

OPINION 8
THE HUMAN-ANIMAL
CONFLICT ON THE RISE**WORLD 11**
AFGHAN PRESIDENT
MUST GO: TALIBAN**SPORT 14**
INDIAN ARCHERS BRACE UP
FOR KOREAN CHALLENGE

LUCKNOW, SATURDAY JULY 24 2021; PAGES 14 ₹3



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Pegasus rocks Parl; TMC MP suspended for Session

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Pegasus snooping scandal continued to derail the proceedings of Parliament. Both Houses on Friday saw slogan-shouting and repeated adjournments even as the Rajya Sabha suspended TMC MP Santanu Sen who on Thursday snatched a statement read out by Information Technology Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw and tore it off.

The MP has been suspended for the remaining period of the ongoing Monsoon Session.

The strong action against Sen took place after a motion moved by the Government was passed by the House soon after it met for the day. However, the TMC MP refused to leave the House and kept sitting despite repeated pleas by Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu and Deputy Chairman Harivansh. As a result, the House could not function and was adjourned repeatedly.

In a tweet, Sen termed his suspension as "unparliamentary" and said his party's voice and its leader's voice cannot be stopped.

The Government made its intentions clear and soon after the obituary references and laying of papers, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs



Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu conducts proceedings of the House during the Monsoon Session of Parliament in New Delhi on Friday

PTI

V Muralaeeharan moved a motion for Sen's suspension. "I move that Dr Santanu Sen, AITC, be suspended from the services of the House...for his unruly behaviour, unbecoming of a member of the Rajya Sabha, yesterday..." Muralaeeharan said in his motion. It was passed by a voice vote and Naidu asked Sen to leave the House.

However, the TMC members protested and raised objection to the manner in which the motion was brought without listing it in the day's business. Sukhendu Sekhar Ray (TMC) said the moving of the motion was not mentioned in the revised list of business.

Naidu said he had approved the motion to maintain the dignity of the House. Roy's party colleague Derek O'Brien claimed a Minister behaved aggressively after the House was adjourned on Thursday. Sensing the mood of the House, the Chairman adjourned it till 12.00 pm after Sen's suspension. The agitated members did not allow the House to run when the House met again and despite repeated pleas by Harivansh, Sen did not go out of the House.

The Deputy Chairman first adjourned the House till 12.30 pm and then till 2.30 pm as the TMC protested. Meanwhile, the Lok Sabha proceedings

were adjourned for the day following disruptions by Opposition parties which raised slogans on the Pegasus snooping row and the farmers' issue by gathering in the Well of the House.

As soon as the House met for the day at 11 am, some Opposition members rushed to the Well but they were prevented from doing so by floor leaders of their respective parties as Speaker Om Birla wanted to make observations on the Indian squad participating in the Tokyo Olympics.

Birla extended best wishes to the Indian contingent on behalf of the House. The mega carnival of sports is from Friday. Members thumped benches in support of the Indian squad.

Soon after Birla had made his observations, several members from the Congress, the Trinamool Congress and the Shiromani Akali Dal gathered in the Well of the House raising slogans and holding placards.

The TMC shouted slogans demanding details of the money allegedly spent by the Government on Pegasus spyware. Congress members had placards demanding a Supreme Court monitored judicial probe into the Pegasus allegations.

Continued on Page 11

My phones tapped, IB people tell me: Rahul

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Amid continuous mudslinging against each other by the BJP and the Congress over the Pegasus spyware phone-tapping controversy, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Friday sought a judicial enquiry, claiming he is not a potential target but "every single phone of his is definitely tapped".

The BJP hit back and dared the Congress leader to submit his phone for investigation if he believed it was tapped.

Addressing the media outside the Parliament complex, Rahul said, "I get phone calls from IB [Intelligence Bureau] people who tap my phone. They call me up and say beware we are tapping you. My security people tell me that they have to debrief what I say to their seniors."

Rahul quipped that only those who are "thieves or corrupt will get scared of Narendra Modi".

"Pegasus is classified by the Israeli State as a weapon and that weapon is supposed to be used against terrorists. The Prime Minister and the Home Minister has used this weapon against the Indian State," he said. "They have used it politically, they have used in Karnataka, they have used to scuttle probes, they have used

it against the Supreme Court, against all the institutions. The only word for this is treason. There is no other word for this and the Home Minister should resign," Rahul said.

Continued on Page 11



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi with party leaders, DMK and other parties' MPs stage a protest near the Gandhi statue against Pegasus project during the Monsoon Session of Parliament in New Delhi on Friday

PTI

Mehbooba's kin, journalists from Kashmir, separatists snooped

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Several political leaders, separatists and journalists from Kashmir, including then Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti's two relatives, may have been targeted for telephone snooping between 2017 and 2019.

According to the report published by The Wire, even journalists working in Delhi but belonging to Kashmir were under surveillance using

Pegasus spyware.

"Others on the leaked database include at least two members of People's Democratic party (PDP) chief and former Chief Minister of J&K Mehbooba Mufti's family. Their selection as potential targets of surveillance happened when Mehbooba was still Chief Minister of the erstwhile State and in a coalition with the BJP. In fact, Mufti's family members were chosen

for potential surveillance just months before the Government collapsed as the BJP pulled out of the coalition in June 2018," The Wire reported on Friday. However, Mehbooba said that surveillance, as a concept, for Kashmiris is not new. "People are used to having their thoughts, ideas not only intercepted but even being punished for them," the former J&K CM said.

Continued on Page 11

I'm in full form to play new innings for people: Sidhu

URGES CAPT TO RESOLVE ISSUES

MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH

Cricketer-turned-politician Navjot Singh Sidhu on Friday made it clear that he was in full form for playing his new innings as the Punjab Congress chief by executing a bat stroke with the flourish of his arms in the air before making his way to the podium — giving a glimpse of his cricketing days when he was popularly known as "sixer Sidhu".

Starting his new inning as the Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee (PPCC) president in the presence of Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh, Sidhu's blitzkrieg speech virtually placed his own party's Government in dock over the issues of sacrilege, drugs, costly power, among others.

"Punjab poochhda hai, sawaal karda hai (Punjab is asking, it is questioning)," said Sidhu while insisting that we need to act on these issues.

Raking up the issues of "guru di beadbi" (sacrilege incidents), and deaths due to drugs, Sidhu maintained that the

Government needs to act against those who are guilty and responsible for these. Without naming anyone, Sidhu, speaking in Punjabi in a spirited display of aggression and rhetoric, said, "Jija-saala rehn nahi dena, kothe te totta behn ni dena (loosely translated that Jija-Saala duo will not be spared."

Also raising the issue of costly power in Punjab, Sidhu questioned why the State would buy power at ₹18, "Why the truth behind these pacts not come out...choraan di chori kyun nahi fadi jaani chahidi," hinting at cancelling the contentious power purchase agreements signed by the erstwhile Badal-led Government.

"CM sahib, issues have to be resolved..." said Sidhu, while gesturing towards Capt Amarinder during his speech.

"The purpose of this PPCC chief's post for me is to resolve the people's issues. And if these are not resolved, it counts for nothing," Sidhu said.

At the same time, Sidhu made an attempt to

bypass his run-ins with the Chief Minister by making it clear that his focus areas are the farmers protesting in Delhi, the problems of doctors and nurses and teachers, drivers and conductors, who were protesting on roads.

At the same time, he declared that he has no ego issues

and will take everyone along and work shoulder-to-shoulder. "The Congress party is united today, contrary to what our Opposition is saying," he said, in presence of former PPCC presidents, including his predecessor Sunil Jakhar, Cabinet Ministers, party MPs and MLAs, among other senior leadership.

Declaring that he got "thick-skinned" and cares for nothing more than Punjab's well-being, Sidhu maintained that those opposing him were only helping him to be better while those supporting him, are his *suraksha kavach* (security cover).

He named Cabinet Minister Sukhbinder Singh Sarkaria, Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa — who were once considered to be Capt Amarinder's loyalists, and also "Bibi" Rajinder Kaur Bhattal — the former Chief Minister among those supporting him.

"There is no difference between an ordinary party worker and the state unit chief. Every Congress worker in Punjab has become the chief of the party's State unit



Coronavirus can be detected up to 10 feet in air around infected person, as per CSIR study: Govt

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A study conducted by the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) indicates that coronavirus could be detected up to 10 feet or 3.048 metres in the air around an infected individual, Parliament was told on Friday.

In a written response to a question in the Lok Sabha, Science and Technology Minister Jitendra Singh said the results of the CSIR study have been posted on a pre-print server. "The study conducted by the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) indicates that the coronavirus could be detected up to 10 feet (3.048 metres) distance in the air around an infected individual. However, with directional air flow, the possibility of virus riding on aerosols to long distance cannot be denied," Singh said.



As a precautionary measure, wearing mask can help in significantly reducing the risk of catching the infection through air, he cautioned.

He said according to the ICMR database, there are 1,88,26,913 individuals registered as Covid-19 positive between December 20 to July 19 2021.

Continued on Page 11

Covid-hit Olympics open sans customary razzle dazzle

PTI ■ TOKYO

The Olympics like no other opened here on Friday sans the customary razzmatazz, the toned-down ceremony showcasing Japan's grandeur, rich culture and heritage while reflecting the sombre mood of a world ravaged by an unrelenting pandemic.

Japanese emperor Naruhito declared the Games open, a month after voicing concerns over the possible spread of coronavirus during the Olympics, becoming the third member from his family to do the honours.

It was ironical that the locals milling around the majestic National Stadium were not allowed entry due to the ban on crowds, even as visitors, including athletes and dignitaries, from across the world participated in the opening ceremony of the Games projected to cost USD 28 billion.

Fewer athletes across con-



Naomi Osaka lights the Olympic flame during the opening ceremony in the Olympic Stadium on Friday

AP

tingents took part, some to stay into the Games village.

Around 950 VIPs and world leaders were in atten-

dance inside the arena that has a capacity of 68,000.

Despite the ban on crowd, the stadium was occupied by



Chungneijiang Mery Kom Hmangte and Manpreet Singh of India carry Tricolour during the opening ceremony in the Olympic Stadium at the 2020 Summer Olympics on Friday

AP

over 10,000 individuals performing different roles.

International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Thomas Bach, without whose steely resolve and stubbornness the Tokyo Games wouldn't have seen the light of the day, acknowledged that it will be different from the ones

in the past. "Today, the Olympic athletes are sending a resounding message of hope to our fragile world. The Opening Ceremony will highlight this Olympic message of resilience, solidarity and unity of all humankind in overcoming the pandemic," Bach said.

Continued on Page 11

CM lays foundation stone of Sainik Schools in Gkp

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that the Central government had proposed to open 100 new Sainik Schools in the country in this budget.

He said taking this chain forward, the state government was working expeditiously on the plan to open Sainik Schools in every divisional headquarters in the state.

"Sainik School is going to be opened in Gorakhpur to provide the best education along with military training to the students of eastern UP," the chief minister said after laying the foundation stone of Sainik School along with Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma in Gorakhpur fertilizer factory premises on Friday.

The chief minister announced that the government would also open a big centre for skill development in the fertiliser factory complex of Gorakhpur. After getting training here, employment will be available in the country and anywhere in the world on better terms.

After laying the foundation stone of the school after performing bhoomi puja amidst Vedic chants, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that the Sainik School was a big achievement as students studying there would get an opportunity to advance in many areas, serve in high positions. He said state-of-the-art facilities would be available in the Sainik School here.

The chief minister said that Sainik Schools had their own history. He said the first Sainik School in the state was



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath laying the foundation stone of Sainik School along with Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma in Gorakhpur fertilizer factory premises on Friday

established in 1960 in Lucknow and martyr Manoj Pandey, Param Vir Chakra winner who played an important role in the Kargil victory, also received education from this Sainik School. He said when the BJP government assumed office in UP in 2017, it renamed Lucknow Sainik School after martyred Captain Manoj Pandey. The Gorakhpur Sainik school will be built on 50 acres at a cost of Rs 154 crore.

Yogi said that after the closure of the fertiliser factory in 1990, the Central and previous state governments did not take care of the fertiliser factory here for 26 years. He said in 2016, Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid its foundation afresh and when the BJP government came to power in UP in 2017, the fertiliser factory complex

became the center of development activities. He said the compost factory was getting ready and it would be dedicated to the people by October next.

“THIS IS THE REASON THAT WE DID NOT ALLOW ANY LACK OF CONTINUITY IN DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES EVEN IN THE COVID-19 PERIOD. FOLLOWING THE COVID PROTOCOL, THE DEVELOPMENT WORK CONTINUED BECAUSE DEVELOPMENT WORK IS THE BASIS OF PROSPERITY”

ed to the people by October next.

“This factory will give jobs to the youth and cheap fertilisers to the farmers,” he added. The Sainik School is being

built in the same premises while in this complex there is the headquarters of the SSB. There is also a Kendriya

“This is the reason that we did not allow any lack of continuity in development activities even in the COVID-19 period. Following the Covid protocol, the development work continued because development work is the basis of prosperity,” Yogi said and added that the work of UP was excellent in the management of the coronavirus pandemic.

Yogi said that once the only medical college in eastern Uttar Pradesh was BRD Medical College but his government had opened medical colleges in Deoria, Kushinagar, Basti, Siddharthnagar and in the remaining districts, medical colleges would soon be opened on PPP model. He said by the completion of five years of the state government, all 75 districts of the state would have

medical colleges.

The CM announced that the Gorakhpur AIIMS will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in October.

In his address, Yogi also mentioned about the development of infrastructure through the expressway being built in the state. He said that industrial clusters would be set up along the Purvanchal Expressway, Bundelkhand Expressway, Ganga Expressway, Gorakhpur Link Expressway, Ballia Link Expressway etc.

Yogi said that 4.5 lakh youths had got government jobs in four and a half years and more than 1.20 lakh had been appointed in the Basic Education department itself and more than one lakh youth had been recruited in the police.

67 pc construction of Bundelkhand e-way completed

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The construction of Bundelkhand Expressway in Uttar Pradesh is progressing rapidly and about 210 kilometres of the 296 kilometres of the expressway, constituting 67 per cent of its total length, has been completed. Presently, construction of bridges on Yamuna and Betwa rivers are underway at a fast pace.

UP Expressway Industrial

Development Authority (UPEIDA) Chief Executive Officer Awanish Kumar Awasthi, who held a review meeting of the construction work of Bundelkhand Expressway, directed officials to expedite the remaining construction of ROB, RE panels, structures and toll plazas and ensure quality.

He also instructed the technical auditors, UPEIDA engineers and PIUs to monitor the quality of work

NOTICE

I No **15446858P** Rank **Sep/Amb** Asst Name **Rajkumar Sahu** of AMC Records my brother name is **Rajeev Kumar Sahu** where as his correct name is **Rajeev Sahu (as per civil cert).**

NOTICE

In the army service Record of my Ajit kumar maurya wife 's Name is sarita kushwaha and D.O.B-19/09/1988,which is wrong in Army educational certificate and Adhar card name is Sarita singh Kuswaha and D.O.B-12/09/1990, which is correct. Please enter correct name. R/o.village-Banka khas post-Bahadurganj Ghazipur U.P

NOTICE

I, Dinesh Chandra Army No. 648552F Son name is PRABHAT KUMAR as per Service Documents & Discharge book but in Educational records PRABHAT KUMAR SHUKLA both name PRABHAT KUMAR & PRABHAT KUMAR SHUKLA pertain to one and the same person vide Affidavit Dt. 22.07.2021

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Pratapgarh medical college to be named after Dr Sonelal Patel

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government has decided to name the new medical college at Pratapgarh as Dr Sonelal Patel State Medical College after Apna Dal founder Dr Sonelal Patel.

This was announced by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in Lucknow on Friday. Apna Dal (Sonelal) national president and Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Anupriya Patel, expressed happiness over the chief minister's decision and thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah for the move.

Earlier, Anupriya Patel had written to the chief minister in this regard after meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 16 last month. Apna Dal working president and Legislative Council member Ashish Patel and party's state president Jamuna Prasad Saroj too expressed happiness over the decision of the chief minister.

Apna Dal national spokesperson Rajesh Patel said that Pratapgarh had been the work place of party founder Dr Sonelal Patel where he struggled for a long time for the uplift of the poor and downtrodden.

BSP holds sammelan to woo Brahmins

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Bahujan Samaj Party on Friday kicked off its poll campaign by holding the first of its seven Brahmin Sammelans at Ayodhya. The UP Assembly elections are due in 2022 and the BSP is struggling to win the confidence of the electorally influential Brahmin community.

BSP supremo Mayawati on July 18 had announced to hold Brahmin Sammelan to woo the Brahmin community ahead of UP Assembly elections from Ayodhya from July 23. Mayawati had entrusted the responsibility of the event on party national general secretary Satish Chandra Mishra.

Addressing the meeting, Mishra, said that his party had made a pre-poll alliance with the public rather than with any political party. The BSP leader first visited the Hanuman Garhi and Shri Ram Lalla Janmabhoomi temples in Ayodhya for darshan.

He said that the BSP had made the biggest alliance with the people of the state for the 2022 Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh.

Mishra said that Bhagwan Shri Ram belonged to everyone and

“we have also come to seek His blessings”.

He said Brahmins were safe during the BSP regime and they were honoured and respected whenever BSP was in power. Raising the issue of bail of Khushi Dubey, wife of

Vikas Dubey's nephew Amar Dubey, in the Bikru case of Kanpur, Mishra said, “We will do everything possible to help Khushi Dubey who is lodged in Barabanki jail. Bahujan Samaj Party has made up its mind to fight a legal battle to get bail for the minor widow of Amar Dubey.”

He said the Brahmin community would join BSP again and form a popular government in the state for their dignity, security and progress.

“The Brahmin community is being exploited in the name of caste and religious hatred which has immensely damaged the interests of the enlightened class,” the BSP leader said. He said that at present the BSP had finalised the programme for holding such meetings till July 29. Mishra said a large number of people would be connected with the party by conducting seminars in every district of the state.

Agra-Lucknow and Yamuna Expressway, the Bundelkhand Expressway will ease traffic up to Delhi. As a result, it will boost agriculture, commerce and tourism in the covered areas.

The state government intends to build an industrial corridor along every expressway.

Bundelkhand is one of the most backward regions of UP and Chitrakoot is one of the eight UP

districts selected by NITI Aayog for rejuvenation. Incidentally, the expressway has also started from Chitrakoot.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has often said that Bundelkhand, the land of valour and rich culture and traditions, would become the heaven of UP in the coming times and the proposed Defence Industrial Corridor and Bundelkhand Expressway would play an important role in this.

The BSP termed this sammelan as an intellectual class meeting instead of Brahmin sammelan to avoid any legal issue.

Earlier, the BSP leader was welcomed in Hanuman Garhi, Ayodhya, by Sanjay Das, the successor of Mahant Gyandas, former president of the Akhara Parishad. Mahant Sanjay Das said, “Hanuman Garhi belongs to all the devotees. We welcome everyone who comes here. We have nothing to do with politics.”

BSP's intellectual class conference will be held on July 24-25 in Ambedkar Nagar, July 26 in Prayagraj, July 27 in Kaushambi, July 28 in Pratapgarh and July 29 in Sultanpur.

Meanwhile, the state government imposed curbs on the much-publicised Brahmin Sammelans of the Bahujan Samaj Party. These sammelans (gatherings) have now been renamed as Prabuddha Varg Samman Sammelan to avoid the casteist tag to the event.

The district administration of Ayodhya, citing Covid protocols, allowed a congregation of only 50 participants at the conclave which was held on the outskirts of the city instead of Ayodhya.

NRIs investing in a big way in UP, claims govt

Lucknow (PNS): The Uttar Pradesh government said that besides multinational companies, non-resident Indians (NRIs) were willing to set up their industrial units across the state.

More than 50 NRIs have taken the initiative to set up industries in the state of which 32 are in touch with the state government to invest about Rs 1,045 crore in Noida-Greater Noida, Lucknow, Kanpur, Gorakhpur and Prayagraj. These NRIs have shown interest in investing in 15 sectors, including agriculture, health, IT, manufacturing and solar energy.

UP has become a favourite destination for both NRIs as well as foreign investors. The interest among NRI investors has increased in the last couple of years, after the launch of the website by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath last year. The NRI section of the website has been screened by over 500 non-resident Indians for investing in UP while NRI cards have been issued to 540 of them.

It is the result of the Yogi government's activism that 32 NRIs staying in 18 countries, including the USA, UAE, Oman, Singapore, Australia, Germany, Ghana, New Zealand, Russia, England etc., have sent their proposals to the state government to invest in the UP.

According to officials, four US-based Indians as well as eight residing in the UAE and two Indians each living in Oman, Singapore and England have sent their proposals to the government to invest in UP.

As many as 13 of these NRI investors already have businesses in the countries of their residences and now they want to expand it to UP as well. Besides, 19 Indians working in responsible positions in major companies abroad are now moving to set up their enterprises in UP.

The state government, on its part, is making concrete efforts to expedite provision of land to these prospective investors. It is also in constant touch with NRIs to help them establish their firms. Once operational, these ventures of NRIs will provide employment to thousands of people of the state. Officials further said that seven NRIs had expressed their willingness to set up their enterprises in agriculture, four each in the health and the manufacturing sectors, three each in the IT and energy and solar energy sectors and two each in the education and food processing sectors. Some NRIs from the UAE have proposed to build a grand hospital at an estimated cost of Rs 400 crore in Uttar Pradesh.

Similarly, Russia based NRI Dr S Singh will invest Rs 300 crore in a renewable energy project. NRIs residing in Kuwait have proposed to invest Rs 100 crore in the automotive sector while NRIs in Ghana and New Zealand have made investment proposals worth Rs 150 crore in the agriculture sector. The chief minister has directed the officials to contact these willing NRIs and expedite procedures to help their projects get off the ground as soon as possible.

Seven IPS officers transferred

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government transferred seven IPS officers late Thursday night, changing the superintendents of police of four districts. New district police chiefs were posted in Jalaun, Siddharthnagar, Kasganj and Hamirpur. As per reports, Yashveer Singh, a 2013 batch IPS officer, was sent from Jalaun to Siddharthnagar as district police chief while Ravi Kumar, a 2015 batch officer posted as deputy commissioner in Lucknow police commissionerate, was posted as SP of Jalaun.

Botre Rohan Pramod, a 2016 batch IPS officer posted as SP (City) in Agra, was shifted as SP in Kasganj while SP, Regional Intelligence, Gorakhpur, Kamlesh Kumar Dixit, was transferred to Hamirpur as SP.

Similarly, former SP of Siddharthnagar, Ram Abhilash Tripathi, was transferred as SP of Regional Intelligence in Gorakhpur. SP of Kasganj, Manoj Sonkar, was transferred as Commandant of PAC Battalion in Fatehpur while SP of Hamirpur, Narendra Kumar, was transferred as Commandant of PAC Battalion in Agra.

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For J.K.Cement Ltd. (Shambhu Singh) Head (Legal)

Place: Kanpur & Company Secretary Date : 23.07.2021 M.No:FCS 5836

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क्रमांक: 178 / 64-सी / 2021-22

दिनांक: 22.07.2021

श्री दीनबंधु नेत्र चिकित्सालय अयोध्या से निर्मित नये भवन के प्रथम तल पर एक मॉडलर ओटोटी और सिविल वर्क कार्य तथा पुराने भवन को नये भवन से जोड़ने हेतु पुल (ब्रिज) निर्माण के लिये मुख्यद निविदाये आमंत्रित की जाती हैं।

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NOTICE

To, The General Public

This is to inform that Sanjay Barawal s/o Munshi Modi applied for the Home Loan Loan facility from my client Hero Housing Finance Ltd. Lucknow for purchasing the property. House Constructed on plot No. 3 area 500 sq fit part of Kharsa No. 270 at Naubasta Kurd word Faizullahganj Lucknow.

The plot No. 3 of the said house was purchased by Anil Verma S/o Shivraj Verma thought registered sale deed dated 13/2/2018 the smt. Shiv Devi D/o Naumlal w/o Hira Lal, where Smt. Shivdevi w/o Hira Lal purchased the said property from Mohd. Shakeel s/o Kadir Baiksh thought registered sale deed duly registered in the office of sub Registrar IV Lko, at wide book No. 1 wild No. 4863 on pages 225/252 at serial No. 3642 Dated 27/03/2008 wheres the after said sale deed dated 27/03/2008 is lost to the was today of Amit Verma s/o Shivraj Verma the F.I.R./L.R.A. of the same is registered on 01/07/2021 heving L.R.No. 2021000055533.

That any person on institution is having any type of objective regarding the aforesaid property any contract me within 7 day from the date of publication of this notice failing which my client Hero Housing Finance Ltd. will have the charge our the aforesaid property.

Vishal Yadav (Advocate)
Mob No. 9415164653
Resi/Chamber :- 101/148, K.B. Road, Baroni Khandak Model House Lucknow.

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CM Yogi distributes appointment letters to 6,695 assistant teachers

Warns those spreading canards against transparent recruitment system

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Distributing appointment letters to 6,696 assistant teachers out of a total vacancy of 69,000 thereby completing the much-awaited process in Lucknow on Friday, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath warned of strict action against those spreading canards against the transparent recruitment system adopted by the Uttar Pradesh government.

He asserted that the government had already vacated jails for such unscrupulous elements. Referring to the upcoming examination for PET, the chief minister said, "We are going to conduct the country's largest examination in which the number of examinees will be over 30 lakh."

At a function held at Lok Bhawan in Lucknow, Yogi personally handed over appointment letters to 10 appointees while 240 newly-appointed teachers were present on the occasion. The rest of the successful candidates will be handed over appointment letters in their respective districts. These assistant teachers were recruited in government schools against the 69,000 vacant posts under the Basic Education Council.

Congratulating the newly-appointed assistant teachers, the chief minister said that the government and its department had completed the recruitment process with sincerity and fairness which proved to be helpful for youths in achieving their goals.

"In case someone tries to corrupt the process, our agencies are alert. We have also vacated the jails for such people trying to play with the future of youths in Uttar Pradesh by tarnishing the process of recruitment. We have already taken strict action against all of them and the state



CM Yogi Adityanath and Deputy CM Dinesh Sharma giving appointment letter to an assistant teacher

Pioneer

is already witnessing positive results." Launching a scathing attack at the previous governments in the state, Yogi said that the performance of primary schools of Uttar Pradesh was very high on the national standards of grading but some people did not like it. Before 2017, there were 1,35,000 Basic Education Council schools but their pathetic condition was common knowledge. The buildings of these schools were in dilapidated condition and if there were buildings, they were without teachers. Furthermore, if there were teachers, students were missing. The students did not have uniforms and children used to go to school barefoot. The entire department was just engaged in transfer and posting. Now when the process is transparent and the condition of government schools has improved to a large extent due to Operation Kayakalp, they (opposition parties) do not like it," Yogi said.

The chief minister further said they (opposition) could

not digest the fact that the children of the poor were attending schools and were getting quality education. "They know that if the children of the poor can read and write then their casteist-dynastic politics will stop. Our schools are giving education at par with the public and convent schools," he said.

Expressing satisfaction on the fairness of recruitments, Yogi said, "I am happy to inform you that our government has completed 52 months of its tenure and during this time, it has provided jobs to more than 4.5 lakh youth in Uttar Pradesh. And no one can raise any questions on a single job as the recruitment was done in a transparent manner, with sincerity and with integrity." In his address, Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma congratulated the youth on their appointment and said that the standard of government schools had been raised by the present government.

"Studying in a government

school is no more 'sarcasm', rather the schools are now having good buildings, good arrangements, and cheap books for which the Yogi government deserves credit. There has been a massive change in the education system," he said.

Minister of State for Basic Education (Independent charge) Satish Dwivedi said that it was a historic occasion for the state when more than 65,000 youths were achieving their aims.

"Ever since the Bharatiya Janata Party government was formed in 2017, its priority has been rapid development of UP, employment to the youths, better law and order and better infrastructure like roads, electricity, hospitals, schools, etc.," he said.

In the function, Principal Secretary (Basic Education) Deepak Kumar presented a brief description of the departmental activities, while the vote of thanks was proposed by department's Secretary Anamika Singh.

Kalyan Singh critical

Lucknow (PNS): The health condition of former chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, Kalyan Singh, was stated to be critical in a health bulletin issued by Sanjay Gandhi Post-Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences in Lucknow on Friday evening.

Singh, also the former Governor of Rajasthan, was admitted in the critical care unit of SGPGIMS in a serious condition on July 4 and his condition improved gradually.

But on the evening of July 17, Singh was put on non-invasive ventilation due to worsening of respiratory system. With further deterioration in the condition, he was put on a life-saving support system and his clinical parameters were being closely monitored by expert consultants. Senior faculties of Cardiology, Nephrology, Neurology and Endocrinology are keeping close tabs on all aspects related to Singh's health.

Several senior BJP leaders have been visiting SGPGIMS regularly to enquire about the health of the former CM.

Covid under control but threat of virus not over yet, says CM

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that due to the strategy and continuous efforts of his government, novel coronavirus infection was under control in the state but warned that the viral infection was not over yet and therefore even a little carelessness on its prevention could be disastrous. The chief minister was reviewing the Covid situation across the state at a high level meeting convened at Lok Bhawan in Lucknow on Friday.

In the meeting, the chief minister was apprised that 61 new cases of coronavirus infection were reported across the state in the last 24 hours while in the corresponding period, 86 COVID-19 patients had recovered.

At present, the number of active coronavirus cases in the state stands at 994. Besides, the recovery rate of coronavirus

infection in the state is 98.6 per cent. The heartening news is that not a single COVID-19 patient has been reported in Aligarh, Balrampur, Basti, Etah, Mahoba, Hathras and Shravasti districts.

The chief minister said that vaccination was an important safeguard in preventing the spread of coronavirus and vaccination should be done with the goal of giving jabs to more and more people of the targeted age group at the earliest. He said that the free registration facility being provided for Covid vaccination through Common Service Centres in villages should be given wide publicity.

It was informed in the meeting that till July 22, over 4.27 crore vaccine doses had been administered. The chief minister was also informed that 211 samples were tested in KGMU, Lucknow and BHU, Varanasi in the last days for the

purpose of intensive study and testing regarding the new Delta variant of novel coronavirus but not a single sample confirmed the dangerous variant.

Yogi said that the work of setting up oxygen plants in the state should be carried out at full throttle and directed officials to complete the process by August 15. He said that a minimum of two technicians should be deployed at each oxygen plant.

It was informed in the meeting that so far 548 oxygen plants had been approved in the state while 214 oxygen plants had become functional and so far 280 technicians had been trained. The chief minister directed that all dues should be paid without delay to the dependents of the people dying of COVID-19 and along with this, the job announced for the dependents of the deceased should also be provided at the earliest.

Focused testing in market areas in Aishbagh

SHARMILA KRISHNA ■ LUCKNOW

Aishbagh and its surrounding areas recorded minimum Covid cases as compared to areas under other CHCs during the second Covid wave. However, the Aishbagh CHC is gearing up to tackle the third wave with focus on testing in market areas. The area recorded 91 cases in March, 2,069 cases in April, 395 cases in May and 19 cases in June, thus having a total of 2,574 cases. The population covered under the CHC is 2.14 lakh.

Superintendent, Aishbagh CHC, Dr Manju Chaurasia said they had the least number of cases during the second wave. "The extensive surveillance work with the help of ANMs and ASHA workers may have made a difference. Along with the supervisors of Nagar Nigam, the surveillance team created awareness amongst the residents. We were particular about the

hygiene factor and held demos at various places on how to wash hands to avoid the infection. We also stressed on hygiene as we talked to patients coming to the hospital," she said. Paediatrician Dr Abhishek Srivastava said the hotspots which they identified in Aishbagh were the same in the first and second waves.

"These are market areas where our focus lies and we are carrying out 900-1,000 tests in a day, including 300-350 through RT-PCR. We have plans to visit the high caseload areas and spread awareness on Covid-appropriate behaviour. We have asked Naka PHC authorities to hold orientation programmes. Also, with the help of the administrative nodal officers, we will be visiting the market areas and talking to people about the importance of wearing masks and practising social distancing," he said.

The four hotspot areas in Aishbagh include Naka, Rajendranagar, Mawaiya and

Garhi Kanaura. "The probable reason for the spread of cases in this region was Holi, extensive travelling and people attending marriages. There are extensive market areas which people visit with their families. All of these may have led to the spread of infection in the second wave," Dr Srivastava said.

"We had very few cases in comparison to other CHCs and the maximum figures went up to 200 in a single day," he said. He said that vaccination was going on at a rapid pace. He added that they have been provided with oxygen concentrators but there is no paediatric ICU," he added.

Meanwhile, District Magistrate Abhishek Prakash issued directions for effective management of the third wave, whenever it strikes. He said vaccination should be raised to 30,000 per day because it is the only way through which the third wave could be prevented.

The DM said all the control rooms should be activated and helplines be publi-

cised. He said that the public address systems spreading the message of Covid-appropriate behaviour should also be activated.

The DM said all the CHCs and PHCs should have an adequate stock of medicines and they should be prepared in case of emergency. He added that medicines should be distributed amongst people through surveillance and rapid response teams.

The DM said that contact tracing should be strengthened and all those coming from outside should be necessarily tested. He said the bigger CHCs should make arrangements for 15 oxygen beds while the smaller CHCs should make arrangements for five beds.

"All the private hospitals, especially those having the facility of dialysis, and those associated with female doctors should have flu clinics. The hospitals which have more than 50 beds should have arrangements for a triage area," the DM said.

Leopard sighted in Gosainganj

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A leopard has been sighted in Gosainganj area of Lucknow. Chief Wildlife Warden PK Sharma said teams have been carrying out surveillance and there is no cause of concern. "Leopard sightings have become frequent and these animals are also well-versed in coexisting in human habitat along the banks of the river," he said.

He said that the sightings of leopards have increased because the tiger population has increased in the state. "This increasing tiger population has pushed the leopards out of the forest and they can be seen in the sugarcane fields and other areas," he added. It may be noted that man-animal conflicts have been quite common recently with several incidents having been witnessed in the Lucknow district in the past few years.

Private school associations seek reopening of schools

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A meeting of all the private school associations of Uttar Pradesh was held on Friday to address various problems like continuous closure of schools for almost 500 days, various discrepancies of the RTE Act, the proposal of bringing private schools under RTI Act among others. The participants discussed these issues and called upon the state government to consider their demands.

Representatives of all private school associations of UP from Lucknow, Varanasi, Aligarh, Kanpur, Moradabad, Muzaffarnagar, Gonda and various other districts of UP took part in the meeting held at CMS, Kanpur Road, auditorium on Friday and demanded reopening all the schools in the wake of constantly decreasing

cases of Covid-19. They also opposed the proposal of bringing all private schools under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, terming it arbitrary and unconstitutional.

Drawing attention towards all the discrepancies in the Act, they demanded immediate redressal from the state government. President of National Independent Schools Alliance (NISA) Kulbhushan Sharma said Uttar Pradesh has been a pioneer in dealing with Covid but while states like Bihar, Punjab and Haryana have opened their schools, it is ironic that schools in UP are still closed.

President of Unaided Schools' Association Anil Agarwal said discussions can solve the most complex of problems. "We want to convince the authorities about our problems and issues in a peaceful and

democratic manner," he added.

President of Confederation of Independent Schools, Meerut, Vishal Jain said that closure of schools is not a loss of individuals but of the nation.

CMS founder Jagdish Gandhi appealed to the school managers to create a public opinion about their problems to make a positive impact on the government.

At the end of the meeting, all the participants unanimously called for reopening of schools without further delay. They said children must not face any further loss of education which is hampering their overall growth.

"The number of fresh Covid cases is rapidly decreasing in UP and in the next few days, the figures will likely reach zero. In such a situation, schools should open immediately," they said while addressing mediapersons.

Mayor inspects Shiva temples

Lucknow (PNS): Mayor Sanyukta Bhatia inspected the Shiva temples in view of the first Monday of Shravan. The mayor visited Buddheshwar Mahadev, Koneshwar Mahadev and Mankameshwar temples.

She took stock of cleanliness in the area and checked if sanitisation was being carried out at the temples. The mayor said the Shiva temples witness the rush of devotees during Shravan and Nagar Nigam is geared up to see that devotees do not face any problem. She said she has directed the officials concerned to ensure that there are proper lighting arrangements. She also appealed for adherence to Covid protocols and for no crowd inside or outside the temples.



Mayor Sanyukta Bhatia during an inspection of Mankameshwar temple on Friday

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ICSE, ISC results today

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The results of Class X (ICSE) and Class XII (ISC) examinations will be declared on Saturday. The results will be made available on the website of the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations and through SMS.

Chief executive of the Council Gerry Arathoon said that tabulation registers would be made available for schools through the Careers Portal. "The schools can access the

results by logging into the Careers Portal of the Council using the principal's login ID and password. Individual candidates can access the results by visiting the Council's website - www.cisce.org or www.results.cisce.org," he said.

The results of individual candidates can also be received through SMS. He said that the recheck of answer scripts is not applicable for the ICSE, ISC year 2021 examinations as the candidates have been awarded imputed marks. "In the event a candi-

date has objections regarding computation of marks in the result, they may make a written application to the school, stating the objection in detail along with reasons thereof. The schools are required to review all such applications and only upon being satisfied with the contentions made therein, forward the same to the CISCE along with comments, remarks endorsing the contentions made and documents supporting the opinion regarding the computation of marks," he added.

Legislators pledge commitment to children affected by Covid

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Legislators in Uttar Pradesh came together to pledge their commitment towards Covid-affected children during an online discussion hosted by UNICEF on Thursday. The discussion was chaired by UP Assembly Chairperson Hriday Narayan Dikshit and nearly 20 members from Uttar Pradesh Vidhan Sabha participated in it.

The discussion began with a tribute to the legislators who died due to COVID-19. "Uttar Pradesh government has been very sensitive towards Covid-affected children. Mukhyamantri Baal Sewa Yojana has been launched in the state to reach out to children who have lost their parents during the pandemic and ensure them the desired help," Dikshit said.

"The legislators have been carrying out relief works. From adopting hospitals in their constituencies to initiating mask and food distributions and creating awareness around COVID-19, the members have done their bit very

responsibly," he added.

Some Covid-affected children also narrated their personal experiences during the meeting which was followed by a discussion by the members of the UP Assembly on the role of legislators for protection of child rights.

Jewar MLA Dhirendra Singh emphasised on improving facilities in rural areas for the third wave.

Bareilly MLA Arun Kumar said: "Covid-hit children are our responsibility and we will ensure that all such children in our constituency are linked to the Chief Minister's Baal Sewa Yojana." He also emphasised on Covid vaccination to stay protected. MLA from Modinagar (Ghaziabad) Dr Manju Siwach said, "We are prepared for the third wave. Ensuring the health and nutrition of children is our priority."

Chief of field office for UNICEF, Uttar Pradesh, Ruth Leano said, "Over the past few years, we have tried to consistently work with the honourable members on child rights and other child-related

issues. The pandemic has disrupted decades of progress that we have made globally. Millions have been pushed towards poverty, millions are facing food shortages and loss of employment, and millions of children are out of school and may never return to school. Health services are under tremendous strain - immunisation, institutional deliveries, neonatal care - all are being affected."

Leano appealed to the members to take stock of the impact on children in their constituencies and connect them to the government resources that would help them tide through this challenge.

Programme manager, UNICEF, Uttar Pradesh, Amit Mehrotra discussed how the pandemic affected children's physical and mental well-being and required attention of one and all. Health specialist Dr Kanupriya Singhal talked about the concerns related to the third wave and answered queries of the members related to new variants, vaccination and related issues.

Asian Pacific Society of Respirology fellowship for Dr Surya Kant

Lucknow (PNS): Head of the department of Respiratory Medicine, King George's Medical University, Dr Surya Kant has been selected for the fellowship of Asian Pacific Society of Respirology.

Dr Surya Kant said the Asian Pacific Society of Respirology is an organisation dedicated to research, education and improvement of medicine primarily in Asia and the Pacific region and around the world. "Throughout its history, the institute has consistently provided advice and suggestions at the international level in var-

ious medical and health-related matters," he said. The Asian Pacific Society of Respirology has elected Dr Surya Kant for fellowship after assessing his expertise in the field of respiratory medicine and efforts in the field of public health care.

"I will always strive through this institution to make the knowledge of my medical sciences accessible among the poor and weaker sections of the patients," Dr Surya Kant said.

KGMU Vice-Chancellor Dr Bipin Puri and other doctors expressed happiness and termed it a big achievement.



AAP members protesting I-T raids on media, in Lucknow on Friday

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मोहिनी बी मनवाणी गर्ल्स डिग्री कालेज
 (अल्पसंख्यक संस्थान)
आवास विकास नं.-3, पनकी कल्याणपुर रोड, कल्याणपुर, कानपुर - 208017

डी.एल.एड. (बी.टी.सी.) सत्र 2021-23 हेतु ऑन-लाइन आवेदन
 अल्पसंख्यक संस्थान में प्रबन्धकीय कोटे के अन्तर्गत डी.एल.एड. (बी.टी.सी.) 2021 में प्रवेश हेतु ऑन-लाइन आवेदन आमंत्रित है, ऑन-लाइन आवेदन हेतु शैक्षिक अर्हता, आयु एवं अन्य मानक व शर्तें उत्तर प्रदेश शासन के नियमानुसार होगी। प्रवेश मेरिट के आधार पर किये जायेंगे तथा प्रवेश प्रक्रिया व चयन उ.प्र. शासन के मानकानुसार किये जायेंगे। ऑन-लाइन आवेदन महाविद्यालय की वेबसाइट www.mbmrgdc.in पर दिनांक **24.07.2021** से **12.08.2021** तक कर सकते हैं। अल्पसंख्यक समुदाय के अभ्यर्थियों को वरीयता दी जायेगी।

प्रबंधक

22 teachers get job letters

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

As many as 22 teachers of the district got their appointment letters at a function held at Divisional Commissioner's auditorium here on Friday. An appointment letter distribution ceremony was held in Lucknow by which the entire state including Varanasi was linked through a virtual platform in which the Chief Minister (CM) Yogi Adityanath presented job letters to the remaining 6,696 teachers of basic education. It was the last phase of the recruitment process of 69,000 teachers in the state.

In his address through the virtual platform, the CM said that the recruitment of the teachers has been done by the present government maintaining full transparency and honesty. "One-and-a-half-lakh teachers have been recruited in the Education department in the last four years and four months. During this period, the government has given government jobs to 4.5 lakh youths. In the entire recruitment process, honest and transparent procedures were maintained," he said, adding that the budget of basic education is more than Rs 53,000 crore for the year and the state should get full benefit of this.

According to Yogi, a pri-



Teachers getting appointment letters in Varanasi on Friday

Pioneer

mary school will not be less than any private convent school in the state.

The Kayakalp programme has improved the condition of primary schools. "Now the poor child wears a good uniform with shoes-stockings, sweaters, pants, shirts. UP is the state with the largest population and lowest unemployment," he added.

Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma, Basic Education Minister Dr Satish

Chandra Dwivedi also expressed their views on the qualitative development of education in the state.

MLAs Saurabh Srivastava and Surendra Narayan Singh, city BJP president Vidyasagar Rai and others gave away appointment letters to 22 teachers including Vishnu Prakash Mishra, Mohana Gujarati, Ritu Mishra, Divya Mishra, Rajneesh Mani, Anoop Tiwari, Vinay Choubey, Anand Kumar Dwivedi, Sumant Kumar Rai,

Madan Gopal Agrahari, Ram Chander Patel, Vikas Kumar Patel, Raghubir Yadav, Shashi Prakash, Shyam Babu Jaiswal, Atul Kumar Maurya, Manish Kumar Srivastava, Prakash Dubey, Meenakshi, Pratima Bharti, Kumari Neelam Devi and Virendra Kumar. District Development Officer, District Basic Shiksha Adhikari along with other officers of the Education department and teachers were also present.

11 Yadav bandhus to offer prayer

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

An important meeting between the administrative officers and the representatives of Chandravanshi Gop Seva Samiti was held here on Friday in which they reached a consensus that in view of prevailing corona pandemic conditions, only 11 representatives of Yadav bandhus carrying the brass flags and damrus of the samiti would continue the tradition of 1932 on the auspicious occasion of the first Monday of Shravan.Ni Meanwhile, the preparations are going on in full swing both inside and outside the Kashi

Vishwanath temple premises and to check the rush of devotees, barricades are being installed.

As per the long tradition, Yadav bandhus take out their tradition procession on the first Monday of Shravan during which they offer jalabhishek at nine famous Shiv temples of the city including one of the Dwadash jyotirlinga Kashi Vishwanath temple. They start their traditional procession from Kedar Ghat and after offering prayer at Gauri Kedareshwar Mahadev, Teel Bhandeshwar Mahadev and reach Kashi Vishwanath temple. From there, they also con-

tinue their procession to visit several other temples.

During the meeting, the samiti members demanded proper cleanliness and repair of roads. They said that the main objective of this year's jalabhishek is to seek the blessings from the Almighty to make the country corona-free and bring prosperity.

They said that as per the teachings of Lord Krishna, the samiti always works for making the society united. According to them, in 1932 when the country was facing a severe famine and even animals and birds were dying without water, the first procession of

Yadav bandhus was taken out under the leadership of Bhola Sardar and Chunni Sardar in order to please the Lord Shiva to help the people overcome from famine.

According to them, the procession would be lead by samiti's president Lalji Yadav, son of late Bhola Sardar. The meeting was also attended by ADM (City), SP (City), COs Dashashwamedh and Kotwali and in-charges of many police stations, Shalini Yadav, Durga Sardar, Bale Sardar, Raju Yadav, Manoj Yadav, Bali Sardar, Vinay Yadav, Manoj Yadav, Manish Yadav, Ayushman Yadav and Anil Yadav.

11th Battalion of NDRF makes ‘Preposition Deployment’

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

In view of the monsoon, the 11th Battalion of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) has made 'Preposition Deployment' in a few districts by making coordination with the State Government, SDMA and Relief Commissioner, SDRF to face any situation of flood if it arises.

The monsoon has knocked the door in UP and keeping this in mind, the 11th Battalion of NDRF is in constant touch with the agencies such as IMD, CWC, Irrigation Department, Nepal Hydrology, etc and also keeping a close watch on rainy season, the Commandant of the Battalion, Manoj Kumar Sharma informed while talking to newsmen on Friday at its head quarters here.

The Battalion has also made 'Preposition Deployment' by making coordination with the state government, SDMA and Relief

Commissioner, SDRF under which one team each has been deployed in Shravasti, Bahraich and Siddharthnagar while two teams each have been deployed in Lucknow, Gorakhpur and Bhopal, he informed adding the other teams are ready with their resources at headquarter and go to anywhere to conduct rescue and relief operation.

Two teams of Battalion have been kept in reserve with their resources at the headquarter to conduct relief and rescue operation in Varanasi and adjoining districts, he informed adding, one team has already been deployed at Dashashwamedh Ghat for the flood emergency and drowning incident and in Pucka Mahal for the CSSR operation.

The Battalion is also in an alert mode in view of the possible the third wave of COVID-19, Sharma said and added each team of NDRF is capable in Covid safety, decontamination, sanitization, etc as

each team comprised trained nursing assistants and medical staff. The NDRF teams discharged their duty sincerely and effectively during the first and second waves of the pandemic. Under the FAMEX, the NDRF prepares data, hazard mapping and vulnerability profile of the districts where there are the possibilities of disaster and mishap so that it remains updated and conducts relief and rescue operations smoothly, he added. Sharma informed that the NDRF runs various programmes during the non-operation period such as Community Awareness Programme (CAP) to generate awareness among common people about disaster, Capacity Building Programme (CBP) to enhance the capability and works skill of administrative units and organisations and School Safety Programme (SSP) to impart training to students, teachers and staff of schools to save them from disaster.

The Battalion was formed on September 15 in 2015 and the headquarter is a cultural complex in Chowkaghat here and it conducts rescue and relief operation in 57 districts of UP and 52 districts of MP. During a short period the 18 teams of Battalion discharged its duty effectively as the team members successfully rescued three persons in a fly-over incident in Lahartara of the city in 2018 and they also rescued 26 persons when they were drowning in a river in Prayagraj in 2019, he informed.

The NDRF discharges duty in the disasters related to medical first responder (MFR), collapse structure search & rescue (CSSR), chemical biological radiological & nuclear (CBRN), rope rescue and flood rescue & water emergency, he informed. An exhibition was also held at it's headquarter, here displaying the instruments used in relief and rescue operations.

AAP protests I-T raids on media

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Scores of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) workers staged a protest at the district headquarters here on Friday over the manner the Central and state governments are allegedly attacking some sections of the media. They strongly condemned the manner in which Income Tax raids were conducted at the offices of some news channels and newspapers and later on they handed over a memorandum to the district administration for forwarding the same to the governor.

Leading the protest, district president of AAP Kailash Patel said that in the manner the raids were conducted on some media houses and their journalists, it was an attempt by the government to crush the voice

of the press. He alleged that the action was taken against those who tried to expose the government by highlighting their failures in handling the Covid pandemic. According to him, the government's action was an open violation of Article 19(1). He said that the action was taken against those media houses which exposed the government in the manner the people lost lives due to oxygen crisis. District spokesman Ghanshyam Pandey said that due to exposing the reality behind the tall claims on development issues, the government lost its cool and started taking action against the media houses. He said that the AAP workers were opposing the government action across the state. The protest was attended by several other office-bearers of the party.

WOMEN RAISE VOICES AGAIN ON PRICE RISE: The women's wing of Varanasi Vyapar Mandal took out a procession in protest against inflation and price rise from Shaheed Udyan to Bharat Sewa Sangh in Sriga area here on Friday. According to the protesting women, the rising inflation has disturbed all sections of the society and women have been the worst sufferers.

The women were carrying empty pots and placards. They also raised strong voices on the failures of the government in controlling the soaring prices of petrol and diesel. According to them, if the government cannot handle the rising inflation, what should we expect from it. They said that due to rising petrol prices, freight and fares are also increasing. Besides, they also expressed their concern

over the sharp hike in prices of edible oils, grains and other essential items.

Varanasi Vyapar Mandal president Ajit Singh Bagga demanded that efforts should be made to control inflation without any delay so that the anger prevailing in the society could be reduced. Mahila Mandal president Sunita Soni said that under such failures of the government, the women cannot sit in their houses. She said that afterall, someone has to make an effort when the administration is sleeping, and women would have to raise their voice. IT Cell chief Santosh Singh said that the organisation would intensify its agitation against the inflation and price rise. Among those who were also present were Pramod Agrahari, Aarti Sharma, Pramila Jaiswal.

Dy CM lays wreath on Azad’s statue

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya reached Amar Shaheed Chandrashekhar Azad Park here on Friday to lay a wreath on the statue of great revolutionary Chandra Shekhar Azad on the occasion of his 115th birth anniversary. He said that Azad's work will always be inspiring. "He is the role model of the youth of the country, not only the state. He has irrigated the land of Prayagraj with his blood to free it from the suzerainty of the British," he added.

Maurya said that due to the sacrifice of all the brave freedom fighters, we are able to breathe freely. The Deputy CM called upon people belonging to all sections of society to take inspiration from Azad and resolve that India will never be under any foreign invader. He asked all the citizens to be united in this regard.

The Deputy Chief Minister also paid tributes to Bal Gangadhar Tilak as it was his birth anniversary too. "He had said that Swaraj is our birthright, we will have it. Resolve that we will take the country to a height that no other country in the world can match," Maurya said. During the programme, the police



band gave salute and patriotic songs were also played.

Maurya also garlanded the statue of Chandra Shekhar Azad in the Circuit House. When Vande Mataram was sung, the supporters also raised slogans of 'Azad Amar Rahe'. In

his address, Maurya said that now India will never be under the control of any foreign invader. "We are all committed to it.

Presently, the reins of the country are in the hands of Prime Minister Narendra Modi

who has a 56-inch chest. He is engaged day and night in taking the nation towards the ultimate glory. The whole world is looking at us with hopeful eyes. We are all moving towards development," Maurya added.

Secret documents related to Azad should be made public

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Secret documents related to Chandra Shekhar Azad should be made public to let people know as to who informed the British Police about the presence of Azad in Alfred Park (now Chandra Shekhar Azad Park) on the day he attained martyrdom. The demand was raised by the Allahabad Heritage Society on the occasion of the 115th birth anniversary of Azad.

On behalf of the Allahabad Heritage Society, former Head

of Medieval and Modern History department, Allahabad University, Prof Yogeshwar Tiwari said that a confidential file of the then superintendent of police John Nott Bower is lying with the CID office in Lucknow. This file is about the encounter at Alfred Park where Chandra Shekhar Azad, after shooting several policemen, had shot himself with the last bullet of his gun to stick to his words that the British Police could not arrest Azad. It is said that the SP had made mention of the name of the traitor who

had informed the police that Azad would be at Alfred Park at that particular time.

Prof Tiwari said that the contents of John Nott Bower file should be made public to let people know the name of the police informer who was responsible for the whole episode, which claimed the life of Azad.

The Allahabad Heritage Society also demanded that all documents related to Azad should be brought to Prayagraj and handed over to Allahabad Museum, situated within Azad

Park. Allahabad Museum, which has preserved the mouser of Azad and has put it on display, is developing an exclusive Azad Gallery, so all government documents related to Chandra Shekhar Azad, including the confidential file of the then police SP, should be brought here from all over India and abroad, and handed over to Allahabad Museum for preservation and public display. This will be the most befitting tribute to Azad and all the members of the Garam Dal of freedom fighters.

Everyone’s honour will be protected: Nandi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Cabinet Minister Nand Gopal Gupta Nandi said that everyone's honour would be protected. Everyone will get their rights as BJP is continuously growing on the principle of "Sab Ka Saath Sab Ka Vikas, Sab Ka Vishwas", he said.

He said that on the application within three months of the death of a democracy fight-

er, the successor would be given honour money and other facilities from the very next day itself.

He further said that in the last several departmental meetings, it had come to the fore that after the death of a democracy fighter, there was a delay in getting the honour money to his dependents.

Now concrete steps are being taken in this direction. The proposal in this regard was

placed before the cabinet, which has been approved by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. Now no one will have to wander or fiddle with the files.

The state government is working on the principle of Antyodaya. Nandi said that the government is determined to provide benefits of the schemes to the people standing on the last rung of the society. Along with the government,

party workers are also making efforts in this direction from their level. Their endeavor is to help every needy.

BJP workers and office-bearers are contacting people at the booth level. Now Panna pramukhs are also being activated.

They will also know the major problems of the area. For their solution, they will talk to the competent officials, ministers.

Railways committed to use of solar energy

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Indian Railways is committed to the use of non-conventional energy sources and ecological balance. To realise this concept, Prayagraj Division of North Central Railway is setting up solar power plants playing a leading role in Indian Railways.

So far, a solar power plant of 3.629 MW peak capacity has been installed in Prayagraj division. In which 120 KW peak capacity by the Railways itself and 3.509 MW peak capacity solar power plant by external sources has been installed in PPP mode. No expenditure of railway revenue is being incurred in its installation and maintenance.

With its help, 33.91 lakh units of green energy has been generated in the financial year 2020-21, resulting in saving of railway revenue of about Rs 1.09 crore. Due to the green energy generated from the said plant, there has been a reduction in carbon emissions from the environment by about 2.71 kilotons.

Similarly, in the financial year 2019-20, 34.09 lakh units of green energy has been generated, resulting in saving of railway revenue of about Rs 1.08 crore and reduction in carbon emissions of about 2.72 kilotons from the environment. About 5 percent of the

total non-traction power consumption of Prayagraj division is met by solar power.

A solar power plant of 1396 kW peak capacity has been installed by the Railways in PPP mode at Prayagraj station and in the region. In which a power plant of 110 kW peak capacity has been installed by the Railways itself. Due to which 1.52 lakh units of green energy has been generated in the last financial year 2020-21, resulting in saving of railway revenue of about Rs 53.98 lakh and reduction in carbon emissions from the environment by about 1.22 kilotons.

In the current financial year 2021-2022 till the month of June, 4.53 lakh units of green energy have been generated resulting in saving of railway revenue of about Rs.016.31 lakh.

AT LEAST 18 DIE BY SUICIDE IN 22 DAYS: At least 18 persons died by suicide in just 22 days in the month of July. So many lives were lost not in accidents but because of the feeling of despair in the minds. On Tuesday night, members of five families living in different parts of the city committed suicide. These incidents which happened in a single night shocked people of the city. In such a situation, it is believed that corona and its increasing problems have pushed students, shopkeepers, domestic

women and employed people into depression. People, instead of facing difficulties and struggles in life, are embracing death. If we look at the police figures, 18 people have committed suicide in the last 22 days. There were also some incidents which were not reported to the police. Due to not getting any job, some ended his life due to financial constraints. The surprising thing is that most of the suicides are from the youth group. It has many male and female students. Some wrote suicide notes giving reasons for taking the extreme step. The family members of some gave reasons, but for many it was not clear as to why they took such extreme steps. Experts blame social change and other problems behind such incidents. July 10: Student Niti, youth Abhishek Jaiswal, Arun Kumar, Sunil Mishra and Alka Khanna committed suicide. July 19: Pooja, a competitive student in Shivkuti, Pradeep, a driver in Civil Lines, hanged themselves. July 18: Student Neha committed suicide in Sivakuti. July 17: Neha, a BA student, embraced death in Muthiganj. July 13: Competitive student Vikas Kumar hanged himself after failing to get a government job in Shivkuti area.

COVID-19 VACCINATION: Prayagraj has reached two major milestones in Covid-

19 vaccination at an ever-increasing pace. One, so far the maximum number of 22157 vaccines have been administered, while with this figure, Prayagraj remained on top in the state on Friday. The Health department's hopes also blossomed with this double success. Due to the receipt of a large consignment of vaccines and the resumption of vaccination in six development blocks, the department made record-breaking vaccination. This week, the vaccination is expected to be running at full speed. All the 44 daily vaccination centres and six cluster centres started at the block level remained full with beneficiaries. There was enthusiasm among the beneficiaries. According to the Health department, 22157 people were vaccinated. As many as 18,988 people reached for the first dose while 3169 people got the second dose. So far 1099968 people have been vaccinated against corona in the district. District Immunization Officer Dr Tirathlal informed that the maximum vaccination was done in Prayagraj in the state on Friday. Ghaziabad was on second number and Meerut on third. He said that maximum beneficiaries reached the medical college campus where 1298 people were vaccinated. Vaccines were administered to 186 women at the Pink Booth.



Higher Education Minister, Nilima Katiyar, distributing appointment letters to 32 selected teachers at Collectorate on Friday.

Pioneer

28 Covid orphans get sanction letters under CM Bal Seva Yojana

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

As many as 28 children, who lost their parents during COVID-19 pandemic, were given sanction letters to mark the launch of Mukhyamantri Bal Seva Yojana and a sum of Rs.12,000 at a function organised in the collectorate compound here on Thursday.

Launching the scheme, Minister of State for Higher

Education Neelima Katiyar said it was launched to take care of the destitute children and keep their future secured.

She said around 4,000 children had lost their parents to COVID-19 during the second wave of the pandemic in the state which prompted the UP government to launch the scheme for them.

She said, "UP is the first state in the country which has

started this scheme for the welfare of the children who have lost their parents to coronavirus. The state government has transferred a sum of Rs.12,000 into their accounts for the first three months. They will get Rs.4,000 per month till they attain the age of 18 years." She said the destitute girls who had attained the age of 18 years would also be given Rs.1.01 lakh for their mar-

riages. Bharatiya Janata Party legislators Surendra Maithani and Bhagwati Sagar, State Commission for Women members Poonam Kapoor, Ranjana Shukla, District Magistrate Alok Tewari, Municipal Commissioner Akshay Tripathi, Chief Development Officer Dr Mahendra Kumar, SP (Outer) Ashtabhujia Prasad Singh and other district officials were present.

Prof Kala stresses on being fully prepared to tackle third wave

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi Memorial Medical College Principal Prof Sanjay Kala, while addressing a workshop organised by the Indian Academy of Paediatrics in association with IAP, Medicine, TB, Anaesthesia and Paediatrics, at the Maternity Wing Hall on GT Road on Friday, said in view of the apprehended third wave of COVID-19 and the bitter experiences of the first two waves, it had become essential to be fully prepared to tackle the

third wave if it struck the country.

He said it was essential to vaccinate the population as early as possible and ensure they stuck to the Covid protocol.

He said vaccine was the most potent tool that one had against COVID-19 infection. He said despite the doubts it was true that vaccination would certainly provide a degree of protection against severe infection and thus it was the best way to combat the third wave. He said besides vaccination, in the short and medium term,

one should also aim to increase the testing capacity and only rapid identification of cases and strict isolation could help to flatten the curve till the vaccine rollout was adequate.

The action plan suggested to overcome the above includes ramping up production of ventilators and allocations through the PM-CARES fund. On beds, oxygen and medicines, it calls for increasing production, maintaining daily updated online records, ensuring centralised availability.

He said there was an imperative need for ensuring

oxygen supply and strengthening medical facilities, in particular, ventilators, oxygen concentrators and oxygen plants and generators and developing healthcare infrastructure, especially in rural areas.

He said this comprised emergency beds, critical care medicines, supplies.

Prominent among those who took active part in the workshop were Dr Ambrish Gupta, Dr Yeshwant Rao, Dr JJ Tambe, Dr Anurag Bharti, Dr Vivek Saxena, Dr Ranjit Nim, Dr Rupa Dalmiya, Dr Pratibha Singh and Dr Neha Agarwal.

CBSE to take up capacity building of teachers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Central Board for Secondary Education (CBSE) had decided to take up capacity building of the teachers of its affiliated schools. The online programme trains the current teachers to use artificial intelligence, and the CBSE has joined hands with Intel for this. The CBSE has decided to lean heavily on AI to literally fix several loopholes in the education sector in the country. It is of the view that due to the acute crisis of teachers the standard of curriculum and teaching has not improved at the desired pace.

This was stated by CBSE coordinator Balwinder Singh while informing press persons about the new schedule of the Board for capacity building of the teachers.

He said artificial intelligence was the capacity of a machine to imitate intelligent human behavior which would make digital, automated processes even smarter. He said under this project software would be developed to create individual lesson plans for students based on their performance. He said this could in simple terms be stated as machine learning which had been used in certain areas to track vital issues pertaining to education.

He said the most important reason was that AI systems could adapt to individual student learning and grasping abilities and could also find out strengths and weaknesses of the student.

He said one teacher for 60

students would no longer work.

He said this engendered the need to enable students with AI systems in schools and classrooms or at their homes which could be an alternative to solve the problem of poor quality.

As per the CBSE circular released under Dr Biswajeet Saha, the present teachers currently handle multiple responsibilities such as evaluation, grading, paper setting, creating mark sheets and tracking the performance of every student.

He said if these tasks were made easy for them, then they would focus more on course development, teaching quality and skill development. Thus, he said, AI systems could assist teachers in all these tasks, and it would be easier for teachers to focus on students rather than mundane administrative tasks.

AI education can become more accessible and inclusive at the same time. Learning applications with skill-based curriculum are being developed and these AI-enabled systems will bring global classrooms at one's fingertips. It will not only empower students but also teachers in upgrading themselves with current trends.

The policy will highly benefit the rural education as students living in the most remote parts of India will be able to learn the way it is learned in an urban setting.

Singh said moves were afoot to take up remote procuring which was the new technology that could help to

simplify the exam invigilation process.

He said under this the students could appear for exams from either classroom or home and the system would be able to invigilate such exams remotely using remote proctoring.

He said under this a web camera was attached to the computer system to monitor remote students.

UMMED KI KIRAN FOR STRAY ANIMALS: Thousands of stray animals, especially dogs and old horses, are left on the street to not only die of hunger but also due to diseases and injuries which they receive on roads. Animals and humans co-exist and this means that animals are dependent on the people. Ironically dozens of dogs and cows are hit by speeding cars and trucks and often they are incapacitated, leading to starvation to death or death due to disease.

This was stated by Gaurav Bajpai, key person for Team Kanpur for voiceless animals while addressing a medical camp held at Vishwa Bank, Barra on Monday to donate medicines, sprays, bandages and ointments for the stray animals and also to animal homes.

He said it was a matter of concern that out of every six puppies born to a dog five were crushed to death under the wheels of cars. He said only one survived and often continued with injuries and disease.

He said similarly every day in Kanpur city limits alone, over 50 dogs, cats and

squirrels were crushed to death and those which survived died of their injuries.

He said Team Kanpur had decided to come to the rescue of the injured and sick animals and ensure that they were provided medical care. He appealed to car drivers, driving at breakneck speed especially during early morning or late night to see that no animal was crushed to death by their vehicles.

He said Ummad ki Kiran was an organisation which was working in this direction and thus TKV had decided to donate bulb medicines, bandages, sprays and other equipment needed for the treatment of stray animals. He said it had been decided to regularly hold camps and appealed to the people to inform them about sick and injured street animals so that the team can provide them medical help.

Pallavi Shukla said in the meeting it was also decided that the members would prepare videos of injured and sick animals and approach the elected representatives for help. She said the members would also try to shift the injured animals to shelter homes.

Mayank Tripathi said Ummad Ki Kiran was basically a ray of hope to the destitute animals and appealed to the citizens to be kind and try to help animals if they were in pain and needed medical care.

Prominent among those present included Aman Shukla, Harshit Awasthi, Ananya Trivedi, Ankita Yadav, Ramit Seth, Deepika and Kanika Bajaj.

Scientists develop 3D robotic platform to simulate human lung motion during breathing

KANPUR (PNS): Professors Ashish Dutta from Indian Institute of Technology-Kanpur and KJ Maria Das from Sanjay Gandhi Post-Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences in Lucknow have developed a programmable 3D robotic motion platform for quality assurance of respiratory motion management in radiation therapy.

The 3D robotic platform can simulate human lung motion during breathing to deliver focused radiation to cancer patients.

The programme was conceived with support from the Advanced Manufacturing Technologies programme of the Department of Science and Technology of the Government of India and is currently under final testing at SGPGIMS, Lucknow.

IIT-K Director Prof Abhay Karandikar said, "This 3D robotic platform shall enable doctors to simulate the lung motion of a cancer patient, which in turn will help verify the delivery of focused radiation in the upper abdomen or thoracic region. The focused radiation for a patient could be further customised by simulating the lung movement of individual patients and then orienting the radiation delivery so that it can be more effective with minimal dosage to adjoining tissue."

The 3D robotic platform is more affordable than other imported products available in the market and the phantom can be programmed to produce different types of human lung motion during breathing. The phantom is a part of the platform and it not only emulates the human lung motion as a patient is breathing but can also be used to check if the radiation is being correctly focused on a moving target.

The phantom is placed inside a CT scanner on the bed in place of the human, and it emulates human lung motion as it is irradiated during therapy. During irradiation, consistently high-quality images of advanced 4D radiation therapy treatments are obtained with minimum exposure of the patients and workers. Before the targeted radiation is delivered to a human subject, its effectiveness in focusing only on the tumor is checked with this phantom, said a statement from DST.

The major part of the phantom is a dynamic platform over which any dosimetric or imaging quality assurance devices can be placed, and the platform can mimic 3D tumor motion by using three independent stepper-motor systems. This platform is placed on the bed where the patient lies during radiation therapy. As the phantom emulates the lung movement, a moving or gating window is used to focus the radiation from the radiation machine on the moving tumour. Detectors placed in the phantom help detect whether the radiation is localised on the tumour, and the dose effectiveness is checked during therapy.

The innovators are further trying to commercialise the product, which can be used in place of the overseas model that is very much more expensive and does not give access to the control software.

Sanitation drive

KANPUR (PNS): Under the Swachh Bharat, Swastha Bharat campaign, activists of Support Foundation carried out a sanitation drive at the historical Mama Talab in Dhami Kheda on Friday. The drive received overwhelming support from local residents.

Speaking on the occasion, national president of Support Foundation, Jyoti Shukla, said she was committed to carrying out similar drives in other places of the city.

She added that the campaign would greatly help in eradicating various diseases and spreading awareness among masses about the precautionary measures to contain them.

On Tuesday, the organisation had organised a seminar on filariasis eradication and vaccination wherein, apart from WHO team, hundreds of representatives from different social organisations had also participated.

Combing operation conducted

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

Superintendent of Police (SP) Ajay Kumar Singh conducted combing operation in the Naxal-affected area in Terhia forest under Chunar

(Operation) Mahesh Singh Atri, Circle Officer (CO) Chunar, Sushil Kumar Yadav, Station House Officer (SHO) Chunar, incharge Sakteshgarh police outpost and heavy force.



SP Ajay Kumar Singh during the combing operation in Terhia forest area on Thursday

police station on Thursday. During the combing the SP launched the search at possible hideouts of Naxalites and gathered ground-level information from the locals as well as the cops. On the occasion he directed the cops to give a message to the locals that the police was with them and earn their trust. He asked the cops too to ensure that nobody was harassed on the pretext of Naxal activities. He said it was our duty to make locals aware about Naxalism and connect them with the welfare schemes of the government and help them in availing themselves of them. On the occasion the SP was accompanied by Additional Superintendent of Police

FUNCTION ORGANISED: Uttar Pradesh Minister of State for Energy Rama Shankar Singh Patel at a function organised under UP Mukhyamantri Bal Seva Yojana at Zila Panchayat on Thursday said at the initial stage the government was providing ₹4,000 per month to each child. The government had decided to take their full responsibility even for higher education. On the occasion MLA Ratnakar Mishra eulogised the sensitive approach of the Chief Minister. MLA Majhawaan Shuchismita Maurya also spoke on the occasion. In his address District Magistrate Praveen Kumar Laxkar said out of 31 eligible children formalities of

22 had been completed till date and they were being benefitted while for the rest the process was on. Probation Officer Shakti Tripathi said that the initiative of the government had proved to be a boon for the eligible children. She further said that the government was keen for the overall development of such children. Prominent among those who also present during the programme were Chief Development Officer (CDO), Srilaxmi VS, Superintendent of Police Ajay Kumar Singh, Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr PD Gupta, Social Welfare Officer (SWO) Girish Dubey and others.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE: With the purpose of making women self-reliant the Innerwheel Club Mirzapur has set up a vocational training centre at Lohia Talab. During the inaugural function of the centre, president of the club Aparajita Singh announced to allocate a part of the Daffodils Public School and provide all necessary facilities to the trainees, including raw material, trainers, market etc. She apprised that at the centre the training in collage, sewing, art, embroidery, toy making, 'mejhndi', beautician etc will be given and other training courses will be started as per the need of the trainees. The club members who also graced the function were Pooja Agrawal, Sarita Agrawal, Riya Raidani, Ranjana Jaiswal, Arati Khandelwal, Alka Singhania, Deepa Sarraf and others.

45,963 rly personnel vaccinated

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

As per the instructions of the Railway Board the target of complete vaccination for prevention of Covid-19 infection is to be achieved till July 31. Vaccination has an important role in the prevention of Covid-19. Besides, the vaccination of railway employees, their family members, retired railway personnel and their families, including those related to the working of the railways, such as porters, vendors besides labourers of private parties in goods sheds is being done on a large scale by the North Eastern Railway (NER) administration. In NER under the vaccination campaign which started at the end of January this year so far 45,963 railway personnel, dependents of

36,173 railway personnel and about 1,200 porters, vendors besides workers working on contract have been vaccinated. In order to ensure 100 per cent vaccination of railway personnel along with their family members, vaccination was done in Diesel Lobby here on Thursday. Besides, fully on-the-spot vaccination camp will be organised on July 26 in General Manager's Office, at Railway Protection Special Force, Rajhi Camp, on July 27 and at Carriage and Wagon Depot, Gorakhpur, on July 28 from 10 am to 03.00 pm.

On the other hand, General Manager, NER, Vinay Kumar Tripathi has directed the heads of departments and Divisional Railway Managers (DRMs) to motivate the officers and employees working in

their departments for vaccination. Railway workers should get themselves and their family members vaccinated on the above dates and motivate their colleagues too for it.

TIMINGS CHANGED

The railway administration has changed the arrival/departure timings of 05073 Shaktinagar-Tanakpur and 05075 Sighrauli-Chanpur special trains at Chohan station, Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) Pankaj Kumar Singh said. As per the changed timings, 05073 Shaktinagar – Tanakpur special train will arrive at Chohan at 18.20 hrs and depart at 18.30 hrs and 05075 Sighrauli – Tanakpur special train will arrive at Chohan at 18.20 hrs and depart at 18.30 hrs.

Coaching camp starts

CORRESPONDENT ■ SONBHADRA

For the proper preparation of candidates from Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL) appearing in the departmental examination of welfare officer trainee to be held under the aegis of NCL's holding company Coal India Limited (CIL) on July 31, a seven-day-long coaching camp started at CETI located at NCL headquarters from Wednesday. Classes have been organised from July 21 to 27 for the candidates of this examination. During the week-long classes, the subject experts

of NCL and welfare officers selected earlier will guide the examination candidates. NCL



Director (Personnel) Bimlendu Kumar, who was present as the

chief guest at the inauguration of the coaching camp on Wednesday, called upon all the candidates to take maximum benefit from the classes. Kumar motivated everyone to capitalise on this golden opportunity by preparing diligently and expressed confidence that maximum participants of NCL will be successful in this examination. General Manager (Personnel) Charles Juster, General Manager (HRD) Dinesh Mishra and others were present on the occasion.

DRM honours 57 employees

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Under the chairmanship of Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) Vijay Kumar Panjari the second phase of 65th Railway Week and Award Distribution Function-2020 was organised recently in

ing of the Railway and has improved the image of the division. Congratulating them on the occasion DRM said under the Railway Week the employees who have done excellent work are rewarded and honoured at the function and their contribution is appre-

(Operations) SPS Yadav, Senior Divisional Safety Commissioner (SDSC) Dr Abhishek, Senior Divisional Personnel Officer (SDPO) Sameer Paul, Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (General) AK Singh, Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD) Pankaj



ciated. He said that since last year till now the employees of the division have discharged their responsibilities well by completely following the Covid protocol during the coronavirus period. On the occasion Additional Divisional Railway Manager (ADRM-Infra) Praveen Kumar, Additional Divisional Railway Manager

Kesharwani, Divisional Personnel Officer (DPO) Vivek Mishra and a limited number of divisional employees were present. For the compliance of Covid-19 prevention guidelines and for ensuring the safety of employees, the 65th Railway Week and the award ceremony at the divisional level is being organised in five phases. After the completion of two phases, this award distribution programme will be organised in three phases i.e. on July 26, 27 and 28 from 15:00 to 16:00 hrs. The vote of thanks was proposed by SDPO Sameer Paul.

Do not politicise Covid-19: Health Min in Lok Sabha

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Seeking Opposition parties to Ensure that people were vaccinated, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Friday said in the Lok Sabha that there should be no politics over the Covid-19 pandemic.

Responding during zero hour amidst noisy Opposition protests, the Minister said the Government is still in talks with US company Pfizer with respect to making its vaccine available in India.

"There should be no politics on the issue of Covid and vaccination. The Prime Minister has said this several times," Mandaviya said in response to a question asked by Shiv Sena MP Rahul Shewale. The Minister detailed how

Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacted with the Chief Ministers over 20 times before allowing them to float tenders for 25 per cent of the vaccine as demanded by them. He said on Jul 21 the Centre started a new vaccine policy when the states conveyed that they were not able to get vaccines purchased at their end.

"I will also not want to indulge in politics on this issue but I want to present the facts," he said, adding that the Prime Minister till date has held over 20 meetings and discussions with the State Governments and Chief Ministers.

He said some opposition-ruled states raised the issue that health is a state subject and they should be taken into confidence.

"Many said Health is a State subject, States said we also need permission to buy vaccines. We said that we have no problem with this. The States said that we want to go out for tender to buy the vaccine. Modi ji said that we are ready to do whatever help is needed," the Health minister said.

He said accordingly, the states were allowed to buy 25 per cent and 25 per cent by the private (sector). The Centre was to procure 50 per cent for the people.

"For the 25 per cent, states issued tenders and we said we will provide all possible help. The suppliers were limited and the Indian government too was holding talks," he said.

Many issued global tenders. But there were only two

Indian companies which had started vaccine manufacturing, the Serum Institute of India (Covishield) and Bharat Biotech (Covaxin), Mandaviya said. He said Moderna has registered in India and taken permission. Johnson and Johnson has tied up with Biological E and work on technology transfer has begun.

"With Pfizer, the Indian government was holding talks with it. But the company said it will not deal with the states and the Indian government is holding talks with us. Even today, an experts group is holding talks with the company," Mandaviya said.

In a meeting with the states, the chief ministers said they were not getting adequate supply of vaccines and the

“MANY SAID HEALTH IS A STATE SUBJECT, STATES SAID WE ALSO NEED PERMISSION TO BUY VACCINES. WE SAID THAT WE HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH THIS. THE STATES SAID THAT WE WANT TO GO OUT FOR TENDER TO BUY THE VACCINE. MODI JI SAID THAT WE ARE READY TO DO WHATEVER HELP IS NEEDED”

Centre should procure 25 per cent, which the states were to earlier acquire, of the vaccines.

So a new policy came into being from June 21 under which the Centre decided to vaccinate all the citizens, he said."The issue is about politics. There should be no politics on

this issue. Our goal is to vaccinate 100 percent people above the age of 18 years. We all need to work on it together. It is not the time to indulge in politics," said the new health minister who replaced Dr Harsh Vardhan on the July seven cabinet reshuffle at the centre.

No record of farmers death during protest at Delhi border: Tomar

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Friday informed Parliament that the Government has no record of farmers who have died during the agitation at Delhi's borders against three new farm laws since 2020.

The Minister said the Government has not undertaken any study to ascertain the apprehensions in the minds of farmers about the three farm laws.

Asked if the Government was aware of the total number of farmers who have died during farm protests since 2020, Tomar said: "The Government of India has no such record." However, the Central Government during discussions with farmers' unions had appealed to them that children and elders,

especially women, should be allowed to go home in view of the cold prevailing at that time and the Covid-19 situation, he said in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha.

Further, in a separate reply, Tomar said, "No study has been undertaken to ascertain the reasons for apprehensions created in the mind of farmers on account of these farm laws. However, the Centre has proactively undertaken efforts to reach out the farmers to remove their apprehensions, he added.

Asserting that the government is serious and sensitive towards farmers' issues, the minister said the Centre has been engaged in active discussions with the farmers unions.

Further, allaying concerns over farmers' privacy data under a new initiative 'Agristack', Tomar said the

government has not involved any private company in developing the digital ecosystem on agriculture. Tomar also said his ministry in consultation with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology is in the process of bringing out a data policy for the agriculture sector.

Agristack is a digital ecosystem for covering everything related to agriculture, including farmers' databases, land records, soil types, and crops. In a written reply to the Rajya Sabha, Tomar said his ministry has commenced the work for creating 'Agristack' in the country and is in the process of finalising the 'India Digital Ecosystem of Agriculture (IDEA)', which will lay down a framework for Agristack. "No private sector companies are involved in building the Agristack," he said.

22 iconic trees relocated for Central Vista Avenue, Centre tells Parliament

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Friday informed the Parliament that only 22 heritage trees had to be relocated because of the Central Vista Avenue redevelopment project.

Responding to a question in Lok Sabha on the relocation of trees to the Badapur Eco-Park, Union Environment Minister Bhopendra Yadav said according to information received from the Central Public Works Department, "only 22 number of trees have been relocated from the Central Vista Avenue to the eco-park, Badapur, and there is no other proposal to relocate trees from the Central Vista Avenue to Badapur". He said there is a proposal to plant 10 saplings for every tree uprooted or removed, and the compensatory plantation will be done at the Badapur Eco-Park, Badapur.

The redevelopment project of the Central Vista -- the power corridor of the country -- includes the revamping of the three-km-long Rajpath from the Rashtrapati Bhavan to India Gate. It also envisages a new triangular Parliament building, a Common Central Secretariat



and new residences for the prime minister and the vice president.

On another query on census of trees, Yadav said, "As per available information, no tree census has been conducted in the recent past."

"However, the Forest Survey of India (FSI) carries out sample plot based regular inventory of trees in forests and outside forests in the country under its National Forest Inventory Programme," he said.

Parl body: Fix upper limit of air fares during festivals

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Taking a serious note of high air fares, especially during the festive season, a Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture in its report 'Status of Aviation Connectivity in the country', has asked to fix an upper limit of air fares for every sector especially in the economy class.

The Committee also expressed concern that there is no uniformity in the cancellation charges levied by the airlines. The Committee also recommended that five Star/three Star hotels and multiplexes should be constructed near the new airports and asked the Ministry should consider mandatorily earmarking minimum 100 acres of land, while making plans for future airports.

The Committee chairman TG Venkatesh, presented its report in the Parliament on Friday. On the exorbitant air fares, the Committee expressed hope that the Ministry should consider fixing an upper limit for every sector, especially in the economy class of air fares. The Committee also noted that even after reduction of the Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) prices over a period of time, the airlines have not passed on the benefit of reduction in ATF prices to the consumers. The Committee recommended that the Ministry should take effective steps to ensure that the airlines pass on the benefit to the travelers by reducing the air fares and inform the Committee about the specific steps taken in this regard and the outcome thereof.

The Committee emphasized the need for rationalizing the cancellation charges and prescribing an upper limit of cancellation charges that can be collected from the passengers.

JCP examining Data Protection Bill gets extension till Winter Session

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amidst disruption of the Lok Sabha business and slogan-shouting, the Joint Committee of Parliament (JCP) examining the Personal Data Protection Bill was on Friday given an extension till the Winter Session to submit its report.

The Personal Data Protection Bill seeks to regulate the use of individual's data by the Government and private companies.

This is for the fifth time the committee's tenure has been extended. The JPC was constituted in the Lok Sabha in December 2019 and was expected to submit its report in the Budget Session.

P P Chaudhary of the ruling BJP moved a motion in the house seeking extension up to the Winter Session of Parliament for the 30-member panel to submit its report.

"That this House does extend up to the first week of Winter session of Parliament, 2021, the time for the presentation of the report of the Joint Committee on the Personal Data Protection Bill, 2019," the motion read. It was passed by a voice vote.

The lower house was adjourned till 1200 hours and then adjourned for the day as order could not be restored in the house.

Ensure that appeals are filed without delays: SC tells CBI

New Delhi (PNS): The Supreme Court on Friday directed the CBI Director to set up a monitoring mechanism to ensure that appeals are filed without delays. The apex court's direction came when the CBI filed an appeal 647 days after the High Court verdict. As per rules appeals against HC orders are to be filed in SC within 60 days.

A Bench of Justices DY Chandrachud and MR Shah while dismissing the appeal on account of delay asked the CBI Director to ensure that steps are taken on the administrative side to monitor filing of appeals.

"We are of the view that the CBI must take all necessary steps to ensure that these kinds of delays do not occur in the future. Delays are liable to cause grave misgivings on reasons for delay. We direct Director CBI to take necessary administrative steps to monitor filing of appeals on an ICT platform so that delays don't take place," the Court said.

In November 2018, a Special CBI judge at Raipur had convicted the accused for three years in a corruption case. The High Court by its judgment of June, 2019, reversed the judgment and acquitted the accused. The appeal against it was filed by CBI after 647 days. As per rule, appeal against trial court judgment has to be filed in High Court in 180 days and appeal against the High Court Judgment has to be filed in Supreme Court in 60 days.

When CBI stated that delay was on account of COVID, the bench said, "There is a delay of 647 days. In application for condonation of delay, explanation given is on grounds of Covid which doesn't explain the entire duration of delay. Explanation of delay on account of Covid is not acceptable since the judgment was much before the onset of the pandemic in March 2020."


उत्तराखण्ड पेयजल संसाधन विकास एवं निर्माण निगम
कार्यालय: अलीहाण्ड अभियन्ता, निर्माण मण्डल,
स्ट्रीट नं. 11 राजेन्द्र नगर, देहरादून। फोन नं. : 0135-2751879 ईमेल: ashcircle10@yahoo.com

पत्रांक-3541/निविदा/210 ई-निविदा सूचना दिनांक- 20.07.2021

अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, निर्माण मण्डल, उत्तराखण्ड पेयजल निगम, देहरादून के पत्रांक 3539/निविदा/209, दिनांक 20.07.2021 द्वारा जल जीवन मिशन कार्यक्रम के अन्तर्गत जनपद देहरादून के विकासखण्ड-सहसपुर की खुशहालपुर पेयजल योजना के निर्माण एवं तत्सम्बन्धी कार्यों हेतु राज्य सरकार की वेबसाइट <https://www.uktdenders.gov.in> के माध्यम से दिनांक 23.07.2021 से 10.08.2021 तक ई-निविदा (e-tender) आमंत्रित की जा रही है। निविदा की नियम एवं शर्तें उपरोक्त वेबसाइट से प्राप्त की जा सकती है।

अधीक्षण अभियन्ता


KONKAN RAILWAY CORPORATION LTD
(A Government of India Undertaking)

Belapur Bhavan, Plot No.6, Sector-11, CBD Belapur, Navi Mumbai - 400 614.
WALK-IN-INTERVIEW NOTIFICATION No.CO/P-R/04C/2021
Konkan Railway Corporation Limited requires candidates for the following posts in various construction projects for its works in connection with construction of Road, Tunnel & New Railway Line etc. on fixed term contract basis.

POST	VACANCY	DATE OF WALK-IN-INTERVIEW	VENUE
PROJECT ENGINEER	01	27.07.2021	KR Vihar, Konkan Railway Executive Club, Sector-40,
SENIOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANT	05	29.07.2021	Seawoods-West, Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra - 400706.
JUNIOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANT	01		Reporting Time: 09.00 Hrs. to 12.00 Hrs.

Candidates may see the details of notification, eligibility criteria etc. on the KRCL website www.konkanrailway.com at the link Recruitment ----> Current Notification and may report directly for walk-in-interview at the above mentioned venue.

Chief Personnel Officer


यू पी ओ प्रोजेक्ट्स कारपोरेशन लिमिटेड
(उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार का उपक्रम) CIN:U16200UP1976SGC004285
कार्यालय : महाप्रबन्धक ज़ोन-7, यूपीप्रोजेक्ट्स कारपोरेशन लिमिटेड, लखनऊ
चाँचा बाट मोहल्लो नगर, लखनऊ ई-मेल : gm_7_up@ppojects.org

पत्रांक : 1192/ पीसीएलएल/महाप्रोज़ोन-7/ई-टेंडर दिनांक : 22/07/2021

अति-अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सूचना का निरस्तीकरण
वर्तमान में कोविड-19 के दृष्टिगत "Construction of STP/ETP Plant (200 K.L.D.) at Autonomous State Medical College, Bahraich" के कार्य हेतु इस कार्यालय की अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सूचना-28/UPPCL/GM-7/E-TENDER/2021-22 दिनांक-19.07.2021 द्वारा ई-निविदा आमंत्रित की गयी थी। यह निविदा वेबसाइट <http://www.etender.up.nic.in> के पोर्टल पर दिनांक-20.07.2021 से दिनांक- 27.07.2021 तक डाउनलोड/ अपलोड की जा सकती थी।अपरिहार्य कारणों से उपरोक्त निविदा निरस्त की जा रही है।

महाप्रबन्धक ज़ोन-7

कार्यालय : अधिशासी अभियन्ता, ज़ोन-8, जलकल विभाग, नगर निगम, लखनऊ

पत्रांक : 207/ईई-8/21-22 दिनांक 20.7.2021

(अति-अल्पकालीन निविदा सूचना)

जलकल विभाग में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु अल्पकालिक निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा प्रपत्र किसी भी कार्यदिवस में दिनांक 26.7.2021 को अपरान्ह 03:00 बजे तक अधिशासी अभियन्ता ज़ोन-8 के कार्यालय के कैश काउन्टर से प्राप्त किये जा सकते हैं। सीलड निविदाएं दिनांक 26.7.2021 को अधिशासी अभियन्ता ज़ोन-8 के कार्यालय में अपरान्ह 3.30 बजे तक सीलड टेण्डर बॉक्स में प्राप्त की जायेगी। प्राप्त सभी निविदाएं दिनांक 26.07.2021 को उपरिथित निविदादाताओं के समक्ष 4:00 बजे ज़ोन-8 के कार्यालय में खोली जायेगी।

1. रतनखण्ड में मज़ान-1/58 से 1/635 तक 250 एमएम डायी की 29 मीटर सीवर लाइन डालने का कार्य, धरोहर राशि रु0 4700/- एवं निविदा मूल्य रु0 200/-

अधिशासी अभियन्ता, ज़ोन-8
जलकल विभाग, नगर निगम, लखनऊ

CANCELLATION OF TRAINS
It is notified for the information of rail passengers that railways have decided to cancel the following Special Trains temporarily due to operational reason. The details are as under :-

Train No. & Name	Date of Cancellation
01060 Chhapra Jn. - Lokmanya Tilak (T) Special Express	24.07.2021
01080 Gorakhpur - Lokmanya Tilak (T) Special Express	24.07.2021

Passengers are advised to follow Covid-19 appropriate behaviour at Railway Premises and in the running trains.

For any kind of information, passengers are advised to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website <https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in> or NTES App.

RailMadad Helpline No. **139**

Visit RailMadad website: www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in & Download Railmadad app.

1659/21

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SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

शर्तें : 1.15 प्रतिशत से अधिक निम्न निविदाओं को खतः निरस्त माना जायेगा। 2.15 प्रतिशत कम की निविदा हेतु अतिरिक्त जमानत धनराशि (Extra Performance Guarantee) जमा करनी होगी। 3.10 प्रतिशत निम्न निविदा डाले जाने पर 0.50 प्रतिशत प्रति 1 प्रतिशत की दर से तथा 10 प्रतिशत से निम्न निविदा डाले जाने पर 1.00 प्रतिशत की दर से सिस्कोनेटि/परफार्मेस गारंटी ली जायेगी। 4. शासनादेश सं0 962/नं०-9-2017/81ज/17 दिनांक 17.10.2017 के अनुसार जीएएलपीडी का धुरानन फर्म द्वारा वास्तविक वाउचर प्रस्तुत करने के उपरान्त प्रतियुक्ति की जायेगी। 5. शासनादेश संख्या-715/नं०-5-2018 -120 बजट/2013 दिनांक 17 मार्च 2018 के द्वारा लिया गया निर्णय कि "नगरीय सड़क सुधार योजनाअर्गत सीमेण्ट कंक्रीट (सीपीसी) की सड़क पर 5 वर्षों तक रख-रखाव किये जाने की ज़िम्मेदारी सर्वस्वनिष्ठ ठेकेदार की होगी। बिटुमिन रोड 05 वर्षों तक के रख-रखाव हेतु आगमन में अतिरिक्त धनराशि सम्मिलित की जाय। परियोजना लागत की प्रतिशत धनराशि परफार्मेस गारंटी के रूप में 5 वर्षों तक के उपरान्त सड़कों के समुचित रख-रखाव होने के दाय में धुनानत सर्वस्वनिष्ठ ठेकेदार को किया जाय" के अनुसार अनुपालन सुनिश्चित कराना होगा। 6. आवेदक निविदादाता को शासनादेश सं0-3890/नं०-5-19-149सा/2019 दिनांक 20 सितम्बर 2019 का अनुपालन सुनिश्चित करना होगा।

मुख्य अभियन्ता

Castle in the air

The Delhi High Court has told political leaders that they must honour the promises they make

It took 89 pages of a Delhi High Court judgment to tell politicians holding high positions in Governments that they cannot go on making promises to people and not honour these. The judgment, in a case relating to a promise made by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, sends the message that it is important to bridge the gap between law and morality and let the authorities, who are either elected to public positions or who hold positions of power, realise that they “are answerable to the people, especially once they undertake or agree to do or not to do a particular thing” and that the citizens would expect that the Government would implement the promises made. The judgment, by Justice Prathiba M Singh, opens with a telling comment that reflects the mood of the society: “The saying ‘Promises are meant to be broken’ is well known in the social context.” The judgment unambiguously says that promises made by the Government or its officials are “judicially enforceable” if these are broken. The judgment reminds the political leaders of things enshrined in the business of governance but forgotten in the melee of politics. One is that good governance requires the said trust to be maintained between those who govern and those who are governed. Two, the sustenance of this trust coupled with the legal certainty of an assurance given, cements the relationship between the citizen and the Government.



Three, citizens repose a lot of trust in a promise made by those who hold Government positions and an assurance given is like an undertaking that is compatible with public duty. One powerful conclusion is derived from the judgment: Once a representation is made by a high-ranking official, it comes within the scope of its authority. It will have a far-reaching impact on the Indian polity which is used to most politicians in power resorting to populism as forethought and governance as an afterthought. A cursory glance through a day's newspapers will throw up scores of promises made by elected representatives of the people that are meant to remain unfulfilled. The present case relates to some poor labourers petitioning the court that Kejriwal should be asked to fulfil his promise of paying the house rent on their behalf if they were unable to pay it because of COVID-19 exigencies. Kejriwal did make that promise in March 2020 but did not pursue the matter further. The court correctly observes, in the context of the case, “that ‘puffing’ which may be permissible in commercial advertising, ought not to be recognisable and permissible in governance”. The judgment is a serious caution to politicians for whom people are merely voters, not citizens. There are millions of political and electoral promises that remain ignored because there is no law to punish politicians, in power or seeking to be in power, who routinely evade accountability. The judgment should prod those in power to desist from playing with people's legitimate expectations.

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PICTALK



Jab-seekers wait in a queue to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, at a district hospital in Noida

PTI

Glitz and guts

The Tokyo Olympics have started. Only blood, sweat and tears will lead to glory

The greatest sporting spectacle in the world has begun in Japan, even though under the scary shadow of the pernicious SARS-Cov-2 virus. Over the next two weeks, the best athletes from around the world will compete in 33 sports and 46 disciplines. As always in the 125-year modern history of the Olympics, the global audience will be wowed by the superhuman performances of the athletes, wondering how some



people — with the same number of limbs, developed more or less in the same proportion and living on the same planet as us — can achieve the seemingly unattainable or near-impossible. But, put in a nutshell, that's what the Games are about. However, never before in the history of the modern Olympics have the Games ever been organised in an odd-numbered year even though these have survived boycotts, natural calamities and man-made wars. Another first is that no spectators would be present inside stadia, thanks to the raging COVID-19 pandemic. Think about it, the world's biggest sporting stage, and not a single soul to cheer

the athletes, say, the fastest woman and man on Earth? In a way, it's poignant.

Focusing on India, a total of only 20 Indian athletes from seven sports (besides six officials) participated in the opening parade on Friday evening. India is being represented by more than 125 athletes in this instalment of the Olympics, with the overall contingent size being 128 members. The parade number was deliberately thinned owing to COVID-19 concerns and the deputy chef de mission had already made it clear that the athletes who have competitions lined up on Saturday — primarily, archery, hockey, shooting and badminton — would stay away from the opening ceremony festivities. From the men's hockey team, only captain Manpreet Singh participated in the event as he was India's flag-bearer along with pugilist MC Mary Kom when Team India proudly walked out into the stadium at number 21st as per the Japanese alphabetical order. The expectations of 130 crore Indians must be weighing heavy on the Indian contingent as it tries for the first time ever to take its medals tally into double digits. So far, our best showing was in the 2012 London Olympics, where Indian athletes managed to scoop up six medals, though none of them was gold. Hopefully, things will turn better this time around. Meanwhile, let the Games begin!

The human-animal conflict on the rise

There's an urgent need to stop designating animals as 'vermin' as it takes the protective shield of the wildlife Act away from animals



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

A practice that continues despite strong and reasoned opposition is that of proclaiming species of wild animals as “vermin” and thus putting them out of the ambit of the protective umbrella of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, the principal instrument for protecting wild animals in India. The wild boar and nilgai have been proclaimed as “vermin” in Uttarakhand, the nilgai and boar in some districts of Bihar, and the rhesus macaque in parts of Himachal Pradesh.

The Act does not define the term “vermin” in terms of what it connotes. It just states in Section 62: “The Central Government may by notification declare any wild animal other than those specified in Schedule I and Part II of Schedule II to be vermin for any area and for such period as may be specified therein and so long as such notification is in force, such wild animal shall be deemed to have been included in Schedule V.” Animals included in Schedule V can be freely hunted.

The Central Government declares an animal as vermin following requests from State Governments and the ground which has been invariably cited is that it causes damage to crops and poses a danger to human life. There have no doubt been cases in which the Centre has withheld permission. The fundamental question, however, is whether there should at all be a provision for designating an animal as “vermin”.

There are several reasons for asking this. For one thing, an article by Anupam Chakravarty, Rajeshwari Ganesan and Rajit Sengupta, published under the heading ‘Enemies of the state?’ in the *DownToEarth* on June 15, 2016, cites animal rights groups as saying that the drive for killing then underway was based on popular perception rather than data. The country had no data both on the populations of animals proposed to be killed and the extent of crop damage they were supposed to be causing. The article stated that, in fact, Uttarakhand's proposal on the basis of which the Centre permitted the killing of wild boars, clearly said, “There is no scientific survey or census of the wild boar population that has



been carried out. However, since the crop damage caused by wild boar is increasing, the wild boar is estimated to be overpopulated.”

Further, experience shows that once killing is permitted, villagers or designated hunters have frequently not followed the methods prescribed. An example is the case in Kerala where a pregnant cow elephant died following several days of intense agony after she had bitten on a pineapple filled with explosives. Enquiries revealed that the pineapple was intended to kill a wild boar which, as a species, had been declared “vermin”. Also, such a barbaric way of killing was not permitted even in the case of wild boars.

State Governments have doubtless laid down restrictions on the methods and guidelines governing killings — such as only rifles and pistols to be used and no killing of injured animals running away to forests, and hunting only after receiving permission from the forest department concerned and the village *pradhan*. But who is to ensure compliance? The fact is, methods that are not permitted are often used. These include laying out live wires

“THE LOSS OF THE VEGETATION THEY FEED ON FOLLOWING THE DESTRUCTION OF THEIR HABITATS THROUGH ENCROACHMENT BY EXPANDING HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, ROADS AND INDUSTRIES, AS WELL AS DROUGHTS AND FOREST FIRES, HAS DRIVEN THEM TO AGRICULTURAL FIELDS FOR FOOD

for animals to be electrocuted, trapping them for murder and poisoning them. There is no guarantee that animals other than those declared as “vermin” would not come into contact with such wires or consume the poison.

The argument that State forest department personnel should watch out for the transgressors and deal harshly with them hardly holds water. It would take a very large number of people and vehicles for doing that. Given that most forest departments have to make do with numerically inadequate staff, deployment on such an errand would leave them with very few people to carry out essential functions like curbing poaching and preventing illegal felling of trees. The result may be a serious diminution of protected species like elephants (for tusks), rhinos (for their horns) and tigers for their body parts which are sought for the manufacture of so-called aphrodisiacs.

Apart from the fact that declaring an entire species of wildlife as vermin is contrary to the spirit and content of Article 51 A (g) of the Constitution which enjoins upon both the Government

and all citizens to show compassion to all living creatures, animals can hardly be blamed for damaging standing crops and attacking people. The loss of the vegetation they feed on following the destruction of their habitats through encroachment by expanding human settlements, roads and industries, as well as droughts and forest fires, has driven them to agricultural fields for food.

Humans do not realise that their own predatory exploitation of nature is increasing areas of human-animal conflict and making non-human species extinct at the rate of 3,000 a year. In this process, they are also destroying the environment and the conditions that have made human life possible. They need to realise that they are not the lords of the universe and must live in harmony with the world around them, including plants and animals. The Greek sophist Protagoras' famous aphorism “Man is the measure of all things” needs to be amended to read, “Humans are the preservers and protectors of all things.”

(The author is Consulting Editor, *The Pioneer*. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

OPPN MUST PLAY ITS CARDS WELL

Sir — This has reference to your editorial on ‘*Rallying forces*’ (July 23). “I will win Bengal with one leg and Delhi with two legs,” claimed Didi. NCP leader Sharad Pawar has ruled out to be the consensus presidential candidate with an eye on the Prime Minister's post in case of a fractured mandate in the 2024 general election. The coming together of the Opposition leaders is a mirage. Though they have different ideologies, every State's prominent Opposition leader has an eye on the Prime Minister's chair. It was a failed attempt for them earlier in 2019 too. They have to really unite, sinking their differences, to fight the BJP.

Furthermore, the coalition form of Government is a failure in our country. Corruption always compromises strict and honest adherence to the coalition dharma. To be fair to it, the BJP has no serious corruption charges against it in the past seven years of its rule. But the ruling party has failed to arrest the fuel price hike, spurt in the prices of essential commodities, handling of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Pegasus expose is embarrassing it now. The Opposition does not put in a strong effort to highlight the Government's shortcomings and misses. But it disrupts Parliament, thus wasting the taxpayers' money, which won't help these leaders. Moreover, even a united Opposition lacks a leader of mass appeal at the national level.

Sravana Ramachandran | Chennai

LESSONS FROM BHAGEERATHI AMMA'S LIFE

Sir — At the age of 107 years and India's one of the first recipients of the prestigious Nari Shakti Puraskar by the Union Government for her exceptional contribution towards women's empowerment, Kerala's “oldest learner” Bhageerathi Amma is no more. Famous as Akshara Muthashi, or Literacy Grandmother, Bhageerathi Amma inspired many by passing the Level Four equivalency examinations at the age of 105, conducted by the State-run Kerala State Literacy Mission (KSLM) in 2019.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had

The Govt has only bombastic claims



More than 4,15,000 people died owing to COVID-19 (thereby leaving at least 16,00,000 family members in insoluble grief, many of them turned orphans or lost the sole bread-earner), hundreds succumbed to the “Long March” and millions found themselves jobless with many of them compelled to kill themselves. But how disgracefully do the who's who of the BJP and the Union Government boast about their “impeccable fight” against COVID and “glorious victory” over the pandemic! So when the party's top leadership asserts that the Pegasus expose is nothing but an “international design” to “defame” the country because of the “success” it had against COVID, it is extremely hard to resist bouts of laughter.

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

also spoken about her during his 62nd episode of his *Mann Ki Baat* programme. In her examination at Kollam, she came out with flying colours with 205 out of a total of 275 marks and full marks in mathematics. As she went on till 107 years of age, she had recently began preparing for her Level Seven exam through digital classes, but one sorrow remains that Amma left without fulfilling the dream of passing the 10th standard equivalency exam. Bhageerathi Amma was one of the few learners in the world who taught others that age is no bar in education. Amma, you are still living in our hearts. May your soul rest in peace and may your movement find success!

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

PINARAYI MUST CLEAN UP HIS CABINET

Sir — It refers to the editorial, ‘*A stitch in time*’. When Kerala Chief Minister

Equally shocking is their magnitude of shamelessness, insensitivity, falsehood and rhetoric.

The displacement of millions of starved, malnourished, poorest of poor migrants negotiating highways for months amid harsh conditions, serpentine queues for procuring the elusive oxygen cylinders, burning of mass pyres in parking lots and mass burials; no other country witnessed such horrors. And all these were the direct result of a series of callous decisions — Trump show, instant lockdown without notice, “Occupy Bengal”, Kumbh Mela, and so on.

Instead of coming up with concrete, sober answers based on logic, facts and truth, it's easier for the Government to just character-assassinate the questioner and invoke fatuous sentiments in the name of the nation. In the same vein, any query regarding the Centre's involvement in the Pegasus scandal is obviously nothing but a “direct attack upon India's integrity”. And, unfortunately, these tactics of jingoism regularly fetch rich electoral dividends for the ruling party in our country. What a tragic state of affairs!

Bal Govind | Noida

Pinarayi Vijayan can take the tough decision of not inducting former Health Minister KK Shailja in his Government (while it is to be noted that she was one of the best performing Minister in the last five years) after creating history of sorts in the last 45 years by winning back-to-back elections and retaining power, then he should not have had any issue in ousting Forest Minister AK Saseendran. Ultimately, Pinarayi Vijayan is in the early days of his second term in succession and he should not allow the Opposition parties any issue on a platter that the latter could use to criticise him. Moreover, when he is not at the mercy of other parties for his Government's survival, then there is no reason for him to not act strictly and set a strong precedent.

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

I am an Opposition leader and I raise issues of public. This is an attack on that. This is an attack on the voice of the people.



Congress leader — Rahul Gandhi

I denounce that the (US) State Department is exercising offensive and humiliating pressures on European countries.

Cuba's Foreign Affairs Minister — Bruno Rodriguez

Kishore Kumar is not just a legend and an icon, he is an institution. He has always been a beacon of inspiration for me.



Actor-singer — Ayushmann Khurrana

During our playing days, both foreign and Indian coaches were given equal opportunities. The same can be followed now.

Former Indian football striker — IM Vijayan

Today every (Punjab) Congress worker has become the president, no difference between leader and workers.



Punjab Congress' new president — Navjot Singh Sidhu

FIRST COLUMN

RAGHURAJPUR
PATTACHITRA

Painting murals to welcome tourists
back to their village



RAKHI GHOSH

After a gap of nearly six months, Abakash Nayak, 54, a seasoned Pattachitra artist of Raghurajpur, the nationally acclaimed heritage village in Odisha's Puri district has picked up his brush, but this time to paint on the walls of his house. He is painting Lord Ganesh on one wall and Ardhanariswara (a traditional form of Lord Shiva and Parvati) on another. "I am happy like the rest of the artists of Raghurajpur village that we are being asked to paint murals to decorate the walls of our houses. Once the lockdown will ease and tourists will start returning to our village, they will witness the fresh look of the village," he said. The artists of this village have been sitting idle with no work at hand since March last year after the nationwide lockdown was announced. Recently, the State government declared financial assistance of ₹10,000 to each of the 150-odd families to decorate the walls of their houses with Patta paintings, bringing smiles to their faces. In Raghurajpur



crafts village, almost all family members are involved in Patta painting, sculpture work, and paper masks. Patta paintings are made on a piece of cloth known as Patta, or on a dried palm leaf which is first covered with a mixture of gum and chalk. Over the prepared surface, colourful and intricate pictures of gods and goddesses, and scenes from mythological scriptures are painted. The village saw no tourists after March 2020. In November, some tourists started visiting, but the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic in February spread among the artists. Banamali Maharana, a Shilpiguru awardee, recalls the times when visitors could see all the family members doing artwork, sitting on the porch of their houses. "We are artists... How are we supposed to pick up spade leaving paint and brush?"

The male members mainly do the painting work, while women prepare traditional colours, the base of the paper mask, and other additional work. Some women have also started Patta paintings. Earlier, they would earn between ₹15,000 and ₹20,000 per month. With overseas buyers, they would earn a little more. Now incomes have drastically dropped. Initially, they managed to make ends meet through loans but money lenders have now stopped giving them money. A few "kind-hearted" art lovers help them out financially. In 2019, Cyclone Fani devastated this artisans' village. All the artwork were damaged. When they began to restart their art, the coronavirus struck. Some started selling vegetables, some opened "paan" shops, or started working as daily wage labourers. But the second wave put paid to these efforts too. Villagers are at present getting vaccinated to fight the virus. "Once unlock happens, the tourists will start coming to our village again. Our vaccination will send a message of reassurance to these tourists," said villager Jitendra who believes that the government should also arrange a vaccination drive for the artists. Raghurajpur is now preparing to welcome tourists with murals on walls. The Department of Language, Literature and Culture in association with Odisha Lalit Kala Akademi has come up with an innovative idea to encourage and support the artists. Each family will receive ₹10,000 as financial assistance while the best five will be awarded after being selected by a special committee. Meanwhile, the younger generation is exploring selling the artwork online. Many have also shifted to the virtual mode to teach Pattachitra-making online. They want the government to train them and arrange for a platform to sell their products to e-commerce companies.

(The writer is an independent journalist from Odisha. The views expressed are personal.)

Cairn looking for arbitration money?

Cairn Energy has submitted a detailed series of proposals to the Indian Government for settlement of the case



SHIVAJI SARKAR

On the very same day that Prime Minister Narendra Modi effected a massive reconstitution of his council of ministers, India got in the shock in the form of a French court freezing residential properties belonging to the Indian government in Paris following a retrospective tax dispute with British power and energy giant Cairn Energy.

The decision will impact 20 properties valued at Euro 20 million (₹177 crore), as part of a guarantee of the debt owed to Cairn that exited India a few years ago. The company with a market capitalisation of £755 million (about ₹7,800 crore) - has filed cases in several countries to pursue the unpaid international arbitration award of \$1.7 billion (₹12,750 crore). The company also filed cases in New York, seeking judicial confirmation that Air India can be classed as the alter ego of the Indian state and thereby jointly liable for the arbitral award.

The French court decision is unfortunate as it is feared it can start a new diplomatic conflict and it also impinges on the sovereignty of the country. It might create an image that India can be taken lightly by MNCs and other private players.

And that is what exactly happened. A case similar to Cairn is that of Devas Multimedia, floated by ex-ISRO executives. It had entered into a deal with ISRO's Antrix Corp. and the National Company Law Tribunal said the 2005 spectrum lease deal was fraudulent. Deutsche Telekom later picked up its stake.

Devas moved an arbitration tribunal saying that its multi-million-dollar investments lost value because of the annulment. In 2020 the tribunal awarded Devas \$1.2 billion. It is now seeking payment from India (now stayed by Supreme Court) in a New York court, asking Air India to pay the amount or forfeit its property, including planes, cargo handling, equipment, and artwork.

In both cases, the authorities in India bungled in pursuing the case. In the case of Cairn and Devas, they moved the courts in Germany and The Hague even as the Indian arguments on jurisdiction and criminality in two arbitrations under Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) under India-Mauritius and India-Germany agreements were lost.

Cairn and Devas have chosen flagship Air India planes and its prime property as a pressure tactic to force India into payment negotiations. Trying to seize planes or property to realise unpaid dues may be an extreme tactic but there are precedents. Aircraft are valuable, mobile, and relatively easy to sell. A few years ago, US hedge fund Elliott Capital Management seized an Argentine naval vessel to collect on bonds on which the country defaulted in 2001.

The Cairn matter is one of the irrational tax system. The company is in dis-



THE FRENCH COURT'S DECISION IS UNFORTUNATE AS IT IS FEARED IT CAN START A NEW DIPLOMATIC CONFLICT AND IT ALSO IMPINGES ON THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE COUNTRY. IT MIGHT CREATE AN IMAGE THAT INDIA CAN BE TAKEN LIGHTLY BY MNCs AND OTHER PRIVATE PLAYERS

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



pute with the government over a 2014 retrospective tax demand. The income-tax department seized a 10 per cent stake in Indian operations that Cairn was trying to sell. After a long dispute, it went for international arbitration and Cairn won the \$ 1.7 billion award.

The issue of high taxation, as recently mentioned by President Ramnath Kovind, retrospective tax, and confusion on predating taxes is an unresolved quagmire. There is an OECD move to have a global minimum tax on corporates at 15 per cent or higher. The UPA government introduced the controversial retrospective tax in March 2012. The NDA II was expected to correct it after 2014 but the bureaucratic system continued with the supposed oddity.

The Supreme Court of India on January 20, 2012 ruled in favour of Vodafone overturning a 2010 decision of the Bombay High Court which ruled that Vodafone was liable to retrospectively pay \$2 billion income-tax because Indian capital gains taxes (CGT) applied on the share transfers between two non-resident entities.

But the smitten tax officials took a different route to circumvent the SC ruling with the introduction of the retrospective tax in March 2012, allowing the government to levy CGT — a move that was piloted by former finance minister Pranab Mukherjee in 2012.

In March 2018 the then finance minister, the late Arun Jaitley, said that the decision to tax Vodafone retrospectively by UPA was erroneous and also that the "present government will not be going down that path". On July 18,

2014, he had said that India would not levy any tax with a retrospective effect that creates an additional burden. But Jaitley made no move to repeal the 2011 law.

The statements of Jaitley and Prime Minister Narendra Modi pledging not to use retrospective taxation to overturn on Cairn Energy were used by a three-member tribunal at the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague on December 20, 2020, to rule that the 2006 reorganisation of Cairn Energy's India business before listing on local bourses was not "unlawful tax avoidance" and ordered the tax authorities to drop the tax demand. This did not happen due to bureaucratic audacity.

Cairn has moved for implementation of the arbitration award in several jurisdictions on different continents, including the US, the UK, Canada, Singapore, Mauritius, France, and the Netherlands as the company intends to focus on high-value assets. Cairn has submitted detailed series of proposals to the Indian government for settlement of the case. The NDA government is now opposing its stand apparently under pressure of officials.

It rattles India. Would the country lose its flagship aircraft carrier and other prime assets? Technically it may be so but authorities say that they are yet to receive a notice or communication from the French court and the government would vigorously defend its case. It translates into more litigations as well as negotiations. Director of Cairn's corporate communication David Nisbet says that the company is keen on an agreed settlement with India and keep the

trust of its shareholders.

So, it has identified \$70-billion worth of Indian assets to retrieve the \$1.7 billion award. However, an international company knows that while it is important to contest governments, it also needs their goodwill to be in business.

The government is also in negotiations since January 2021, even before the present French order was flashed. It may give Cairn Energy one of the surrendered oilfields — Ratna R-series — in the Arabian Sea that was taken away from Essar-Premier Oil in 2016 instead of an arbitration payment. Cairn had spudded the biggest inland oil wells in Barmer, indicated in a survey by NGRI. It exited the country after it was given ₹10247 crore retro-tax demand. Apparently, the government wants that the biggest oil company with one of the lowest operational costs come back to India to shore up its image as also create a show window for the international investors.

It is also looking at the other option of giving it the Barmer oilfield. Vedanta, which now operates the field, has so far has not agreed to the government conditions for extending its contract. Under Vedanta, Rajasthan oilfields have seen a steady decline in output. Cairn has protested against the high \$9 cress per barrel on the oil produced.

The bureaucrats had the issues mired in a web. A political decision to annul retro-tax under Prime Minister Narendra Modi can ensure that a Cairn, Vodafone, Devas, or Vedanta is not repeated and bureaucrats do not muddy the waters.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

NARENDRA MODI AND AMIT SHAH USED THE PEGASUS SPYWARE AGAINST INDIA AND ITS INSTITUTIONS, AND THE ONLY WORD FOR IT IS TREASON.
— FORMER CONGRESS PRESIDENT RAHUL GANDHI



THE CONGRESS IS DETERMINED TO STALL THE HOUSE FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER AFTER BEING REJECTED TWICE BY PEOPLE IN 2014 AND 2019.
— BJP SPOKESPERSON RAJYAVARDHAN RATHORE

Rejuvenating agricultural marketing through cooperatives

Farmer aggregation is necessary to organise them, reduce transaction costs and enable members to share information & take collective decisions

Agricultural and allied activities continue to be the backbone of the Indian economy supporting the livelihood of 60 per cent of the population and contributing 1/6th of GDP. It used to account for more than half of GDP in 1951.

Half of the arable area continues to depend on the monsoon for irrigation. The proportion of gross irrigated area to total cropped area could increase from 31 per cent in 1984-85 to only 45 per cent, as per the agriculture census of 2010-11. The total operated area under agriculture decreased from 16 crore hectares in 2010-11 to 15.8 crore hectares in 2015-16.

With succession not based on primogeniture, population explosion has resulted in frag-



SUBHASH C. PANDEY

(The writer is former Special Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, GOI. The views expressed are personal.)

mentation of landholdings. Total operational holdings increased from 13.8 crore in 2010-11 to 14.6 crore in 2015-16. The average size of an operational holding declined to 1.08 hectares in 2015-16 from 1.15 hectares in 2010-11.

Small and marginal farmers suffer from the absence of economies of scale, access to information, and their inability to participate in the price discovery mechanism. Their participation is restricted by poor vertical and horizontal linkages, limited access to the market, and poor information flow along the value chain. The challenge now is to optimize benefits through effective and efficient means of aggregation models.

Farmer aggregation assumes significance due to



the shift of Indian agriculture towards high-value commodities as a result of the growing importance of the agri-food market caused by liberalization, globalization, improved purchasing power, demand for safe and quality food, and expansion of niche markets.

Integrating small farmers with agricultural markets is a big challenge. Many forms of farmer producer organizations have been experimented with like cooperatives, self-help

groups, Farmer Producer Companies, and commodity interest groups to aggregate farmers to help them benefit from economies of scale and to link them to the markets.

Contract farming and direct marketing are other institutional interventions that can be undertaken by organised groups of farmers. I have come across even Whatsapp groups being used to connect farmers and consumers, bypassing middlemen and getting better prices for farmers. A Farmer Producer Company (FPC) seems to be the most useful for the aggregation of small farmers. The FPCs offer more benefits compared to other formats of aggregation. Its members are able to leverage their collective strength and bargaining power to access financial and non-

financial inputs and services and appropriate technologies leading to a reduction in transaction costs. They can tap high-value markets and enter into partnerships with private entities on equitable terms.

The performance of cooperatives has been generally poor with the exception of cooperative sugar factories and dairy cooperatives in Maharashtra and Gujarat. Amalsad cooperative Society for sapota and farming cooperative Gambhira in Gujarat, MAHAGRAPES in Maharashtra, HOPCOMS and CAMPCO in Karnataka, Mulkanoor women's cooperative groups in combined Andhra Pradesh, etc., have performed well. These successful models could not be emulated else where in the

country. In Budget 2019-20, the government announced new central sector schemes to facilitate the formation and promotion of 10,000 new Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) and handholding of each FPO for five years from its aggregation and formation.

Rainfall deficit, unseasonal rains, floods are natural and continuing risks. Agricultural production has increased but productivity is generally lower than international benchmarks. Water-use efficiency is particularly low. Some progressive farmers are de-risking themselves by diversifying their produce. However, many relatively well-off farmers continue with water-guzzling crops like rice and sugarcane in water-defi-

cient regions. How to incentivize farmers to move away from the over-production of cereals (particularly rice and wheat)? How to go about agricultural diversification to boost oilseeds, protein, and fruits/vegetable production? These are policy challenges.

Rejuvenation of our agricultural sector needs appropriate diversification and value-addition and loosening of outdated controls on agricultural markets. It is hoped that protests against the farm laws - misguided or mischievous or partly both - abate soon and a sensible farmer leadership works on connecting farmers with FPOs. Farmers' apprehensions about the entry of big corporates can be addressed if they become members of the FPOs.

SC rejects Airtel, Voda pleas against AGR dues

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Supreme Court on Friday dismissed the petition of telecom majors Airtel and Vodafone-Idea for re-computation of dues, claiming errors in Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR) calculation. Airtel owes due of ₹8,000 crore and Vodafone-Idea owe ₹58,000 crore to Department of Telecom. In the petition, Airtel claimed only ₹18,000 crore and Vodafone-Idea claimed ₹25,000 seeking re-computation.

"All the miscellaneous applications are dismissed," a bench headed by Justice L Nageswara Rao said while pronouncing the order. Shares of cash-strapped Vodafone Idea plunged as much as 10% to ₹8.10 per share post the verdict that came as a setback for the telcos, whereas that of Bharti Airtel was trading over 1% higher at ₹552 on the BSE. Under invoicing of Telecom companies were caught by CAG in 2011 during their audit on 2G Scam. As per the licensing agreement on every call certain portion (Adjusted Gross Revenue - AGR) of the bill, the companies have to share with Government. The telecom companies went up to



Supreme Court against CAG auditing of their revenue and lost the case.

After the 2016 CAG report finding huge under invoicing and DoT issued notice to all companies to pay a total of ₹1.45 lakh crores. Supreme Court Bench headed Justice Arun Mishra also ratified the Government's claim in October 2019 and ordered companies to start paying immediately, citing that this money was collected telcos from public already per call.

Later Government informed Supreme Court that 20 year installment can be given to the companies. In September 2020, Justice Mishra's Bench allowed 10 years installment starting

from March 2021. The bench had asked the Managing Directors (MDs) or Chief Executive Officer (CEOs) of the telcos concerned to furnish undertaking or personal guarantee for payment of dues.

After getting 10 year installment, biggest defaulters Vodafone-Idea and Airtel approached Supreme Court seeking re-computation of their dues, claiming errors in DoT's calculations.

The apex court on Friday had held that demand raised by the DoT in respect of AGR dues will be final and said there shall be no dispute raised by the telcos and that there shall not be any reassessment.

Benchmarks build on gains as banks, FMCG stocks spurt

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Sensex and Nifty mustered gains for the second straight session on Friday, propped up by banking, FMCG and pharma stocks, but closed lower for the week as the surging Delta variant cases sapped risk appetite globally.

Overcoming a choppy start, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 138.59 points or 0.26 per cent higher at 52,975.80.

On similar lines, the broader NSE Nifty advanced 32 points or 0.20 per cent to finish at 15,856.05.

ICICI Bank topped the Sensex gainers' chart with a jump of 3.18 per cent ahead of its results on Saturday. ITC, SBI, HCL Tech, Axis Bank, Bajaj Finserv, Tech Mahindra

and Sun Pharma were among the other winners, advancing up to 2.56 per cent.

On the other hand, L&T, HUL, Reliance Industries, NTPC, Asian Paints and HDFC Bank were the prominent losers, dropping up to 1.80 per cent.

During the week, the Sensex declined 164.26 points or 0.30 per cent, while the Nifty slipped 67.35 points or 0.42 per cent.

"The markets today witnessed a bumper listing of one of the most awaited IPOs in recent history, Zomato. The exuberance though was not broad based, the market breadth remained negative for the day. The weekly trend too remained marginally negative as all the major market cap

based broader indices closed marginally in the negative for the week.

"The strong show of IT stocks continued whereas slip-pages in reported asset quality and expectations of rising NPA risks dragged down the banking stocks. The expected rise in NPAs may have broader market implications as it exposes the pandemic-caused vulnerability of both household as well as corporate balance sheets," said Joseph Thomas, Head of Research at Emkay Wealth Management.

Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said, "Domestic indices continued to advance ahead tracking rising global risk appetite and higher domestic inflows from local investors."

'Govt set to overshoot FY22 tax collection target as Q1 mop-up reaches ₹5.6L cr'

PTI ■ MUMBAI

With the first quarter gross tax mop-up reaching ₹5.6 lakh crore, Ica Ratings on Friday said the Government is set to exceed the budgeted tax collection target of ₹22.2 lakh crore for 2021-22, led by indirect taxes.

The government has budgeted a modest 9.5 per cent growth in tax collections at ₹22.2 lakh crore for FY22, over FY21 collections of ₹20.2 lakh crore. However, despite the second wave of the pandemic, the April-June

quarter tax collections rose to ₹5.6 lakh crore, which is 39 per cent higher than Q1 of FY20. As stated differently, this is 107 per cent more than Q1 of FY21 and 25.1 per cent of the full-year target, according to an analysis by Ica.

The first quarter is traditionally moderate for tax collection, as the economic activity remains tepid.

The revenue department is yet to officially release tax collection data, but the finance ministry informed the Lok Sabha on July 19 that Q1 tax revenue mop-up reached ₹5.6 lakh crore.

The ministry also informed the House that the excise duty on petrol and diesel fetched ₹94,181 crore in Q1.

"Given that tax inflows in Q1 were 39 per cent higher than the pre-Covid level (of Q1 of FY20), we expect the gross tax revenue to surpass FY22 budget estimate of ₹22.2 lakh crore. Growth in tax mop-up is led by indirect taxes, primarily taxes on petroleum products," Ica chief economist Aditi Nayar said. According to her, Q1 collections at ₹5.6 trillion is 107 per cent higher than ₹2.7 lakh crore in Q1 of

FY21, when the whole country was under lockdown last year.

"But more meaningfully, this is a full 39 per cent more than the pre-COVID level in Q1 of FY20," she said. She further said while corporation tax, personal income tax and Central GST receipts in Q1 stood at 21-22 per cent of the budget estimates, excise and customs collections already crossed 30 per cent of the budget estimate, boosted by the high taxes on fuels as well as a relatively faster recovery in international trade.

NIFTY 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY 50	15856.80	15899.80	15768.40	15856.05	32.00
ICICIBANK	655.95	677.85	650.75	676.40	20.45
ITC	207.00	213.60	206.50	212.45	5.45
WIPRO	586.50	601.80	583.70	598.00	13.80
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	22.95
TATACONSUM	767.15	777.00	766.00	776.85	12.65
HCLTECH	904.70	1003.90	982.60	994.00	15.40
SBIN	422.90	429.95	419.50	428.50	6.45
AXISBANK	749.00	764.00	740.10	755.30	8.55
SUNPHARMA	686.20	698.95	681.60	695.00	7.70
AXISBANK	13044.00	13243.95	12945.05	13208.00	143.40
TECHM	1123.95	1141.50	1115.10	1129.00	10.40
M&M	758.70	767.85	758.25	764.40	5.95
DREDDY	5381.50	5432.00	5360.10	5419.00	34.50
KOTAKBANK	1710.00	1727.30	1694.15	1717.50	10.30
ULTRACEMCO	7599.80	7638.95	7470.00	7497.85	38.85
HDFCLIFE	662.10	667.95	661.80	665.65	3.40
TATASTEEL	1279.35	1295.50	1274.00	1279.05	6.05
BRITANNIA	3427.00	3452.50	3425.30	3441.80	16.50
NESTLEIND	7296.35	18224.00	17882.25	18171.85	77.05
JSWSTEEL	7730.90	7727.00	7700.70	7740.45	0.85
BHARTIARTL	547.70	560.65	532.75	546.80	0.10
BPCL	440.40	465.80	439.30	460.00	0.00
POWERGRID	233.75	233.95	232.05	233.15	-0.10
TITAN	1714.65	1725.95	1697.00	1700.75	-1.00
INFY	1588.55	1598.50	1595.05	1589.00	-1.20
HEROMOTOCO	2805.05	2864.00	2821.00	2835.90	-2.35
HDFC	2497.80	2501.60	2470.00	2485.80	-4.50
CIPLA	952.00	957.70	946.95	948.00	-1.90
TCS	3230.00	3241.55	3206.65	3210.00	-6.35
MARUTI	7300.00	7375.00	7272.00	7283.50	-16.05
EICHERMOT	2565.05	2578.00	2544.00	2553.45	-6.65
ONGC	1115.00	1167.50	1147.50	1151.35	-0.35
BAJFINANCE	6189.00	6225.00	6140.00	6177.05	-18.50
CAJAL-AUTO	3873.00	3925.00	3825.05	3840.00	-13.20
COALINDIA	1447.00	1451.00	1433.50	1441.55	-0.55
HDFCBANK	1451.50	1457.45	1435.30	1443.00	-5.70
HINDALCO	394.10	396.55	390.80	391.85	-1.65
DIVISLAB	484.45	4850.00	4801.70	4823.15	-20.10
NTPC	119.40	120.10	118.80	118.65	-0.55
SHREECEM	29805.10	28227.65	27855.20	27913.00	-167.00
INDUSINDBK	960.00	1000.00	977.00	985.50	-6.65
ASIANPAINT	2104.00	2134.60	2078.05	2085.15	-21.60
RELANCE	3136.45	3134.45	3102.05	3104.00	-16.70
HINDUNILVR	2382.00	2391.75	2354.70	2358.95	-19.20
IUC	106.70	107.20	105.45	105.80	-0.90
JOPL	827.50	827.60	816.00	819.20	-8.80
IT	1644.00	1645.95	1606.85	1617.00	-25.15
ADANIAPORTS	700.00	700.00	672.20	678.80	-13.00
GRASIM	1580.00	1588.95	1545.15	1550.00	-32.05
TATAMOTORS	300.50	301.90	295.00	295.80	-6.75

NIFTY NEXT 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY NEXT 50	39444.30	39521.85	39122.05	39312.35	-47.40
JUBLFOOD	3408.00	3638.55	3390.00	3564.95	135.00
ACC	226.95	237.00	229.50	233.00	47.75
VEDL	263.90	270.25	262.25	267.55	4.75
INDIGO	1694.15	1750.90	1680.00	1724.00	29.85
ABBOTINDIA	17480.00	17850.00	17418.55	17820.00	290.35
ICICIPRULI	636.25	647.50	632.00	644.85	9.45
SBICARD	955.00	961.95	937.10	956.00	13.15
DLF	331.95	335.50	325.00	334.85	4.35
UBL	1434.80	1453.70	1418.20	1446.00	16.20
GODREJCP	979.00	984.00	962.25	980.00	10.35
TORNTPHARM	3012.00	3069.00	2995.95	3045.00	31.45
ALKEM	3369.70	3431.95	3344.00	3399.50	31.35
MARICO	532.00	537.35	528.00	533.90	4.70
MCDOWELL-N	680.00	688.40	680.25	680.25	5.60
PEL	2239.95	2278.00	2207.20	2253.25	18.60
YESBANK	13.10	13.30	13.10	13.10	0.10
AMBUJACEM	403.25	409.50	400.50	402.80	2.60
HDFCAMC	2891.00	2911.85	2883.00	2901.00	15.25
DABUR	590.90	594.10	585.65	591.30	0.40
DMART	3417.85	3425.00	3393.05	3407.00	9.65
HINDPETRO	275.45	292.00	275.05	277.00	0.60
LUPIN	1179.45	1186.00	1176.05	1181.90	2.45
COUPAL	1797.55	1811.90	1780.00	1792.05	3.40
PIDILITIND	2310.00	2327.70	2300.60	2310.20	-0.20
PETRONET	221.00	221.25	219.35	219.95	-0.05
RANDHANBK	305.95	309.45	303.20	304.75	-0.15
BGL	540.00	545.70	535.10	537.80	-0.80
BERGEPAINT	855.70	864.00	851.35	854.00	-1.70
SIEMENS	1982.20	1996.95	1965.55	1972.30	-3.95
PGHH	12917.15	12917.15	12780.00	12780.00	-38.60
PNB	40.10	40.30	39.70	39.85	-0.15
BOSCHTL	15182.70	15192.15	15040.00	15070.10	-67.20
HAVELLS	1158.90	1166.95	1139.25	1144.60	-6.70
MRF	8187.95	81969.75	81000.00	81080.00	-492.00
CADILAC	62.10	62.50	61.20	61.60	-4.20
BAJAJHLDNG	3945.00	3995.85	3755.05	3839.60	-26.80
AUROPHARMA	974.10	976.80	963.30	963.40	-8.70
NMDC	177.00	179.10	172.65	173.90	-1.70
ADANTRANS	950.00	990.00	926.00	955.05	-9.55
ITI	4411.50	4425.00	4344.00	4359.95	-46.20
ADANIET	14300.10	14345.00	13870.00	13995.95	-16.80
GAIL	144.00	145.00	142.00	142.00	-1.80
BIOCON	392.00	401.45	387.30	392.75	-5.75
APOLLOHOSP	3985.30	3999.75	3913.00	3918.20	-67.10
NAUKRI	5258.00	5359.75	5190.00	5135.05	-90.35
ADANGREEN	989.00	991.00	951.25	969.50	-18.75
MUTHOOTFIN	1616.00	1616.05	1560.00	1565.20	-39.45
GLAND	4150.00	4171.95	4091.80	4041.65	-132.05
ICICIGI	1510.00	1512.00	1494.80	1490.00	-53.85
INDUSTOWER	233.00	233.95	215.45	221.15	-10.45

BSE 500

	Open	High	Low	LTP	BALRAMCHIN	341.65	345.85	336.75	342.85	EDLWEISS	92.85	92.90	90.00	90.65	OIL	162.70	163.65	156.70	160.10	NESCO	610.00	616.10	600.70	602.00
DEA	9.32	9.54	7.87	8.36	DRREDDY	5394.00	5433.45	5360.10	5420.50	ORIENTELEC	351.00	363.00	346.25	348.15	J&KBANK	16.35	38.40	37.20	37.35	SJVN	27.75	27.75	27.10	27.15
INFY*	1590.00	1598.70	1586.10	1590.35	AUBANK	1158.55	1173.05	1146.85	1170.00	SOBHA	616.00	634.95	594.35	603.40	NCC	91.40	91.40	87.85	88.30	JAMNAAUTO	86.00	86.95	84.10	85.65
ITC	207.30	213.60	206.45	212.35	KPITTECH	279.95	298.00	277.25	285.25	CONCOR	668.50	674.50	660.85	663.40	KEC	43.50	43.70	42.80	43.05	JKCEMENT	3145.00	3205.00	3057.80	3080.45
WIPRO	586.10	601.80	583.70	595.65	L&TFH	88.65	88.90	88.00	88.20	HONAUT	4320.00	4320.15	4250.00	4259.65	NIACL	162.10	162.10	158.10	158.50					
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	SAIL	127.00	131.00	126.00	126.55	BIRLACORPN	1450.00	1560.00	1450.00	1473.25	VOLTAS	1054.00	1055.00	1043.55	1045.00	NILKAMAL	2568.35	2568.35	2498.95	2521.60
TATACONSUM	767.15	777.00	766.00	776.85	BHARTIARTL	540.50	560.50	532.85	548.55	3900.35	4060.00	3759.05	3828.05	VINATIORGA	1971.95	1976.70	1934.00	1944.05	BRIGADE	321.10	324.00	312.90	316.70	
HCLTECH	904.70	1003.90	982.60	994.00	MPHASIS	2472.70	2526.05	2472.70	2526.05	BAJAHLIND	3900.35	4060.00	3759.05	3828.05	DIXON	4595.00	4595.00	4535.00	4547.70	HAWKINCOOK	5983.00	5983.00	5850.00	5850.25
SBIN	422.90	429.95	419.50	428.50	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	CCL	410.00	428.00	399.70	421.70	TV18BRDCST	41.95	41.95	40.15	40.40	KALPATPOWR	479.00	479.70	468.55	475.75
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	PIDILITIND	2316.00	2327.10	2301.65	2307.00	MAHINDCIE	242.50	248.00	240.10	244.05	BALMLAWRIE	137.90	138.45	136.70	137.05
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	TATAELXSI	4318.00	4318.00	4233.00	4253.45	JMFINANCIAL	107.90	107.90	102.05	102.30	NH	495.35	506.10	493.55	499.95
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	M&MFIN	154.60	156.85	153.75	154.20	WHIRLPOOL	2244.95	2244.95	2178.25	2195.20	SUPRAJIT	316.10	316.00	310.00	312.00
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	EICHERMOT	2574.95	2575.00	2543.10	2553.55	UJVIJAN	235.00	242.25	232.05	236.00	BAYERCORP	5829.40	5895.00	5764.60	5840.00
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	CIPLA	950.30	957.50	947.10	948.00	CARERATING	714.30	722.40	709.35	714.65	LAXMIMACH	7800.00	7947.00	7743.00	7753.75
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	HDFCAML	2885.75	2911.50	2883.00	2901.90	TAKE	61.80	65.25	61.40	60.55	ENDURANCE	1646.20	1662.50	1627.75	1658.50
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	FINCABLES	515.50	544.00	515.50	525.00	MRF	82453.10	82453.10	81000.00	8141.90	HIIFWAM	1392.30	1398.30	1367.00	1317.55
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	AVANTI	620.10	639.75	616.55	644.00	ABBOTINDIA	17509.30	17846.75	17432.15	17799.00	GRINDWELL	1250.80	1281.00	1221.25	1264.25
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	PAGEIND	32989.25	33756.25	32650.00	33240.15	VIPIND	418.00	422.65	408.10	414.90	PGLH	5512.00	5535.00	5463.05	5492.80
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	AFBLR	221.70	221.20	215.50	218.25	KI	725.50	725.50	716.15	718.00	ENAMITOLD	550.00	558.70	549.00	551.40
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	SHANKARA	534.50	553.20	532.10	542.95	SONATSOFTW	800.00	800.00	779.35	782.00	THERMAX	1432.25	1442.85	1404.60	1432.45
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	ATUL	9339.00	9590.00	9200.00	9543.00	EIDIPARRY	413.00	417.70	411.15	412.45	3MINDIA	24258.60	24317.95	23999.95	24317.95
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	NAVINFELTOR	3949.00	3955.00	3884.35	3945.00	UCOBANK	13.55	13.75	13.40	13.55	GULFOILLUB	658.80	660.00	647.60	650.00
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	SPIJECT	78.50	78.70	77.10	77.65	INDIANB	141.00	141.50	138.60	138.95	ADVENZYMES	40.00	40.55	39.35	39.35
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	JIBCHEPHARM	1840.00	1855.00	1800.00	1822.00	BANKINDIA	72.00	73.75	71.65	72.75	GMDCITD	67.40	67.40	65.60	66.30
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	JAICORPLTD	163.50	163.65	155.70	157.35	OFSS	4090.00	4100.65	4002.00	4013.10	PTC	100.65	100.95	99.45	99.75
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	GNFC	363.00	371.80	362.75	364.45	AFLAPOLLO	1656.25	1663.00	1603.00	1618.50	SIS	499.50	504.30	490.05	491.80
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	JKPAPER	223.90	223.90	216.05	219.65	TATACOMM	1360.00	1393.00	1355.00	1361.15	CHOLAHLDNG	690.00	690.00	662.10	664.20
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	POWERGRID	234.40	234.40	232.00	233.50	NATOPHARM	1113.50	1113.50	1078.30	1091.60	TASTYBIT	18581.55	18671.10	18430.65	18519.95
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	WOCKPHARMA	562.00	562.00	543.80	547.85	INDHOTEL	146.00	147.25	143.50	147.00	MRPL	46.75	46.75	45.40	45.55
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	MCX	1678.00	1692.20	1639.00	1645.00	COCHINSHIP	375.05	378.95	371.50	378.80	BBTC	1287.80	1292.05	1267.00	1267.20
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	DBL	569.70	571.00	556.00	565.25	KNRCN	260.00	273.70	264.80	271.85					
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	TRIDENT	18.00	18.00	17.45	17.60	QUESS	789.80	820.00	789.60	797.80					
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	DMART	3439.50	3439.50	3393.50	3415.00	AGESSLOG	324.80	312.80	318.00	321.30					
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	WELSPUNIND	129.90	129.90	125.00	127.15	GUJALKALI	465.00	477.00	463.45	467.00					
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	PRESTIGE	347.85	356.00	340.60	349.25	DABUR	589.50	593.00	586.00	591.00					
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	UFLEX	531.95	539.10	518.80	520.95	HEG	2219.90	2255.00	2205.00	2223.00					
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	NICINDIA	59.10	59.40	58.00	58.10	AVAS	2747.90	2290.80	2656.55	2685.70					
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	RAJESHXPO	578.80	584.50	576.00	581.45	PRSMJOHNSN	145.95	147.00	141.15	142.55					
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	SRF	7890.00	7958.55	7879.75	7910.00	GILLETTE	6094.05	6210.05	6039.80	6100.00					
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	CGCL	526.80	531.55	521.95	524.80	ASTRAZEN	3543.70	3562.85	3467.75	3507.10					
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	PNCINFRA	327.40	328.80	315.20	319.00	GODREJIND	555.75	557.00	535.95	547.60					
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	MMTC	50.65	50.65	48.20	48.70	IFCI	14.98	14.98	14.16	14.30					
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	SCI	112.95	115.55	111.60	112.85	ENGINEERSIN	76.35	76.40	74.70	74.90					
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	HATHWAY	26.00	26.10	25.25	25.90	GHCL	298.00	313.00	298.00	305.90					
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	MAHABANK	23.50	23.60	23.00	23.25	ABB	1712.85	1716.20	1691.65	1696.00					
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	NOCIL	249.05	253.00	248.50	249.40	VGUARD	252.00	256.75	249.20	251.45					
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	PCF	129.80	129.80	128.10	128.35	CHAMBLFERT	307.00	307.00	302.65	303.90					
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	RVNL	30.70	30.95	29.95	30.35	PCJWELLER	26.20	26.45	25.65	25.75					
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55	1048.95	FEDERALBNK	85.30	87.00	83.75	85.40	UJVIJANSEB	30.10	30.10	28.95	29.10	FLUOROCHEM	1629.90	1629.90	1570.00	1570.70					
SBILIFE	1025.50	1053.95	1023.55																					

TO REACH A PEACE DEAL Afghan President must go: Taliban

AP ■ ISLAMABAD

The Taliban say they don't want to monopolise power, but they insist there won't be peace in Afghanistan until there is a new negotiated government in Kabul and President Ashraf Ghani is removed.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Taliban spokesman, Suhail Shaheen, who is also a member of the group's negotiating team, laid out the insurgents' stance on what should come next in a country on the precipice.

The Taliban have swiftly captured territory in recent weeks, seized strategic border crossings and are threatening a number of provincial capitals, as the last US and NATO soldiers leave Afghanistan.

This week, the top US military officer, Gen. Mark Milley,

told a Pentagon press conference that the Taliban have "strategic momentum," and he did not rule out a complete Taliban takeover. But he said it is not inevitable. "I don't think the end game is yet written," he said.

Memories of the Taliban's last time in power some 20 years ago, when they enforced a harsh brand of Islam that denied girls an education and barred women from work, have stoked fears of their return among many.

Afghans who can afford it are applying by the thousands for visas to leave Afghanistan, fearing a violent descent into chaos. The US-NATO withdrawal is more than 95 per cent complete and due to be finished by Aug. 31.

Shaheen said the Taliban will lay down their weapons when a negotiated government acceptable to all sides in the

conflict is installed in Kabul and Ghani's government is gone.

"I want to make it clear that we do not believe in the monopoly of power because any governments who (sought) to monopolise power in Afghanistan in the past, were not successful governments," said Shaheen, apparently including the Taliban's own five-year rule in that assessment. "So we do not want to repeat that same formula."

But he was also uncompromising on the continued rule of Ghani, calling him a war monger and accusing him of using his Tuesday speech on the Islamic holy day of Eid-al-Adha to promise an offensive against the Taliban.

Shaheen dismissed Ghani's right to govern, resurrecting allegations of widespread fraud that surrounded Ghani's 2019 election win. After that vote, both Ghani and his rival Abdullah Abdullah declared themselves president. After a compromise deal, Abdullah is now No 2 in the government and heads the reconciliation council.

Ghani has often said he will remain in office until new elections can determine the next government. His critics — including ones outside the Taliban — accuse him of seeking only to keep power, causing splits among government supporters.

Myanmar prisoners protest military with chants, songs

AP ■ BANGKOK

Prisoners inside Myanmar's most notorious jail held a protest Friday, singing popular songs opposing the military government and chanting political slogans, according to nearby residents and to video uploaded to social media.

One video showed a street close to Insein Prison in Yangon with clear audio of voices shouting support for ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi and ousted President Win Myint.

According to a lawyer representing some of those detained, the prisoners were demanding the release of all those held on political charges, an easing of prison regulations and medical treatment for those who have fallen sick amid spiralling cases of the

coronavirus. The lawyer asked not to be named due to the sensitivity of his position. He said he believed talks were underway. A resident, who asked not to be named out of fear of possible repercussions, told *The Associated Press* by phone that she cried when she heard the chants, which lasted for around two hours.

Prison authorities did not respond to a request for comment. Witnesses said military vehicles entered the compound and soldiers were stationed outside.

Myanmar is currently reeling from soaring numbers of Covid-19 cases and deaths that are badly straining the country's medical infrastructure, already weakened when many state medical workers went on strike to protest the army's seizure of power.

Iran's top leader Khamenei says understands protests over drought

AP ■ DUBAI

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Friday said he understands protesters' anger over a drought in the country's southwest, as a fourth death related to ongoing demonstrations there was reported.

The remark, reported by state television, was the first

direct comment on the protests by Khamenei since they began in the Khuzestan region a week ago. Semiofficial news agency Fars reported a man was killed by shotgun fire in street violence in the nearby city of Aligoudarz, which police blamed on "counterrevolutionary elements."

"People showed their discontent, but we cannot have any

Pelosi says 'deadly serious' Jan 6 probe to go without GOP

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Unfazed by Republican threats of a boycott, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi declared Thursday that a congressional committee investigating the Jan 6 Capitol insurrection will take on its "deadly serious" work whether Republicans participate or not.

The Republicans' House leader, Kevin McCarthy, called the committee a "sham process" and suggested that GOP lawmakers who take part could face consequences.

McCarthy said Pelosi's rejection of two of the Republicans he had attempted to appoint was an "egregious abuse of power."

The escalating tension between the two parties — before the investigation has even started — is emblematic of the raw partisan anger that has only worsened on Capitol Hill since former President

Donald Trump's supporters laid siege to the Capitol and interrupted the certification of President Joe Biden's victory.

With most Republicans still loyal to Trump, and many downplaying the severity of the violent attack, there is little bipartisan unity to be found.

McCarthy said Wednesday that he would withdraw the names of all five Republicans he had appointed after Pelosi rejected two of them, Reps. Jim Banks of Indiana and Jim Jordan of Ohio. Pelosi made clear on Thursday that she won't relent, and Democrats mulled filling the empty seats themselves.

"It is my responsibility as the speaker of the House to make sure we get to the truth of this, and we will not let their antics stand in the way of that," Pelosi said of the Republicans.

It is unclear, for now, whether Pelosi will try to appoint more members to the select

panel, as she has the authority to do under committee rules. She left open that possibility, saying that there are other members who would like to participate. But she said she hadn't decided whether to appoint Illinois Rep. Adam Kinzinger, one of only two Republicans who voted in support of creating the panel last month.

The other, Wyoming Rep. Liz Cheney, has already been appointed by Pelosi to sit on the committee along with seven Democrats — ensuring they have a quorum to proceed, whether other Republicans participate or not.

Cheney praised Kinzinger, saying he would be a "tremendous addition" to the panel. Several Democrats on the panel also seemed to support the idea, with Chairman Bennie Thompson of Mississippi saying the military veteran is a "the kind of person we'd want to have."

Post bus blast, China, Pakistan FMs to hold talks in Chengdu

Beijing: Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi will hold talks with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi to discuss several bilateral issues, including progress of a joint probe and increasing security for thousands of Chinese workers after a blast in a bus in northwest Pakistan killed nine Chinese engineers and jolted the ties between the two all-weather allies.

Qureshi, who is due to arrive on Friday night for the two-day visit, will hold talks with Wang in western China's Chengdu city, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said.

China rushed a special team to Pakistan to probe the July 14 blast in a shuttle bus at Dasu area of Upper Kohistan district of the restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province where a Chinese company is building a 4320-MW dam on the Indus river.

PTI

US carried out airstrikes in Afghanistan: Pentagon

Washington: The US carried out airstrikes across Afghanistan in the last several days as part of an effort to support the Afghan security forces fighting Taliban insurgents, the Pentagon has said.

The news of US airstrikes in Afghanistan came a day after America's most senior military officer admitted that the Taliban had gained "strategic momentum," with their forces now controlling about half of Afghanistan's more than 400 district centres.

The Pentagon, however, refrained from giving any specifics of its airstrikes in Afghanistan.

"Without speaking to specifics, I can say that in the last several days, we have acted through airstrikes to support the ANDSF (Afghan National Defense and Security Forces) but I won't get into tactical details of those strikes," Pentagon Press Secretary John Kirby told reporters at a news conference here.

"But we continue to be able to and we continue to, as the Secretary said yesterday, conduct airstrikes in support of the ANDSF," he said.

The commander of US forces in the region, Central Command's General Kenneth "Frank" McKenzie, would retain the authority to call for airstrikes in support of Afghan forces until the US withdrawal from Afghanistan was complete. According to a defence official, the US military has carried out approximately six or seven strikes in the past 30 days, mostly using drones to launch the strikes, *CNN* reported.

A US defence official on Thursday said that the strikes targeted "captured military equipment that the Taliban [were] able to seize from the ANDSF," the Voice of America reported.

"There were enemy forces, enemy personnel targeted" alongside the captured equipment, the official added, speaking on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitive nature of the information. The Taliban in recent days swept across Afghanistan, pushing back the Afghan military and taking over significant swaths of territory as the US nears the ends of its withdrawal.

PTI

UK warns of increased risk of Covid reinfection with Delta

PTI ■ LONDON

UK health officials on Friday issued a warning of an increased risk of catching the Delta variant even if someone has had Covid-19 before and urged caution as further investigations remain ongoing.

Public Health England (PHE), which monitors all variants of concern (VOC) in the country on a weekly basis, found the Delta VOC cases have risen by 33,716 since last week to a total of 286,765 and continues to account for approximately 99 per cent of coronavirus cases across the UK. It also revealed that 897 cases out of 68,688 infections of

the Delta variant — first identified in India — recorded in an 11-week period from April to June were possible reinfections.

"The Delta risk assessment has been updated to reflect early signs of increased risk of reinfection with Delta compared to Alpha [variant previously dominant in the UK]," the PHE said.

"National surveillance analysis, adjusted for different variables including age and vaccination, shows a preliminary signal of increased risk of reinfection with Delta compared to Alpha. Further investigations are being undertaken," it noted.

Turkey: Boat carrying 45 migrants sinks in Aegean Sea

Istanbul: A boat carrying 45 migrants has sunk in the south-eastern Aegean Sea and rescue units were deployed, Turkey's defense ministry said Friday.

The ministry tweeted that the boat capsized about 60 miles (nearly 100 kilometers) south of the Greek island of Karpathos. It said two ships and one plane was involved in the rescue attempt.

Migrants have tried to cross the Aegean Sea from Turkey to Greece in the hopes of starting new lives in Europe. The journey is a deadly one. *AP*

UN council rejects Russian bid to get rid of Bosnia high rep

AP ■ UNITED NATIONS

The UN Security Council has rejected a resolution put forward by Russia and China that would have immediately stripped the powers of the international high representative overseeing implementation of the 1995 peace agreement that ended the devastating war in Bosnia, and eliminated the position entirely in one year.

The draft resolution failed to get the minimum nine "yes" votes for adoption on

Husband chops off nose, ears of wife's lover in Pak

Lahore: A Pakistani man was hospitalised after his nose and ears were chopped off with a knife for allegedly having an affair with a married woman in the country's Punjab province.

The incident took place on Thursday in the village of Muzzfarghar. According to police, Abdul Qayum suspected that Muhammad Akram of his village had an affair with his wife.

"On Thursday, Qayum, along with his other accomplices, intercepted Akram on his way to home and took him to a deserted place where they cut off his nose and ears with a knife and left him in a critical condition," police said. *PTI*

My phones tapped...

From Page 1

Talking about his phone being tapped, he said it was not just about the breach of his privacy but an attack on the people whose voices he raises.

He claimed the Government used the spyware against the Supreme Court as well as the former Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) Director (Alok Verma) when a case was about to be registered in the Rafale deal.

"I have said very clearly that there has been gross theft in Rafale. For whatever reason, none of you people supported me. But truth has a way of coming out. There is an inquiry in France and the Prime Minister himself is responsible for corruption in Rafale," he said.

"The real question is why on the last minute when the CBI Director was about to file an FIR, why was his phone tapped and why was he blackmailed? And who did it? That's the real question," said Rahul Gandhi.

Meanwhile, BJP's National spokesperson and former I & B Minister Rajyavardhan Rathore told newsmen that Rahul should submit his phone to probe agency, and investigation will take place as per the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

The Congress cannot accept the country's development and has been stalling Parliament's functioning often on one pretext or another, he alleged.

Rathore said the Congress was determined to stall Parliament for one reason or another after being rejected twice by people in Lok Sabha polls of 2014 and 2019..

Pegasus rocks Parl; TMC MP suspended for Session

From Page 1

They also showed their cell phones to the Speaker. Harsimrat Kaur Badal (SAD) was holding a placard demanding rollback of the three farm laws.

Slogans included "jasoosi karna band karo" (Stop indulging in spying). As disruptions continued, the Speaker adjourned the House till 12 noon at 11.20 am.

As the House reassembled at 12 noon, Kirit Solanki, who was in the Chair, asked protesting members to take their respective seats. During the brief period for which the House functioned, resolutions were passed to appoint and elect new members in various parliamentary panels as some of the members have become ministers in the recent reshuffle of the Union Council of Ministers.

Covid-hit Olympics...

From Page 1

"The Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 are a light at the end of this dark tunnel."

He added, "Today is a moment of hope. Yes, it is very different from what all of us had imagined. But let us cherish this moment because finally we are all here together."

Even as the opening ceremony took place, protestors gathered outside the stadium and made their voices heard after blocking one of the city's busiest roads, forcing the police to act.

Although there were no spectators inside the Olympic Stadium, there were fireworks and music, from famous Japanese video games, to which each of the competing nations walked in, led by Greece, home of the Ancient Olympic Games, with host nation Japan entering the stadium last.

A total of 19 Indian athletes, including flag-bearers iconic boxer MC Mary Kom and men's hockey team captain Manpreet Singh, besides six officials, participated in the ceremony. The country has a 228-strong delegation in Tokyo, including over 120 athletes.

Deviating from the norm, Vanuatu and Tonga's male flagbearers created quite a flutter after they walked in shirtless and bodies smeared with oil. 'United by Emotion' was the theme of the evening which opened with a countdown video dating back to the time when Tokyo won the bid to host the Games in 2013 before persevering

through a year of postponement due to the pandemic.

It was followed by a 20-second indigo and white fireworks display, highlighting the colours of the Tokyo 2020 emblem and shaped like a fan, which is an auspicious symbol in Japanese culture.

Japanese emperor Naruhito walked in with International Olympic Committee head Thomas Bach. Olympic rings made from the wood of trees planted from seeds brought to the country the last time it hosted the Olympics in 1964 were formed before the traditional Parade of Nations.

Unlike previous Games held in Japan, where participating nations marched into the stadium in the English order of their names, Tokyo 2020 followed Japan's writing system.

After the Olympic oath was taken by athletes, officials and coaches, and the Games were officially declared open, a spectacular artistic display greeted the viewers as the flame entered the city's Olympic Stadium and the lighting of the cauldron took place.

Tennis star Naomi Osaka lit the cauldron on the main stage, atop an octagonal mountain inspired by Mount Fuji. The sphere opened like a flower to embody vitality and hope, a visual representation of the start of the Tokyo Games.

One of the best moments was when a staggering 1824 drones lit up the sky above the Olympic Stadium to form the Tokyo 2020 emblem in a spectacular show.

I'm in full form...

From Page 1

At the same time, Sidhu made an attempt to bypass his run-ins with the Chief Minister by making it clear that his focus areas are the farmers protesting in Delhi, the problems of doctors and nurses and teachers, drivers and conductors, who were protesting on roads. At the same time, he declared that he has no ego issues and will take everyone along and work shoulder-to-shoulder. "The Congress party is united today, contrary to what our Opposition is saying," he said, in the presence of former PPCC presidents, including his predecessor Sunil Jakhar, Cabinet Ministers, party MPs and MLAs among other senior leadership.

Mehbooba's...

From Page 1

The Wire was able to conduct forensic analysis on the phones of two separatist leaders Bilal Lone and the late SAR Geelani, who worked as a lecturer in Delhi University and died in 2018," said the report. Lone's phone data was examined by Amnesty International's Security Lab. Even though this phone set was not the same as the one he used at the time his phone was potentially targeted as per the leaked database, forensic analysis revealed signs of Pegasus targeting. "The signs appear in 2019, and are likely the outcome of a process initiated by an India-based client of the NSO Group," said the report published by The Wire portal. Geelani's phone showed clear signs of

Pegasus spyware activity between February 2018 and January 2019, forensic analysis showed. The days and months in which the infection was detected on his phone match with his appearance in the leaked data, the report added. J&K Apni Party president Altaf Bukhari's brother Tariq Bukhari also makes an appearance in the list and was of considerable interest to the agency which added his name between 2017 and 2019. In addition, at least four members of Kashmir's most influential separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani's family - including his son-in-law, journalist Ifitkhar Gilani and his son, scientist Syed Naseem Geelani - were of consistent interest to the Indian client of the NSO group between 2017 and 2019. Waqar Bhatti, a prominent human rights activist from the Valley, was also potentially a target of surveillance.

Coronavirus can be detected up to 10 feet in air around...

From Page 1

Replying to another question on Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) — a consortium of 28 genome sequencing laboratories of the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Department of Science and Technology (DST), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHF&W), CSIR, Ministry of Education, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and State Governments — he said the overall aim of the consortium is to monitor the genomic variations in coronavirus in India. "Since the inception of INSACOG till now the INSACOG has sequenced 57,476 SARS-CoV-2 genomes. Out of these, 44,334 samples have been analysed and assigned Pangolin lineage classification and submitted to the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) for public health correlation," he said.

100 killed in...

From Page 1

Casualties were reported from places like 15 in Poladpur in Raigad district (15), at Khed in Ratnagiri district (11), at Mirgaon in Satara district (12) and Mumbai (4). There were also unconfirmed incidents from other places in the State.

As the State reeled under one of the worst-ever flood situations, the Indian Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, NDRF and Maharashtra government agencies launched extensive rescue and relief operations in the coastal Konkan region and western Maharashtra.

All through Friday, helicopters of different agencies hovered in the skies of the coastal Konkan region looking for marooned people, while rescuers swam in water to reach out to the stranded people. Hundreds of stranded people were rescued by the relief agencies using helicopters and other means, while as many as 22 people trapped in a bus in Raigad were rescued in the afternoon.

In all, 14 NDRF teams, two each of the Army, Indian Navy and Coast Guard are involved in rescue and relief operations in various affected areas of the State. As many as 59 boats were pressed into service to rescue marooned people in various flooded areas of the State.

Meanwhile, after taking stock of the situation in the rain-ravaged areas in the State, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray announced a compensation of Rs 500,000 for the next of kin of each deceased and free treatment for all the injured in these disasters.

The Chief Minister said the situation that prevailed in Raigad, Ratnagiri, Palghar, Thane, Sindhudurg, Satara, Kolhapur and Sangli was of varied nature. "The overall situation in the state is grim," he said.

The Chief Minister urged the people in the districts and Sangli and Kolhapur to be extra

vigilant as the discharge from the Koyna Dam discharge has also started. "We have given orders to the local authorities to evacuate all the flood victims, ensure accommodation in temporary camps with food, water, medicines and other requirements," he said. PM Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah spoke to the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar and offered full help for the flood victims, while Shah met Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to coordinate rescue efforts through the armed forces for the State.

Traffic between Mumbai and Goa - both by way of road and rail -- virtually came to a standstill for the second day on Friday, as the passengers remained stranded at various places between the two places. While the Mumbai-Goa Highway has been closed for traffic due to severe flooding, the Konkan and Central Railways cancelled at least 30 trains 30 trains, diverted a dozen trains and short-terminated eight trains due to heavy rain.

While the boulder slide that took place at Tali village in Raigad district was the worst rain-related mishap, the neighbouring Ratnagiri district continued to reel under intense flooding. At Chiplun town where many areas remained submerged under water, at least 11 Covid-19 patients died at Kamathe Hospital at Chiplun, as they could not be treated on time owing to the flood situation in the town.

There were reports of casualties in western Maharashtra where more than 20 persons were feared at Ambekar and Mirgaon in Phatan taluka of Satara district in western Maharashtra. At least 25 major roads in the neighbouring Sangli districts remained under thick sheets of water, resulting in the authorities closing down Sangli-Kolhapur by-pass road for traffic.

SHORTCIRCUITS

FAWAD KHAN

Lending my voice to Rajinder Singh Bedi’s classic story, *Garm Coat for Yaar Julahay* was a great experience as it is very close to my heart. There are many thoughts and feelings the audience can distil from the narrative. I tried to give the character a certain dignity that I hope the audience will appreciate.’

RAIMA SEN

‘I think it is unfair to blame an actor for a project’s failure or success because it is a result of teamwork. Everyone is responsible, not only the actor. We read a script but we don’t know how it will eventually turn out. The audiences keep evolving so it depends on the audience and their changing tastes.’

JIMMY SHERGILL

‘I like the digital space. Actors have got another option to consider, now. When an actor is offered a script for a commercial film, the character might be something that has been portrayed before. With OTT, there is scope of experimentation and trying something new.’

GAUAHAR KHAN

‘When the first brief of *14 Phere* came my way, I was asked if I would be okay with playing an older mummy ji on-screen and I was like ‘let me hear the story first!’ After I heard the narration, and understood all the nuances, I couldn’t wait to get start working on the project.’

EMILY BLUNT

‘Dwayne ‘The Rock’ Johnson comes from some hard times, and he wears it very lightly and in a very wise philosophical sense. And so I do go to him for advice because he has lived in the trenches. He has not just winged it, and it has not been just a meteoric rise to where he is now. It’s been a lot of razor blades and tears.’

STUDIO TALK 45 MINUTES

It takes *Chutpah*

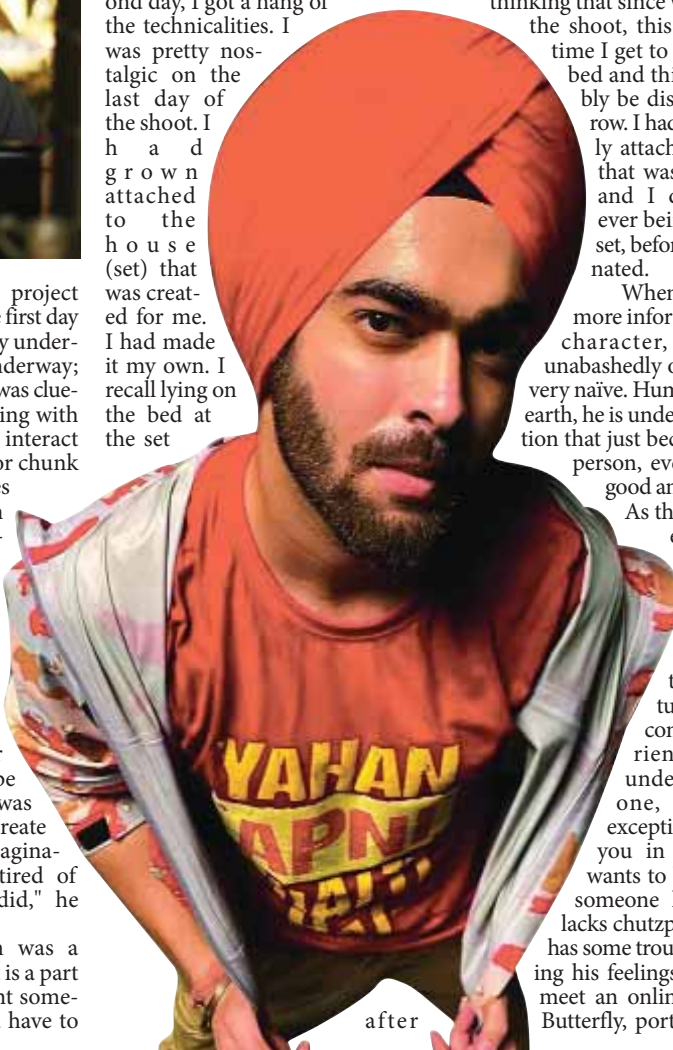
Actor MANJOT SINGH tells CHRISTY VARGHESE that creating reactions, in the absence of co-stars, was a challenge during the shooting of the new series



was the most challenging project that has come my way. On the first day of the shoot, I could not really understand the process that was underway; you could very well say that I was clueless. I had a tough time dealing with the fact that I did not get to interact with my co-actors for a major chunk of the production. For scenes in the series, where I am shown interacting with someone via my computer, their lines were read to me and I cannot explain how difficult it is to respond to someone else’s dialogue when they are not around. The reactions that come naturally, by responding to someone else’s dialogue, or before and after your own dialogue had to be consciously expressed. It was extremely challenging to create those reactions by way of imagination, and you would get tired of counting the retakes we did,” he chuckled.

“All in all, production was a painstaking process. But that is a part and parcel of life. If you want something worth cherishing, you have to

pour every ounce of your being into it. I would say shooting for *Chutpah* was like climbing a mountain. With time, I got used to it. From the second day, I got a hang of the technicalities. I was pretty nostalgic on the last day of the shoot. I had grown attached to the house (set) that was created for me. I had made it my own. I recall lying on the bed at the set



we were done shooting my bits. While another set alongside mine was lit up, the lights were switched off on mine and I remember feeling numb thinking that since we are done with the shoot, this will be the last time I get to lie down on this bed and this set will probably be dismantled tomorrow. I had grown extremely attached to the home that was created for me and I don’t remember ever being this close to a set, before,” Manjot ruminated.

When we ask him for more information about his character, Rishi, he unabashedly obliges us. “He is very naive. Humble and down to earth, he is under the misconception that just because he is a nice person, everyone else is as good and helpful as he is. As the story progresses, little by little, that perception is corrected. He realises that the world bears a stark contrast to how he pictured it and it is a coming of age experience for him to understand that no one, barring a few exceptions, will support you in this world. He wants to bare his heart to someone he likes but he lacks chutpah and hence he has some trouble communicating his feelings. He goes on to meet an online camgirl, Wild Butterfly, portrayed by Elnaaz

after

Norouzi, who provides some abstract guidance, of sorts. You have to witness how he goes on to gain some chutpah which changes his life,” he expressed.

We ask Manjot for his take on the internet, whether it is a curse or a boon, and he said, “I think just about everything has its pros and cons. In moderation, everything is good. Frankly, I feel that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. But those disadvantages are potent and can ruin someone’s life. Talking in particular about social media, we all know what trolling is and it has also been represented in the show. Now, while at face value it might be disregarded but it may result in a chain reaction of sorts which may lead to some serious consequences. I believe that is partly why people subconsciously choose to not reveal their real selves on social media. However, once again, the advantages cannot be ignored. We all have seen how the internet proved to be a lifesaver for scores of people against the backdrop of the pandemic, earlier this year.”

He went on to highlight that the series is something worth your while. He laughed as he said, “I know everyone keeps raving on about how good their show/film is but have you seen the trailer? While it might seem somewhat amusing, I would say *Chutpah* is an incredible social drama and the trailer serves as a wonderful teaser to what’s in store for viewers. Well, while I haven’t seen the series, I can vouch for it since it is directed by Simarpreet Singh sir and written by Mrighdeep Singh Lamba, who also wrote *Fukrey*. Additionally, the work done by the DOPs, Amit Babbar and Gianni Giannelli lent a *Black Mirror*-esque feel to the trailer. *Chaa jayega ye* show, you wait and watch.”

Manjot shared that he is just as eagerly waiting for the third part of *Fukrey*, but it all depends on the impending third wave of the pandemic. “Just like the fans of the franchise, we too are waiting for the film to get a little better before we start working on it. We believe we will start shooting sometime next year. Additionally, I have another unnamed project which might commence shooting before *Fukrey*,” he disclosed, as we wrapped up the conversation.

We just have one question for you. Were you also watching *Chutpah* with Manjot Singh yesterday?



‘It would be wise to wait’

Veteran producer ANAND PANDIT says anticipated blockbusters like *Chehre* will hit the big screen only when the circumstances are conducive

Veteran producer Anand Pandit has put the release of his much-anticipated film, *Chehre*, starring Amitabh Bachchan, on hold and says most production houses would like to wait for conducive circumstances before they release potential blockbusters.

“The industry has a tremendous amount of resilience and patience and we know that a pandemic is not the right time to take unnecessary risks. I am waiting for the government’s directives regarding the opening of theatres and then will take a call as to when *Chehre* will be released,” he says.

Pandit, who has worked to

speed up the vaccination drive within the industry and helped create oxygen centres across Mumbai, is well aware of the dangers posed by a possible third wave of COVID-19. He voices his thoughts, “At this time, the more careful we are, the better it will be for all concerned. Yes, the industry needs to go back to work and it is already doing that to some extent but the exhibitors are an important part of the ecosystem and till they can open theatres to full capacity, we cannot say that we have truly turned a corner. Hopefully, better times are ahead and we can go back to the movies the way we once did, sooner than later.

CELEB CHAT 15 MINUTES

The fight isn’t over

Actor ÉDGAR RAMÍREZ advises everyone to be cautious, in light of the increase in cases of extremely contagious variants of COVID-19

Venezuelan actor Edgar Ramírez wants people to understand that although the world is starting to come out of the pandemic, the fight is not yet over.

“Many families, including mine, continue to be affected terribly. At this very moment I have family members dying of COVID, so it is very important that we remain alert and attentive to this global health hazard,” he said in a remote interview from Los Angeles.

While he did not specify which relatives he was referring to or where they were, he stressed the importance of avoiding fake news, trusting science and getting vaccinated.

“Remember that our grandparents and our parents defeated polio and smallpox with vaccines and that it is very important to be very careful because in times of fear there is a lot of misinformation. We need to trust science and follow the recommendations and be very responsible with the way we handle information in times of fear and uncertainty,” Ramírez shared.

With White House officials stating that



vaccination drives are being ramped up, hospitals in some US states, where COVID-19 cases are soaring, are running out of space because of the delta variant, which is spreading with incredible efficiency.” Ramírez advised caution

against the spread of COVID-19 while promoting Disney’s upcoming film *Jungle Cruise*, in which he plays the villainous Spanish conquistador Aguirre opposite Dwayne Johnson and Emily Blunt. *Jungle Cruise*, an adventure film inspired by the iconic Disneyland theme park ride of the same name, opens on July 30 in US theaters and on Disney+ with premier access.

Ramírez said that being in this film ‘means a lot’ to him because he grew up watching Disney movies. He also hinted at the possibility of a sequel or new franchise.

“It’s beautiful to be part of the Disney universe in such an iconic movie which we’ll hope becomes the adventure saga of this decade,” he shared.

—AP

Ranveer Brar recently joined the Clubhouse app to be a part of the *Aman ki Asha* campaign. In the series, Brar talks about how India and Pakistan share history, culture, language, and cuisine and how food has the power to blur the differences between the two.

Brar shares details of the show and how India and Pakistan have a lot in common when it comes to food culture.

❖Tell us about your debut on Clubhouse and being a part of *Aman ki Asha* series?

It feels fantastic to debut on Clubhouse, I think it’s a great platform. As a kid I’ve always been fascinated by audio media, having grown up listening to a radio. The power of audio has been a big driving force in my life and it’s good to see audio coming back to the forefront again. So, yes, I am excited to be a part of it.

❖Your recent video, where you posted the recipe of *Lahori malai kofte*, also spoke about the unity that food builds between two different countries/cultures, how do you connect yourself with different cultures?

I’d say it’s serendipity that I put up a recipe of *Lahori malai kofta* when I did and spoke about Punjab on both sides of the border, and then *Aman ki Asha* came up. For me, as a chef, and a food explorer, it’s important to connect with culture as much as with cuisine. Food doesn’t stand alone. It has evolved and continues to evolve along with geo-socio-political factors. Hence, when I study the food history and cultural evolution of any region, it helps me connect to the dish better.

❖India and Pakistan practise a similar food culture. According to you what are the similarities or differentiation?

A: With respect to similarities, both countries share similar climates, terrain and agriculture and the last one is the dominant factor behind what you eat. We’ve grown up on this side of Punjab, listening to stories

Mixing it up

Celebrity chef RANVEER BRAR talks about similarities in the food cultures of India and Pakistan



about the other side, more so, in terms of food. I think the similarities lie with the spices, spice-mixing and elaborate cooking methods that are primarily born out of similarities in climate and agriculture.

❖Your favourite dish from Pakistan?

A: My favourite dish is *Murgh choley*, a dish I got introduced to in New York.

❖You are one of the fastest-growing content creators in the culinary

space with over 5 million followers on your social media platforms. How is the transition to digital space treating you?

Social media or digital medium, in general, helps me express myself beyond a format and showcase content unlike on television or other mediums. The volatility that social media brings with it is an advantage and allows you to start afresh each day despite making mistakes. I’d say, I’m very trend-agnostic but platform-friendly. For me, trends are relatively short-lived, you just have to



continuously say what you are saying, do what you are passionate about and keep finding newer ways of being in touch with people who want to be in touch with you.

❖How was your experience cooking with celebs in *You Got Chef’d Season 3*?

It was a fun experience, to say the least. Given the hard times over the past year, it’s great to reconnect with people in the physical space, cook in a different setup. All the celebs I cooked with were super fun, especially Arjun Kapoor. And Myles Carrol’s highball concoctions are the icing on the cake.

❖How has your journey in the industry been so far?

When you are truly passionate about something, you just pursue it wholeheartedly. I am someone who started by romancing food in the lanes of Lucknow, roughing it at Munir Ustad’s kebab stall and worked my way up the ranks. All I knew through it all, was that I was doing what I love and wanted to do it for the rest of my life. And I’ve always believed that food is a giver. When you invest so much in it unconditionally, it will surely give back. Above all, God has been kind. —IANS

CONVERSATION 45 MINUTES

CAPTURING THE RIGHT SPIRIT

Actor MEGHNA MALIK realised that Usha Rani Nehwal is a woman of substance after playing the character in *Saina*. By AYUSHI SHARMA

If not as Farah in *Chalte Chalte* or Tulika from *Pagglait*, one would, undoubtedly, remember actor Meghna Malik as Ammaji of *Na Aana Is Des Laado* and Usha Rani Nehwal from the biopic *Saina*. Before the world television premiere of the film, Malik gets candid about her preparation process, a hunger that drives her to the next role, and much more. Excerpts:

You must have spent a lot of time with Ushaji to get into the skin of character...

Well, the fact is that I was not able to meet Ushaji but Amolji (Gupte) met Saina and her parents. He was my guiding light here. I prepared by watching a lot of her interviews. I was shown many old pictures of Saina and Ushaji. Right from her dressing sense, aura, dialect, energy to the way she reacts to certain situations and the bond that she shares with Saina, I noticed every tiny detail about Ushaji.

Let me share one instance that I clearly remember. When I was shown her old family pictures, I noticed that Ushaji had a habit of carrying a bag with her at all times. It was because she was very cautious about Saina's needs. In the film, you would have noticed her style of carrying a bag. Just like how mothers are, Ushaji always had the best interest of Saina in her mind. She is somebody who is unburdened by the expectation of perfection.

Ushaji herself was a sports person, a district-level badminton player. I can recall another small but important detail about her; she used to always put on sports shoes on *salwar kurtas*, exuding remarkable confidence. Even without meeting her in person, I know that she is a woman of substance, comfortable in her own shoes. I have tried hard to capture all these intricacies.

There's one sequence in the film where the mother (me) slaps the child (Saina) because she made some wrong move in the tournament. This incident actually happened, and I got to know it while watching Ushaji and Saina's interview, where they discussed this episode. Ushaji told Saina 'arey maine toh halke se

mara tha.' But Saina responds by saying, 'Nahi nahi bhot zor se mara tha, apko yaad nahi hai'. And they were crazily laughing about it. From that interview, I got to know the bond that the mother-daughter share with each other. These were some of the points that I have tried bringing it out into the portrayal.

How was your experience of playing such a boisterous character?

The experience was super fun. It was really amazing to capture the spirit of a mother, who has been always there for her daughter. She has been there to motivate her, scold her when she's wrong, praise her for her achievements, and support her for her failures. She was there to ensure that she does not get distracted from anything. There were really beautiful dialogues in the film, which truly conveyed her spirit.

You have been a part of this industry for nearly two decades. What's your process of picking a film?

You are sounding as if *mere charon taraf scripts hi scripts rehti ho* (laughs). Sometimes, it's the money because, of course, you need to pay your bills; sometimes, it's the ensemble cast, production house or at times because of the director... I mean it depends on the project. For example, when I did *Pagglait*, it was a very small part and it got edited even further, but it was about the script. I had really loved it. And here, in *Saina*, the character, script, director, everything was amazing. Ushaji coming from Haryana, I could easily relate to that landscape. It was almost to the point where I made Amolji believe to cast me in the film. I said 'aap or kisi ko le hi nahi sakte, yehi Usha Rani ki spirit hai jo mujhe chahiye'.

From *Chalte Chalte* to *Saina*. How would you describe your transition?

(After a long pause, she says...) Over the years, the journey has been great. As I said, at times you get very small parts,



'IT WAS ALMOST TO THE POINT WHERE I MADE AMOLJI BELIEVE TO CAST ME IN SAINA. I SAID 'AAP OR KISI KO LE HI NAHI SAKTE, YEH TOH MUJHE HI KARNA HAI'. AND HE SAID, 'YEHI USHA RANI KI SPIRIT HAI JO MUJHE CHAHIYE''

and other times, you get interesting roles, where you actually want to capture the soul of the character. But I feel you have to be really lucky to always get meaty roles where you can actually bite into them and relish. It's not always like this, at least with me. I consider myself a student even today. I am still learning. The more challenging role, the more confident you eventually get. You feel happy about the learning process. I strongly feel that the audience should love what you do, and you must enjoy the process while you do it. And I have always believed that the journey is often more beautiful than the destination.

I want to do so much more. I want to play different characters, and learn from them. I don't think I have accomplished anything yet. But I still feel lucky that people recognise me. God has been kind to me that way. I am this person who never gets disappointed by rejections. I learn and move on. I believe in focussing on tomorrow. It's not necessary that every time that you want something, will come your way. But what you can do is: Do your best to achieve it. I can only put in the hard work, rest is upon luck!

(The film premieres on Zee Cinema on Sunday, July 25, 12 noon.)



A full-on entertainer

Filmmaker KARAN MALHOTRA says that *Shamshera* is a visual extravaganza with complex human emotions. By TEAM VIVA

Filmmaker Karan Malhotra, who has directed the much-awaited big-screen entertainer *Shamshera*, reveals the film to be a visual spectacle for the audience.

He says, "I will be celebrating my birthday by finalising the mix of *Shamshera*, a vision I have cherished for some time now. I can't wait to share this film with you all. As a filmmaker, I have been fortunate enough to be able to tell stories that I would like to see as an audience and *Shamshera* is definitely that kind of a story. It is a visual extravaganza with complex human emotions and it deserves to be on the big screen where people have, for years, had a truly wholesome cinematic experience of watching Hindi feature films."

Malhotra feels lucky to have found the right team for this action entertainer and he hails Ranbir Kapoor to be a 'generation-defining actor'.

He says, "I'm fortunate to have found a steadfast producer in Aditya Chopra and an all determined cast and crew for *Shamshera* who have always been by my side right from the word go. Ranbir is a generation-defining actor and has given his best to *Shamshera*. Vaani (Kapoor) plays her strength and compliments him beautifully in the film. As far as Sanjay (Dutt) is concerned, you are in for a surprise."

Karan believes that *Shamshera* celebrates everything that a pan-Indian Hindi film stands for and it will appeal to all audience segments who would want to watch good cinema on the big screen post-pandemic.

Karan says, "I have grown up on quintessential Hindi cinema and I wanted to create a true blue Hindi film that everyone can enjoy in theatres. I feel confident that we have achieved an entertainer that will appeal to everyone. We are all waiting eagerly for the COVID-19 situation to become better in our country and then plan the release of the film in the grandest way possible."

IMMERSIVE 30 MINUTES

Create the future

RAHUL CHAKRABORTY shares that it is painful to see visual artists not getting royalty



can have an extra edge in this era. I believe probable art buyers would be the millennials, who are now in their twenties. We need to make our art visible to those platforms/mediums where our would-be buyers are," says the artist.

Speaking about the concept of artist royalties, he explains, "Artist re-sale rights or Droit De Suite, as known in French terminology, is both an example of an economic right as well as an extension of the personhood theory of Copyright Law, which emphasises upon a work representing the character and personality of the artist/author. It becomes an essential part of moral rights, particularly for visual artists."

"This permits the authors of artistic works to benefit from the rising value of the



work, due to the nature of an artwork being one, wherein, value appreciates with time, popularity and its varied interpretation. The art market has been argued to be too volatile to predict when or to what

extent a piece of artwork may rise in value, if it does at all, and it needs exposure and multiple sales to get to such a point. Artists may initially sell their unique, one piece, artwork for a lower cost, however, the value may appreciate upon garnering popularity, and it is imperative to not jeopardise their interest in the same."

According to Sonam Chandwani of KS Legal and Associates, information about copyright and royalties is not a widely-discussed topic in the creative world, especially the art market. The lawyer says that artists are eligible to get royalties upon the resale of their works.

"The issue of royalty for visual artists has been long overdue. Like musicians and authors, visual artists deserve to

be compensated for their intellectual property and today with blockchain technology, it seems very possible. This will undoubtedly be a positive move for the welfare of the artist community. This is a necessary disruption that requires to happen to bring in more parity for the artist in the secondary art market."

"According to me this is inevitable — if not in the immediate but definitely in the distant future. The bigger question is how it will shape the market. The general perception is that blockchain enabled royalty system will challenge the intermediaries, like galleries, curators and dealers, because it will force transparency in an industry where much of the market thrives on information asymmetry. This might not necessarily be the case. A greater system generated transparency will bring in more professionalism within all the players in the ecosystem," Lubna Sen, art curator and founder of The Art Route, shares.

How is Jumbish tackling the issue? "Piracy, no royalty and a long gestation period are very common challenges faced by an artist. We bring a solution to these through our flagship project — JDAT. This provides better and paperless provenance for our art collectors. Remember royalty and provenance are interrelated. Provenance is a record of ownership of that art work, which includes the owner's history and the painting details."

To keep track of it, Jumbish has brought a microchip called Jumbish Digital Authentication Tag (JDAT) which is a highly secured chip and it can be read by any NFC reader device. JDAT apparently looks like a thin paper, once it pastes at the back side of the painting then the painting becomes itself an authentication certificate."

With pioneering technology like JDAT, the artist can expect to get paid a predetermined percentage of the resale amount, as soon as the sale is sealed.

—IANS

More than what meets the eye

Telling the story of one of the greatest revolutionaries of the Indian freedom struggle, CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD, the biography — *Azad: The Invincible* — is a slice of history told in an anecdotal form. By TEAM VIVA

His archival photographs depict him as a sturdy Indian man with a hand twirling his moustache. We also know him for his role in the Kakori train robbery and the Legislative Assembly Bombing of 1929. But there is more to Chandrashekhhar Azad (1906-1931) than most know.

On his 115th birth anniversary on July 23, Garuda Prakashan launched *Azad: The Invincible*, a biographical novel translated from Kannada to English, building a comprehensive portrait of the independent revolutionary luminary through anecdotes, letters, his contemporaries' biographical references, and news sources from pre-Independence India.

Written by legendary Kannada writer Babu Krishnamurthy and translated by Manjula Tekal, author of *Devayani*, the book details Azad's life and times, from being born in a small no-name village to poverty-stricken parents, running away from home as a young boy, becoming a coolie in Mumbai (then Bombay), learning Sanskrit in Varanasi to his beginnings in the freedom struggle through participation in the Non-Cooperation movement and suffering flogging as a punishment.

The book's original Kannada version, titled *Ajeya*, was published several years ago and has seen numerous reprints. Now, it is coming to the readers in English.

Azad later became a revolutionary and commanded a revolutionary movement in North India for around a decade. Chosen to command the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) after the death penalty of Ramprasad Bismil — quotes from whose biography is among the many rich research material in the book — Azad was responsible for the political assassination of Saunders to avenge

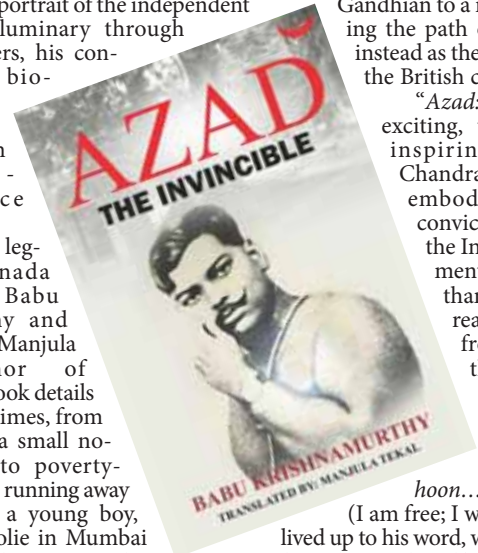
the death of Lala Lajpat Rai, who was beaten up brutally when he was protesting peacefully in 1928. He was also responsible for orchestrating the bombing in the legislative assembly to protest the introduction of two highly oppressive and unpopular bills designed to increase the dictatorial powers of the British in India.

The book also details the politics at that time and looks into the questions like how and why he moved from being a Gandhian to a revolutionary, choosing the path of armed revolution instead as the means of combating the British colonial rule.

"*Azad: The Invincible* is the exciting, thrilling, and ever-inspiring saga of Chandrashekhhar Azad, the embodiment of courage, conviction and heroism of the Indian freedom movement which is 'stranger than fiction. It keeps the reader on tenterhooks from the first page to the last page," says author Dr Babu Krishnamurthy. The young martyr, who roared "*Main Azad hoon... Azad Hee Rahoonga*" (I am free; I will remain free)," lived up to his word, when he engaged with the police in the Alfred Park of Allahabad (now Prayagraj). The book chronicles the episode in every single detail and also what happened to Azad's pistol.

"The book is a slice of history rendered in an easy anecdotal form. In narrating the story of Chandrashekhhar Azad, Dr Babu Krishnamurthy tells the story of his times, his friends and associates, their struggles, and achievements. It describes the values Azad inherited, tried to uphold, and indeed lived by throughout his young life," shares translator Manjula Tekal.

The book was launched in a virtual panel discussion by the author, translator, and Garuda Prakashan co-founders Sankrant Sanu and Ankur Pathak.



The Tokyo Olympics were declared open in an eerily empty stadium on Friday after defying a year's pandemic delay and lingering coronavirus threats that will make them perhaps the most unusual Games in history.

Japan's Emperor Naruhito made the announcement against the backdrop of thousands of vacant seats at Tokyo's 68,000-capacity Olympic Stadium, after Covid-19 forced organisers to ban spectators at all but a handful of venues.

"I declare open the Games of Tokyo," said the monarch, wearing a white surgical mask.

The stripped-down ceremony, simplified to reduce coronavirus risks, unfolded in front of fewer than 1,000 VIPs and several thousand athletes.

A reduced parade of about 5,700 athletes, far lower than the usual numbers, filed into the stadium, not all of them socially distanced but all wearing masks.

International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach acknowledged the Games would be "very different from what all of us had imagined."

But "today is a moment of hope," he said in an address.

The 16-day Games, with 339 Gold medals across 33 sports, have a surreal air after the pandemic compelled organisers to make this the first Games with virtually no spectators.



INDIA'S SCHEDULE ON JULY 24 (ALL TIMES IST)

TIME	EVENTS	ATHLETES
05:00 AM IST	Shooting: 10m Air Rifle Women's Qualification	Apurvi Chandela & Elavenil Valarivan
06:00 AM IST	Archery: Mixed Team 1/8 Eliminations	Deepika Kumari & Pravin Jadhav
06:30 AM IST	Hockey: Men's Pool A	New Zealand vs India
07:15 AM IST	Shooting: 10m Air Rifle Women's Final	
07:30 AM IST	Rowing: Lightweight Men's Double Sculls Heat	Arjun Jat Lal & Arvind Singh
	Judo: Women 48 kg Elimination Round of 32	Shushila Devi Likhambam
08:30 AM IST	Table Tennis: Mixed Doubles Round of 16	Sharath Kamal & Manika Batra
08:50 AM IST	Badminton: Men's Doubles Group Stage	Satwiksairaj & Chirag Shetty
09:00 AM IST	Tennis: Men's Singles First Round	Sumit Nagal
09:30 AM IST	Badminton: Men's Singles Group Stage	B Sai Praneeth
	Shooting: 10m Air Pistol Men's Qualification	Abhishek Verma & Saurabh Chaudhary
10:20 AM IST	Weightlifting: Women's 49kg Final	Saikhom Mirabai Chanu
12:00 PM IST	Shooting: 10m Air Pistol Men's Final	
12:15 PM IST	Table Tennis: Women's Singles Round 1	Manika Batra
01:00 PM IST	Table Tennis: Women's Singles Round 1	Sutirtha Mukherjee
03:54 PM IST	Boxing: Men's 69kg - Round of 32	Vikas Krishan
05:15 PM IST	Hockey: Women's Pool A	Netherlands vs India
LIVE ON SONY TEN & SIX NETWORK		



US' First Lady Jill Biden speaks with French President Emmanuel Macron; WHO Director-General TA Ghebreyesus arrives at the opening ceremony

After struggles, sacrifices & success, Indian shooters eye Olympic glory

Tokyo: Entering the Tokyo Olympics on the back of an unprecedented run that began sometime after the inexplicable meltdown in the Rio de Janeiro Games, Indian shooters bagging a medal or two, or even three to four, is a tangible reality.

All of the 15 shooters are capable of winning medals, but few are seen as sure shot to secure podium finishes in the events that start on Saturday.

One among them is the highly-skilled Saurabh Chaudhary, who will have a few Olympic and world champions standing in his way to glory at sport's biggest showpiece.

Alongside Abhishek Verma, Chaudhary will be part of the first competition day action in the men's 10m air pistol event.

But before that, the fate of Apurvi Chandela and Elavenil Valarivan — in the women's 10m air rifle event — will be decided. A good outing for either of them means India will have won their first medal in these Games.

Both Chandela and Elavenil will enter the competition with plenty to look forward to, despite the occasional blips here and there. The 21-year-old Elavenil, world number 1 and considered one of the country's finest rifle shooters after some fine performances since breaking into the senior team, will certainly fancy her chances.

On the second competition day, India will have the sensational Manu Baker and the hard-working Yashaswini Singh Deswal representing the country in the women's 10m air pistol competition.



The women's 10m pistol event has attracted maximum number of entries but that should not worry the two Indian shooters given their skills and consistency over the years.

In the men's 10m air rifle event, India will have the teenaged Divyansh Singh Panwar and the experienced Deepak Kumar, with the former especially seen as a strong contender after his superb run of form since breaking into the

senior team in 2019.

If these eight participants fire on the first two days, India can expect a handful of medals at the Games, which will make up for returning empty-handed from the 2016 Rio Games.

In the middle and towards the end of the shooting events too, India have in its ranks strong contenders in the form of Rahi Sarnobat, Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar, Anjum Moudgil, Tejaswini Sawant and the seasoned Sanjeev Rajput, besides the two skeet shooters in Mairaj Ahmad Khan and Angad Vir Singh Bajwa.

The likes of Sarnobat, who has won a Silver and Gold in the ISSF World Cups in New Delhi and Oisjek, Croatia respectively, world number one in 10m air rifle Divyansh Singh Panwar and Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar are all gunning for medals. PTI

Mirabai favourite to open India's account

Tokyo: Former world champion Mirabai Chanu will be in focus for her high medal-winning chances at the Tokyo Olympics as the Indian hopes to exorcise the ghosts of a disappointing Rio Games and write a new chapter in the country's weightlifting history.

Competing in the 49kg category, Chanu is being considered a sure shot medal prospect for India as her personal best of 205kg is only second to China's Hou Zhihui's effort of 213kg in the eight-woman field.

The hype is similar to the one five years ago in Rio, where Chanu could manage only one lift from her six attempts and thus could not get an overall total in

women's 48kg event.

The diminutive Manipuri will desperately hope for a different script this time round, one that involves a podium.

While Chanu will have one eye on her competitors' barbells, the 26-year-old's main battle will be with herself. In recent times, her performance in the snatch section has often proved to be her downfall in important competitions.

Chanu has managed to match Zhihui, the favourite to win the Gold, in the clean and jerk category, but her personal best of 88kg in snatch pales in comparison to the Chinese lifter's world record effort of 96kg.

Even USA's Delacruz Jourdan Elizabeth has a better personal best — 89kg — than the Indian, while Aisah Windy Cantika of Indonesia had managed to pip Chanu to win a Bronze in the snatch section at the Asian championship in April.

It is expected that Chanu will try to better her world record lift of 119kg in the clean and jerk category, should the competition demand it.

Interestingly, Chanu has set the highest entry weight of 210kg, which is five kilograms more than her personal best, followed by Zhihui (205kg), who had lifted 213kg (96g+117kg) at the Asian championship. PTI



Indian archers brace up for Korean challenge

Tokyo: World No 1 Deepika Kumari was inconsistent but the male archers' performance was simply underwhelming in the Olympics' ranking rounds, prompting a rejig of India's mixed pair combination on a topsy-turvy day at the Yumenoshima Park on Friday.

The Koreans, who stayed away from all International competitions in the build-up to the Olympics since 2019, reigned supreme, including a top-three finish in the women's section where young sensation An San shattered a 25-year-old Olympic record.

The Indian men's team of Atanu Das, Pravin Jadhav and Tarundeep Rai, however, did not post particularly impressive scores and just about managed to sneak into top 10 in the team rankings.

Deepika slipped from fourth at the halfway mark to finish ninth with 663 points which was way below her best International ranking score of 686. "I feel my performance was good as well as bad...It was in between I would say," Deepika said.

Deepika's biggest challenge is likely to be in the last-eight where she might run into San who is making her Olympic debut. "I want to show my best performance here and I will show that in my next rounds," Deepika vowed to come back strong.

In fact, there will be Korea in waiting for the Indians in the quarterfinals of both men's team and mixed pair competition.



The mixed team, is the country's best bet to win an elusive Olympic medal in archery.

India had identical rankings of ninth in both men's team and mixed pair competitions.

Deepika will not partner her husband Das after the top Indian male archer slipped behind Olympic debutant Jadhav.

Jadhav was the best among the Indian trio with 656 points for a 31st place finish, three points ahead of Das, while Rai, in his third Olympics appearance, took the 37th spot among 64 archers.

India had the option to send entries of Das and Deepika, who recently won a Gold medal together at the Paris World Cup, but the federation went ahead with Jadhav based on his current form.

"Simply put, we picked Jadhav based on his current form, it's no rocket science," Archery Association of India official Virendra Sachdeva, who

is accompanying the team said. In all likelihood, the Indian mixed pair team would run into top seed Korea in the quarters after overcoming eighth-ranked Chinese Taipei.

Placed in the same half as India, top seed Korea will open their main event against 16th ranked Bangladesh.

The men's trio's combined performance was just enough to finish inside top-10 as they totalled 1961 for a ninth place finish in their first Olympic appearance since London 2012.

The Indian men's team might run into top seed Korea, who got a bye into the quarters, should they beat eighth-ranked Kazakhstan in the opening round.

In individual section, Jadhav will face 34th ranked Galsan Bazarzhapov of Russia, Das will take on Deng Yu-Cheng of Chinese Taipei, while Rai's opening challenge will be against Ukrainian Oleksii Hunbin. PTI

Hockey teams start campaign

PTI ■ TOKYO

The men would be seeking to reclaim a glorious past, while the women would be aiming to script some history of their own when the two Indian hockey teams begin their Olympic campaign on Saturday with expectations from both at a high.

Men will be up against eighth-ranked New Zealand, followed by the women's clash with the Netherlands.

With a current world ranking of four, the Indian men's are considered a bright medal prospect this time around in Tokyo.

ALL EYES ON VIKAS

The seasoned Vikas Krishan (69kg) will open India's boxing campaign on Saturday against local favourite Sewonrets Quincy Mensah Okazawa.

He will be the lone Indian boxer in action on the opening day of boxing competitions at the Ryogoku Kokugikan arena.

Can paddlers do the unthinkable again?



Tokyo: The Indian table tennis contingent produced an unthinkable performance at the Asian Games, considered as 'mini-Olympics' by the players. Three years down the line, can they pull off another miracle at the Tokyo Games?

Asian Games may have the presence of continental powerhouses like China, Korea and Japan but the Olympics are a different ball game altogether.

Nevertheless, India exceeded all expectations to win a men's team Bronze and mixed doubles Bronze in Jakarta, ending the country's medal drought at the Asian Games, but getting close

to even one medal here would be a gargantuan task.

Before the paddlers arrived in Tokyo, the only little hope was in the mixed doubles category but an opener against the world number one duo from Chinese Taipei has made the challenge a lot tougher for A Sharath Kamal and Manika Batra.

Sharath along with G Sathiyan has also been handed a tough draw in the men's singles competition.

The 20th seed is drawn to meet reigning champion Ma Long in round three provided he clears the second round (first round bye) in his fourth

Tennis players need miracle to go deep

Tokyo: Indian tennis players need no less than a miraculous performance to get close to the medal rounds as an under-prepared team of Sania Mirza and debutant Ankita Raina faces a tough Ukrainian challenge in the opener while Sumit Nagal has got a tough draw in the singles competition.

Mirza, who is making a record fourth Olympic appearance, and debutant Raina are going into the Olympics without playing a single competitive match together this year, which is far from ideal preparation.

They will open their cam-

paign against Ukraine's twin sisters Nadiia and Lyudmyla Kichenok.

In the men's singles, Nagal is extremely lucky to get an entry into the Olympics but his recent performances do not inspire confidence and he faces Asian Games champion Denis Istomin in his first round. There is a possibility of him getting past the 34-year-old Uzbek but the Indian may next face world number two and Australian Open runner-up Daniil Medvedev from Russia and that could be end of the road for him. PTI

The unseeded Manika is expected to beat Britain's Tin-Tin Ho in the first round and is drawn to meet 20th seed Margaryta Pestoska in the second. Sutirtha, world number 98, plays 78th-ranked Linda Bergstroem from Sweden in the opening round. PTI

Lanka register consolation win

Colombo: Brilliant bowling performances by Akila Dananjaya and Praveen Jayawickrama followed by half-centuries from Avishka Fernando (76) and Bhanuka Rajapaksa (65) helped Sri Lanka to a consolation three-wicket win in a rain-hit third ODI. It was Sri Lanka's first ODI victory at home against India in nine years.

Sri Lanka's spinners made best use of a rain break to dismiss the visitors for a lowly 225 in 43.1 overs.

Sri Lanka nearly messed up a comfortable chase towards the end but got over the line with eight overs to spare. Rahul Chahar was the pick of the bowlers for India, giving SL a late threat with 3 for 54. India's sloppy fielding cost them, as they put down five catches.

With the series pocketed, India coach Rahul Dravid rejigged the bowling line-up along with a couple of changes in the batting order, but it was evident that the lack of game awareness became their undoing on the day.

The rain-break at the end of the 23rd over, which reduced the game to 47-overs per side, helped the home team. The pitch suddenly had a bit of freshness and the ball would both grip and skid, making life easier for the spinners, who rocked the middle-order.

The latest trend of young batters not being able to cope up with slow bowlers was on show as the middle-order looked clueless against left-arm spinner Praveen Jayawickrama (3/59 in 10 overs) and off-spin-



ner Akila Dananjaya (3/44 in 10 overs), who, in his second spell, blew away the lower middle order with turn and bounce.

However, Prithvi Shaw (49 off 49 balls) dazzled with his breathtaking array of strokes, while Sanju Samson again made batting look easy in his run-a-ball 46.

They added 74 runs in 13.2 overs and one can't fault anyone who was dreaming of something big as the duo injected life in a dead rubber.

However, after skipper Dasun Shanaka got one to skid and trapped Shaw, Manish Pandey's (11 off 19 balls) inclusion brought about a break in momentum.

Samson was in no mood to relent but an uppish inside-out check drive was plucked by Avishka Fernando at extra-cover, like a fruit from the tree.

Post the break, when India resumed at 147 for three, the spinners suddenly started getting more turn and the rain had spiced up the pitch.