to discuss about the apprehension of bird flu outbreak, the DM directed Jal Police and Varanasi Municipal Corporation (VMC) to ascertain that no one feeds food to migratory birds in the river. He directed the veterinary officers to get the animals injured in road accidents, reached to nearby cow shelters. He directed the chief veterinary officer to conduct an inquiry of illness of cows in the areas adjoining

to the railway tracks.

The DM directed the BDOs to ask the village secretaries for holding meeting with meat and chicken sellers and make them aware about bird flu and said, the cleanliness should be maintained in the rural areas and the information about the death of animals and birds in mass should also be intimated to the veterinary officers and respective police stations immediately.

The close vigil should be kept on the migrated birds at ponds and canals, he directed

the officers of rural areas and added, the municipal corporation should also conduct verification of 400 shops of hens and 250 shops of meats.

The DFO apprised the DM that the employees have been deployed at mini zoo park to have close watch there. The villages have been divided in three categories, most-sensitive, sensitive and general and the DM asked the SDMs to make a report available of these villages in view of the forthcoming Panchayat elections.

Rally taken out against liquor sale

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The villagers including women took out a protest rally passing through several villages including Kallipur, Gaur Mirzamurad and Chakrapanpur and demanded complete ban on the sale of liquor here on Monday. The protest was held under the joint auspices of Lok Samiti, Prerna Kala Manch and Asha Trust. During their protests, the artistes of Prerna Kala Manch performed street plays based on intoxication and alcoholism. In their protests the women shouted slogans against the sale of liquor and they were carrying banners, posters and placards.



Women talking out a rally against sale of liquor in Varanasi on Monday

it be stopped like Bihar and Gujarat in the entire state.

Lok Samiti convenor Nandlal Master said that like leprosy, liquor also makes the body dull and alcohol is also spoiling the society. According to him, as liquor shops are being opened in every village, it is making the youth addicted and the rising sale of liquor is disturbing the life of the family. He said that prior to forthcoming Panchayat elections, a campaign will be launched in the villages to demand a complete ban on liquor in the entire state. Among those who were also present were social worker Manish Patel, Manjaya Patel, Sunil, Rajesh Gound, Panchmukhi, Ajit Kumar, Ranjit, Sandeep, Ajay Pal, Govinda, Shashank Dwivedi,

Vijay Prakash, Pramod Patel, Shiv Kumar, Saroj, Amit, Rambachan, Asha, Saroj and Mukesh Jhanjharwal.

98 KG CHINESE MANJHA RECOVERED: The city police recovered 98.05 kg Chinese manjha from a shop in Kundi Garh locality in Chowk and took the shopkeeper in their custody. It is pointed out that there is restriction on the selling of Chinese manjha, a thread which is used to fly kites.

During the last few days it came to fore that few sustained injuries because of Chinese manjha and taking a serious note of it, the city police launched a drive against its selling and recovered 98.05 kg this thread of China from a shop at Kundi Garh locality under the Chowk police station

late afternoon on Sunday and took the shopkeeper Naseem Ahmed, resident of Hartirath area. The drive created terror among the shopkeepers selling this restricted Chinese thread. The police said that no shopkeeper would be spared if found selling it. It is pointed out that some had sustained injuries from Chinese manjha while passing through various areas of the city.

Meanwhile, a social organisation Subah-e-Banaras Club organised a programme at Harischandra Girls Inter college in Maidagin to make them aware about the harm from this thread. The girl students of the college pledged not to use this thread and also motivate others for the same as it had injured many and also been restricted by the district administration. They also appealed to the district administration and police to execute the restriction strictly.

The club members said that this thread injures not only the persons but also birds and animals and added, some had even lost their lives in the past because of it.

Among those present on the occasion included the college principal Dr Priyanka Tiwari, Mukesh Jaiswal, Vijay Kapoor and Nand Kumar Topi Wale.

28 new Covid cases in Prayagraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The Prayagraj district was relieved of corona infection. A total of 28 new cases of coronavirus have been reported in the last 24 hours. About 35 people beat corona. No patient died of corona infection for the second consecutive day.

According to CMO Dr Prabhakar Rai, on Sunday, a corona testing of 5,145 people was conducted in the district. The number of infected persons was 28, providing relief. Of the 37 people who beat corona, eight were discharged from various Covid hospitals. About 29 people completed home isolation.

CMO said that the number of active patients of Covid is

continuously decreasing in the district. This figure now comes to 438. At the same time, the maximum 40 infected patients are admitted to L3 SRN Hospital. 15 patients are being treated at Kalindipuram Covid Care Centre, 20 at Beli and 14 patients at United Medicality.

According to Nodal Officer for Corona Dr Rishi Sahai, among the active patients are POs of Bank of Baroda Regional Office, teachers of a convent school near Civil Lines bus stand and an inter college teacher from Nevada.

Meanwhile, preparations for the first bathing festival of Magh Mela, Makar Sankranti, were reviewed on Sunday. Instructions were also given to complete the incomplete works

in time. The District Magistrate Bhaun Chandra Goswami instructed to complete the Kalpavas and Mela settlements under the protocol of COVID-19.

The DM reviewed the preparations for the first bathing festival of Magh Mela in the Triple IC auditorium of Prayagraj Mela Authority. He instructed the PWD officers to construct a wide checkered plate road to the bathing ghats and toilets in time. Also, the Irrigation department was directed to complete the construction of bathing ghats.

He said that apart from installing toilets in every sector, the officials must ensure that no encroachment be made on any Mela route. Covid protocols

should be followed in institutions' camps. Along with this, COVID-19 help desk should be set up so that log books of people coming to the camps should be made and entered.

IG KP Singh inquired about security arrangements. He directed the water police that under no circumstances should any sailor be able to operate boats without a life jacket.

Also, more than eight riders should not be put in boats at one time. Several officials including Superintendent of Police Mela Rajeev Narayan Mishra, ASP Ashutosh Mishra, ASP Protocol Kuldeep Singh, City Magistrate Rajneesh Mishra were present on the occasion.

Commissioning ceremony held

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Commissioning ceremony for Dr Abhishek Singh into Army Medical Corps by DGAFMS was conducted in Military Hospital Prayagraj on Monday. The chief guest for the occasion was Maj Gen IM Lamba, GOC, Purva UP and MP Sub Area.

The occasion was also used for sharing the COVID-19 trophy given to MH Prayagraj by DGAFMS for all the efforts done in Covid in 2020.

Brigadier Sundeep Bhandari, VSM explained the efforts done by MH for infra-



Maj General L M Lamba and Brigadier Sundeep Bhandari, releasing senior photo journalist Jitendra Prakash's new year calendar at military hospital in Prayagraj

structure changes medical equipments and enhancement

of facilities for both Covid and non Covid. MH Prayagraj was nodal agency for 11 hospitals for medical stores. He extended thanks to Headquarters Purva UP and MP Sub Area, Central Air Command, Fd hospitals and all units in station for efforts during this pandemic times in 2020.

Maj General L M Lamba, GOC, Purva UP and MP Sub area and Brigadier Sundeep Bhandari, VSM, military hospital released senior photo-journalist Jitendra Prakash's new year calendar at military hospital in Prayagraj on Monday.

Cook of HC judge killed

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The Cantt police has registered an FIR against the unidentified miscreant in the murder of Sharad Soni, a cook in Allahabad here on Monday. While filing a report on the families' written complaint, the police are raiding in search of the accused, but so far no arrest has been made.

Police said that a call detail report of Sharad Soni's mobile is being extracted and some clues can be obtained from it. It is also being investigated at this point that Sharad was not called by anyone. However, family members said that Sharad left home after being told to take medicine. When the family members got the news and reached the spot, they

were all shocked to see the scene there. Sharad was found lying the ground in a pool of blood.

Sharad Soni, a native of Jaunpur, lived with his wife and children in his in-laws place on Nevada Circular Road in Cantt police station area. He used to work as a cook at the residence of a judge of Allahabad High Court. On Sunday evening, he had left the house on foot alone, when someone had stabbed his throat with a knife a hundred metres away.

The murder caused a sensation in the area. Several officials including SP City, CO reached the spot and reviewed the situation. At first Sharad's daughter expressed suspicion over a family living in the neighborhood, saying that she had a fight with him during

Deepawali. The police then raided his house, but the neighbours were absconding.

SHAIL TANAYA PASSES AWAY: A veteran dedicated worker of the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh and former state president of the Bharatiya Janata Party Shail Tanaya Srivastava breathed here last at the SRN Hospital of Moti Lal Nehru Medical College Prayagraj on Sunday night owing to post Corona complications. After treatment her Corona report came to negative, but the ailment had damaged her lungs which stopped functioning on Sunday. Her mortal remains were consigned to flames by her husband KK Srivastava at Rasoolabad Ghat on Monday.

Born in the family of Triveni Sahay, a known RSS

worker of the city, Shail Tanaya Srivastava opted to become an activist of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad during her university days. Later she formed a Rashtriya Sewika Samiti of Prayagraj, and she also became the first lady teacher of Bharatiya Shishu Mandir, run by the education wing of the RSS, the Vidya Bharati. Shail Tanaya Srivastava was the patron of Sanskar Bharati Prayagraj, president of the Sahitya Parishad Prayagraj, executive member of the Hindustani Academy and Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR). She had been the state president of the BJP Mahila Morcha, and state secretary of the BJP. She was also a theatre activist of the era when women did not prefer to act on the stage.



Kanpur Divisional Commissioner carried out surprise inspection of Jageshwar Hospital on Monday.

Pioneer

Concern over dilapidated state of Jageshwar Hospital building

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Kanpur Divisional Commissioner, Raj Shekhar, while carrying out a surprise inspection of Jageshwar Hospital, Govind Nagar, Monday, run under the Kanpur Nagar Nigam, expressed concern over the dilapidated state of the hospital building which was constructed in year 1957. He also directed the Municipal Commissioner, Akshay Tripathi, to prepare a site map with drawings and also prepare the estimate of repairs and renovation of the building in the next 15 days. He urged them to send a team to Surat, Gujarat to study the model and introduce it here as well.

He said for this a team of zonal officials of Kanpur Nagar Nigam, EE Nagar Nigam, EE PWD (Buildings), and AE Building of Medical department will be constituted which will prepare the estimates. He said once this was done the KNN will officially send a letter to CMO to take over the operations of the hospital. He further added that the CMO, Dr AK Mishra will then prepare a proposal and will send it to the government by February 15, 2021 and will pursue for permission, budget and manpower.

The Commissioner said that the hospital in the past almost six decades had served millions of people and was one of the most important maternity centres for this part of the

city. He said the hospital was running partially majorly because of fund crunch especially to renovate the dilapidated structure of the hospital and for proper doctor and para medical team. He added that as of now the Kanpur city was extending more and towards the south, the people there needed a good government or Municipal Hospital to cater to the medical needs of the people.

Shekhar directed the KMC that all the defunct hospitals be identified and those under encroachment. He said there were nearly 46 hospitals, small, medium and big and they should be freed from the present encroachments at the earliest. He further directed the KMC to identify all such hos-

pital premises and to get a detailed survey done in the next two months and then to plan for their better management and better use of the vacant land or defunct building. He also directed them to prepare a plan for such properties by March 31, 2021.

He said Surat was successfully running hospitals under Nagar Nigam and thus special study be made to implement the pattern here as well and said not only KNN officials but even the elected representatives should be part of the study team to introduce changes on the pattern adopted there. He then reviewed the COVID-19 vaccine dry run work at this hospital and interacted with doctors, paramedics and the selected beneficiaries.

14 more test positive in Kanpur

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Chief Medical Officer Dr Anil K Mishra said 14 more people tested positive of coronavirus infection in Kanpur Nagar during the past 24 hours.

With this, the tally of confirmed coronavirus infections detected in the city reached 32,580 on Monday evening.

The CMO said 16 COVID-19 patients were discharged. He said no COVID-19 death was reported in the city during the past 24 hours.

Dr Mishra said 340 active cases were undergoing treatment in the city at present. He said 3814 samples were taken in the city on Monday for testing.

Youth kills girl

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

In a one-sided love affair, a youth killed a teenaged girl by slitting her throat when she had gone to field with her cousin sister under the Derapur police station of Kanpur Dehat on Monday morning. He also attacked her cousin sister who narrowly escaped. The profusely bleeding girl was immediately taken to hospital but she succumbed to her injury on the way. The 17 year old daughter of a teacher of Balharamau village had gone towards the field with her cousin sister on Monday morning. At the same time, Dinesh of the village also reached there and slit her throat with a knife. When Dinesh also attacked her cousin sister, she escaped from there raising alarm and informed the family members about the incident. Doctors at the local Community Health Centre (CHC) referred the profusely bleeding girl to LLR (Hallet) Hospital but she succumbed to her injury on the way.

Father of the deceased said Dinesh used to press his daughter for love affair which was refused by her. This irked Dinesh and prompted him to attack her.

SCARED OF BIRD FLU: Panic prevailed at the DBS College campus when a crow was found dead on Monday morning. Immediately bird flu control room was informed. Immediately, Veterinary Officer Dr Vikas Yadav along with Pharmacist Ramji Lal Srivastava and Manoj Kumar reached the spot and took the dead crow. He said the sample of dead crow would be sent to Bhopal for testing. Around 11 am, when the gardener Ram Chandra Yadav went to clean the botanical garden developed by the Science department on college campus, he found a crow lying dead there. He informed the garden incharge Dr Gyan Prakash. Hearing about the incident, panic prevailed among all the teachers, students and college staff who were asked to immediately wear the mask. Veterinary Officer Dr Vikas Yadav, after putting on the PPE kit, lifted the crow in a polythene bag and kept it in a box. Principal Dr CS Prasad said the entire park would be sanitised. On receipt of testing report, decision about closing the college would be taken. Veterinary Officer Dr Vikas Yadav said till the receipt of the testing report, nobody should be allowed entry to college without mask.

KDA HOLDS REGISTRY CAMP: In the special registry camp organised by KDA, as many as 184 registries were executed on Saturday. These included 21 in Zone 2, 25 in Zone 3, 13 in World Bank, 40 in Zone 4 and 85 in Bulk Sale. It may be recalled that due to misbehaviour with the KDA staff by the lawyers in Registry Office a few days ago, the former had decided to boycott the work and demanded to organise registry camp at KDA premises. On the second Saturday of December, 133 registries were executed. On January 9, 184 more registries were done. In a bid to resolve problems of allottees on the spot, a team of KDA officials headed by the Additional Secretary Dr Gudakesh Sharma with Executive Engineer Ashu Mittal, Joint Secretary KK Singh and Law Officer Shashi Bhushan Rai and other officers/employees was present.

DM visits Chunar Fort

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

District Magistrate Praveen Kumar Laxkar directed the tourism officer to submit a work plan for the beautification of Chunar Fort in order to attract tourists on a large scale. During his visit to the fort, the DM went to the archaeological museum and directed the tourism officer to submit a work plan for giving it a

feel free to approach him for any help if it was needed. The MLA inspected all the counters set up by the Health department and interacted with the staff as well as people on the occasion.

CAMPAIGN: Organising secretary, east UP of Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), Ambareesh Singh, said on Sunday that as part of people's participation programme the organisation had set a target of approaching 50 crore families to involve them in the construction of Ram Temple. Addressing the media the VHP leader said that the campaign for people's participation was to be organised from Makar Sankranti to Maghi Purnima. During the press conference the VHP leader was accompanied by Diwakar, Mahesh Tiwari, Ram Chandra Shukla, Gopal, Pramod, Ratnesh and others.



District Magistrate Praveen Kumar Laxkar at the historical Chunar Fort

facelift and to make it attractive. On the occasion he said that our heritage should be protected. The DM saw the sunwatch and matched the time with his watch. He directed the tourism officer to get details of idols. On the occasion the DM inspected the water tank which was in a dilapidated state for which he asked the tourism officer to submit a report along with a proposal. At the proposed tent city project he directed to the officer concerned to put up details before him with suggestions on it could be more attractive for tourists.

APPEAL TO PEOPLE: MLA (City) Ratnakar Mishra said that the government was committed to providing medical facilities in every corner of the state besides taking care of each and every citizen. These views were expressed by him as the chief guest during the Mukhyamantri Arogya Mela organised at the Sangmohal primary health centre (PHC) on Sunday. In his address he appealed to people to enjoy the facilities provided by the government and keep themselves as healthy as possible. He told the patients to go to government hospitals too as it was required for further treatment after the check-up in the mela. He appealed too

loaded with stone products recently. As many as six vehicles were found carrying them without proper papers. The officer concerned handed over the vehicles to Chunar, Adalhat and Ahaura police. Besides a raid was conducted at a crusher where a truck was found overloaded. He warned the company authorities and got the truck unloaded. Mines Officer PK Singh said that the vehicles would be released only after depositing a fine of ₹2.18 lakh on the order of the District Magistrate. Meanwhile an earlier report said that Vindhya police arrested one person along with 60 gms of intoxicating powder recently. As per the reports received here, on being tipped off by an informer that someone was selling the intoxicating powder near the temple of Bandhava Mahabeer, the Vindhya police immediately swung into get informed. The police raided the place and arrested one person and recovered 60 gms of intoxicating powder from his possession. The police arrested the accused identified as Sandeep, a resident of Bangali Chauraha in Vindhya, registered a case against him under Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act and after completing the legal formalities sent him to jail.

Sports competition organised

CORRESPONDENT ■ SONBHADRA

In order to improve the fitness of the personnel of Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL), a miniratna company of the Government of India, and for developing a sports culture there meaningful efforts are being made in that direction.

In this sequence, a two-day-long sports competition was organised at the NCL headquarters recently in which men and women players participated in 1500 metre, 100 metre and 200-metre run, long jump, high jump, triple jump, discus, hammer and javelin throw competitions etc. During the closing ceremony General Manager/Chairman-cum-Managing Director's Technical Secretary PK Biswal was the chief guest while General Manager (Personnel) Charles Juster was

the special guest. A total of 70 players, including 45 men and 25 women, took part in the competition. For the best performance in the sports competition Pankaj Kumar Vaishya

Vaishya Chairman, BMS, Vijay Singh, secretary, RCSS, and Pankaj Rai secretary, BMS, were present on the occasion. Sports competitions are organised every year in all coal



was selected from the men's category and Monodipa from the women's category. Besides as the representative of the labour union Bholanath Bharti, president, RCSS, Prayaglal

field areas and units of NCL in order to develop sports culture among its personnel. Also sports-related basic infrastructure is constantly being developed in NCL.

Frontline workers to be given priority in 2nd phase of vaccination

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Additional Director, Medical Health, Dr GK Mishra while addressing a meeting on Monday said in the second phase of COVID-19 vaccination the priority will be given to frontline workers. He said the tentative vaccination will be carried out for 50,000 frontline workers. He said in view of the increasing number

more booths will be set up and more vaccination centres be put up.

He said in the district a total of 21 control unit had been set up out of the total 11 were in the rural areas and the rest 10 in primary health centres. He said arrangements had been made for the proper storage and supply of the vaccines. He said in both the cases the vaccines both foreign and indigenous will be supplied

by the centre and the tentative date for the drive takes off from January 16 onwards.

The Chief Medical Officer, Dr AK Mishra informed that the Russian vaccine Sputnik trial was a joint effort in collaboration with Dr Reddy's Laboratories Ltd and GSVM Medical College was among the 12 centres in the country and their trial has been completed.

He said the third phase trial was about to begin and it would take off from January 18 all the 67 vaccination centres in the district vaccination will regularly be carried out on all 100 booths. He said the vaccines will be given only twice a week Monday and Friday. He said the vaccine will be given on arm near the arm joint and the thing needle as used in insulin will be used for the vaccine.

Aroghya Health Mela inaugurated

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The State Minister of Higher Education, Neelima Katiyar, while inaugurating the Aroghya Health Mela, under the Prime Minister Jan Arogya Yojana, simultaneously at 92 Primary Health Centres said the objective of the State Government was to ensure that the people of the state should have better health facilities that too free of cost. She said in the times when the city was in the grip of both COVID-19 and bird flu people will have to remain more vigilant.



MLC Arun Pathak inaugurates the Aroghya Health Mela on Monday.

Pioneer

She said illiteracy and poverty were the two major reasons for herd effect of the diseases. She said the state government had under the Prime Minister Jan Arogya Yojana was catering to the medical needs of the people of the rural and semi urban areas. She said the team of doctors had been rushed to all the 92 primary health centres along with the paramedical teams to ensure they provide immediate medical help to the poor and ignorant people.

She said medical camps provided free medical advice, medicine to the under-privileged people and referred them for specialised treatment or surgery whenever it was required. She said these camps make sure people were getting the healthcare at the right time, and seeing the doctor early enough before a small health problem turned serious. She

said through Aroghya Health Mela people were given medical help on basic health problems and also given free medicines. She said medical camps should be encouraged for personal providing free services to the people at the grass-roots level.

Prominent doctors who took part in the camp were Dr Anil Mishra, Dr AK Singh, Dr SK Singh, Dr AK Kanaujia, Dr Mahesh Kumar and several others. The guest of honour to the camp was MLC Arun Pathak. A total of 856 gold cards were distributed. A total of 975 COVID-19 tests were carried out in the camp and 809 cases of scabies were attended to while the lowest cases were that of TB which was just 14.

WORKSHOP ON ORGANIC FARMING: Organic farming was a method of crop production that involved much more than choosing not to use pesticides, fertilisers, genetically modified

organisms, antibiotics and growth hormones. It was a holistic system designed to optimise the productivity and fitness of diverse communities within the agro-ecosystem, including soil organisms, plants, livestock and people. However, the principal goal of organic production was to develop enterprises that were sustainable and harmonious with the environment.

This was stated by Dr YK Singh, Soil Department, CSA University of Agriculture and Technology while addressing a virtual workshop on organic farming on Monday. He said in Uttar Pradesh where there was massive pollution and organic farming protected the environment, minimised soil degradation and erosion, decreased pollution, optimised biological productivity and promoted a sound state of health. He said organically approved pesticides included natural or other pest manage-

ment products.

He said organic standards generally prohibited products of genetic engineering and animal cloning, synthetic pesticides, synthetic fertilisers, sewage sludge, synthetic drugs, synthetic food processing aids and ingredients, and ionising radiation.

He said prohibited products and practices must not be used on certified organic farms for at least three years prior to harvest of the certified organic products.

He said organic farming presented many challenges and some crops were more challenging than others to grow organically but nearly every commodity can be produced organically.

He said the main reasons farmers state for preferring farm organically were their concerns for the environment and about working with agricultural chemicals in conventional farming systems.

Carpet industry's issues discussed

PNS ■ VARANASI

The Export Promotion Bureau convened the fourth meeting of Niryat Bandhu Committee under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary, Government of Uttar Pradesh, Rajendra Kumar Tiwari during which Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) MSME & Export Promotion, Navneet Sehgal, Principal Secretary, Dairy Development, Fisheries and Animal Husbandry Bhuvnesh Kumar, and other senior officials from state government were present. Chairman of Carpet Export Promotion Council (CEPC), Siddh Nath Singh, President of All India Carpet Manufacturers' Association (AICMA), Onkar Nath Mishra, honorary secretary of AICMA Aslam

Mahboob, Executive Director (ED) of CEPC, Sanjay Kumar, attended the meeting during which the following concerns of the industry were discussed. On the occasion a request was made to approve the reconstruction of Dhorhara bridge on Varuna river connecting Bhadohi with Lumbini Road with Jaunpur, to complete the construction of Gazia overbridge work on a priority basis which is the lifeline of the small exporters as well as weavers to avoid the jam in the area. The officials realised the importance of the issue and agreed that the matter will be taken up with senior railway officials in the Central Government. Besides a request was made for the construction of the four-lane road from Bhadohi to Varanasi, improvement of

condition of road near Indra Mill service lane, Ravda Parasur, internal roads and Dhorhara bridge construction, to improve the condition of road of Gopiganj, Khamaria, Ghosia and to make proper arrangement for sewerage system as well as the garbage disposal system in Bhadohi, to provide freight and container subsidy up to the port of exports in order to compete in the international market, to provide subsidy for promotion, branding and packaging of GI products from the region, to waive the interest on packing credit for six months in view of cancellation of orders due to the Covid-19 pandemic etc. Siddh Nath Singh mentioned that the officials had agreed for consideration of most of the requests of the Council.

Mukesh adjudged Man of the Match

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ 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 Electrical/TRD and Railway Protection Force (RPF) was played on Sunday. Batting first Electrical TRD's team was able to score 115 runs losing all wickets in 20 overs. Zafar contributed 49 runs and Funttoosh 18. For Railway Protection Force Vinay took three runs, Mukesh, Ram Bharos and Rajesh two wickets each. In response the RPF team losing five wickets scored 118 runs in 17 overs and won the match by five

wickets. For RPF, Surendra contributed 31 runs, Rambharos 26 and Mukesh 20. Varun took two wickets for TRD. Mukesh Yadav was declared the Man of the Match for his all-round performance. The umpires were Rampravesh Yadav and Amitabh Singh. On the occasion railway employees and sports lovers were present in the pavilion. These inter-departmental T20 matches are being played between the teams of Varanasi division's Personnel, Commercial, Operations, Stores, Accounts, Mechanical, Electrical, Signal and Engineering departments and the RPF. After the final match of the tournament, the winner and runner-up teams will be given trophies by the Divisional Railway Manager (DRM).



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Maha sounds alert as bird flu spreads

Confirmation of cases in Mumbai, Thane, Beed, Dapoli

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Maharashtra Government on Monday sounded a "high alert" across the State, as the health authorities confirmed that the bird flu was the cause of the death of birds in Parbhani district where "800 to 900" birds died due to avian influenza later last week and also in places like Beed, Mumbai, Thane and Dapoli.

Three days ago "800 to 900" chickens died in Murumba village in Parbhani district in Marathwada. The district authorities had sent the blood samples of a few deceased birds to Bhopal-based ICAR-National Institute of High Security Animal

Diseases (NIHSAD) for a chemical analysis, reports of which had confirmed that "800 to 900" birds had died due to Avian influenza.

On its part, the NIHSAD had confirmed that two crows from Mumbai died due to bird flu. On Sunday, 11 crows were found dead at Chembur in north-central Mumbai, following which a team of doctors from the BMC health department rushed to the spot to examine the cause of the death of crows.

Three pond egrets and a parrot from Thane were infected by the H5N1 avian influenza virus, while a chicken and two herons from Parbhani too died of H5N1 avian influenza

virus. Crows from Beed and Dapoli in Ratnagiri district were infected by H5N8 avian influenza virus. Similarly, 180 birds, including 128 hens, were found dead during the last few days in Latur district of Marathwada region.

Talking to media persons at Jalna where he had gone to celebrate his birthday, State Health Minister Rajesh Tope said that there was a need to sound "high alert" in the state.

"There has been an outbreak of bird flu in many states. Maharashtra has also joined these states. Hundreds of crows have been found dead in Parbhani district. The death rate among those affected by bird flu is 10 to 12 per cent. To stop

the spread of bird flu, the state animal husbandry department has to sound high alert in the state," Tope said.

Confirming the outbreak of bird flu in some parts of Maharashtra, State Animal Husbandry Department secretary Anoop Kumar said that the state government would intensify bio-safety measures in poultry farms so that there was no interface with wild birds.

Kumar said that as part of the action plan being implemented to fight bird flu in the state, the culling of birds would begin from Tuesday.

Kumar said that 8,000 to 10,000 birds within one-km radius of the infected zone in Parbhani would be culled on

Tuesday.

Kumar, meanwhile, said that it was "safe" to consume eggs or chicken as the virus cannot withstand cooking temperatures. He said that people need not worry as infection to humans due to bird flu was "rarest of rare".

In a related development, the Thane Municipal Corporation has set up a control room to monitor the situation and appealed to people to promptly report any cases of bird deaths in the city. "The TMC will undertake a campaign to remove fear from the minds of citizens and give them appropriate information from time to time," a TMC spokesperson said.

Famine will follow if Bengal picks BJP, claims Mamata

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ RANAGHAT/HABIBPUR/NADIA

Stopping short of calling the BJP a fascist force, Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday said that there is no difference between the saffron outfit and outgoing US President Donald Trump adding Bengal will witness a second famine if they come to power in the State.

"There is no difference between BJP and Trump as they represent two sides of the same coin," Banerjee said referring to how one party like the other refuses to concede defeat even after getting trounced in the elections. "Trump has lost the elections but wants to continue in power refusing to concede defeat. The BJP is no different from him and they too cling on to power after defeat."

Hitting out at the saffron Government for forcing through the anti-farmer laws against which the entire farming community of the country had united in the outskirts of Delhi Banerjee said if the BJP is allowed to come to power in Bengal the State will be hit by a second Great Famine.

Bengal had lost lakhs of people in the Great Famine of '76. "The Great Famine will hit Bengal again if the BJP comes to power in the State" asking the farmers and the poor to reject the party in the coming Assembly elections.

The Chief Minister was speaking in an electoral rally at Habibpur in Nadia.

Earlier she demanded the withdrawal of the "oppressive farm laws" while paying tribute to former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri on his 55th death anniversary.

Invoking Shastri's slogan, "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan" (hail the youth hail the farmers), Banerjee said that the interests



West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee addresses a public meeting at Habibpur in Nadia on Monday

PTI

There is no difference between the saffron outfit and outgoing US President Donald Trump — Mamata Banerjee

... but some swindlers are promising them false citizenship which is not required," adding her government will provide about 1.5 lakh 'pattas' to the people which in turn will stand as a record to prove citizenship.

"We will not allow anyone to implement to force NRC or NPR in Bengal in the name of giving citizenship to people," Banerjee said adding "those who will try to implement NRC or NPR will be shooed away from the area by the local people."

Attacking the "turncoats" including senior TMC leaders and former Ministers who have left the ruling party to join the BJP Banerjee said that the "BJP today stands for Bharatiya Junk Party which accommodates all the junks from the TMC..." adding "the BJP has come out with a formula according to which all the Kalo (black) becomes 'Bhalo' (good) after joining the BJP".

Pooh-poohing the BJP for holding out a false dream of "Sonar Bangla" or Golden Bengal, Banerjee said "they are feeding you a false dream of Sonar Bangla. But there is no need of that as we already have made a Sonar Bangla...now we are proceeding to accomplish the dream of Biswa Bangla (Global Bengal).

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India sees dip in fresh Covid-19 cases, higher rate of recovery

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A declining number of fresh Covid-19 cases and a high rate of recovery have resulted in a continuous fall in the country's active caseload, which accounts for only 2.13 per cent of the total infections, the Union Health Ministry said on Monday.

The number of daily new fatalities has also declined substantially in the country. On Monday, less than 170 such deaths were recorded after 229 days, the Ministry said. In fact, in the last 24 hours, India reported 16,311 new cases.

India's total active caseload has fallen to 2.25 lakh (2,22,526) on Monday with

16,959 infected people recovered and discharged. This has led to a net decline of 809 from the total active caseload.

The total recovered cases stand at 10,092,909. The gap between recovered cases and active cases, that is steadily increasing, is nearing 99 lakhs and presently stands at 98,70,383. The recovery rate has also improved to 96.43 per cent on Monday. This is amongst the highest the world over. The Ministry said that 78.56 per cent of the new recovered cases are observed to be concentrated in 10 States/UTs. Kerala has reported the maximum number of single day recoveries with 4,659 newly recovered cases.

Yasin Malik, 9 others to be charged in Rubaiya Sayeed kidnapping case

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

More than 31 years after terrorists belonging to the Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) had abducted Rubaiya Sayeed, younger daughter of former Home Minister Mufti Mohd Sayeed, a special TADA court in Jammu on Monday ordered that charges be framed against terrorist-turned-separatist leader Yasin Malik and nine others. The trial in the case is expected to begin soon.

Rubaiya Sayeed was kidnapped by the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front on December 8, 1989 barely six days after Mufti Mohd Sayeed was sworn in as Union Home Minister. She was dragged out of a matador, popular mode of public transport and whisked away in a car from Nowgam area in Srinagar, by the JKLF terrorists.

During a special hearing in the case, Special Judge TADA Court Sunit Gupta Monday ordered that charges be framed against Yasin Malik, Ali Mohammad Mir, Mohammad Zaman Mir, Iqbal Ahmad Gandroo, Javed Ahmad Mir, Mohammad Rafiq Pahloo alias Nana Ji alias Saleem, Manzoor Ahmed Sofi, Wajahat Bashir, Mehraj-ud-Din Sheikh and Showkat Ahmad Bakshi.

Rubaiya was returning home from the local hospital at the time of her abduction at gunpoint.

As pressure mounted on the union government, five JKLF terrorists were released by Dr Farooq Abdullah government on December 13, 1989. Hours later Rubaiya Sayeed too was set free by the JKLF terrorists.

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The court after hearing public prosecutor of the CBI

Vijay Kumar Dogra and advocate MA Goni besides going into confessional statements of other accused observed that sufficient grounds existed to presume that all the accused had committed offences.

According to the CBI, the accused had kidnapped Rubaiya Sayeed to force the government to release five terrorists.

Yasin Malik has been accused of playing a key role in the kidnapping that he and his associates executed.

"Hence, charges are required to be framed against each of the accused persons, separately," the court stated.

In March last year, a TADA court had also framed charges against Yasin Malik and six others allegedly involved in the killing of four unarmed Indian Air Force (IAF) officials in 1990 in Kashmir. Malik is currently in Delhi's Tihar jail.

Nadda launches campaign in Assam; asserts BJP will win 100 plus seats

PTI ■ SILCHAR

With Assembly elections in Assam only months away, BJP President JP Nadda on Monday launched party's poll campaign in the State, asserting it will return to power for the second consecutive term by winning hundred plus seats in the 126-member House.

The party since the 2016 assembly win in the state has emerged victorious in all the elections—whether it be the Parliamentary, byelections, zilla parishads, panchayats, territorial or autonomous councils—and will come to power again in the next assembly polls, Nadda said while addressing 'Vijay Sankalp' rally at the police parade ground here.

"This has been possible due to all-round development of all sections of the people and the entire state by the government of Sarbananda Sonowal with the support of Prime Minister Narendra Modi", he said.

Its BJP's "double engine" government at the centre and the state that has led to proper implementation of all the schemes in the various sectors, he said.

"It is in the entire country that people have time and again reposed faith in Modi ji



BJP national president JP Nadda addresses a public meeting at Police Parade ground in Silchar on Monday

PTI

which has resulted in the BJP winning almost all elections at all levels", Nadda said.

Recent elections at Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir, Gujarat, Karnataka, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and North East have shown that people want to be part of Modi ji's "model of development" and they also served as an example of "how a party and the government can work together".

Starting BJP's poll campaign from the Barak valley, which has a sizeable population of the Hindu Bengalis, is significant as it was here that the party had begun its journey in the state winning two Lok

Sabha seats and nine assembly seats for the first time in the early nineties.

Barak valley comprises of 15 assembly segments in the three districts of Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi districts. Polls in Assam is due in March-April this year.

The BJP president, harping on the development agenda of the government, steered clear of the twin issues of National Register of Citizens (NRC) which was published in 2019 but is yet to be implemented and Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) which created a stir in the rest of Assam but was welcomed in the Barak valley.

K'taka Cabinet expansion on January 13 or 14, Nadda will be invited: Yediyurappa

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa on Monday said the much-awaited expansion or reshuffle of his Cabinet will take place on January 13 or 14, and BJP President JP Nadda will be invited for the swearing-in.

Though the Chief Minister indicated seven new faces will be inducted, he did not make it clear whether it will be a cabinet expansion or reshuffle.

The ministry currently has 27 members and seven berths are vacant.

As it became clear that the much-awaited exercise would finally happen this week, Ministerial aspirants stepped up efforts to secure a berth on Monday even as speculation that a few incumbents may be dropped kept some on tenterhooks.

"On January 13 or 14 according to convenience of our national President J P Nadda and Karnataka in-charge (general secretary Arun Singh), by inviting them, swearing in ceremony will be organised," Yediyurappa told reporters here.

After paying tributes to former prime minister Lal

Bahadur Shastri on his death anniversary, he said, about seven people will be inducted.

Asked whether it will be cabinet expansion or reshuffle, he said, "let's see, you will get to know." On returning from New Delhi after holding discussions with Nadda and Union Home Minister Amit Shah on the cabinet expansion, Yediyurappa had on Sunday said seven members would be inducted and that he will finalise the names on Monday.

Yediyurappa was waiting to carry out the expansion/reshuffle as he was asked by the BJP president during their meeting in New Delhi on November 18 to wait for the clearance from the central leadership.

Amid reports that he might be dropped, Excise Minister H Nagesh said he was not aware of any such move.

The Minister said he was promised that he would not be eased out from the cabinet as he had played a crucial role in the BJP forming government and he trusted the chief minister.

"It is I who paved the way for BJP government formation, CM and people of the state are aware of it," Nagesh, a minister in the previous JDS-Congress government, said.



Farmers harvest lotus stem, locally known as Nadroo, in the frozen Dal lake in Srinagar on Monday

PTI

Earthquake strikes J&K

PNS ■ JAMMU

An earthquake of magnitude 5.1 on the Richter scale hit several districts of Jammu & Kashmir at 7.32 pm on Monday, the National Center for Seismology said. The earthquake occurred at a shallow depth of 10 km near Doda and the epicentre is said to be Kishtwar. Shallow earthquakes are felt more strongly than deeper ones as they are closer to the surface.

According to ground reports, strong tremors were felt across Doda, Kishtwar, Reasi and Udhampur districts. Large number of people came out of their homes during the earthquake. It created panic among the people. Several tremors have occurred in the state over the past four months. District administration across these districts had alerted local agencies to report loss of any life and property after assessing the ground situation.

Second edition of 'Sea Vigil-21' begins today

New Delhi (PNS): The second edition of the biennial pan-India coastal defence exercise 'Sea Vigil-21' will be conducted for two days starting Tuesday. The exercise will be undertaken along the entire 7,516 km coastline and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of India. The first such exercise was held in 2019.

Giving details here on Monday, the Navy said the drill will involve all the 13 coastal States and Union Territories along with other maritime stakeholders, including the fishing and coastal communities. The exercise is being coordinated by the Indian Navy. The entire coastal security set up was reorganised after the 26/11 Terror attack at Mumbai which was launched via the sea route.

The scale and conceptual expanse of the exercise is unprecedented in terms of the geographical extent, the number of stakeholders involved, the number of units participating and in terms of the objectives to be met.

The exercise is a build up towards the major Theatre level exercise TROPX [Theatre-level Readiness Operational Exercise] which Indian Navy conducts every two years. SEA VIGIL and TROPX together will cover the entire spectrum of maritime security challenges, including transition from peace to conflict.

Sikkim Assembly adopts resolution for granting ST status to 11 communities

PTI ■ GANGTOK

The Sikkim Assembly on Monday adopted a resolution for granting Scheduled Tribe status to 11 left-out communities of the State.

The resolution will now be forwarded to the Centre for approval.

Speaking at the one-day Assembly Session, Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang said it is a long-standing demand of the 11 communities to be granted ST status.

The assembly passed the Sikkim Panchayat (Amendment) Bill and the Sikkim Industries Licensing (Amendment) Bill.

The House also passed the second supplementary demands of Rs 503.47 crore for

Speaking at the one-day Assembly Session, Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang said it is a long-standing demand of the 11 communities to be granted ST status

2020-21 fiscal by a voice vote. It also passed the Sikkim Appropriation Bill for the second supplementary demands.

Governor Ganga Prasad, while addressing the House, said that the prevailing challenges related to the COVID-19 outbreak will not be allowed to derail the state government's resolve to bring all-round development of the state.

Deputy Speaker Sangay Lepcha adjourned the House sine die at the end of the proceedings.

INFANTS' DEATH IN BHANDARA HOSPITAL — NHRC seeks detailed report from Maha in 4 weeks

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Taking suo motu cognizance of the death of ten infants at district general hospital at Bhandara in Maharashtra, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on Monday directed the State Chief Secretary and Director General of Police to submit a detailed report on the shocking death of infants within four weeks.

The NHRC also asked the DGP to inform the Commission about the outcome of the investigation being conducted by the police authorities.

"The report (from the state chief secretary and DGP) must contain the fire audit reports of various hospitals in the state as well as what measures have been taken or contemplated to

be taken by the state against the erring or negligent officers/officials so that they cannot go with impunity," a statement from the NHRC said.

In its notice, the NHRC has among other things has observed that the victim babies were in the custody of a state run hospital where they lost life. "Hence, the state cannot escape its responsibility. This is a serious issue of violation of human rights for which the accountability of the negligent officers/officials is required to be fixed, with retrospective effect," the Commission said.

Alluding to a relief of Rs.5 lakhs has been announced by the state government from the Chief Minister's Fund to each bereaved family, the NHRC said: "The monetary relief alone is not sufficient to compensate. Further, it is imperative to ensure

that the support systems in various hospitals in the state must provide adequate care and attention to the patients for protection of their human rights"

The Maharashtra government has announced a State-wide fire audit, while a case of accident has been registered.

It may be recalled that ten infants—aged between one and three months—were killed in the wee hours of Saturday, when a massive fire broke out in a government hospital at Bhandara in eastern Maharashtra.

The fire—triggered prima facie by a short-circuit—had broken out at the Sick Newborn Care Unit (SNCU) at Bhandara District General Hospital at Bhandara at around 1.30 am on Saturday.

Before long, fire and smoke engulfed the new born care

unit. A nurse who was among the two nurses and one helper present at that time in the NICU raised an alarm, prompting other nurses, doctors and other hospital members to rush to the scene.

Of the 17 trapped infants, seven were rescued, while the remaining ten children died on the spot. "There were 17 infants at the NICU at the time of the incident. Of them, seven were rescued and have been admitted to another. We have no plans to shift them to another hospital as yet," District Civil Surgeon Dr Pramod Khandate said.

"Most infants died due to suffocation. While one male child suffered fatal burn injuries, the two others had minor burn injuries. The rest of the children had inhaled a lot of smoke," Khandate said.

Govt teacher dies after being found with hands, legs tied in Jaipur

PTI ■ JAIPUR

A 55-year-old woman, who was a relative of a Rajasthan Administrative Services (RAS) officer, died at a hospital after being found unconscious with her hands and legs tied in Mansarovar area here on Monday, police said. Vigya Devi (55) was the sister of an RAS officer posted as a sub-divisional magistrate (SDM) in Jaipur. She was a government teacher and posted in Jaipur collectorate on deputation.

"The matter came to light when her relatives reached the house in the morning. She was lying unconscious. Her hands and legs were tied. She was rushed to a nearby private hospital where she died," police said.

SC reprimands Govt

Court wants farm laws paused till the deadlock with farmers can be resolved through dialogue, not judicial intervention



It has happened again; the Supreme Court reminding the Executive to carry out its functions rather than relying on legal intervention on matters that it is perfectly equipped to handle. Except, this time, it was an admonishment of sorts, exasperation even, with the Government for not heeding past counsel and passing the buck to escape its share of the blame. So the top court reminded the Government, which washed its hands of the impasse with farmers over new agricultural laws, that it could not ignore its role in what was essentially a matter of policy. In a stinging rap, the judges re-emphasised the need for a consultative process to resolve the vexed issue, asking the Government whether it would pause the implementation of the farm laws, or else the court would. It further drew attention to dialogue as the only way out, asking "What's the ego here?" and if the Government was "part of the problem or solution?" Considering that it had earlier highlighted the importance of setting up a mediatory committee, the court rightly took umbrage at the Government's ignorance of such recommendation and its rigidity. By calling out the Government on its stubbornness, the court clearly laid out the virtues of democratic discourse. Besides, it kept the Centre accountable to farmers, a task that the latter was hoping to tie up in legalities. The court, hearing a clutch of petitions challenging the farm laws and farmer agitations at the Delhi border, was also deeply concerned about the human dimension, raising questions about suicides and even old men and women holding out in the harsh weather. Clearly, it didn't want a civil movement to get out of hand because of the Government's intransigence and, at the same time, warned against a crackdown, with Chief Justice of India SA Bobde saying: "We do not want blood on our hands." By suggesting that the protests could continue even after the laws' implementation was stayed, the court made it clear that dissent needed its space. Nor could the Centre "blame the previous Governments" for it, it added, an indictment of its tendency to attribute anything antithetical as the Opposition's conspiracy.

It would be easy to describe the court's stern stand as a win for the farmers' unions but the fact of the matter is that it is a denunciation of the Government's political failure. Had the Government preferred the Standing Committee's scrutiny over pushing the law unceremoniously with a voice vote in the Upper House, things would not have come to such a pass. A GST-like consensus involving the Centre and States would have helped, since agriculture-related issues come under the State List in Schedule VII of the Constitution. The laws may sound well-intended, reformist and help farmers in the long run but shouldn't the Government then have hand-held them through the transition? What stopped it from considering amendments or a "clause by clause" analysis while the laws were on the drawing board? In that sense, the Government is solely responsible for fomenting protests in the first place. The farmers are not against market economics but simply want a level playing field. Experts may argue that the protest is being led by cultivators from Punjab and Haryana, who have benefited because of the Government's guaranteed pickup of volumes and fixed rates, namely the Minimum Support Price (MSP). But with the MSP itself becoming unremunerative given the rising input costs, with the farmers forced to sell at lower rates, they are but naturally wary of competitive prices in the open market. The small and marginal farmers, the lot of whom the Acts intend to improve, would not gain that much either, given their limited resources to transport their goods to the local markets, leave alone to bigger markets. Besides, without proper warehousing and processing, they would anyway be dependent on the food majors. With most of them not literate enough to exercise their rights, dispute resolution could also end up being loaded against them. The farmers need to be legally protected in what is still an unequal deal.

The Sydney stain

Cricket Australia must take expeditious and strict action against the racial bigots and make an example of them



Cricket, they say, is a gentleman's game. But the disgrace which occurred on the fourth day of the ongoing third Test at the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) doesn't bear witness to this adage at all. Team India pacer Mohammed Siraj was subjected to abuse by a section of racist Australian supporters who called him "Brown dog" and "Big monkey" before being evicted from the stands by security officials when the bowler complained to his captain Ajinkya Rahane, who was quick to take up the matter with the on-field umpires. What is worse is that such shameful indiscretion, non-chalance and mindset of the Aussie spectators is a recurring theme, given that even the previous day Siraj and Jasprit Bumrah were on the receiving end of racial abuse.

According to a media report, the Australian fans had been drunk. "Bumrah and Siraj were called monkeys, w**ker and mo**er by the people almost throughout the time they were fielding at the boundary," it claimed. What lends more currency to the two Indian bowlers' allegation is the fact that a number of cricketers — including Sachin Tendulkar, Harbhajan Singh, Ravichandran Ashwin and Virat Kohli — have come out to counter the New South Wales Police's claim that the six fans were only "welcoming Siraj to Sydney" by unequivocally stating that they had had also undergone many incidents where "really pathetic things were said" near the boundary rope.

But it has been an issue in Australian sport stretching back decades, on and off the field. Aficionados would vividly remember the Monkeygate scandal involving Harbhajan Singh and Andrew Symonds during the second India-Australia Test in Sydney in 2008-2009, and Kohli's flipping response — yes, to the Sydney crowd, again — in the 2011-12 series. Then, Cricket Australia was forced to lodge an investigation when England cricketer Moeen Ali accused an Australian player of name-calling him during the 2015 Ashes series. In his autobiography, Ali had revealed that he was called "Osama" by an Australian player. As per an extract, an Australian player had turned to him on the field and said: "Take that, Osama." The Englishman had asserted that he "could not believe" what he had heard at the time. Similarly, former Australian Test star Usman Khawaja has previously said he was abused so much growing up that he refused to support the national side, and claimed racism once even played a role in selections for the team. Even off the field, several attacks on Indian students across different Australian cities have been ascribed to "racism" and "racial overtones" and, during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, Asians were targeted by linking them to the likely origin of the disease in China. The International Cricket Council's (ICC) "anti-racism code" clearly banishes "engaging in any conduct (whether through the use of language, gestures or otherwise) which is likely to offend, insult, humiliate, intimidate, threaten, disparage or vilify any reasonable person in the position of a player, player support personnel, umpire, match referee, umpire support personnel or any other person (including a spectator) on the basis of their race, religion, culture, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin". It is high time, therefore, that Cricket Australia, in tandem with the police authorities, take expeditious and strict action against the racist bigots and make an example of them so that their, and that of others like them, perfidiousness comes to a permanent halt. The ongoing series is currently locked 1-1 and the finale is scheduled in Brisbane from January 15.

A 'Hindu patriot'?

Gandhi's idea of *Swaraj* was admittedly shaped by his Hindu ethos. But can it be overlooked that he sacrificed Hindu interests for Pan-Islamism?



PRIYADARSHI DUTTA

In 2003, the trio of JK Bajaj, Professor MD Srinivas and AP Joshi came out with a path-breaking work, 'Religious Demography of India'. It revealed the changing share of different religious communities in India, based on the Census figures between 1881 and 1991. The Partition was a watershed moment in India's inter-communal relations. The study, however, suggests that it was far from the culmination. Muslims are still the fastest growing community in India, particularly in certain pockets close to the frontiers or coastline. Numerous districts of India, often contiguous, betrayed a significantly higher growth rate of the Muslim population. A belt of Muslim concentration districts spans Jammu & Kashmir (J&K), western Uttar Pradesh (UP), north-eastern Bihar, West Bengal and Assam, running almost into Bangladesh.

Way back in 1912, Colonel UN Mukherji (based on his study of Censuses 1881 to 1911) had stated that the Hindus were a "dying" race. Bajaj's team — through a more exhaustive analysis of the Census figures — concluded that the changes on the ground were far too serious in independent India than those in the colonial era. These developments could not be without severe consequences for India.

It was a book about India's future, or rather challenges to it, which those in power should have taken note of. However, the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Government soon lost power in May 2004. The UPA-1 Government attuned its policies to the growing Muslim clout. It set up the Sachar Committee to study Muslim underdevelopment, created an independent Ministry of Minority Affairs permanently headed by a Muslim Minister and announced lakhs of scholarships for the minorities, where the lion's share went to Muslims. It was in a sense Bajaj's predictions coming true; Muslim demographic heft was moulding State policies.

However, those with whom he shared his ideological affinity also did not seem to realise the importance of his work. They would hardly read or quote from his laborious work. Though Bajaj's Centre for Policy Studies continued to function and even secured its own building in Central Delhi (which apparently meant that it was able to monetise its projects, or obtain funding), his path-



breaking work was not sufficiently appreciated by those on whom he had pinned his hopes the most.

Since 2014, India seems to have come under a divinely-ordained Prime Minister. The Hindu nationalists have reasons to be upbeat. However, the pro-minority (read Muslim) policies of the Government have only got bigger and better. New schemes like Nai Manzil, USTTAD and Gharib Nawaz have been started by the Modi Government. Almost ₹2,082 crore were disbursed towards Prime-matric, post-matric and merit-cum-means-based scholarships during financial year (FY) 2019-20, marking a definite improvement over the ₹1,739 crore worth of scholarships during FY 2013-14. The ambit of Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (previously called multi-sectoral development programme for the minorities) has been expanded to 308 districts from mere 90 under the UPA Government. What was previously alleged as "appeasement" is now being re-interpreted as "empowerment". All the Congress-era institutions catering to religious minorities are functioning well. However, this Government never appointed a Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities, though it is a constitutional post.

Bajaj and Prof Srinivas recently sprang a surprise with a 1,000-page tome on Gandhi.

The book, titled 'Making of a Hindu Patriot: Background of Gandhi's Hind Swaraj', is based mostly on Gandhi's own correspondences and conversations. As evident, it deals with the period prior to 1908, when the *Hind Swaraj* was published. Gandhi spent 24 years in South Africa before returning to India in January 1915. This columnist, though he is yet to see the book, is in no doubt that the authors would have done a thorough job. However, was the subject really worth the massive labour of the two authors put up? Further, does this really contribute something to India's future as their previous work on religious demography did?

The crux of the authors' argument is that Gandhi's political outlook was shaped by profound Hindu convictions. Those having read the speeches and correspondences of Gandhi would know that this is correct. Expressions like "I speak as a Hindu" and "our Hindu scriptures say that..." frequently appear in his literature. He mainstreamed the concepts like *satyagraha*, *ashram*, *brahmacharya*, *Ram rajya*, *upvaas* (fast), *maun* (silence), *Daridra Narayan*, *Harijan* and suchlike in a bid to de-colonise the Indian mind. However, why would such a person, with deep formative influence of Hinduism, zealously take up the Khilafat Movement to restore the deposed Sultan of Turkey on his throne? Gandhi made Hindu-Muslim unity a

precondition for any political action. He went to the extent of distorting the bhajan "Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram" to include words like Allah, Rahim and Karim. Gandhi described the marauding Moplahs in Malabar as "God-fearing people" and (at the Guwahati Congress, 1926) refused to censure Abdul Rashid, the assassin of Swami Shradhdhanand, but rather called him a "brother" who had done no wrong.

BR Ambedkar — in his landmark book *Pakistan, or the Partition of India* — wondered whether any sane man could go to the extent that Gandhi went for the sake of Hindu-Muslim unity. However, while Gandhi harmed the Hindu interests, he failed to impress the Muslims either. They dissociated themselves from the leadership of Gandhi soon as the Khilafat Non-Cooperation Movement ended in a fiasco. Rather, the Muslims turned upon the Hindus as though they were responsible for Mustafa Kemal Pasha's abolition of the Caliphate. Gandhi had to acknowledge that every Muslim was a bully, and every Hindu a coward.

Gandhi fraternised with Husyen Shaheed Suhrawardy (1884-1963), the evil genius of Great Calcutta Killings (August 1946) to the extent that the latter could attend Gandhi's prayers at Birla House in New Delhi (September 1947) as Subimal Dutt (later India's Foreign Secretary) found him

(With Nehru in Foreign Office, P18). Is this how a "Hindu patriot" should act?

One wonders what purpose will be served by identifying a "Hindu patriot" in Gandhi in South Africa. In South Africa, the Hindu-Muslim question was either non-existent or subservient to the question of colonial policy. The immigrant Indians were a small minority among the huge native black population and tiny White rulers. Gandhi's test of Hinduism was in the India between the years of Khilafat Movement to the Muslim League's campaign for Pakistan. He failed the test miserably.

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Rao Bhagwat launching the book is perhaps an indication of "Gandhi-tisation of the RSS" even though the Hindus might continue to put its faith in the organisation as their saviour. If Gandhi were really a "Hindu patriot", KB Hedgewar need not have founded the RSS in 1925. Moreover, the Gandhi that one comes across in the *Hind Swaraj* or Indian Home Rule (1908) is a person who wants to disengage with all forms of modernism and industrialism, viz; railways, machinery, law courts, Parliament and so on. Is it the way forward for the much-touted "New India"?

(The writer is an author and independent researcher based in New Delhi. The opinions expressed are personal.)

SOUNDBITE

The BJP high command has permitted us to induct seven legislators in the Cabinet. They will be sworn in on Jan 13 afternoon as there is 'habba' (Sankranti festival) on Jan 14.



Karnataka CM BS Yediyurappa

In protecting our Constitution and democracy, we will act with urgency because this President represents an imminent threat to both.



US Lower House Speaker Nancy Pelosi

If there is constructive criticism, I will surely introspect because that is the way to grow as an individual. As an actor, I am constantly working on the nuances in my performance.



Actor Pankaj Tripathi

Cricket never discriminates. The bat and ball recognise the talent of the person holding them and not the race, colour, religion or nationality.



Cricketer Sachin Tendulkar

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Alternative to WhatsApp

Sir — The recent change in the privacy policy of WhatsApp is like holding people to ransom. Even though the service provider has clarified that the change is only to facilitate business, there is no assurance that personal chats will not be tracked.

The credibility of WhatsApp is now lost and people should avoid using it for messages related to business transactions. The banks should withdraw all the services provided through WhatsApp and courts may also review the earlier decision of allowing WhatsApp for official communication.

In the age of technology, privacy is of utmost importance and the Government should frame rules to ensure that no company is allowed to compromise on the privacy and safety of end users.

It is also an opportunity for the Government to promote 'Make In India' by encouraging young entrepreneurs to develop indigenous social media platforms similar to WhatsApp. That will not only safeguard the privacy of common people but also of businesses and the Government.

M Raghuraman
Mumbai

Sad state of fire safety system in Govt hospitals

The recent fire tragedy at a Government hospital in Maharashtra's Bhandara district is yet another incident that shows the pathetic state of fire safety system at State-run hospitals.

It reminds us of similar tragedies in the past that were apparently not horrible enough to wake up the authorities from slumber. Ten infants have been killed in the fire that gutted the newborn care unit at the General Hospital. The gory incident shows how safety norms are thrown out of the window when it comes to saving lives. Safety measures, even in the best of Government hospitals, are not up to the mark and lack standard features. The casual approach towards standardising the protective system in State-run hospitals is scary. It is doubtful whether a clearance from the relevant safety authorities is procured by such district-level hospitals. The question that jumps to one's mind is whether fire audits are carried out regularly? Are the firefighting equipment monitored periodically?

The need for maintenance of electrical wiring on a regular basis cannot be stressed enough. It is also the responsibility of hospital staff and relatives of patients



who regularly smoke, ignoring the rules and putting the lives of others in grave danger. There are many inflammable materials and waste in hospitals that can catch fire easily. In a fire emergency, extinguishment and evacuation have to be accorded top priority. It is high time the authorities take preventive steps on war-footing and make the fire safety system more robust.

Ganapathi Bhat
Akola

Neglected elderly

Sir — We as a society have failed to take care of our elderly. The problems faced by the older people are mainly due to the disintegration of the traditional joint family system. In the nucleated families, the elderly are mostly left to take care of themselves or at the mercy of a caretaker who often

ill-treats them. Moreover, geriatrics is still a neglected area in modern medicine. The private old-age homes are very expensive and mostly out of reach for a large section of society.

The expenditure of elderly care is ballooning in the absence of concrete models of support from the Government. We are still ill-prepared to deal with the

problems confronting the elderly population like chronic illness, mental health problems, ill-treatment by caregivers and so on. Our economic growth will not be sustainable in the true sense if we fail to empower our older people and create a safe environment for them.

Bhagwan Thadani
Mumbai

Stop caste bias

Sir — It is very saddening that a few days ago, a Muslim shopkeeper was detained by police for selling shoes embossed with the word "Thakur" on the soles in Uttar Pradesh's Bulandshahr.

The incident raises uncomfortable questions about our society and politics. It also shows where we are headed as a nation and society. Why a caste name on the shoe becomes incendiary when a Muslim sells it and not when others do? Shopkeepers have sold "Thakur" footwear in UP and elsewhere for decades without it kicking up any dust. Are we reaching a situation where to use a certain title is to invite trouble and legal action?

Such incidents show that we are sitting on top of a volcano which can erupt anytime leading to caste and class conflicts in the society. It is the responsibility of the State Government to ensure that no injustice is done to the poor shopkeeper and his livelihood is not affected.

Shovani Chakraborty
Kolkata

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Drama in the US is not over yet

US President Donald Trump might make some more attempts to subvert democracy till January 20, when President-elect Joe Biden takes over



KALYANI SHANKAR

There is a WhatsApp message doing the rounds: "Americans recently found out that it's much easier for them to change presidents in other countries than in their own nation." So, how does the largest democracy, India, compare with the oldest one, the US, on practising democracy?

All through the presidential campaign, outgoing US President Donald Trump had declared that he would not move out of the White House even if he were defeated. His rival, President-elect Joe Biden, retorted that he (Trump) would be escorted out by the military. But no one expected an attack on the Capitol Hill, which is regarded as the temple of democracy in the US. Trump has spent the last two months refusing to concede defeat and claiming mass voter fraud. But the worst was his instigation of the Capitol Hill riots. According to the US media, Trump began his most infamous Wednesday morning making a last-ditch effort to hold on to power with a tweet, asking his Vice-President Mike Pence to intervene and overturn Joe Biden's election. Pence publicly issued a letter in the afternoon declaring that he would not illegally intervene in the Congress, minutes before convening the joint session of the US Congress to certify the Electoral College. Trump addressed his supporters about 1 PM and declared: "We will never give up, we will never concede," and announced "We're going to the Capitol." Trump drove his supporters into a frenzy. However, he did not join them in the riots that followed in the Capitol Hill and went back to the White House and watched the destruction on television. At the end of Wednesday, after the US Congress confirmed Biden's victory, Trump declared: "Even though I disagree with the outcome of the election, and the facts bear me out, nevertheless, there will be an orderly transition on January 20."

There are many reasons for Trump's atrocious behaviour. First of all, he is a bad loser and reluctant to admit defeat. Even in 2016, Trump had declared that he would accept the poll results only if he won or else he would resort to legal action. Second, now that he has lost the presidency, he would lose all federal protection against prosecution. Third, he needs his followers to be his support base in case he makes a presidential bid in 2024. He is also depending on the 73 million who voted for him this time. It is speculated that Trump has made up his mind to contest the next elections and wants to play the role of a martyr. Fourth, he also has to keep the section of Republicans who support him in the party, happy. This contemptible attack on the US democracy makes one compare it to the largest democracy, India, that has gone through many trials and tribulations in the last 73 years. India has seen a smooth transfer of power 17 times. The electorate, too, has become mature over the decades since Independence and has punished authoritarian rulers. Even late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi who imposed an Emergency in 1975 worked within the system, which bears little direct parallels to the current situation in the US.

After declaring an Emergency under Article 352 of the Indian Constitution, Indira blamed the "hidden hand" of the Central Intelligence Agency for internal unrest. The late President Pranab Mukherjee, who had been a Congressman all his life, talked about the Emergency period in his book 'The Dramatic Decade: The Indira Gandhi Years'. He described the period thus: "Suspension of fundamental rights and political activity (including trade union activity), large-scale arrests of political leaders and activists, Press censorship and extending the life of legislatures by not conducting elections were some instances of Emergency adversely affecting the interests of the people. Congress and Indira Gandhi had to pay a heavy price for this misadventure." The Emergency officially ended on March 23, 1977. The Congress came down from 352 seats to just 189 seats in the Lok Sabha in the 1977 elections. The Janata Party came to power. However, once the people's anger subsided a subdued Indira came back to power in 1980 when the Janata Government collapsed. Since then, her successors have confined themselves to the boundaries of the Constitution. Even in States where cult leaders like Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalithaa or RJD leader Lalu Prasad ruled in an authoritarian manner, they did so within the confines of the Constitution. So, to that extent, India has been lucky that democracy survives unhindered.

The US democracy got a major jolt on Wednesday and it is not over yet as Trump might make some more attempts to subvert democracy till January 20, when Biden takes over. The framers of the US Constitution would never have expected such shameful behaviour by a sitting President. In the words of Bob Woodward: "When history is written, Trump's failure to heed the warnings he was given is going to be probably the story of the failure of the American presidency and the American system to nominate and elect someone who responsibly would carry out the duties of President."

(The writer is a senior journalist. The views expressed are personal.)

POINT COUNTERPOINT

WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO MAKE THE ATMOSPHERE CONDUCTIVE BY KEEPING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE (THREE FARM) LAWS IN ABEYANCE. —CHIEF JUSTICE OF INDIA ARVIND BOBDE



A LAW CANNOT BE STAYED UNLESS IT IS BEYOND LEGISLATIVE COMPETENCE OR VIOLATIVE OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS. —ATTORNEY-GENERAL KK VENUGOPAL

Stop chasing a mirage

The Govt needs to pursue disinvestment, including privatisation, as an objective by itself instead of linking it to revenue receipts and meeting the fiscal target



UTTAM GUPTA

The Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) is in a war of words with the Ministry of Finance (MoF) over the proceeds of disinvestment of the Government's shareholding in Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs) during 2020-21. The point raised by the DIPAM is that out of the ₹2,10,000 crore target fixed in the Union Budget, a big slice of ₹90,000 crore, was thrust upon it by the MoF as being the projected proceeds from the sale of 10 per cent shares in the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) and its residual stake in IDBI bank (during 2018-19, LIC acquired 51 per cent stake in IDBI Bank even as the balance 49 per cent remained with the Centre).

Leave aside ₹90,000 crore, even the balance ₹1,20,000 crore is nowhere within reach as the proceeds so far are a meagre ₹14,000 crore. The Narendra Modi Government's strategy of disinvestment pursued during the last seven years has not worked. This is because barring two years i.e. 2017-18 and 2018-19 — when the actual proceeds from divestment exceeded the goal — in the remaining five years the target fell short. Even during those two exceptional years, the good performance was made possible primarily due to two big ticket sales of the Union Government's shares in one CPSU to another. This was the sale of its 51.11 per cent shareholding in Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) to the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) during 2017-18 yielding ₹37,000 crore and the sale of its 52.63 per cent stake in the Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) to the Power Finance Corporation (PFC) 2018-19 that brought in ₹13,000 crore. But, for these, even during 2017-18 and 2018-19, actual proceeds would have fallen short.

These trends point towards bad handling of the disinvestment process. At the root of this is the faulty approach of the Union Government to treat CPSUs as an appendage to the administrative Ministry under which the PSU concerned falls and by extension, treating proceeds from divestment of its shareholding in them as a source of revenue (albeit non-tax) while preparing its Budget.

Unlike tax revenue which can be projected with a degree of certainty (the crucial determinants being the prevailing tax rate as per the law of the land and the value of economic activity), the same can't be said about the proceeds from disinvestment. In this case, a lot depends on the market scenario and, in particular, the perception of investors about the PSU in which share sale is contemplated. It is even more relevant in cases where strategic disinvestment is mooted. Under such a sale, the shareholding of the Union Government is brought down to below 50 per cent or even zero. For instance, the sale of its entire shareholding of 51.11 per cent in HPCL or sale of its entire 53.29 per cent shareholding in Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) that was initiated in 2019-20 and has not yet happened. In such cases, if you don't get a buyer, the sale won't materialise. The proof of the pudding is in the eating.

As per the original plan, the 51.11 per cent shares of the Union Government in HPCL were to be sold to a private investor. But things did not pan out as planned and towards the end of that year i.e. January 2018, the Government had

IN THE CURRENT SCENARIO, WHEREIN THE GOVERNMENT IS ENCOURAGING PRIVATE COMPANIES TO INVEST EVEN IN SENSITIVE AREAS SUCH AS DEFENCE, SPACE AND SO ON, THERE IS NO POINT IN GETTING BOGGED DOWN IN DRAWING A LINE BETWEEN STRATEGIC AND NON-STRATEGIC SECTORS. ANY DECISION TO PRIVATISE A PSU SHOULD BE TAKEN ON THE MERIT OF EACH CASE. THIS WILL GIVE THE MUCH-NEEDED FLEXIBILITY TO THE MANAGEMENT TO DECIDE THE CONTOURS AND TIMING OF THE DIVESTMENT, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT MARKET CONDITIONS



to ask ONGC to pick up the entire stake, as it desperately needed money to meet the fiscal deficit target (in the process, ONGC suffered a collateral damage as it had to borrow ₹35,000 crore to fund the purchase). The second flaw has to do with the Government's reluctance to transfer rights proportionate to shares sold to private parties.

Even in cases where strategic disinvestment is proposed, it wants to remain in the driver's seat. To get an idea, look at what Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in her Budget speech for 2019-20. She had stated that the intent was to change the extant policy of the Government "directly" holding 51 per cent or above in a CPSU to one whereby its total holding, "direct" plus "indirect", is maintained at 51 per cent.

Such a stingy approach and the unwillingness of the political establishment to relinquish control even after divestment of majority ownership is far from conducive to eliciting interest from potential investors.

Third, the Government spends too much time on policy formulation — a process that goes on *ad infinitum*. In early 2016, the NITI Aayog had recommended a strategic sale of over two dozen CPSUs. But, the powers that be didn't act on those recommendations. Meanwhile, early this year, Sitharaman announced broad contours of the Government's plans on privatisation, delineating different approaches to "strategic" (16 such sectors have been identified) and "non-strategic" sectors. Reportedly, a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) will be held shortly to approve the policy.

Allowing for about a year for the NITI Aayog to come up with its recommendations, it has been more than five years and the policy on strategic disinvestment has not been finalised yet. Till that happens, the Ministries concerned

won't gain the necessary momentum to push the sale process. Even after a divestment plan for a PSU is finalised, the Government remains in a flip-flop mode. For instance, in the case of Air India (AI), in its initial sale plan (2018-19), it had insisted on retaining 26 per cent stake, three years' lock-in period on disposition of shares by the acquirer, leaving a big slice of debt on the balance sheet, retention of employees and so on. Since then several changes have been made. The offer plan currently under execution includes divestment of all of the Government's shareholding, requiring the suitor to bid for the "enterprise value" (put simply, it means, he will be free from any debt burden), relaxation in other riders such as lock-in period, retention of employees and so on.

These flip-flops result in avoidable delays and erosion in the sale proceeds. If, only the Government had gone for sale of its 100 per cent stake in its 2018-19 offer and not insisted on the suitor to pick up a big slice of the debt on the AI's books, further erosion in the realisable value from sales could have been avoided. Fourth, notwithstanding much trumpeting about governance reforms, bureaucratic red tape rules the roost. Almost all processes starting from conception, getting approvals, appointment of transaction advisor, inviting an Expression of Interest, financial bids, selection of bidder and so on, crucial to successful completion of disinvestment are hamstrung by it. Add to this, the reluctance of bureaucrats to take timely decisions fearing they might be questioned after retirement.

This leads to delay in processes and by the time, all approvals are in place, the market scenario has undergone a drastic change. For instance, the sale of BPCL was planned during 2019-20. Then, the projected realisation from sale was over ₹60,000 crore. But, the officials were not ready. Even as they exuded confidence that the sale would

go through during the current year, the pandemic has spoiled the party. The chances of the sale getting completed by March 31 this year are dim. Meanwhile, there has been significant value erosion, even as the proceeds on current valuation may not exceed ₹45,000 crore.

To conclude, the present approach of the Government to link divestment of its shareholding in CPSUs to using receipts (non-tax) therefrom to meet the fiscal deficit target is flawed. It should be abandoned. Instead, the Government should pursue share sale including strategic disinvestment (or privatisation) as an objective by itself.

In this regard, formulation of an appropriate strategy and preparation of a PSU-specific plan should come from the management (it is best equipped to do the job) instead of being thrust on it by the concerned administrative Ministry under a typical top-down approach.

However, the Government may constitute a panel of eminent professionals (sans bureaucrats) for providing guidance on macro-economic issues that have a bearing on the disinvestment process and can be helpful in maximising realisation from the sale.

In the current scenario, wherein the Government is encouraging private companies to invest even in sensitive areas such as defence, space and so on, there is no point in getting bogged down in drawing a line between strategic and non-strategic sectors. Any decision to privatise a PSU should be taken on the merit of each case.

This will give the much-needed flexibility to the management to decide the contours and timing of the divestment, taking into account market conditions. This will help in maximising proceeds from sales and improve the Centre's budgetary position, too.

(The writer is a New Delhi-based policy analyst. The views expressed are personal.)

The drugless way to good health

Sujok has become popular among people suffering from chronic diseases, especially among the poor who can't afford costly hospitals



VK BAHUGUNA

As the world battles the Coronavirus pandemic and other zoonotic diseases that are plaguing humanity, it is vital to keep healthy and boost immunity. Apart from the use of various allopathic drugs and ayurvedic tonics, people are trying out alternative therapies to improve their overall health and immunity.

One such therapy is Sujok, which was invented by late Park Jae Woo, a Korean professor, a few decades ago. It is a drugless method of treatment and is a mixture of acupuncture and other healing methods. *Suj* means hand while *jok* means palm. Sujok is thus a method of treatment based on

the principle that all parts of the body have a positional link in our palms and feet and it thus focuses only on treating through points in the hands and feet.

After successfully treating many chronic diseases in his country, Prof Park chose India to propagate this therapy and established the Sujok Association of India in Nagpur. He groomed and trained a few physiotherapists and other interested people and kept on visiting India to popularise this drugless treatment.

Sujok in recent years has become very popular in some parts of India among people suffering from chronic diseases like axonal neuropathy, cerebral palsy and so on, especially among the poor people who cannot afford costly treatment in big hospitals. It is becoming popular because it is a very safe and effective natural therapy that works without medicines.

Sujok treatment is carried out by using various instruments, like tiny needles and magnets specially designed and made with precision to carry out

specialised, specific treatment on the hands and feet. Sujok needles are made of medical grade steel, have spring-like handles on one side and are perfectly shaped for painless insertion by experts. The therapy also uses the energy of various seeds and colours for treatment. One of the most effective ways to massage the points of the body part where the treatment is needed is done by a diagnostic and therapeutic stick after identifying the exact points and then treating those points by massaging.

Magnets are the most important tools in the armoury of a Sujok healer. They are used to channelise the flow of energy in the identified body part. Yet another way is the application of elastic ring massagers to provide continuous pressure on the identified point.

As for the efficacy of the treatment, Sujok practitioners give a long list of diseases which can be cured by them like arthritis, bronchitis, asthma, cervical spondylosis, backache, pain in the joint, migraine, hypertension,

sinusitis, partial deafness, paralysis, constipation, acidity, obesity, diabetes, blood pressure, menstrual problems and many more diseases related to different body organs. However, practitioners say they find it to be successful in all muscle and nerve-related diseases, too.

For instance, a senior retired veterinary surgeon who was admitted to a medical college hospital in Dehradun, was later treated by the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi, for almost eight months for axonal neuropathy. He was put through 84 tests but to no avail. Ultimately, out of frustration he contacted a Sujok expert in Dehradun and was cured in 90 days. Today he is fine and his nerve conduction value has reached 56 per cent in medical terms from 14 per cent. Similarly two children suffering from cerebral palsy children have returned home after fully recovering, thanks to Sujok therapy.

In a huge, overpopulated and poor country like India, providing affordable healthcare to all is still a very big

challenge for the Government and the private sector alike. Even though the healthcare infrastructure has been ramped up to a very large extent due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is far from adequate. At a time like this, when a lot of emphasis is on prevention of the infection, ayurvedic and traditional systems of medicine have proved their efficacy in bolstering the immune system. In the treatment of chronic diseases, where Sujok therapy has achieved excellent results, it needs to be subsumed in the holistic and alternative healthcare system so that it can be evolved to provide cheaper and assured healthcare to our citizens. Health Minister Harsh Vardhan, who is a celebrated doctor himself, needs to evolve an integrated healthcare policy for certain identified diseases where a combination of all forms of medical therapies can be applied.

Sujok therapy offers the Indian Government an excellent way to treat some untreatable diseases at an affordable cost. However, it should not be

included without testing its efficacy and solid scientific proof. To judge its potential and effectiveness, the Government must ask AIIMS, Delhi, and other prestigious medical institutions in the country to conduct studies and standardise the protocols for identified diseases before Sujok therapy is officially recognised.

Even as Sujok therapy continues to grow in popularity globally and help countless people suffering from chronic diseases, Sujok leaders in Korea, particularly Minchul Park, son of professor Park who heads the Sujok International Foundation, have their task cut out. Park, must rid the Sujok India Association of vested interests who are not allowing new practitioners to flourish and are putting up roadblocks in the spread of the therapy for their own selfish interests.

One can only hope that in the end, Sujok will spread widely across the country and become a boon for the poor and rich alike.

(The writer is a retired civil servant. The views expressed are personal.)



THE UK NEEDS TO INVEST IN HEALTH

Spending on health and social care in the UK is lower than in many comparable countries. It is good that so many British people value the NHS; indeed, it is a cornerstone of progressive politics. But a resilient health system cannot be run on goodwill. What it needs, particularly in a country with an ageing population, is sustained and strategic investment.

(The Guardian editorial)

India's real GDP to expand by 10.1% in FY 2022: Icra

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Domestic rating agency Icr Ratings on Monday said it expects the country's real gross domestic product (GDP) to grow by 10.1 per cent in FY2022.

It, however, said the value of GDP in the next financial year will only mildly surpass the level that had been recorded in FY2020.

"After a 7.8 per cent pandemic-driven shrinkage in the ongoing fiscal (FY2021), India's real GDP is projected to record a growth of 10.1 per cent in FY2022.

The seemingly-sharp expansion will be led by the continued normalisation in economic activities as the roll-out of Covid-19 vaccines gathers traction, as well as the low base," the agency principal economist Aditi Nayar said in a report.

The agency's principal economist expects a multi-speed recovery in FY2022, with the contact-intensive sectors, discretionary consumption and investment by the private sector trailing the rest of the economy, in the arduous march back to attaining, and sustaining, pre-Covid levels.

"On a sobering note, we project the aggregate value of the Indian GDP in real terms in FY2022, to be only mildly higher than the level recorded in FY2020," Nayar added.

The agency expects the headline CPI inflation to decline to 4.6 per cent in FY2022 from 6.4 per cent in FY2021, while exceeding the mid-point of the Monetary Policy Committee's (MPC's) medium target of 4 per cent, for the third consecutive year.

A favourable base would moderate the retail food inflation to an average of 4.7 per cent in FY2022 from 8 per cent in FY2021, despite the pressures from edible oils, and protein items such as pulses, it

said. With the CPI inflation expected to remain above the MPC's 4 per cent target during FY2022, the agency expects an extended pause for the repo rate.

It expects the "stance of monetary policy to be changed to neutral from accommodative in the August 2021 policy review or later, only after there is greater certainty on the durability of the awaited economic revival."

The report said RBI may initiate steps, in a calibrated manner, to reduce the magnitude of the systemic liquidity surplus.

Nayar said the government security yields will take a cue from the size of the borrowing programme of the central and the state governments for FY2022, as well as the outlook for inflation.

The agency expects the twin deficits to display a divergent trend in FY2022.

The market capitalisation of all BSE-listed companies jumped to an all-time high of over ₹196.56 lakh crore on Monday as markets reached lifetime high for the second straight session. At close of trading session, market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies was at ₹1,96,56,811.32 crore (USD 2.6 trillion). The 30-share BSE Sensex ended 486.81 points or 1 per cent higher at 49,269.32, closing above the 49,000-level for the first time.

During the day, it touched its record intra-day high of 49,303.79. The Indian equity began today's session trading at all-time highs, taking a cue from the Asian markets and announcement of vaccination drive," said Sumeet Bagadia, Executive Director, Choice Broking. HCL Tech was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, gaining 6.09 per cent, followed by Infosys, HDFC, Maruti, Tech Mahindra, Bajaj Auto and M&M. Sector-wise, BSE

IT, tech, auto, FMCG, realty, telecom and healthcare indices gained up to 3.63 per cent. "Markets started the week on a robust note led by positive global cues and strong earnings from IT behemoth TCS," according to Ajit Mishra, VP-Research, Religare Broking Ltd.

Global shares and U.S. Futures were mostly lower Monday as hopes for more U.S. Economic aid were countered by fears over spreading damage from the pandemic.

France's CAC 40 slipped 0.5 per cent in early trading to 5,677.99, while Germany's DAX slipped 0.8 per cent to 13,943.02. Britain's FTSE 100 shed 0.4 per cent to 6,843.12. U.S. Shares were poised for a weak start with Dow futures down nearly 0.7 per cent at 30,793.00. S&P 500 futures fell 0.6 per cent to 3,794.00.

Mcap of BSE-listed companies at record high of over ₹196.56L cr

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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₹ tumbles 16 paise to 73.40 per US \$

Mumbai: The rupee depreciated by 16 paise to close at 73.40 against the US dollar on Monday, tracking a rebound in the American currency overseas. At the interbank forex market, the domestic unit opened at 73.47 against the greenback and witnessed an intra-day high of 73.37 and a low of 73.50. The local unit finally settled at 73.40, registering a fall of 16 paise over its previous close.

Global shares fall as pandemic fears overshadow aid hopes

AP ■ TOKYO

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FinMin releases ₹6,000 cr to States, UTs to meet GST compensation shortfall

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry on Monday released the 11th instalment of ₹6,000 crore to states and UTs to meet the GST compensation shortfall, taking the total amount provided so far under this window to ₹66,000 crore. The Centre had set up a special borrowing window in October 2020 to meet the estimated shortfall of ₹1.10 lakh crore in revenue arising on account of implementation of GST.

The Ministry of Finance in a statement said it has released the 11th weekly instalment of Rs 6,000 crore to states/Union Territories to meet the GST compensation shortfall.

Out of this, ₹5,16.60 crore has been released to 23 states and ₹483.40 crore to the three Union Territories (UTs) with Legislative Assembly (Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir and Puducherry), who are mem-

bers of the GST Council.

The remaining five states, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Sikkim do not have a gap in revenue on account of GST implementation, it said.

"The amount has been borrowed this week at an interest rate of 5.10 per cent.

So far, an amount of ₹66,000 crore has been borrowed through the special borrowing window at an average interest rate of 4.72 per cent," the statement said.

The borrowings under the special window have been done in 11 rounds and the amount borrowed so far was released to the states on October 23, November 2, November 9, November 23, December 1, December 7, December 14, December 21, December 28, 2020, and January 4 and January 11 this year.

Banks gross NPA may rise to 13.5% by Sept 2021, says RBI FSR

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Banks' gross non-performing assets may rise to 13.5 per cent by September 2021, from 7.5 per cent in September 2020

under the baseline scenario, according to Financial Stability Report (FSR) released by the Reserve Bank of India.

If the macroeconomic environment worsens into a

severe stress scenario, the GNPA ratio may escalate to 14.8 per cent, the report said.

"The stress tests indicate that the GNPA ratio of all scheduled commercial banks

(SCBs) may increase from 7.5 per cent in September 2020 to 13.5 per cent by September 2021 under the baseline scenario," the FSR report added.

Among the bank groups, public sector banks' (PSBs) GNPA ratio of 9.7 per cent in September 2020 may rise to 16.2 per cent by September 2021 under the baseline scenario, it noted. The gross non-

performing asset (GNPA) ratio of private sector banks (PVBs) and foreign banks (FBs) may increase from 4.6 per cent and 2.5 per cent to 7.9 per cent and 5.4 per cent, respectively, over

the same period. In the severe stress scenario, the GNPA ratios of PSBs, PVBs and FBs may rise to 17.6 per cent, 8.8 per cent and 6.5 per cent, respectively, by September

2021, the report said. "These GNPA projections are indicative of the possible economic impairment latent in banks' portfolios, with implications for capital planning," it added.

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY 50	14,474.05	14,498.20	14,383.10	14,484.75	137.5
TATAMOTORS	1999	2254	19965	2232	2506
HCLTECH	101500	109905	100800	105325	586
INFY	134210	138335	130400	137595	6385
WIPRO	436	451	435	44705	1685
HDFC	268000	276200	266675	274710	896
BAJAJ-AUTO	353100	363455	352100	362440	925
MARUTI	809900	828800	788240	823000	2151
GAIL	134	1366	13205	1361	335
TECHM	106210	108155	104050	107890	257
CPIA	839	860	83275	859	203
M&M	77305	7914	7632	7883	178
ONGC	1015	1029	9805	1024	175
HINDUNIVLR	242500	244195	240210	243020	39
TCS	323000	323000	314635	317045	4955
COALINDIA	1405	143	1403	1418	21
HDFCBANK	145000	146490	143630	145260	2095
DREDDY	534400	542700	532600	541300	7475
HDFCLIFE	7209	731	7157	7253	809
HEROMOTORS	316100	322490	314705	319615	3506
BHARTIARTL	5415	55435	5415	5462	5947
BRITANNIA	360380	362500	354765	361300	3775
TITAN	156000	157200	154570	156210	135
ICICIBANK	54515	546	535	5452	315
ITC	204	2061	20125	20265	115
NESTLEIND	1835000	1854585	1818810	1841000	10375
ECHERMOT	276700	280865	272670	277605	152
ULTRACEMCO	555000	569675	550495	561810	2635
BPL	404	40475	39535	4011	095
SUNPHARMA	6237	628	61405	6216	08
ASIANPAINT	284500	287345	282460	284600	13
POWERGRID	204	205	20345	2036	005
SBIILE	940	9525	92685	93535	-015
GRASIM	99935	100230	99445	100035	-125
IOC	962	9695	946	957	-045
JSWSTEEL	40285	40495	39265	397	-315
AXISBANK	676	67665	66015	6669	-58
DIVISLAB	388490	388895	380550	381920	-3935
SRIN	288	2882	2796	2828	-32
UPL	506	5089	4933	4979	-575
NTDC	10075	10125	987	99	-115
HINDUNIVLR	9429	95095	9262	9289	-109
IT	138200	138495	134500	135290	-205
KOTAKBANK	194000	196690	193540	193930	-312
SHREECEM	2580000	2595000	254000	254005	-41335
HINDALCO	2676	2694	258	26375	-445
RELIANCE	193880	193880	189250	189900	-347
BAJAJFINSV	920100	926200	895500	904000	-1676
ADANIPOWER	52045	5225	504	50695	-1006
BAJFINANCE	510800	511095	49825	498335	-9866
TATASTEEL	712	712	6882	695	-1815

BSE 500

SCRIP	Open	High	Low	LTP
BAJAJFINSV	9230	9254	8959.75	8994.1
TATAMOTORS	1999	225	1995.5	2201
SBIN	287.7	287.7	279.55	282.35
FORTIS	181.5	182	170.65	174.5
MARUTI	8080	8289.95	7880	8236.05
IDEA	11.95	12.05	11.35	11.49
INFY	1340	1382.65	1340	1376.1
WIPRO	439.8	450.8	435.1	446.8
TCS	3215	3224	3147.45	3175.05
RELIANCE	1935	1938.9	1892.25	1897
HDFCBANK	1450.6	1465	1436	1450.8
ITC	203.6	206	201.3	202.45
BHARTIARTL	542.8	554.4	541.6	547.1
ICICIBANK	544.2	545.95	534.8	544.75
TATASTEEL	713.25	713.25	688.3	695.5
DLF	248.85	251.15	243.6	247
BAJFINANCE	5124	5124	4961	4984.15
VEDL	178.7	182.7	175.35	179.1
HDFC	2690	2762.55	2667.35	2751.65
HCLTECH	1015	1058.6	1008.3	1055.05
DMART	3130	3130.05	2942.8	2979.75
ADANIPOWER	518	525	510.55	518.55
AXISBANK	674.2	677	660.05	667.1
BANDHANBNK	423	424	404.45	408.65
ONGC	101.2	102.85	98	102.55
HINDUNIVLR	945	951	926.15	929.6
IRCTC	1483	1483.65	1454	1461.65
INDUS	80800	82959.95	80527.38	82508.15
MRF	520	522.3	503.85	508.25
ADANIPOWER	772.95	791	763.4	788.75
M&M	34.85	35.6	34	34.85
RVN	1720	1746.25	1705	1711.05
TECHM	1068.8	1081.35	1040.5	1077.65
ZEELE	232.25	233.35	222.35	223.4
NTPC	100.55	101.2	98.75	99
IUBHSGFIN	242.5	243	230.55	234.4
TATACONSUM	612	632.25	609.3	628.95
SUNPHARMA	621.8	627.95	614.25	620.8
PNB	35.65	35.75	34.55	34.9
HFCL	31.35	33.75	30.6	33.2
IOC	97	97	94.6	95.1
HINDUNIVLR	2410	2441.9	2404.85	2428.45
ECHERMOT	2775	2809	2727.8	2775.65
ADANIPOWER	540.5	546	535.5	546.15
BPL	401.75	404.6	395.4	402.05
TATAMTRDRV	82.5	91.15	81.35	89.95
ASHOKLEY	113.15	118.15	113.15	116.9
GODREJCP	755	785.9	752.95	770.5
LUPIN	1040	1042.5	1040	1075.6
INDIAMART	7508	8190.9	7508	7991.15
TATAPOWER	83.3	84.1	82.15	83.3
ESCORTS	1355	1368	1334.65	1355
LT	1377.1	1384.8	1344.75	1349.65
AUROPHARMA	950	966.95	940.2	964.9
SIRTRANSFIN	1297	1313.55	1240.65	1249.7
IDFCFIRSTB	44.95	45.15	43.25	44.45
LAXMIMACH	4939	5044	4731.6	5006.65
SAIL	77.1	77.45	73.45	74.75
BANKBARODA	66.4	66.4	63.7	64.2
COALINDIA	142.45	143.1	140.4	141.7
BHEL	39.85	40	38.3	39
JUBLIFOOD	2945	2987	2912.3	2934.4
CPIA	839.5	860	832.6	856.55
DREDDY	5340	5425.5	5328.9	

Dems step up bid to impeach Trump

Washington: Democrats in the House of Representatives have stepped up their bid to impeach Donald Trump in the waning days of his presidency, contending that he should be held accountable for the unprecedented mayhem by thousands of his supporters at the US Capitol.

The move to impeach Trump gained momentum on Sunday with the House Democrats announcing the article of impeachment against the outgoing Republican president on Monday.

This comes hours after the House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi in a Dear Colleague letter to the Democratic members laid the ground rules for the move and gave an ultimatum to Vice President Mike Pence to invoke the 25th Amendment of the Constitution.

The 25th Amendment allows for the president to be removed from office by the vice president and a majority of the Cabinet.

"On Monday, I intend to help introduce a resolution



impeaching President Trump for high crimes and misdemeanours," Congressman Brad Schneider said on Sunday.

Describing the ground rules, Pelosi said, first thing Monday morning, House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer will request Unanimous Consent to bring up the Raskin resolution which calls on the Vice President to convene and mobilise the Cabinet to activate the 25th Amendment to declare the President incapable of executing the duties of his office, after which the Vice President would immediately exercise

powers as acting President. "If we do not receive Unanimous Consent, this legislation is planned to be brought up on the Floor the following day. We are calling on the Vice President to respond within 24 hours. Next, we will proceed with bringing impeachment legislation to the Floor," Pelosi said.

"In protecting our Constitution and our Democracy, we will act with urgency, because this President represents an imminent threat to both. As the days go by, the horror of the ongoing assault

on our democracy perpetrated by this President is intensified and so is the immediate need for action," she wrote.

The calls for Trump's impeachment intensified after thousands of pro-Trump rioters on Wednesday stormed

the US Capitol, interrupting a joint session of Congress where lawmakers were set to certify President-elect Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris' win in the November 3 election. Five people died in the incident. **PTI**

Pompeo to designate Yemen's Houthi rebels as terrorist group

Washington: Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has announced that he will designate Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels as a "foreign terrorist organisation" as time runs down on the Trump administration. The designation will take effect on January 19, one day before president-elect Joe Biden takes office.

The announcement Sunday comes as Pompeo and his top aides rush to complete actions they believe will cement their legacy and the president's. In addition to the Houthi designation, Pompeo in coming days is also expected to likely re-des-

ignate Cuba as a "state sponsor of terrorism," according to several administration officials.

Both moves will impose or re-impose sanctions on the targets and may complicate the incoming Biden administration's diplomacy. On Saturday Pompeo angered China when he declared restrictions on U.S. Diplomatic contacts with Taiwanese officials to be null and void. In addition, Pompeo plans before leaving office on Jan. 20 to draw explicit links between Iran and al-Qaida and hit more Iranian entities with sanctions, the officials said. **AP**

Hong Kong's new top judge urges impartiality in courts

Hong Kong: Hong Kong's new top judge warned on Monday that the semi-autonomous Chinese territory's courts need to show they are impartial amid a flurry of politically charged cases or risk losing public trust.

Hong Kong has been in a state of political crisis after months of anti-government protests in 2019 led to Beijing imposing a national security law on the city to quash dissent. Pro-democracy supporters have decried the security legislation as authorities suppressing the freedoms Hong Kong was promised when it was handed over from British control in 1997.

Last week, 55 pro-democracy activists were arrested in a sweeping police operation, and prominent pro-democracy activists such as Joshua Wong, Agnes Chow and outspoken media tycoon Jimmy Lai are currently in jail for their activism. Hong Kong Chief Justice Andrew Cheung, who was sworn in on Monday, said



New Hong Kong's Chief Justice Andrew Cheung listens to reporters' questions during a press conference in Hong Kong on Monday. **AP**

public confidence in our judicial system," Cheung said in his first speech delivered as chief justice.

He said that it is equally crucial to the public and business community that there is confidence in the judicial system. Cheung also said that it is important to the international reputation of Hong Kong that the city is governed by the rule of law under the so-called "one country, two systems" framework that allows Hong Kong freedoms not found in mainland China.

Cheung also condemned threats of violence and doxing attacks on judges, describing them as futile and reprehensible.

"Comments and criticisms, sometimes extreme and harsh ones, are unavoidable. Whilst the freedom of speech of everyone in society must be fully respected, there must not be any attempt to exert improper pressure on the judges in the discharge of their judicial functions," he said. **AP**

Yemen's rebels defiant as aid agencies fear US terror label

AP ■ CAIRO

Yemen's Iran-backed rebels on Monday dismissed the US Move to designate them a terrorist organisation in the final days of the Trump administration while a leading aid agency warned such a designation would deal another "devastating blow" to the impoverished and war-torn nation.

The planned designation, announced by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo late Sunday, would take effect a day before President-elect Joe Biden is inaugurated January

20. It was not clear whether Biden would overturn the decision.

Yemen is mired in a disastrous humanitarian crisis, with millions of people in wide swaths of the country on the brink of famine as a result of six years of civil war.

Pompeo said he was proceeding with the designation of the rebels, known as Houthis, along with separate terrorist designations for the three top rebel leaders. At the same time, he pledged the U.S. would help absorb the impact on aid groups and allow humanitari-

an assistance to continue to flow into Yemen.

Hours later, several senior rebel figures slammed Pompeo's announcement.

"We are not fearful," tweeted Mohammed Ali al-Houthi. "America is the source of terrorism. It's directly involved in killing and starving the Yemeni people."

Others said the designation was an attempt to deflect attention from the U.S. Political crisis in the wake of the deadly Capitol rioting and efforts to impeach President Donald Trump. **AP**

Egypt, Germany, France, Jordan meet to revive Israel-Palestine talks

Cairo: Egypt on Monday hosted the Foreign Ministers of Germany, France and Jordan to discuss ways to revive peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians, a week before President-elect Joe Biden takes office.

In Cairo, the Foreign Ministry said the aim of the meeting was to urge the Palestinians and Israelis to negotiate a "just and comprehensive political settlement" on the basis of achieving a Palestinian state with east Jerusalem as its capital on territory Israel captured in the 1967 Mideast war.

The Palestinians suffered numerous setbacks under the outgoing administration of President Donald Trump and complained about what they say were pro-Israeli steps from Washington. Trump has sidelined the Palestinian Authority, recognised Jerusalem as Israel's capital and moved the US Embassy there from Tel Aviv, slashed financial assistance for the Palestinians and reversed course on the illegitimacy of Israeli settlements on land claimed by the Palestinians.

Egypt's President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi said last month that Cairo has been working toward a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, taking into account the regional and international changes." He was apparently referring to Biden's election and the establishment of ties with Israel by four Arab countries — the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco.

France's Foreign Ministry said the meeting would discuss ways to have Israelis and Palestinians embark on talks, building on "the positive regional context" related to the recent normalisation deals. **AP**

Armenian, Azerbaijani leaders in Russia for talks

AP ■ MOSCOW

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday hosted his counterparts from Armenia and Azerbaijan, their first meeting since a Russia-brokered truce ended six weeks of fighting over Nagorno-Karabakh.

As he sat down for talks in the Kremlin with Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, Putin said that the peace agreement has been successfully implemented, laying the foundation for a fair settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. **AP**

He noted that senior officials from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia will now discuss further moves to restore traffic links in the region after the decades-long conflict.

The November 10 peace deal ended 44 days of hostilities in which the Azerbaijani army routed Armenian forces and reclaimed control over large parts of Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding areas.

Nagorno-Karabakh lies within Azerbaijan but was under the control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by Armenia since a separatist war there ended in 1994.

Qatar-Saudi direct flights resume amid Gulf detente

Dubai (United Arab Emirates): A Qatar Airways jetliner landed in Saudi Arabia on Monday, completing the first direct flight from Doha to Riyadh since the kingdom's boycott of the tiny, energy-rich state in 2017. The resumption of direct flights came after regional heavyweight Saudi Arabia reopened its borders and airspace with Qatar last week, paving the way for a broader rapprochement.

At an annual Gulf summit meeting in Al Ula, Saudi Arabia, representatives of the four boycotting countries signed a pledge to resolve the bitter dispute. Saudi Airlines was also set to fly to Doha later Monday. **AP**

China denies coercive birth control measures in Xinjiang

PTI ■ BEIJING

A Chinese official on Monday denied Beijing has imposed coercive birth control measures among Muslim minority women, following an outcry over a tweet by the Chinese Embassy in Washington claiming that government polices had freed women of the Uighur ethnic group from being "baby-making machines."

Xu Guixiang, a deputy spokesperson for the Xinjiang regional government, told reporters Monday that birth control decisions were made of the person's own free will and that "no organisation or individual can interfere."

"The growth rate of the Uighur population is not only

higher than that of the whole Xinjiang population, but also higher than that of the minority population, and more significantly higher than that of the (Chinese majority) Han population," Xu said.

"As for the so-called forcing ethnic minority women in Xinjiang to wear IUDs, or undergo tubal ligations or abortions, it is even more malign."

An Associated Press investigation in June found that the Chinese government was forcing draconian birth control measures on Uighurs, Kazakhs, and other ethnic minorities in Xinjiang, including IUD fittings, contraceptives, and even abortions and sterilisations.

The measures are backed by the threat of detention,

with parents with three or more children swept into camps and prisons if they're unable to pay massive fines.

As a result, the birth rate in Xinjiang's minority regions plummeted by over 60 per cent in just three years, even as Beijing eases birth restrictions on the Han population ahead of a looming demographic crisis.

Twitter took down the Chinese Embassy's January 7 tweet following protests by groups that accuse Beijing of seeking to eradicate Uighur culture.

Users complained the tweet was a violation of rules set by Twitter, which is blocked in China along with Facebook and other American social media platforms.

Merkel: Trump's Twitter eviction problematic

Berlin: German Chancellor Angela Merkel considers US President Donald Trump's eviction from Twitter by the company "problematic," her spokesman said Monday.

Twitter permanently suspended Trump from the microblogging platform on Friday, citing a "risk of further incitement of violence" in the wake of the storming of the US Capitol by supporters of the outgoing president. Asked about Twitter's decision, Merkel's spokesman, Steffen Seibert, said the operators of social media platforms "bear great responsibility for political communication not being poisoned by hatred, by lies and by incitement to violence." He said it's right not to "stand back" when such content is posted, for example by flagging it. **AP**

WHO experts' team to visit China on Jan 14

Beijing: China said on Monday that a group of experts from the WHO is due to arrive in the country on Thursday to probe the origins of the coronavirus pandemic, ending the uncertainty and delay which drew sharp criticism from the world health body.

Experts from the WHO will conduct a field visit to China on January 14, the state-run CGTN quoted China's National Health Commission as saying in a report.

The team's visit to China, especially to Wuhan where the virus first emerged in December last year, has become a bone of contention as Beijing, which questions the widely-held view about the virus' origins in Wuhan, had delayed granting permission the 10-member team of experts. On January 9, Zeng Yixin, the deputy head of

the National Health Commission (NHC) told the media here that the exact time of the team's arrival in Wuhan was still under negotiations. China and the World Health Organization (WHO) have reached a consensus on specific arrangements of the investigation with four video conferences, Zeng said. Once the WHO experts complete their procedures and finalise the schedule, Chinese experts will go to Wuhan with them to conduct the investigation, Zeng said.

Monday's confirmation came after WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, who is often accused of being pro-China, in a rare instance of criticism had expressed disappointment over Beijing not finalising the necessary permissions for the experts' team's arrival. **PTI**

Around the Globe

Jerusalem: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's corruption trial will resume in February after being postponed because of a tightened coronavirus lockdown, an Israeli court said Monday.

Harare: Zimbabwe, battling a spike in new COVID-19 cases, has banned families from transporting their dead relatives between cities, as part of new measures stop traditional funeral rites that are believed to be increasing the spread of the disease.

Jakarta: Indonesia's Food and Drug Authority on Monday green-lighted emergency use of the COVID-19 vaccine produced by China-based Sinovac Biotech Ltd., with vaccinations of high-risk groups expected to start later this week.

London: The UK will go through the "most dangerous time" as it enters "the worst" weeks of the COVID-19 pandemic, England's Chief Medical Officer (CMO) said on Monday.

FROM PAGE 1

PUT ON HOLD 3 FARM LAWS OR WE WILL DO SO: SC

"After the implementation of farm laws are stayed, you can carry on protest and we don't want anyone to say that we stifled the protest," the Bench told the advocates appearing for several farmer organisations.

The apex court, which said it will pass orders on the issue concerning farm laws and farmers' protest in part in the matter, asked the parties to suggest two-three names of former CJs including former CJI RM Lodha who can head the apex court-appointed panel. The court was hearing a clutch of pleas challenging the new farm laws as well as the ones raising issues related to the ongoing agitation at Delhi borders.

Meanwhile, several legal experts said Parliamentary legislations cannot be stayed by the Supreme Court unless it is satisfied prima facie that they are unconstitutional and illegal.

Senior advocate and constitutional law expert Rakesh Dwivedi said Parliamentary legislations cannot be stayed unless there is a very strong ground for holding at the very inception that prima facie it is unconstitutional.

"This is very tall order, without hearing the Government you jump the gun. Large number of farmers are agitating cannot be a ground for the court to stay the laws. It is only in the wisdom of the law-makers and is beyond the domain of the court," Dwivedi told PTI.

"Courts cannot say people are agitating so we will stay the law. I agree with the Attorney General that the farm laws cannot be stayed unless it is constitutionally

invalid," he said. Senior advocate Mohan Katarki said however that the top court is vested with the jurisdiction to stay the operation of the Act of Parliament if it is satisfied that prima facie Parliament lacks legislative competence.

PROTEST WILL CONTINUE

Pulling up the Centre for its handling of the farmers' protest, the apex court on Monday said it is "extremely disappointed" with the way negotiations between them were going and will constitute a committee headed by a former Chief Justice of India to resolve the impasse.

"We are not experts on economy. You tell us whether the Government is going to put on hold farm laws or we will do this," the Bench said. "We are sorry to say that the Centre has not been able to solve the problem and the farmers' agitation," it said.

The eighth round of talks between the Centre and the farmer unions on January 7 headed 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 apex court had earlier sought the Centre's response on a batch of pleas against the three contentious farm laws - the Farmers' (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act.

Punjab Kisan Union president Ruldu Singh Mansa said the agitation started with the demand of scrapping the agriculture laws and "it will end only when we win this fight".

Darshan Pal, president of Krantikari Kisan Union, said the farmer leaders are consulting their lawyers and a formal response will be given after the SC pronounces its verdict.

The farmers have been camping at several Delhi border points for over 40 days, demanding repeal of the farm laws, a legal guarantee on minimum support price for their crops and other two issues. Meanwhile, the Delhi Traffic Police on Monday advised commuters to take alternative routes for coming to Delhi via Anand Vihar, DND, Bhopra and Loni borders.

In a series of tweet the traffic police said that available Open Borders to Haryana are following- Jharoda (Only Single Carriageway/Road), Daurala, Kapashera, Badusarai, Rajokri NH-8, Bijwasan/Bajghera, Palam Vihar and Dundahera Borders.

"The Chilla & Ghazipur Borders are closed for traffic coming from Noida & Ghaziabad to Delhi because of farmer protests. Please take alternate route for coming to Delhi via Anand Vihar, DND, Bhopra & Loni Borders," traffic police tweeted.

"Singhu, Auchandi ,Piau Maniyar, Saboli & Mangesh borders closed. Please take alternate route via Lampur Safiabad, Palla & Singhu school toll tax borders. Traffic has been diverted from Mukarba & GTK road. Please avoid Outer Ring Road, GTK Road & NH-44," traffic police further tweeted.

GOVT PLACES ORDER FOR 11 MN COVISHIELD JABS

After vaccinating around three crore healthcare and frontline workers, priori-

ty will be given to those above 50 years of age and the under-50 population groups with co-morbidities, together numbering around 27 crore.

The institute has entered into a collaboration with the University of Oxford and AstraZeneca to manufacture the Covishield vaccine. SII, the world's largest vaccine manufacturer, has a license to produce the shot and has already manufactured close to 50 million dose.

3 CR COVID WARRIORS TO GET VACCINES FREE OF COST: PM

Talking about the vaccination drive, the Prime Minister said that health workers — Government as well as private — will be vaccinated first of all. Sanitation workers, other frontline workers, defence forces, police and other paramilitary forces will also be vaccinated in the first phase.

"If you look at the number of health and frontline workers across all States, it stands at around three crore. It has been decided that State Governments will not have to bear the expenses of vaccination of these 3 crore people in the first phase. The Government of India will bear these expenses," said the Prime Minister.

Modi also asked States to ensure that rumours do not get spread about the vaccination exercise and suggested involving social and religious groups in helping check any rumour-mongering. On Saturday last week, Modi had reviewed the status of Covid-19 and vaccine preparedness across States and Union Territories at a high-level meeting.

He said many States have given good suggestions in fighting the pandemic and

the dialogue and cooperation between the Centre and States have been a "great example" of federalism. After healthcare and frontline workers totalling about three crores, priority will be given to those above 50 years of age and the under-50 population groups with co-morbidities, together numbering around 27 crore, in the next phase.

According to the Health Ministry guidelines on Covid-19 vaccination, the latest electoral roll for Lok Sabha and Legislative Assembly elections will be used to identify the population aged 50 years or more.

BIRD FLU SPREADS TO 10 STATES

Seven other States — Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Gujarat — had earlier confirmed avian influenza as the cause of the recent bird deaths. After Delhi, the Himachal Pradesh has also banned the supply of all poultry products from other States for a week.

Meanwhile, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Agriculture summoned senior officials of the Ministry of Animal Husbandry on Monday to examine the availability of animal vaccines in the country.

Amid the bird flu outbreak, Union Animal Husbandry Minister Giriraj Singh on Monday urged people to not pay attention to any kind of rumours about the virus and said there was no risk to human beings if animal products were cooked properly before consuming.

He also urged States not to close mandis or restrict sales of poultry products as there are no scientific reports of trans-

mission of bird flu to human beings. The Minister said there have been no scientific reports on transmission of bird flu to humans and consumers should not be scared. Singh's comments came in the wake of the affected State Governments have imposed ban to sale of processed and packaged chicken within the 10 kms radius as a precautionary measure.

"Bird flu spreads among wild birds through migratory birds. Ministry had issued advisory for all States on Oct 22, 2019. Had the advice been paid heed to, there would've been no need to close Ghazipur Mandi in Delhi," he added.

"ICAR-NIHSAD has confirmed the death of crows and migratory/wild birds in Tonk, Karauli, Bhiwara districts of Rajasthan and Valsad, Vadodara and Surat districts of Gujarat. Further, the death of crows was confirmed in Kotdwar and Dehradun districts of Uttarakhand. Crows and ducks, respectively, were reported dead in New Delhi," the Ministry said.

SAMPLES CONFIRM BIRD FLU IN DELHI

In a Press briefing, Sisodia said results of 100 samples that have been sent to a Jalandhar lab are awaited. "Only samples of ducks from Sanjay Lake have tested positive for

bird flu. There is no cause for concern. Reports of other samples are awaited," he said.

Sisodia said Sanjay Lake area was sanitised after the samples of ducks from there tested positive for bird flu.

The Delhi Government has also decided to ban sale of processed and packaged chicken brought from outside the city as a precautionary measure, he said.

FirstTalk

Amid the dwindling Covid-19 numbers and the extensive preparations for roll-out of the Coronavirus vaccine in India, the medical experts are discussing the million dollar question: which phenomenon will emerge first — the natural disappearance of the virus or the total vaccination for containing the virus



DOCYARD
DR SMITA KAPOOR

Squint and Paediatric Ophthalmology Consultant

VISION EYE CENTRE, NEW DELHI



Keep a check on eyes



In India there is a high incidence of childhood and adult blindness, but the problem of strabismus or squint is often overlooked, either because of ignorance or lack of access to adequate eye care. Squint is a condition in which the eyes are not aligned with each other in the same direction therefore they are not capable of focusing on the same spot at the same time. Strabismus occurs because of the absence of coordination between the extraocular muscles. As a result, while one eye may be looking straight, the other may be directed inward (esotropia), outward (exotropia), upward (hypertropia) or downward (hypotropia) with the individual appearing cross-eyed.

Misalignment of eyes in the first few months is normal. It takes upto three months for the coordination to develop. Squint can be congenital and associated with genetic disorders or acquired after birth. Some conditions may run in families. Squint can also be a consequence of some common refractive errors such as short-sightedness (myopia), long-sightedness (hyperopia) or astigmatism. Of these, long-sightedness is particularly responsible for squint in young children between six months and two years.

Misalignment of eyes in the first few months of birth is normal. It takes upto three months for the coordination to develop. Squint can be congenital and associated with genetic disorders or acquired after birth

The turning of eyes in these children can be corrected by simply prescribing the correct spectacle power. Trauma during delivery or infectious viral diseases contracted during childhood can also lead to squint. In adults, trauma, tumor or other infections of the brain or eye can lead to sudden onset squint. However, in many patients the reason for squint remains unidentified.

If medical intervention is not made at the opportune time in the early stages, squint can further degenerate into what is called amblyopia, commonly known as lazy eye. This occurs because the brain tends to ignore signals or inputs from one eye to avoid double vision. If discovered late, amblyopia is nearly impossible to cure completely. In fact, even after surgical treatment of squint during childhood, the squinting eye might remain amblyopic for life. Some patients experience blurred vision, strain, headache and inability to concentrate. On a psychosocial scale, squint makes patients conscious of their appearance and reduces their ability to make eye contact with people.

When should squint be treated? Squint should be treated as early as possible in children in order to prevent the development of lazy eye. If left untreated, the child will be unable to develop 3-D vision and thus lose depth perception. Cosmetic appearance of a patient can be improved at any age. However, adults who develop sudden onset double vision require urgent treatment.

Treatment: While medical intervention during early years is recommended, strabismus can be treated at any stage in life. Depending on the cause of squint, several types of treatments are available. For instance, if refractive errors are a cause, glasses with the right power can remedy the condition. Or, if one eye seems stronger than the other, an eye patch can be used to force the weaker eye to function better. Then for some, eye exercises such as Home-Based Pencil Pushups (HBPP) are recommended to strengthen the eye muscles. Eye drops and botox have a role in a few cases. For those that remain uncorrected, surgery has to be performed. The surgical intervention requires readjustment of the extraocular muscles and must be made timely.

WARMFOODS

SPRING ONION: Spring onions, also known as green onions, are known for its antibacterial and antiviral properties. They are an excellent medicine to fight against viral and flu.

Spring onions also help in reducing excess mucus and fight against the winter cold which often ends up making you feel miserable.

They have carotenoids which help to keep the vision healthy and intact. It is also rich in vitamin A which prevents loss of eye-sight. Club these with some

carrots and cucumbers as it tastes great when savoured in the form of salads.

Spring onions are always preferred as appetisers. They are rich in fiber and helps in better digestion. You can pair it with other vegetables for dinner or lunch as well but do remember to add it in your daily diet routine, either cooked or raw.

Sulphur present in the spring onion plays a major role in lowering blood sugar levels as well. Due to the Sulphur compounds, the body's ability to produce insulin tends to increase. This helps to prevent Diabetes to a great extent.

A person's wellbeing depends on skeletal health as well. Doctors tell you how winters can be harsh for your joints and share tips to keep the pain at bay



A JOINT ISSUE

Not only cough, cold and viral infections, winters are driving condition for bone related issues as well. Many people are seen reporting about joint pain or with increased severity of conditions like arthritis osteoporosis etc. during this season. Also it may be a tough time for those who recently had a fracture or any other bone injury. A person's overall wellbeing depends upon skeletal health as well. So how does winter affect bone health and how prevention can be ensured?

Winters lead to increased muscular spasm. Hence if you are facing some extra fatigue or acute pain, it may be associated with increased muscular spasm. In our experience people in winters report more with joint pain, back pain, neck pain etc. issues. Also health of people suffering from arthritis, osteoporosis etc is more at risk in this weather.

In winters you may feel more tempted to unnecessarily rest under the cosy cover of blankets but it is not advisable. Avoid binge eating and keep the nutrition value high. As unprecedented lockdown has induced some unhealthy habits in many households due to more stay at home, many of them have confined themselves to gadgets and unnecessary munching, and lazy winters are there just add more stiffness to the bones. Apart from leading to obesity it is equally threatening for your bones as well. This has to be avoided.

Always keep your posture right while sitting, watching screen, even reading or writing. These days working on laptops and other gadgets is important, still avoid taking them to your bed. Fix a place for office work at your home with table and chair which can ensure right posture and comfort.

Keep in mind



Especially in case of joint pain or bone injury keep yourself safe from winters.

- In winters lack of physical activities also aggravates more stiffness and results in bone health issues. Make daily routine of exercise of at least 20 to 30 minutes. Do regular stretching, maintain good posture and avoid sitting for too long.
- Adequate intake of water is seen reduced in winters. Hence keep yourself hydrated, drink adequate water.
- Keeping calcium intake high solely doesn't serve the purpose if one is deprived of other nutrients like protein and Vitamin D. In urban areas it is quite apparent that lesser exposure of sunshine has made a vast majority Vitamin D deficient which plays a major role in absorption of calcium. Do some physical activities or exercise daily for at least 20 minutes under sun exposure.
- Take extra care of children and elderly in this regard.

The writer is Dr Rajesh Kumar Verma, Director Orthopaedics and Spine Surgery, Narayana Hospital, Gurugram

Winters make your body stiff for diverse reasons. In winters blood vessels shrink because of fall in temperature and as a result blood supply is affected around joints and musculature. This condition may aggravate your old joint pain.

- First of all avoid washing painful joints with the mixture of warm water and salt which is often seen in many house-

holds in the name of home remedy. Secondly, never take pain killers without proper suggestion. Such temporary reliefs will not serve the purpose. The acute pain may need bigger attention and treatment. Rely only on only doctor's suggestion and prescribed medicines, therapies.

- Wear required layers of woollens as temperature goes down.

Especially women reaching or reached menopause should be extra cautious about their calcium and other nutrients intake. In menopause sudden hormonal change can cause calcium decay and the pain may get worse in winters. Hence take extra care. Children are also more vulnerable to fall sick in winters, and their physical activities are also restricted. This is also a major concern that problems like arthritis, obesity are getting common in children as well. Many children are also taking online education; inspire them also for some healthy habits instead of just scolding them, because they are also dealing with pandemic generated stress.

Be regular with your medicines and doctor's suggestion if already suffering from any disease. Always consult them for pain.

Keep the nutrition value high; add milk, green vegetables, nuts, seasonal fruits to your diet.

The writer is Dr Atul Garg, Unit Head and Senior Consultant, Orthopedics, Sri Balaji Action Medical Institute

DadiKaKehna

Cracked heels can be both painful and annoying. Not to mention, unpleasing too. ROSHANI DEVI tells you how with the help of simple kitchen ingredients one can treat it



Dry skin and cracked heels are a part and parcel of winters. As much as they are painful, they look unpleasant too.

Here are a few tips that can help.

First, soak your feet in lukewarm, soapy water for about 15 minutes. One can also add a pinch of salt to it. Remove and use a loofah or a foot scrubber to remove the hard skin. Pat dry. Once done, apply moisturiser to lock in the moisture.

Second, use honey. Honey has antimicrobial and antibacterial properties. One can use honey as

a foot scrub after a soak, or apply it as a foot mask overnight.

Third, coconut oil. It can help your skin retain moisture. Using coconut oil after a foot soak could be a good option, too. Coconut oil's anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial properties may help heal your cracked heels if they're prone to bleeding or infections.

Fourth, oil your feet. Make a mixture of two tsp castor oil, two tsp olive oil and two tsp almond oil and massage it onto your heels every night before sleeping. This will help in healing.

Healthy lifestyle must for elderly

Studies suggest that the number of elderly in India will be over 319 million in the next three decades. ARCHANA JYOTI speaks with doctors about the diseases that can hamper their quality of life

In next three decades, the number of elderly people in the 60 plus age group in India will be over 319 million, threefold the number identified by the Census in 2011, as per the recently released Longitudinal Ageing Study of India (LASI) by the Government.

It presents disturbing scenario for not only those in the sunset of their life but their caretakers too.

"About 45 million have cardiovascular diseases and hypertension, 20 million suffer from Diabetes, and 24 per cent of the elderly have difficulty in performing daily functions such as walking, eating, toileting," says KS James, director of The International Institute of Population Sciences (IIPS), Mumbai, the nodal institution for implementing the survey.

"But what is more worrying is we are not yet geared to cater to the needs of the elderly. Despite such a huge chunk of population, trained elderly care physicians do not exist even in the triple digit," adds Dr Prasun Chatterjee, Associate Professor, Department of Geriatric Medicine, AIIMS, Delhi.

The ageing population surely has multifaceted problems concerning their health, family and society.

"These problems are usually interrelated to their medical illiteracy, perception towards random events of life, incomplete wishes and the attitude of the next two generations of soci-

ety towards them," he says.

Here are some of the major diseases that take a toll on the elderly people if they do not adopt healthy lifestyle.

Heart disease: The number of cases of heart disease in senior citizens across India in 2050 is forecasted to be about 19.1 million. As people age, they're increasingly living with risk factors, such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol, that increase the chances of having a stroke or developing heart disease.

Arthritis: The most common arthritis seen in India is age-related degenerative arthritis which involves degeneration (wear and tear) of cartilage and can affect any joint such as the knee. The reasons for early onset in females include obesity and poor nutrition with as many as 90 per cent Vitamin D deficient.

Cancer: Cancer is the second leading cause of death among people over age 65. In India, the number of cases of cancer in senior citizens across India in 2050 is forecasted to be about 1.3 million. If caught early through screenings, such as mammograms, colonoscopies, and skin checks, many types of cancer are treatable.

Fall: Common among the older adults either with or without falls and considered as important risk factors for falls, especially as one advance in aging.

Respiratory diseases: Chronic lower

respiratory diseases, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), are the third most common cause of death among people 65 and older.

Alzheimer's and Dementia: The Alzheimer's Association reports that one in nine people age 65 and older, which is about 11 per cent, have Alzheimer's disease. Similarly, the proportion of people with dementia in age groups of 60-75 years is expected to increase steadily over time.

Osteoporosis: Osteoporosis is a major clinical problem in older women and men. Almost any bone can fracture as a result of the increased bone fragility of osteoporosis. These fractures are associated with higher health care costs, physical disability, impaired quality of life, and increased mortality.

Diabetes: Diabetes can be identified and addressed early with simple blood tests for blood sugar levels. The sooner you know that you have or are at risk for Diabetes, the sooner you can start making changes to control the disease.

Dr AB Dey, former Head of Department of Geriatric Medicine, AIIMS advices inculcating healthy lifestyle choices, like quitting smoking and losing weight, intake of rich protein diet and keeping one self physically and mentally engaged can help elderly avoid health risks. They should also go for routine check-up for timely medical treatment, if required.

FOR THAT FLAWLESS SKIN

Certain external factors and medication can cause skin pigmentation. DR NIVEDITA DADU shares tips that can help



Skin pigmentation refers to the colour of the skin. Skin pigmentation or dark patches are a common issue amongst both males & females wherein the skin becomes darker often in patches. Hence, one gets uneven skin tone. The main cause for skin pigmentation is overproduction of the brown pigment called melanin. Melanin is the pigment responsible for the colour of the skin and is made by melanocyte cells in the skin.

Skin rashes like rosacea, psoriasis, eczema, contact dermatitis; skin infections such as acne, ringworm, tinea versicolor, candidiasis, medical conditions, and hormonal changes due to pregnancy can cause the formation of skin pigmentation and dark patches.

Certain external factors and medication can also cause dark patches or skin pigmentation. UV rays are the biggest cause that trigger the overproduction of melanin. However, the damage caused by UV rays is not visible immediately, it will be visible over a period of time.

Hyperpigmentation is generally harmless but can sometimes be caused by an underlying medical condition. Therefore, it is advised to consult a qualified dermatologist if someone is facing skin pigmentation problems.

There are several types of skin pigmentation such as age spots or solar lentiginosis (Liver Spots), melasma or chloasma, freckles (Ephelides) and post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation.

The following are some tips and home remedies one can follow to get rid of skin pigmentation and dark patches:

- Apply sunscreen every day at least 15-20 minutes before heading out in the sun as it needs some time to get absorbed in the skin. Reapply sunscreen after every 4 hours or use physical sunscreen as it provides protection for long duration. This is the most important step towards preventing and treating skin pigmentation.
- Apple cider vinegar contains polyphenolic compounds that are beneficial in managing pigmentation. One can apply it daily.
- Take oral supplements like Vitamin C or glutathione. These can boost the skin's resilience to the UV rays of sun.
- Potatoes are known for their anti-pigmentation properties. It can work quite well on pigmented areas and blemishes. For this, cut a potato into half and dip the sliced part into water. Rub the potato slice on the affected areas in a circular motion for about 10 minutes. Wash off the face with lukewarm water. Repeat this procedure twice or thrice in a week to get rid of dark patches of the skin.
- Apply black tea water on the skin. For this soak a cotton ball in black tea water and apply it on the pigmented skin at least twice a day.
- Coconut oil helps to remove the dead skin cells and also protects it from the harmful UV rays of the sun. Take a few drops of coconut oil and massage it well so that it penetrates deep down the skin's layers. Leave the oil on the skin for about 20-25 minutes so that it gets absorbed. Wash the face and repeat this method thrice in a week.

The writer is Dermatologist, Founder & Chairman of Dr Nivedita Dadu's Dermatology Clinic

Trend
Slazer

Uri was personal for me: Kirti

Actor **KIRTI KULHARI** has recalled working on *Uri: The Surgical Strike*, which released two years ago on this day.

"Flight lieutenant Seerat Kaur is a very memorable character, not only for the audience but for me as well. My family is serving in the defence. My father is a retired naval officer and my sister and brother-in-law are serving lieutenant colonels in the army, so the film was very personal for me," said Kirti.

"I also learnt such interesting things for the role, I took up running for it, learnt to fire shots from pistols, machine guns and rifles. I sat inside the cockpit of a real MI 17 chopper for this film. A big thanks to everyone associated with the film," she added.



'We live in a society where most of us refrain from expressing our feelings about anything

because other people will just judge, say something ugly and try to make your life miserable. Is this how we intend to go forward as humans? And because some of us can't voice our feelings, these thoughts get bottled up and cause stress, anxiety and pose a serious threat to our mental health.'

—Armaan Malik

Actor **SONU SOOD** has started a new mission to ensure that students who are unable to attend online classes due to inaccessibility to smartphones, get education without roadblocks.

When asked, he said, "I have realised during lockdown that a lot of people missed their online classes because they didn't have smartphones or unable to join those classes. I am introducing a platform where those who don't have phones will have options. No one should miss education."



Tom sheds 30 pounds for Cherry

Hollywood star **TOM HOLLAND** reportedly shed a whopping 30 pounds for his role in the forthcoming film *Cherry*, and then then successfully regained the weight.

"(Tom) really shredded himself for the part. He lost 30 pounds, he gained it back. We're on an independent movie schedule here. He didn't really have a lot of time to be doing these things,"

said Joe Russo, one of the directors of the film.

In the crime drama film, also directed by Anthony Russo, the 24-year-old actor will be seen playing an army medical officer who is suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder or PTSD.

Holland has earlier starred as Spider-Man in the *Avengers* films directed by Joe and Anthony Russo.



A glamorous update

Sustainable, functional and easy-to-wear clothing has taken precedence over impressing people through what you wear. Fashion experts share a few trends that may rule 2021



While this year was all about comfort and meaningful design, which works well for work from home, loungewear and intimate gatherings, 2021 is expected to a glamorous update of the same forecast the experts.

We spoke to industry veterans to shed light on trends that may rule 2021.

DESIGNER KUNAL RAWAL

Military tones are going to be huge in the coming year. Personally I've always been fond of a good tonal grey look, so 'Ultimate Gray' is a colour I highly recommend. The new year will see a rise in de-constructed utilitarian silhouettes, especially in chic neutral shades.

Pantone colours will dominate virtual runways. Both 'Ultimate Gray' and 'Illuminating' are colours that work well together as the sensibilities behind them are relatable.

Fashion Winners of 2020 were definitely silhouettes that were easy to lounge in. Comfort took charge over style, and as restrictions started easing up, menswear was championed by multi-utilitarian clothing that could easily transition from day to night.

MONICA SHAH OF JADE BY MONICA & KARISHMA

I think comfort is going to be high on every bride's list of priorities when it comes to her bridal ensemble. We're going to see lighter fabrics and breezy silhouettes that not only facilitate movement but also make the bride feel completely at ease on her big day.

Another trend I see is that of experimentalism. Brides are going to be much keener to either deviate from what's seen as traditional or they're going to find ways to give their own unique touch to a traditional number.

Heirloom value. Ensembles, even the modern ones, are going to have a distinct heirloom element to them. Techniques like *Ek Taar* and *Kasab* can be effortlessly woven to craft contemporary pieces that still carry that heirloom appeal. These are the kind of pieces that score high on

comfort, personal significance and artisanal excellence.

RINA SINGH, DESIGNER AND FOUNDER OF EKA AND EKA CORE

The idea this year has been to wear clothes to suit oneself and I strongly believe this trend will carry on in 2021 as well. I don't think there were any trends as such in 2020 honestly speaking as most of our time was spent at home. If at all, we could capture a trend for this year it would definitely

be comfortable, wearable and meaningful design options in good textiles. Sustainable, functional and easy to wear clothing has taken precedence over impressing people through what you wear.

DHRUV BOGRA, COUNTRY MANAGER INDIA, FOREVER NEW

2020 saw comfort clothing and lounge wear as most preferred styles. Everyone wanted to be comfortable at home during the pandemic, however, with work from home and gradual opening up of social gatherings, high fashion prevailed with some key trends for 2020. These would be puff sleeves which is flattering for all body types, elegant satin dresses and high slits, playful cut out dresses and leather pants — are versatile and can be dressed up and down.

2021 is about comfort clothing translating through boyfriend jackets and khaki colours on the one hand, and on the it is going to be about glamour accentuated by waist cinching silhouettes. I see a lot of sorbet pastel tones and delicate florals, which are perfect for summer with ruffles, voluminous sleeves or polka dots. These timeless styles will be the front runners in 2021 styles with vibrant scarves.

AVINASH MANE, COMMERCIAL HEAD, SOUTH ASIA, LENZING GROUP

The sustainable fashion trends of the future are heavily influenced by the events of today, which could never have been predicted. As we look towards 2021, we believe that the changing consumer attitude will continue to encourage the industry to embrace sustainability at all levels.

2020 has impacted every aspect of our lives. As we continue to battle the pandemic, the textiles and apparel industry world-over experienced unprecedented disruptions. The pandemic has thrown light upon the urgent need for consumers as well as organisations to focus on sustainable choices, products and processes. And to that effect, sustainable fashion has accelerated to centre stage within the industry. The global ethical fashion market was earlier also estimated to grow at 6.8 per cent CAGR, from US\$6.35 billion in 2019 to \$8.25 billion in 2023.

—IANS



Ask first

Actor **PANKAJ TRIPATHI** says that sex without consent is sexual abuse even after marriage

Actor Pankaj Tripathi says he understands why women stay mum about issues related to their married lives, from domestic abuse to sexual abuse, after working on web series *Criminal Justice: Behind Closed Doors*.

The show, through the story of Anu Chandra, portrayed by actor Kirti Kulhari, spotlights marital sexual abuse and the trauma the victim goes through behind closed doors. In the show, Pankaj is seen as a lawyer fighting Anu's case.

"It was unknown to me why women kept quiet when they went through some trauma in their personal life, they were tight-lipped when asked to share their problems. I, as a man, didn't really know how to decode it," Pankaj said.

"This issue exists in our society, whether we stay in liberal urban cities or places outside the city, so

why not speak up. But after playing the character of Madhav Mishra and decoding why Anuradha Chandra killed her husband I finally understood why most women like her are not vocal about their problems," he added.

Pankaj continued, "Especially with issues related to their married lives because clearly the society demands them to be locked in the closed doors of their homes. Through this show, we hope that more and more women are invoked

to share their problems and take the right step for themselves."

Now, the actor along with stars including Pratik Gandhi, Vijay Varma, Pavaal Gulati, Nakuul Mehta and Karan Tacker, has featured in a video which talks about the importance of consent before getting intimate.

"Sex without consent is sexual abuse, before marriage and after marriage," Pankaj says in the video.

He has had a phenomenal run of success so far, but he is aware that

there might come a time when his work draws criticism. Every actor goes through such a phase, he says, and he knows how to deal with it.

"I know that a day will come when I may face criticism because I am a human being and we all have some flaws. No one is perfect. But I am not, and will never be, that arrogant man who would say 'audience ko kya pata performance kya hota hai' (what does the audience know of performance)? I think that is a very wrong approach. I have a way and that has come from the fact that I have got late success," he said.

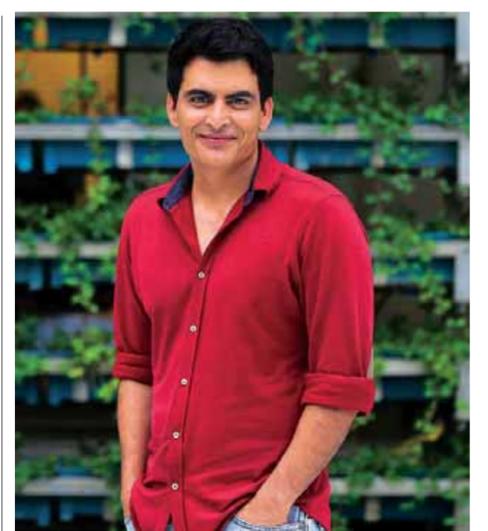
"If there is constructive criticism, I will surely introspect, because that is the way to grow as an individual. I cannot say I know it all. No. As an actor, I am constantly working on the nuances in my performance, and the possibility is endless," he added.

"I am the same actor who started from zero, I started with one scene, one dialogue... a small part. My aim is to make that single opportunity magnify. I will make you remember that one dialogue. Since I did not get success overnight, I do not have the arrogance. I could have, if I would have got success at the age of 30! I have crossed 45 now, and every achievement makes me humble and not arrogant," explained the actor.

So, what has changed with success?

"Firstly the fact that I know places, as in when I came to Mumbai, I did not know all the studios and production houses where I had to go and give an audition. After searching for the address, when finally I reached there, many a time the gatekeeper said that the shooting of the film was over and there was no audition happening! I do not give auditions anymore. Earlier I never said 'no' to any work because I needed the money to survive. Now that I have a fan-following, credibility matters to me," he replied.

Criminal Justice: Behind Closed Doors also features Jisshu Sengupta, Ashish Vidyarthi, Shilpa Shukla, Pankaj Saraswat, Ayaz Khan, Kalyanee Mulay, Ajeet Singh Palawat, Khushboo Atre, and Tirtha Murbadkar. The series streams on Disney+ Hotstar VIP. —IANS



Acting is a lie: Manav

Actor Manav Kaul is being talked about for his portrayal of a multi-layered characterisation in the OTT-released film *Nail Polish*. He says he did not expect his performance to create such an impact.

In the courtroom drama, Manav essays contrasting personalities as Veer Singh, Ranjit and a woman named Charu Raina.

"I think the energy of both the characters were very different. So, when it comes to Charu, my body language was very tender, because that was the essence of Charu. I remember how, everyone who was present on the set, from our makeup artist, light and every other technician would leave me alone. After every scene that we shot, I would feel how the energy changed around me," Kaul said.

"Never did I imagine the impact and overwhelming response I got for *Nail Polish*.

I did not think of it when I was playing the character," he added.

Considering the character was so intense, was there any hangover of the performance that Manav carried home, once shooting was over?

"Yes, and that is natural because I never played such a character in any film ever. I really do not have any process to get out of that hangover. See, acting is a lie but you tell your brain all this is true. You convince your mind. So, there is a reaction that happens in mind I guess, even when you are done shooting, it cannot be just switched off like that. The character leaves you gradually," shared the actor.

Nail Polish also features Arjun Rampal, Anand Tiwari, Rajit Kapur, and Madhoo among and is directed by Bugs Bhargava Krishna. The film streams on Zee5.

Bruised & abused yet standing tall

Fight To Remember: Vihari, Ashwin pull off memorable draw after Pant pyrotechnics

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Ravichandran Ashwin and Hanuma Vihari battled pain and a hostile Australian bowling attack while resolutely displaying the largely extinct art of Test-saving batsmanship to snatch a remarkable draw for India after Rishabh Pant raised visions of an improbable win here on Monday.

Chasing a Herculean target of 407, Pant (97 off 118 balls) and the ever-steady Cheteshwar Pujara (77 off 205 balls) produced an amazing 148-run stand before India were forced to down the shutters finishing on 334 for 5 in 131 overs when players shook hands.

The series stands at 1-1 going into the fourth Test in Brisbane but an Indian team which has turned into a 'mini-hospital' would be walking away with a lot of pride. They put up a proper fight in adverse circumstances already soured by racist chants and abuses from the crowd here during the course of the game.

Pant's innings will be remembered for a long time but none can forget that Ashwin (39 no, 128 balls) and Vihari (23 off 161 balls), battling a hamstring injury, put their bodies on line to save a game which could have been lost in a jiffy after their two best batsmen were gone on the day.

"Our talk coming this morning was to show character and fight till the end. Not to think about the result. Really happy with the way we fought especially today but also throughout the game," skipper Ajinkya Rahane said at the post-match presentation.

Pat Cummins (26-6-72-1), Josh Hazlewood (26-12-39-2), Mitchell Starc (22-6-66-0) and Nathan Lyon (46-17-114-2) threw everything they had, peppering them with short balls, hitting the patches with a few jumping from the spot.

"...This one's a tough one to swallow. Our bowlers were superb, Lyon bowled well. Just that we (especially me) didn't hold onto our catches," said Australian skipper Tim Paine after the match.

The duo, in 42.4 overs, scraped their way for a 62-run stand, which certainly would have made Rahul Dravid proud on his 48th birthday.

Vihari hobbled with a torn hamstring but defended dourly, Ashwin got hit on the ribs but carried on manfully while also engaging in some chatter with Tim Paine and close-in fielders.



Rishabh Pant, Ravichandran Ashwin, Hanuma Vihari and Cheteshwar Pujara pose for photo after end of fifth day play of 3rd Test @mayankcricket

INDIA'S PARTNERSHIPS IN 2ND INNINGS OF SYDNEY TEST

Runs (Balls)	Players
71 (133)	Rohit Sharma 39(69) and Shubman Gill 31(64)
21 (49)	Cheteshwar Pujara 8(20) and Rohit Sharma 13(29)
10 (33)	Cheteshwar Pujara 5(15) and Ajinkya Rahane 4(18)
148 (265)	Cheteshwar Pujara 45(146) and Rishabh Pant 97(118)
22 (55)	Cheteshwar Pujara 19(24) and Hanuma Vihari 3(31)
62* (259)	Ravichandran Ashwin 39(128) and Hanuma Vihari 20(130)

Catches landed in no man's land and that was the slice of luck they needed. When Marnus Labuschagne was brought in the 112th over, one knew that they had done their job.

The great Neville Cardus had once said "Scoreboard is an ass" and many years down the line, it probably won't highlight what Vihari and Ashwin endured and what they did for the team.

The dressing room will however always know that and respect them for the bruised ribs and torn hamstring.

Perhaps, it was the best way to honour the brilliance of Pant

and the assuredness of Pujara. So much so that Ravindra Jadeja, with his broken thumb, was all gloved up and ready to go in if need be.

There was method to madness in Pant's exhilarating innings during which he hit 12 fours and three sixes off 118 balls. His 'cat and mouse' game with the world's best off-spinner Nathan Lyon was one for the ages.

But it was Lyon, who had the last laugh when Pant's desperation to get to the three-figure mark before the second new ball saw him try to hit the spinner against the turn.

The result would have horrified his partner Pujara, who looked far

Pujara crosses 6K mark

Sydney: Cheteshwar Pujara on Monday became only the 11th Indian to cross the 6000-run mark in Test cricket.

Pujara, playing his 80th game, reached the milestone on day five of the third Test.

The other Indians who have 6000 plus runs are Sachin Tendulkar (15921) runs, Rahul Dravid (13265), Sunil Gavaskar (10122), VVS Laxman (8781), Virender Sehwag (8503), Virat Kohli (7318), Sourav Ganguly (7212), Dilip Vengsarkar (6868), Mohammad Azharuddin (6215), Gundappa Viswanath (6080). PTI

more purposeful during his 205-ball knock.

He got a beauty from Josh Hazlewood and was bowled in the manner he has often been — playing inside the line to a delivery that moves a shade after pitching.

Pant was promoted above Vihari



Hope all of us realise the importance of pujaara.pant and Ashwin in cricket teams..batting at 3 in test cricket against quality bowling is not always hitting through the line ..almost 400 test wickets don't come just like that..well fought india.time to win the series @bcc

—SOURAV GANGULY

Really proud of #TeamIndia! Special mention to @RishabhPant17, @cheteshwar1, @ashwinravi99 and @Hanumavihari for the roles they've played brilliantly. Any guesses in which dressing room the morale will be high? #OneTeamOneCause #AUSvIND

—SACHIN TENDULKAR

Loved the fight and determination of India all day today. Starting with Pant and Pujara, and then for Vihari and Ashwin to withstand Australia and look largely in control for most of the day was very impressive. Can't wait for Brisbane now. #AUSvIND

—RICKY PONTING

Feel so so proud of the Team, Pant showed why he needs to be treated differently & d grit showed by Vihari, Pujara & Ashwin was unbelievable

—VIRENDER SEHWAG

Even a half-strength, battled, bruised, injured, ridiculed, abused, bio-bubble fatigued India is difficult for a full strength Australia to beat at home. No praise high enough for this Herculean effort. Told you this is a damn good team. Cherish it. #AUSvIND

—WASIM JAFFER

'Cometh the hour, cometh the man, and cometh the team'. Extremely proud of #TeamIndia for putting up a fight on Day 5. Special mention to @RishabhPant17, @Hanumavihari, @cheteshwar1 & @ashwinravi99. Well done, guys! Hello Brisbane Flag of India #AUSvIND

—JAY SHAH

Never giving up. Never backing down from a challenge. Great character and resilience displayed by the team

—MAYANK AGARWAL

as playing the surviving game wouldn't have helped on this track at least in the first session and also the left-right combination needed to be in place.

Pant defended for the first 35 odd balls but then, suddenly in a couple

Draw as big as win: Rahane

PTI ■ SYDNEY

India captain Ajinkya Rahane on Monday said the heroic draw that his side pulled off in the third Test against Australia was as good as a victory and especially commended Hanuma Vihari, who battled the excruciating pain of a hamstring injury to stay at the crease.

"Today we all saw that special knock. I think this knock was more special than his hundred (in 2019 in the West Indies) especially the way he batted after getting injured," Rahane said during the virtual post-match press conference.

"To show that kind of motivation, hunger and hang in there for your team, that's what shows the character of an individual. It's all about what the team wants and credit to him. There was pressure and the way he batted was special," said Rahane, lauding the young man from Andhra Pradesh.

For Rahane, the credit of the draw goes to all those, who performed in pressure situations responding to the team's requirements.

"This is as good as winning a Test match. When you come abroad and play a match like this, it was really special as I said. It's as good as victory. Credit to Vihari, Ashwin, (Rishabh) Pant, (Cheteshwar) Pujara, the way they batted. Rohit

of overs from Lyon, hit him over long on for a six and three fours using his feet to perfection.

Tim Paine then decided to change Lyon's end from Randwick to Paddington but the result was two more sixes — one over long-off and other over long-on.

This sudden attack did force Paine to again change his end back to Randwick. Pujara also seemed to gain in confidence and played that whip off mid-wicket to further torment the off-spinner.

The left-hander, who hit eight fours and three sixes, was also severe on Mitchell Starc, creating him through covers on a number of occasions and jabbing a short ball through point.

He was a bit lucky on two occasions with Paine dropping sharp chances off Lyon.

But what will stay on for a long



Ravichandran Ashwin is embraced by Indian captain Ajinkya Rahane, left, following play on the final day of third Test AP

(Sharma) at the start. Everyone chipped in but credit to those two guys in the end"

Pant, who has copped so much flak in the past few months, came good on Monday with his exhilarating 97-run knock and the skipper couldn't have been happier for him.

"The way he played the knock was really good and unfortunately he was out on 97. Yes, he can drop catches but as long as he is learning, that is very important. I am really happy for Rishabh for the way he batted today. It was a really special knock"

time was the assured footwork and strategy against the off-spinner to reach the pitch of the deliveries.

On most occasions, he just came down the track to smother the spin and disturb Lyon's natural length.

There was a point in time just before lunch when Lyon had as many as five fielders posted at various boundary points for a lofted shot, a departure from his usual attacking field.

Knowing that the second new ball will be due in the second session, Pant smashed four boundaries in no time which also gave Pujara confidence to play his strokes and he too brought out the pull-shot out of his repertoire.

Once he was gone, Vihari, with a pulled hamstring and Ashwin, had no option but to go for a draw and they did it with a commendable effort.

Vihari's knock equal to scoring a hundred: Ashwin

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Ravichandran Ashwin on Monday equated Hanuma Vihari's unbeaten 23 off 161 balls in a match-saving stand of 62 runs with him in the third Test to scoring a hundred.

Vihari pulled his hamstring at the start of his innings and was struggling to run between the wickets but pulled off a remarkable draw for India on day five of the third Test.

"After Pujara and Pant's wicket and with Vihari injured, it was going to be difficult to go for a win. Touring Australia is never easy so Vihari can be proud of himself. It was a knock equal to scoring a hundred," Ashwin told Channel 7.

Ashwin said the confidence gained from productive net sessions helped him finally come good against Australia as he and Vihari saved the third Test.

"I have been battling well in



Ravichandran Ashwin receives treatment from a trainer during final day play AP

the nets, so it was great to spend some time in the middle. Chasing 400 in Sydney was never going to be easy, as the ball was going up and down. That knock by Pant set us up," he said.

In a tweet after the game, Ashwin's wife Prithi revealed that he was struggling with acute back pain last night.

"The man went to bed last night with a terrible back tweak and in unbelievable pain. He could not stand up straight when he woke up this morning. Could not bend down to tie his shoe laces. I am amazed at what @ashwinravi99 pulled off today," she wrote.

Injured Hanuma out of last Test

Unlikely for England series; Shardul likely in place of Jadeja

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's injury woes in the Test series against Australia compounded on Monday after the hero of their drawn game in Sydney, Hanuma Vihari, was ruled out of the fourth and final match with a hamstring tear that could keep him out of action for a considerable time.

It has been learnt that Vihari was taken for scans after the match got over and the reports are expected by late evening or Tuesday morning.

However, a BCCI source confirmed that Vihari is unlikely to be fit in time for the next Test match starting in another three days' time.

"The extent of Vihari's tear can only be ascertained after the scan reports come



Hanuma Vihari receives treatment to a leg injury during play on the final day AP

through. But even if it's a grade 1 tear, he is out for at least four weeks and then will need some rehabilitation time. So it's not only Brisbane Test but also, he won't be a part of England Tests at home," a senior source revealed on Monday.

As far as Vihari's replacement is concerned, the team only has two options — either to play Wriddhiman Saha as a wicketkeeper and Rishabh Pant purely as a batsman or bring in Mayank Agarwal as a middle-order batsman who can take on the second new ball.

In another important development, Shardul Thakur, with way more first-class experience and better batting abilities compared to rookie Thangarasu Natarajan, is likely to replace an injured Ravindra Jadeja in Brisbane on a track that is supposed to be the bounciest of the series.

PUCOVSKI INJURED

Debutant Australian batsman Will Pucovski on Monday injured his shoulder and has been taken for scans to a hospital here.

The 22-year-old hurt his right shoulder after diving for the ball at mid-wicket in the 86th over of India's innings on the fifth day.

After the dive, Pucovski stayed down for a few seconds clutching his shoulder as his teammates came to help him.

The youngster then left the field at the end of the over, leaving his participation in the final Test in doubt.

I let the team down: Paine

PTI ■ SYDNEY

A "bitterly disappointed" Australian captain Tim Paine conceded he "hasn't had too many worse days" than Monday after his three dropped catches "let the team down" and played their part in India pulling off a draw in the third Test here.

Paine said he was below par behind the stumps after India held on for a draw in pursuit of 407.

Paine dropped two catches of Rishabh Pant, who made a fluent 97 and raised hopes of an Indian win, and then dropped one of Hanuma Vihari, who remained unbeaten on 23 and ensured that the game ended in a draw along with Ravichandran Ashwin (39 not out).

"Obviously the dropped catches have played a part in the result.

Probably going both ways to be far. But I am bitterly disappointed, I pride myself on my wicketkeeping. Haven't had too many worse days than that today," Paine said at the virtual post-match press conference.

"It's a horrible feeling knowing our fast bowlers and our spinner (Nathan Lyon) bowled their hearts out and gave everything to the team. I certainly feel I let them down.

"I have to wear that, but I'll get another crack at it next week so move on," said the wicket-keeper referring to the fourth and final Test in Brisbane.

According to the Australia skipper, India deserved the result as they fought hard.



We didn't know what to make of it: Ashwin, Vihari talk about marathon vigil

PTI ■ SYDNEY

The aches and pains they carried to the field had numbed to such an extent by the end of it all that Ravichandran Ashwin and Hanuma Vihari had no idea what they had pulled off by steering India to an unforgettable draw against Australia with their three-hour vigil.

Ashwin came in with a sore back, Vihari had a hamstring tear that severely restricted his ability to run between the wickets. What the two did not lack was the resolve to hang in there and fight.

"With his hamstring and my (sore) back, we did not want to lose concentration and play a (bad) shot. In the last four-five overs we knew we were close and we started to slip a bit. So we wanted to rotate the strike and play each other's end," Ashwin said in a bcci.Tv interview which also featured Vihari with him.



Ravichandran Ashwin receives treatment from a trainer during final day play AP

"We did not even celebrate towards the end because we did not know what to make out of it. Because we were so channelised in taking on a certain particular bowler and keep blocking."

Vihari added a touch of extra optimism to the conversation, saying that he could have taken India to a win had he not been injured and Cheteshwar Pujara (77) stayed a bit longer.

"Getting a draw was a fabulous result. I feel if I was not injured and Pujara stayed some more time it could have been a different result, maybe it would have been a fabulous win," he said.

Ashwin made 39 not out off 128 balls and Vihari 23 not out off 161 balls on day five for a resolute 62-run sixth-wicket partnership.

"If you talk about premonitions, from when I went to bed last night with a sore back I was telling myself that if I keep dead batting everything, how (Faf) du Plessis did at Adelaide, I can give myself a good chance," Ashwin said.

In the Adelaide Test in 2012, du Plessis batted for more than one day for his 110 not out off 376 balls

to save the match against Australia while chasing 430 in the fourth innings.

On communicating with Vihari all through their partnership, Ashwin said, "Runs were not important in that situation. It was more about batting time. Whenever we are comfortable with a particular bowler or certain spell we wanted to hang on.

Vihari said the enormity of what he and Ashwin achieved is sinking in very slowly for him.

"It was something you can only dream of, something on day five of a Test match. The satisfaction of doing that is slowly sinking in and realise how big that was."

He said like an elder brother, Ashwin was communicating with him throughout in the middle.

"Whenever he felt I was a bit loose (while playing shots), he told me let us focus and take as deep as possible."



India captain Virat Kohli and his actor wife Anushka Sharma were on Monday blessed with a baby girl. Kohli made the announcement on his official Twitter handle. "We are thrilled to share with you that we have been blessed with a baby girl this afternoon. We thank you all for your love, prayers and good wishes. Anushka and the baby are both healthy and we are feeling beyond blessed to start this new chapter of our lives. We hope that you can respect our privacy at this time." Kohli tweeted. "Anushka and the baby are both healthy and we are feeling beyond blessed to start this new chapter of our lives. We hope that you can respect our privacy at this time," added the star batsman who returned from Australia on paternity leave after leading India in the first Test.

LOCAL EVENTS

SHAURYA ADVANCES

Shaurya Singh of Uttar Pradesh beat Tanmay Singh 7-6 (14-10) to advance into the second round of PTA AITA Men's Tennis Tournament at Awadh School facility on Monday. Meanwhile, Man Kesarwani, Ashutosh Tiwari and Vasu Gupta also won their respective matches to enter the next round.

KD SINGH XI LIFT TROPHY

KD Singh XI defeated Narayan XI by seven runs to win the 1st AD Sports Cup Cricket Tournament at Chowk Stadium on Monday. Electing to bat, KD Singh XI piled up 133 runs in 20.1 overs Jitendra (38) being the top scorer. In reply, Narayan XI were bundled out for 126 runs in 29.1 overs.

BRIEF SCORES:

KDSINGH: 133 (Jitendra 38, Tauseef 20; Sharif 8/2, Hasim 22/2, Rishi 24/2, Zubair 30/2)

NARAYAN: 126 (Dilshad 36, Karan 20, Areeb 12; Akash 19/3, Daanveer 25/3)

LCC, GCC ENTER QUARTERS

Lifecare Cricket Club thrashed Excer's Cricket Club by eight wickets while Gear Cricket Club defeated Gurukul Cricket Club by three wickets to enter the quarter-finals of the 16th BBD 'D' Division League.

BRIEF SCORES:

ECC: 165 (Anuj Raj 44, Shivanshu 40, Abhishek 21; Manish 13/3, Prashant 32/3)

LCC: 166 (Gaurav 86, Akash 41, Arbaaz 31; Akash 25/1)

Gurukul: 110 (Utarksh 26, Abhishek 24, Ankit 12; Ravikant 13/4, Vishveshwar 41/2)

GCC: 121 (Rahul 50, Anees 24; Ishan 15/2, Shobhit 30/2).