

**OPINION 6**  
THE INTERNATIONALE:  
KUMBH OF PROTESTS

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KIDNAPPED SCHOOLGIRLS ARE FREED

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CHANDIGARH, WEDNESDAY MARCH 3, 2021; PAGES 12 ₹2

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# BJP goes full throttle in Bengal

Modi to address 20 rallies, first on Mar 7; BJP plans over 800 rallies

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP is set to roll out a mega campaign blitzkrieg in poll-bound West Bengal with Prime Minister Narendra Modi visiting the State on March 7 to address his first public rally after announcement of poll dates by the Election Commission.

Apart from Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP national president JP Nadra are likely to share about 120 public rallies among 120 in the poll-bound Bengal, BJP sources said.

Out of at least 800 rallies to be addressed by the national BJP leaders in the State, the Prime Minister will address 20, party sources said.

Also said that the PM's Brigade Ground rally would also be attended by the people from across the country from as far as Uttarakhand.

The Home Minister and the BJP president are likely to address 50 rallies each in the State which goes to eight-phase polls for its 294 seats.

Chief Ministers of the BJP-ruled States, all key Central Ministers and a number of BJP MPs are to descend down on Bengal to give power to the party's campaign.

The party is also trying to draw some of the Bollywood stars to match TMC's glamour, colour and the punch.

Besides 20-odd rallies in West Bengal, beginning March



7, the Prime Minister will hold at least six public rallies in Assam where the BJP is confident of victory for the second time.

Modi would focus in north and middle Bengal where party had fared well as also in southern part which is a TMC stronghold.

There could always be more rallies by the Prime Minister "if the situation

demands", sources said while pointing out that he is in demand in other States too.

The Left-Congress-Indian Secular Front has already had their electoral "Brigade-show" of strength on February 28.

In the run-up to the Sunday rally, party workers are holding corner meetings to invite people to the rally. BJP workers from other BJP-ruled States too are extending their

## CAMPAIGN BLITZKRIEG

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helping hand to make the Sunday Parade Ground show at Kolkata a grand success.

The elections for the 294 Assembly seats in West Bengal will begin on March 27. The State is going to witness eight-phase Assembly polls this year.

In Assam, the Assembly elections shall be held in three phases beginning from March 27 with the final round of voting taking place on April 6.

Meanwhile, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday attacked the Mamata Banerjee Government for allowing love jihad and cow smuggling in the State.

Yogi, who was speaking at a rally near Bulbulchandi in Malda district said how rampant cases of "love jihad" is happening in Bengal with the State Government allowing that to

happen."

The UP Chief Minister who promised to stop all that anomalies if the BJP came to power in Bengal said, "In UP we have made a law against love jihad and have brought the menace under control... but in Bengal the Trinamool Congress is allowing this to happen."

## TMC MLA Jitendra Tiwari joins BJP

Hoohy: Amid an ongoing exodus from the ruling Trinamool Congress ahead of the West Bengal Assembly elections, two-time party MLA from Pandabeswar in Paschim Bardhaman district and former Asansol mayor, Jitendra Tiwari, joined the BJP on Tuesday.

# Stop pleasing future boss: Adhir to Anand

Sonia forms panel led by JP Aggarwal to screen Assembly candidates in WB

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Issues widened further in the Congress a day after senior Congress leader Anand Sharma slammed the party leadership for its tie-up with the Indian Secular Front (ISF) in the poll-bound West Bengal. On Tuesday, Bengal Congress chief Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury hinted at a possible split in the party when he questioned the intention of his colleague "who is trying to please his future boss" in a reference to speculation that Sharma may join the BJP.

"If his intention was honest, he could have simply called me. I would have explained the decision of alliance partners to him...but he thought it was better to tarnish the image of the Congress to please somebody who could be his future political boss", Chowdhury said.

While Sharma is Deputy Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury is Leader of the Congress in the Lok Sabha. The West Bengal Congress chief went ahead to accuse Anand Sharma of criticising



the Congress without any reason. "Anand Sharma is more vocal against Congress without any reason. He is simply blowing the issue out of proportion", Chowdhury stated.

In response to the criticism over alliance with Furfurur clerics Abbas Siddiqui's ISF, Chowdhury took to twitter to respond to Sharma. "Know Your Facts, Anand Sharma ji."

Would urge a select group of distinguished Congressmen to rise above always seeking personal comfort spots & stop wasting time singing praises of PM (Narendra Modi)", Chowdhury mentioned.

Amid the continued war of words between two party veterans over the alliance partners for Assembly elections in West Bengal, Congress chief Sonia Gandhi on Tuesday constituted a screening committee under the chairmanship of veteran Delhi Congress leader JP Aggarwal. The screening committee constituted for the eight-

phase Bengal Assembly polls starting March 27 also have Mahesh Joshi and Naseem Khan as members besides some ex-officio members, including the State Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) president and the AICC in-charge for West Bengal.

The panel would screen the probable party candidates and put forward its recommendations to the Central Election Committee of the Congress chaired by party chief Sonia Gandhi.

The grand old party also formed a screening committee for poll-bound States of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. While party veteran HK Patil will chair the Kerala Screening Committee, with former CM Oomen Chandy and former Union Minister Tariq Anwar as its member, Digvijay Singh will head TN and Puducherry with senior leaders KS Alagiri, K. Janakesh and former Puducherry CM V. Naraswamy as its members.

# Haryana Bill reserves 75% pvt sector jobs for locals

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Tuesday said Governor Satyadeo Narain Arya has given assent to the Bill providing 75 per cent reservation in the private sector to job seekers from the State.

The Haryana Assembly had late last year passed the Bill, a key poll promise made by the ruling alliance party Jannayak Janta Party.

Addressing a press conference here, Khattar said, "The Haryana Governor today gave his assent to the Bill entailing 75 per cent reservation in the private sector to job seekers from the State. The Government will notify it soon."

The Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Bill, 2020 provides quota for local people in private sector jobs that offer a salary of less than ₹50,000 a month. The quota will initially apply for 10 years, according to the Bill.

Apart from tackling unemployment among local people, the State Government said the



law will discourage the influx of migrants seeking low-paid jobs, which has a "significant impact" on local infrastructure and leads to the "proliferation of slums". The Bill covers private companies, societies, trusts and partnership firms in the State. It provides for training to eligible local candidates when qualified people are not available.

It defines local candidates as those domiciled in the State. For domicile status, a person should be born in Haryana or have lived there for at least 15 years.

Giving 75 per cent reservation in private sector jobs was a key poll promise by Dushyant Chautala's JJP, which is the BJP's coalition partner in the State. Chautala described the assent given by the Governor as "happiest moment for the youth of Haryana."

"The rules on this new law will be framed soon and published," he said at Faridabad.

Karnal Chief Medical Officer Yogesh Sharma said three students of Sainik School Kunjpur had tested positive for the virus on Monday following which the health department took samples of 390 students and staff members of the school for testing.

"The reports revealed that 54 students are COVID-19 positive", Sharma said.

Deputy Commissioner Nishant Kumar Yadav said the school building and its hostels have been declared as a containment zone. The Sainik Schools are run by the Sainik Schools Society under the Ministry of Defence and the students stay in hostels.

The Haryana education department had reopened schools for classes 9-12 in December last year and classes 3-5 from February 24.

# 54 students in Karnal Covid +ve, classes suspended

PTI ■ KARNAL

Fifty four students of a school near here have tested Covid-19 positive leading to suspension of classes and other academic activities.

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# PM, Shah hail BJP's stellar show in Guj local body polls

Party grabs 2,085 of 2,771 seats whose results were declared on Tue

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The ruling BJP on Tuesday scored a big win in Gujarat local polls by winning all 31 district panchayats and leading in 2,085 of 8,474 seats across various municipalities that voted on Sunday in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home State and establishing a wide gap with the closest rival Congress.

The PM and Home Minister Amit Shah hailed the BJP's impressive show in Gujarat.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) bagged 16 seats on its debut in Gujarat.

The BJP gained a lead by winning 2,085 seats, while the Congress won 602 seats so far across various municipalities, district and taluka panchayats in Gujarat where results for 2,771 seats out of the total 8,474 were declared on Tuesday.



"Results of the Nagar Palika, Taluka Panchayat and District Panchayat polls across Gujarat give a crystal clear message - Gujarat is firmly with the BJP's agenda of development and good governance. I bow to the people of Gujarat for the unwavering faith and affection towards BJP," tweeted Modi.

Shah hailed the results of the municipal corporation elections in Gujarat, saying the BJP won around 85 per cent of the seats it contested and that the party continues on its "development journey" under the leadership of Modi.

The Home Minister too targeted the Congress, which saw a dismal performance.

He said the Opposition party won only 44 seats, the number which the BJP won in Bhavnagar corporation alone.

"The municipal corporation poll results have again established Gujarat as BJP's stronghold. The BJP continues on 'Vikas yatra' under the leadership of PM Modi. Today's results are one of the best results in Gujarat," the Home Minister said.

"The BJP has won around 85 per cent of the seats it contested, and the Congress has suffered badly in this election. The Congress won only 44 seats across the whole State, while the BJP bagged 44 seats in Bhavnagar corporation alone," he added.

The Home Minister congratulated Chief Minister Vijay Rupani, Deputy Chief Minister Nitin Patel and the newly-elected State BJP Chief CR Patel for the party's performance.

BJP president JP Nadra said, "I thank the people of Gujarat for reposing their faith in BJP, a symbol of development and trust, in local body elections."

## CAPSULE

GOVT NETS ₹77.815 CR IN SPECTRUM AUCTION

New Delhi: Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Jio cornered more than half of the telecom spectrum auctioned by the Government over the past two days, offering about ₹57.12 crore to consolidate its holding of the scarce resource that is used to carry mobile call and data signals.

ACCEPTANCE OF COVID-19 JAB HIG AMONG WOMEN

New Delhi: Covid-19 vaccine acceptance among pregnant women and mothers is the highest in India, the Philippines and some Latin American countries, according to a survey of 16 countries that asked questions premised on a safe and free preventive with 90 per cent efficacy.

CHAZIPUR BORDER CLOSED AGAIN

New Delhi: The Delhi Police on Tuesday afternoon closed the Ghazipur border again, hours after it reopened a portion of NH-9 for traffic movement, officials said.

AIR 'MODERATE' IN NOIDA, GURUGRAM, FARIDABAD

Noida: The air quality was in the "moderate" category in Noida, Gurugram and Faridabad, while it was "poor" in Ghaziabad.

# Delhi records zero Covid-19 death, 217 cases on Tue

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi recorded no new Covid-19 fatality on Tuesday, even as 217 new cases pushed the city's infection tally to 6,39,681, and the positivity rate fell from 0.44 per cent to 0.33 per cent, the health department said.

The new cases came out of 66,624 tests for Covid-19 conducted on Monday, as per data shared by the department.

Seventy-eight more people have recovered from the disease in the national Capital, it showed.

Delhi had recorded 175 new cases of Covid-19 on Monday. The death toll due to the disease in the city stands at 10,911.

# Kisan stir halts ₹35K crore Delhi-Katra e-way in its tracks

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

After Covid-19 pandemic, now the ongoing farmers' agitation has cast a shadow on the proposed Delhi-Katra Expressway corridor. This includes the Punjab stretch which has been converted into a Greenfield Amritsar Connectivity. About 24,700 trees will make way for the much-hyped project.

The Delhi-Katra Expressway proposes to cover journey from Katra to Delhi in about seven hours and from Jammu to Delhi in just over six hours.

Going through the project details submitted by the project proponent (NHAI) and the Gurugram-based EIA consultant Feedback Infra Pvt Ltd, the EAC members noted that the proposed alignment will also cross 55 canals, 20 drains, four

(NHAI) under the Union Road Transport and Highways Ministry.

The total length of the proposed project is 361.656 km - 262.656 km for Punjab Section of Delhi-Katra Expressway plus 99 km for Greenfield Amritsar Connectivity. About 24,700 trees will make way for the much-hyped project.

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Going through the project details submitted by the project proponent (NHAI) and the Gurugram-based EIA consultant Feedback Infra Pvt Ltd, the EAC members noted that the proposed alignment will also cross 55 canals, 20 drains, four

rivers, five nallahs and three ponds in the Punjab Section of Delhi-Katra Expressway, whereas 20 canals, 14 drains, 3 river and 1 pond will be crossed by the proposed alignment of Amritsar connectivity.

The public hearing was conducted in December 2020 at all eight districts of Punjab namely Sangrur, Patiala, Ludhiana,

Jalandhar, Kapurthala, Gurdaspur, Tarn Taran and Amritsar by the Punjab Government. Sources said the Government had proposed to complete the landmark Katra-Delhi expressway corridor by 2023.

The Government hopes that it will promote religious tourism as the road will connect the holy cities of Katra in Jammu and Amritsar in Punjab.

# HP Assembly passes ₹9125.12 cr Supplementary Budget for '20-21

PNS ■ SHIMLA

Asserting that the Covid-19 badly impacted the State economy, Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur on Tuesday tabled supplementary demands for grants of ₹9125.12 crore for 2020-21 in the Vidhan Sabha.

Speaking during the third day of the Budget Session of the State Assembly, the Chief Minister said that revenue receipts were affected in the Covid-19 pandemic, and it was necessary to ensure that committed obligations of the government are fully met.

Relief was provided to every section of the society and now, the state is coming out of the economic recession, he said.

Giving details of the supplementary demands, the Chief Minister said that out of the total supplementary demands of ₹9125.12 crore, ₹8,448.17 crore is under non-plan schemes, ₹280.84 crore under the plan and ₹396.11 crore under the centrally sponsored schemes.

Major expenditure proposed under the plan schemes includes ₹108 crore to Health and Family Welfare Department for construction of buildings, ₹86.74 crore for World Bank Aided Horticulture Development Project and to provide additional subsidy to the horticulturalists, ₹45.84 crore for Bhunupalli-Bilaspur-Beri Rail Line and development of water transport project between Tatta Pani and Slapper, ₹17.36 crore to Education Department for

the construction of buildings and parking and ₹11.93 crore to Public Works Department for the construction of roads and buildings.

Thakur informed the House that under the non-plan expenditure, a sum of ₹7,999.57 crore has been provided for ways and means advance.

WMA are temporary advances given by the RBI to the government to tide over any mismatch in receipts and payments.

The Chief Minister said that the WMA get repaid during the year itself and its net effect on borrowings is zero. The Government of India this year has increased the amount of this facility from ₹550 crore to ₹880 crore for the state due to the COVID-19 pandemic, he said.

Thakur further said the State Government took advantage of this facility provided by the Central Government, so that the burden of the debt does not increase on the State.

Due to the COVID-19 lockdown of the sources of income of HRTC and HPETDC had been adversely affected due to which the payment of salary or pension liabilities of employees became difficult.

The government ensured payment of committed liabilities of both these corporations. During current year, Rs 258.76 crore has been provided to HRTC as grant-in-aid, he added.

Later, the supplementary demand for grants for 2020-21 was passed by voice vote in the Vidhan Sabha.

# To ensure Govt meets all its obligations post pandemic

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# In a first, IAF to join 'Desert Flag' in UAE

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The IAF, for the first time, will take part in exercise 'Desert Flag' in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), starting Wednesday. The Indian pilots will test their skills with their counterparts of air forces of USA, France, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Bahrain and host UAE in the more than 20 day long multi-national exercise.

Giving details of the prestigious annual exercise, IAF officials said here on Tuesday the exercise is scheduled from March 3 to 27 at the Al-Dhafra airbase, UAE. The drill will take place in the strategically important Persian Gulf region.

The IAF is participating with six SU-30 MKI, two C-17 and one IL-78 tanker aircraft. The C-17 Globemaster will provide support for induction and de-induction of the IAF contingent.

The Su-30 MKI aircraft will undertake long range ferry, routing direct from India to the exercise area with aerial refuelling support from IL-78 tanker aircraft. The aim of the exercise is to provide operational exposure to the participating forces



while training them to undertake simulated air combat operations in a controlled environment. The participating forces will get an opportunity to enhance their operational capabilities along with mutual exchange of best practices.

The large-scale exercise involving diverse fighter aircraft from across the globe will provide the participating forces, including IAF, a unique opportunity to exchange knowledge, experience, enhance operational capabilities and interoperability. Exercising and interaction with the participating nations in a dynamic and realistic warfare environment will also contribute to strengthen international relations, the IAF said. The Indian jets will fly along with F-15 and F-16s of

the US besides Rafales and Mirage-2000s of the French Air Force.

Over the last decade, IAF has regularly hosted and participated in multi-national operational exercises, wherein collaborative engagements are undertaken amongst the best air forces of the world.

Incidentally, the IAF participation comes at a time when India has forged strong ties with countries in the Gulf region. Army Chief General M. Naravane was the first chief to visit Saudi Arabia and UAE in December last year. Moreover, the UAE provided mid-air refuelling facilities to the IAF for bringing their aircraft from France over a 7,000 km journey to Ambala in September last year.

# Politicians, VIPs come forward for jab on Day 2

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the nation's vaccination drive by taking the Covid-19 vaccine, a battery of politicians cutting across party lines and VIPs from various walks of life came forward to inoculate themselves on the second day of the second phase of the vaccination programme aimed to cover persons over 60 years of age and those between 45-59 years with co-morbidities.

Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan and his wife took the first dose of Covid-19 vaccine at the Delhi Heart and Lung Institute on Tuesday. Soon after getting vaccinated, the Minister said, "I request everyone to get vaccinated. After 28 days of the first dose, everyone should get their second dose. Do not worry if you experience minor side-effects, but do tell your doctors know."

Speaking about the CoWin platform, he also said, "There have been some glitches in the CoWIN platform due to the high number of registrations all of a sudden. On Monday around 34 lakhs people had registered on this platform till last night. The number of people registering for the vaccination is increasing rapidly."

He added, "I would like to request all hospitals to update the schedule for 28 days so that people don't face any issue. The Government is ensuring the availability of the vaccine for the whole country so that everyone can get vaccinated."

The others who got inoculated on Tuesday included Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh who received the first dose of Covid-19 vaccine at RR Hospital in the national capital while Union Minister of Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi received the first shot of Covid-19 vaccine at Rampur, Uttar Pradesh.

Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad also took the anti Covid-19 shot in Patna for which he paid ₹250. As many as 2,08,791 people above 60 years of age and those aged 45-60 years with comorbidities have taken the first dose of the vaccine. Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan took the weekly press conference here.

Those with specified comorbidities will have to produce a medical certificate attested by a registered medical practitioner at the time of vaccination at the Covid-19 vaccination centre. This phase is likely to cover close to 270 million beneficiaries. Beneficiaries will have to



Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan and his wife being administered the first dose of Covid-19 vaccine at the Delhi Heart and Lung Institute on Tuesday in the national Capital. Ranjan Dinni / Pioneer

# Don't take Covid-19 lightly, cautions Min

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

While maintaining that India's current positivity rate suggests Covid pandemic is under control, the Union Health Minister cautioned people about not taking the virus lightly after the vaccination programme has started and avoid large gatherings, parties, weddings etc. "These could be super spreading events," warned Dr VK Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog.

As Gujarat, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Delhi, apart from Kerala and Maharashtra reports uptick in cases each passing day, Paul who is also the chairperson of the National Task Force on Covid-19, V K Paul, blamed on the wedding season coinciding with elections in some of them as a few of the reasons for the resurgence of infections.

Paul said he got the information after taking inputs from various State Governments, which engaged with the Centre deputed teams there to find out the probable causes behind the steady rise in the number of cases.

"People have gone lax on the Covid protocols. The reasons which the States have cited behind this laxity include crowding at wedding functions and elections. Many states

admitted this during the interaction with the teams deputed there," Paul said.

Notably, municipal elections and other local body polls have been conducted in Gujarat and few other states recently, while West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Assam and Puducherry are scheduled to go to the polls in March-April.

Wedding ceremonies also act as superspreaders of the disease since they attract a substantial crowd, often throwing social distancing norms to the wind.

Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said though certain states including Maharashtra, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh are seeing a surge in number of Covid-19 active cases, "the fact remains that recovered cases are still more than 97 per cent and active cases are less than 2 per cent (1.51 per cent)".

He pointed out that, "According to the World Health Organisation, if 140 tests per million are being conducted per day and the case positivity rate is at 5% or below, it means the Covid-19 pandemic is under control. We are very close to that mark at 5.11% overall case positivity."

# K'taka Minister gets vaccinated at home, Centre seeks report on vaccination protocol violation



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Taking exception to a Karnataka Minister's act of getting vaccinated at his residence, the Union Health Ministry called it a violation of protocol and has sought a report in the matter. However, the Minister BC Patil brazened it out saying that his decision to take the vaccine at home cannot be considered wrong.

The video and pictures of health officials administering the vaccine at Patil's home were widely shared on social media where people talked about the misuse of processes by the minister at a time when Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah among

other Cabinet Ministers had gone to the hospital to receive the shot.

Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said at a press briefing on Tuesday that "This is not allowed in the protocol. We have asked for a report from the State Government."

However, the minister in question justified his action, arguing that, "There were many people in the house and I would have to wait for around half an hour at the hospital is why I took it at home."

He added that there were certain privileges and his decision to take the vaccine at home cannot be considered wrong. Patil said that he had only called health officials home for the vaccine.

# Cong targeting its stalwarts who are backing rightful agenda of Modi: BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In the backdrop of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's full-time praise of 'disillusion' Congress leader Gulam Nabi Azad, a comment which the latter richly repelled this week, the BJP on Tuesday expressed its 'sadness' over 'Congress targeting its stalwarts who are backing the 'rightful agenda' of Modi.

BJP took a dig at the Congress amid a vocal dissent within the opposition party, saying its ideology is all about fulfilling the Congress leader's "ambition", and anyone speaking against it or standing with the rightful agenda of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is castigated.

BJP's national spokesperson Sambit Patra told a press conference here that the Congress will "castigate" anyone who wants democracy in the party, wants its president to be elected, speaks in favour of politics of development or stands with Modi's rightful agenda.

While stating that the G23, a caste to the group of 23 senior Congressmen pushing for an organisational overhaul in the party, is an internal matter of the opposition party, Patra said it is "saddening to see senior leaders like Gulam Nabi Azad and others being targeted."

The Congress is now all about four leaders, he alleged, referring to its president Sonia Gandhi, her son Rahul and daughter Priyanka Vadra —

both party general secretaries — and Priyanka's husband Robert Vadra.

"Their only agenda is 'hate Modi'. It has grown to such an extent that Congress workers are protesting on the streets against their own leaders who have praised good works of Modi," he said answering a question.

Azad had praised Modi in an event - G-23 met in Jammu on Saturday, saying he speaks frankly about his past as a tea-seller and does not try to hide his background from the world. Azad and others being targeted, last month, while speaking in the Rajya Sabha in the last session of the Parliament as he went on praising the retiring Azad.

# EC slashes public notice time for registration of new parties to 7 days

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Keeping in view the prevalent restrictions on account of Covid-19, the Election Commission (EC) on Tuesday reduced the public notice period for registering new political parties from 30 days to seven days in all the five poll-bound States. This relaxation will remain in force till March 19, the last date for filing nominations in Assam, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Puducherry, and till April 7 for West Bengal (the last date for filing nominations for the last phase in the State).

The order said a party seeking registration with the Commission has to submit an application within a period of 30 days following the date of its formation. According to officials, 60 to 70 political parties have approached the poll body in the past two-three months seeking registration.

As per the existing guidelines, the applicant association should publish the proposed name of the party in two national daily newspapers and two

local daily newspapers, on two days for submitting objections, if any, with regard to the proposed registration of the party, within 30 days from its publication. The EC has announced general elections for the legislative Assemblies of West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Puducherry on February 26. It has been brought to the notice of the EC that in view of the Covid pandemic situation, there was dislocation and delay in moving applications for registration, which in turn led to delay in registration as a political party. After considering all aspects of the matter, the Commission has given a relaxation by reducing the notice period from 30 days to 7 days for the parties who have published their public notice on or before February 26. For all parties, including those which have published the public notice in less than 7 days prior to February 26, objection, if any, can be submitted latest by 5.30 p.m., on March 2 or by the end of the originally provided 30-day period, whichever is earlier.

# NIA takes up WB railway station bomb blast case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The NIA has taken up investigation of bomb blast at Nimta Railway Station, Murshidabad, West Bengal after taking over the case originally registered by the State police.

The bomb explosion at Nimta Railway Station in Murshidabad had caused serious injuries to 22 people including Jakir Hossain, Minister of State for Labour, West Bengal Government.

The case was initially registered as FIR No. 05/21 dated February 17, 2021 under various Indian Penal Code Sections and the Explosive Substance Act against unknown miscreants at Azimganj GRP PS, Murshidabad on the statement of Md. Allarakha.

"The NIA re-registered the case as RC-04/2021/NIA/DLI and has taken over the investigation today. Investigation in the case continues," the NIA said in a statement.

Meanwhile, the NIA registered a case related to conspiracy by terrorist organisation,



Lashker-e-Mustafa, a frontal outfit of JeM. The case relates to conspiracy by frontal terror organisation Lashkar-e-Mustafa working at the behest of proscribed terrorist organisation Jaish-e-Mohammed to carry out terrorist activities in Jammu area with the aim of threatening the sovereignty, integrity and security of India.

The case was initially registered as FIR number 16/2021 of Ganguly Police station, Jammu on February 6, 2021 under section 18, 20 of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

The NIA has re-registered this case as RC-

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Bollywood actress Kangana Ranaut and her sister Ranaut Chandel have moved the Supreme Court seeking transfer of cases pending against them in Mumbai to a court in Shimla, alleging there would be threat to their lives if the trial proceeded there because of "personal vendetta" of Shiv Sena leaders against them.

The actress and her sister said they apprehend that if trial in these cases are conducted in Mumbai, there would be a "material threat" to their life and property as the Shiv Sena leaders against the Maharashtra Government has been "harassing" them.

"The petitioners face a threat to life if the trials proceed in Mumbai, because of personal vendetta of Shiv Sena leaders against the petitioners herein," said the plea, filed recently through advocate Neeraj Shekhar.

The plea has sought transfer of trial of FIRs and complaints registered against them,

# AKHTAR HAD FILED A COMPLAINT CASE AGAINST RANAUT ALLEGING CRIMINAL DEFAMATION

including a complaint case filed by veteran lyricist Javed Akhtar against Ranaut alleging defamation, from Mumbai to a competent court in Shimla in Himachal Pradesh.

It said that Akhtar had filed a complaint case against Ranaut alleging criminal defamation after the actress had given an interview to a news channel last year in which she had talked about a meeting with the lyricist in 2016.

It has further sought transfer of an FIR lodged in Mumbai by one Ali Kashif Khan Deshmukh which relates to Chandel's tweet in which she had expressed her anguish over attack on doctors

during COVID-19 pandemic. It said subsequently, Twitter account of Chandel was suspended after which Ranaut had spoken on a social media video against it.

The plea said Khan had lodged an FIR against Ranaut and Chandel for the alleged offences under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), including 295A which deals with deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings of any class.

It said that the same complainant had also filed a complaint case before the Metropolitan Magistrate, Andheri, against the petitioners. "Multiple proceedings on the same cause of action clearly demonstrates how the said complainant is just trying to harass the petitioners herein," the plea has alleged.

The plea has also sought transfer of an FIR lodged by one Munawar Ali for the alleged offences of sedition against them.

# CCTVs in offices of probe agencies: SC expresses displeasure over delay

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Tuesday expressed displeasure over the Centre for 'dragging its feet' by seeking more time on the issue pertaining to installation of CCTV cameras in the offices of investigating agencies including CBI, ED and NIA.

A Bench headed by Justice RF Nariman, which observed that this issue concerns the rights of citizens, said it is not accepting the excuses given in the letter filed by the Centre seeking adjournment in the

matter. "We are getting a distinct impression that you are dragging your feet," the bench, also

"We are getting a distinct impression that you are dragging your feet"

comprising Justices B R Gavai and Hrishikesh Roy, told Solicitor General Tushar Mehta who was representing the Centre.

The apex court had on

December 2 last year directed the Centre to install CCTV cameras and recording equipment at the offices of investigating agencies — the Central Bureau of Investigation, National Investigation Agency, Enforcement Directorate, Narcotics Control Bureau, Department of Revenue Intelligence, Serious Fraud Investigation Office and any other agency which carries out interrogations and has the power of arrest.

During the hearing conducted through video-confer-



encing on Tuesday, Mehta told the bench that adjournment has been sought as the matter may have ramifications.

"This concerns the rights of citizens," the bench said, adding, "We are not accepting the excuses."

**JAMMU & KASHMIR**  
Office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti PHE  
(QC&PD) Division, HMT, Srinagar  
Phone:- 0194- 2496307, e-Mail:- xenmandp@gmail.com  
**Cancellation of e-NIT-24 of 2020-21**  
Subject : - Supply of liquid chlorine to be refilled in Deptt. Chlorine tonners as per IS 646-2020 with latest amendments (in chlorine tonners of capacity 900 Kgs) for Water Treatment Plants of Kashmir PHE Jal Shakti Department Srinagar.  
Ref : 1. This office NIT No: PHE/QC&PD/24/2020-21/e-Tender Dated: 27-11-2020.  
2. DPC decision held on 22-01-2021 and minutes circulated vide No: JSD/Misc/22997-98 Dated: -23-01-2021.  
As per decision of the DPC as referred in reference in its meeting held on 22-01-2021, due to poor response the e-NIT No. PHE/QC&PD/24/2020-21 Dated: 27-11-2020, is hereby cancelled.  
Sd/- Executive Engineer,  
QC&PD Jal Shakti HMT Srinagar  
No. DIPK-14257/20 Dated: 02-03-2021

# ADMK in dilemma as BJP wants to rope in Sasikala

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Chief Minister Edappadi Palaniswamy and his deputy O Panneerselvam are facing the biggest test in their political careers as the BJP national leadership wants the duo to accommodate VK Sasikala, former aide to J Jayalitha, in the AIADMK led alliance to fight the April 6 Assembly election.

Palaniswamy, who ruled out any possibilities of Sasikala getting accommodated in the AIADMK would be doing a vault face if he agrees to the dictate of the BJP. The Hindu party's directive to the AIADMK leadership is to follow up to a report by various intelligence agencies that Sasikala and her nephew TTV Dinakaran are capable of spoiling the chances of the AIADMK's winnability in 40 to 45 constituencies in southern districts of Tamil Nadu.

"The BJP wants the AIADMK to win the election because then it could remote control Tamil Nadu from New Delhi. But both Palaniswamy and Panneerselvam know well that if they yield to the command of the BJP, it would be the end of their political careers," said Sam Rajappa, long time observer of Tamil Nadu politics.

Panneerselvam, who was sworn in as Chief Minister following the demise of Jayalitha on Dec 5, 2016 was ousted by Sasikala and her close relations to pave the way for her to become chief minister.

Though she was unanimously elected as chief minister by the AIADMK legislature, the Supreme Court order upholding the Bangalore Special Court's verdict sentencing Sasikala to four years rigorous imprisonment came the next day. That spoiled her political dreams as she had to surrender in Parappana Agrahara Central Prison to serve her term.

Palaniswamy was hand-picked by Sasikala to stand in as chief minister in her absence. But when Dinakaran, her nephew decided to take over the administration by ousting Palaniswamy, the BJP intervened and made EPS and OPS to patch up. The duo eased out Sasikala and Dinakaran from the AIADMK leadership and took control over the AIADMK and the government. Now that Sasikala has come back to Chennai after serving her term in the jail, she has staked her claims. This has upset the Palaniswamy-Panneerselvam duo. Dinakaran, who had launched Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam (AMMK), claiming that the AIADMK has become history made a volte face and declared that the duo had been launched to retrieve the AIADMK.

Palaniswamy had successfully completed four years in power and has been looking at a second shot at the chief minister's chair when the BJP has asked him to take the AMMK into the alliance fold. Amit Shah, union home minister, who was in Chennai on Sunday is believed to have told EPS and OPS to patch up with Chinammal (as Sasikala is addressed by her cadre).

Sasikala belongs to the Thevar community, which is quite powerful in southern districts. In Dravidian Tamil Nadu, it is the caste factors that determine the fate of elections. The party in-charge for Puducherry Nirmal Kumar Surana said the BJP would field away with 23 seats from the BJP in the UT, where elections to the 30-member assembly would be held on April six.

They include Prime Minister Narendra Modi, BJP president J P Nadda, and Union Ministers Amit Shah, Nirmala Sitharaman and Smriti Irani, he told PTI here.

Modi and Shah have already launched the party's campaign in the tiny union territory. Surana, who is Vice-President of Karnataka unit of BJP, said discussions were underway with the All India NR Congress (AINRC) and AIADMK on seat-sharing for the elections and it would be finalised as soon as possible.

Asked if the NDA plans to declare its Chief Ministerial candidate, he said: "All the matters are getting discussed". Surana said Puducherry Assembly Speaker V P Sivakolundhu, who quit on Sunday citing health reasons, is in touch with the BJP and would decide on joining the party in a day or two.

Sivakolundhu won from the Lawpet constituency in the 2016 assembly elections on a Congress ticket. His brother V P Ramalingam joined the BJP in Karaikal in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah during his campaign visit on Sunday.

"He (Sivakolundhu) wants his brother (Ramalingam) to contest from his constituency (Lawpet)", Surana said. On how many seats the NDA hoped to win in Puducherry, he claimed that according to his assessment the Congress would not be able to win even a single seat.

Puducherry is now under President's rule after the Congress government headed by V Narayanasamy fell on February 22 on being reduced to a minority following a spate of resignation of Congress MLAs and a DMK legislator.

# BJP to unleash high-voltage campaign to wrest power in Puducherry

Bengaluru: The BJP plans to unleash a high-voltage campaign in Puducherry with a battery of central leaders as it seeks to wrest power in the union territory in the coming assembly elections.

The party in-charge for Puducherry Nirmal Kumar Surana said the BJP would field away with 23 seats from the BJP in the UT, where elections to the 30-member assembly would be held on April six.

They include Prime Minister Narendra Modi, BJP president J P Nadda, and Union Ministers Amit Shah, Nirmala Sitharaman and Smriti Irani, he told PTI here.

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# DADRA NAGAR HAVELI MP SUICIDE Mumbai cops should register FIR against those named in Delkar's suicide note: Cong

PN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Two days after Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said that his Government would investigate the circumstances leading to alleged suicide by seven-time Dadra Nagar Haveli MP Mohan S Delkar, the Maharashtra Congress on Tuesday clamoured for the registration of an FIR against the persons whose names figured in the 15-page suicide note left by the deceased MP.

Participating in a debate on the Governor's address to a joint sitting of both the Houses in the State Legislature, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said: "He wanted justice. That why came to Mumbai and committed suicide. In his suicide note, he has named several persons. But still an FIR has not been registered. The Government should register an FIR without any further delay and initiate stern action in the case".

Alluding to the role of Administrator of the Union Territory (UT) of Dadra, Nagar Haveli and Diu and former BJP MLA Pratul Patel in the death, Patole said: "The name of former minister of home Pratul Patel's figures in Delkar's dying declaration. He is the Administrator of the Union Territory (UT). However big and influential a person may be, but the person is not above law. Action should be taken against the person concerned".

In Parliament, Delkar had raised the issue of harassment meted out to him by the UT administration. "He tried to draw the attention of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah to the harassment faced by him from Pratul Patel and others. Coming from Tribal community, he was harassed, humiliated and committed suicide. He expected that justice would be done to him in Mumbai after his death".

Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray had said on Sunday last that he would register a Ministerial case against Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah to direct the authorities in the Union Territory to cooperate with the Mumbai in the investigations.

"The probe hasn't begun yet. But I will request the Prime Minister and Home Minister to instruct the authorities in the Union Territory to cooperate with the Mumbai police when they reach there for investigation", Uddhav said, while interacting with media persons on the eve of the budget session of the Maharashtra Legislature.

"An independent MP ends his life by suicide...he wrote 14 to 16 pages...He committed because of harassment", Sena and Dr Wafgmare said.

In his weekly column "Rokhthok" in the Sena mouthpiece "Saamra", Raut had a dig at BJP and a section of the media over Subhan's death and demolition of a portion of actress Kangana Rana's bungalow.

"Last year, there was such a hullabaloo and sensation in the media. Now everyone is silent. Delkar's purported suicide note blamed the administrator of Dadra and Nagar Haveli for alleged harassment and pressure brought to bear on him to join the BJP", Raut had written on Sunday.

On his part, Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh had said last that the Mumbai police would investigate the circumstances leading to Delkar's suicide.

It may be recalled that 58-year-old Delkar was found hanging in a hotel in the Marine Drive in south Mumbai on Thursday night. He was 24 years old. Delkar is suspected to have committed suicide by hanging himself. The police had recovered a 16-page suicide note from the hotel room where Delkar's body was found.

The 2020 and the 2019 Lok Sabha election, he was a member of Congress — which is one of the three constituents in the MVA government in Maharashtra had turned the needle of suspicion towards Administrator of the Union Territory (UT) of Dadra, Nagar Haveli and Diu and former BJP MLA Pratul Patel in the death, Patole said: "The name of former minister of home Pratul Patel's figures in Delkar's dying declaration. He is the Administrator of the Union Territory (UT). However big and influential a person may be, but the person is not above law. Action should be taken against the person concerned".

In a video-conference held with Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh, State Congress general secretary Sachin Sawant and party's spokesperson Dr Raju Waghmare alluded to a video clip released by late Delkar in mid-2020 and the suicide note left by the latter and rooted for thorough investigations into the circumstances leading to the suicide by the sitting MP. The tragic end of Mr Delkar needs to be investigated. He has left a 16-page suicide note in which he mentioned the names of all the officials who harassed him. It is being discussed among people that he has mentioned the name of Pratul Patel, who is currently working as the Administrator of Dadra, Nagar Haveli and Diu since 2016, Sawant and Dr Waghmare said in their representation to the State Home Minister.

"Mr Patel is a former BJP MLA from Himatnagar constituency in Gujarat for his 12th legislative assembly. He also served as an Minister of State for Home of Gujarat and is very close to the RSS and BJP's national leadership," the two Congress leaders had said.

It is pertinent to note that Delkar travelled to Mumbai late on Sunday, checked into a hotel and committed 'suicide' by hanging himself in the room. He may have chosen to come to Mumbai committing suicide because of he was not sure to get justice in the Union Territory. Sena and Dr Wafgmare said.

"He must have come to Mumbai with an expectation from the MVA government that the culprits who compelled him to take the extreme step would be punished by law," the two Congress leaders stated in their letter.



An elephant takes a dust bath at a hot summer day, at Alipore Zoological Garden in Kolkata on Tuesday

# Dalit girl in Aligarh was strangled, no clear evidence of rape: Police

Aligarh (UP): The postmortem report of the teenage Dalit girl whose body was found here on Sunday, has not indicated any clear evidence of rape and found that she was strangled to death, a senior official said here.

Five persons have been picked up by the police for questioning in the case, SSP Superintendent of Police (SSP) Muniraj G told mediapersons on Monday night.

The body of the 16-year-old girl was found in a field in Akbarabad area, a large crowd for which villagers clashed with police and indulged in stone pelting. Inspector Pranendra Kumar was injured in the attack.

The postmortem report has not indicated any clear evidence of rape, the SSP said.

He said that in view of the inconclusive evidence, he has decided to conduct further microbiological tests using vaginal swabs. "The proceedings of the postmortem were video-graphed. There were multiple injury marks on the body of the girl who had died due to strangulation," the SSP said.

An FIR has been registered under IPC 302 (murder), 376 (rape) and POCSO Act. Earlier, on Monday when the body was handed over to the family for last rites, a large crowd of protesters collected at the house of the victim and blocked traffic on the main Agra road.

The SSP said efforts are on for giving adequate financial compensation to the victim's family.

# Three minor girls go missing in UP's Shahjahanpur after leaving home for school

Shahjahanpur (UP): Three minor girls went missing here after they left home for school, with one of them carrying cash and clothes supposed to be for an equal number of seats as was given to PMK. A clear picture of the political landscape before the assembly polls would emerge in three days, according to sources in AIADMK.

While the DMK is expected to ink the deal with Congress in a day or two, the AIADMK is faced with issues like the anger of Vijayalakshmi-led DMK which wants an equal number of seats as was given to PMK. A clear picture of the political landscape before the assembly polls would emerge in three days, according to sources in AIADMK.

One of the girls told her family members that she had packed the clothes as there was a programme at the school, the police said.

Police were informed about the matter on Monday night when the girls did not return home, Kumar said.

Last month in the district, a BA second-year student of a college run by the Mumukshu Bhawan of former Union minister Swami Chinmayanand was found with clothes and severely burnt along a national highway.

She said in a statement before a magistrate that three people tried to rape her in a field near Rai Kheda village when they did not succeed, they poured kerosene and set her on fire. Four people, including a female friend who had allegedly sent her to the field, were arrested from different places in the district.

# Molestation victim's father killed by accused on bail

Lucknow: A 50-year-old man was allegedly shot dead in Uttar Pradesh's Hathras district by an accused on bail in a case of molestation lodged in 2018 against the victim's daughter, police said on Tuesday.

The incident took place in Nozpur village of Sausani area in Hathras on Monday afternoon when the daughters of Ambirish Sharma (50) had gone to a temple, where the wife and aunt of accused Gaurav Sharma were present. The women had heated arguments with each other after which the victim's daughter, who was killed, came to the temple, where the wife and aunt of accused Gaurav Sharma were present.

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According to an FIR lodged by the victim's daughter, however, the incident took place in their family potato field. The Hathras SP said the FIR had been registered against Gaurav Sharma, Lalit Sharma, Rohitash Sharma, Nikhil Sharma and two others. In that, Lalit has been arrested while the main accused Gaurav is absconding.

"Before my father could say anything, he opened fire on him. We rushed him to the hospital, where he died," the girl said in the FIR. The victim had lodged a case of molestation of his daughter two and a half years ago against Gaurav, who was jailed. Gaurav, then, came out on bail after a month and he had animosity with Ambirish since then, the SP added.

Taking note of the incident, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has ordered strict action to be taken against the accused and directed officials to review provisions of the stringent National Security Act (NSA) against them.

Meanwhile, the Samajwadi Party reacted to the incident with its president Akhilesh Yadav alleging that women in UP have lost hope of justice from the state government.

"After Hathras ki beti, murder of a father who had complained of molestation of his daughter has taken place. UP's women has not lost hope from the government has stopped seeking justice from it," Akhilesh said in a tweet in Hindi. "Enough of the atrocities on women, this time BJP is out," he added. Akhilesh also tagged a video of a girl, said to be the victim's daughter along with his tweet. In the video, the girl is heard saying, "Please give me justice... Please give me justice. First, he molested me and now he has shot my father. He had come to our village. There were six-seven people. My father had no enemy against anyone. My name is Gaurav Sharma, he is a dog..."

# Firms should support startup tyros : Raj Guv

Jaipur: Rajasthan Governor Kalraj Mishra said on Tuesday that industrial organisations should encourage and support the youth who want to start new startups. Such efforts are necessary to speed up the economy and generate employment, he said.

Mishra was addressing the 'Rajasthan Business Conclave' organised by the Confederation of Rajasthan Industry in Jaipur. He said there was a need of changing the thinking of youths that they can get employment by getting a degree.

The governor said industrial organisations should also play their role in developing the skills of the youth studying in technical, management and higher education to the best of their ability. He said with the availability of trained young professionals at the local level, investment in industries would increase in the state and the problem of youth employment will also be solved.

He said that in view of the inconclusive evidence, he has decided to conduct further microbiological tests using vaginal swabs. "The proceedings of the postmortem were video-graphed. There were multiple injury marks on the body of the girl who had died due to strangulation," the SSP said.

An FIR has been registered under IPC 302 (murder), 376 (rape) and POCSO Act. Earlier, on Monday when the body was handed over to the family for last rites, a large crowd of protesters collected at the house of the victim and blocked traffic on the main Agra road.

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GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE					
SR. NO.	NAME OF DEPARTMENT	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE	AMOUNT / (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE DEPARTMENT
1	PWD B&R, PANICHERA	TENDER FOR THE WORK OF CONSTRUCTION OF GUEST HOUSE IN GOVT. POLYTECHNIC & MULTISKILL DEVELOPMENT CENTRE/MISSION HEAD QUARTER AT SECTOR-26, PANICHERA.	02.03.2021 22.03.2021	210.55 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in
2	PWD B&R, JHAJHA	ANNUAL REPAIR FOR CONSTRUCTION OF B&R IN JHAJHA DISTRICT (NOT BE INVITED).	01.03.2021 06.03.2021	10.73 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in
3	TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT HARYANA, ROADWAYS, JHARSUGA	REGARDING INVITING TENDER FOR PURCHASING RUBBERS, UNIPOLIES ETC. FOR ADVERTISEMENT AT BUS STAND AND WORKSHOP AT JHARSUGA.	05.03.2021 05.04.2021	60000/-	https://etenders.hry.nic.in
4	WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT, BHAWANI	PURCHASE OF GUDGI GUDGI BOARD OF SIZE 7X2	01.03.2021 15.03.2021	1.50 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in
5	REGISTRATION & WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT HARYANA, KATHAL	WORK FOR CONSTRUCTION OF BRIDGE AT RD 1430 OF PAFARSA LINK, DRAIN + 2 OTHERS	CLOSING DATE: 09.03.2021	19.40 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in
6	POLICE DEPARTMENT HARYANA	SELECTION OF CONTRACTOR TO PROVIDE CATERING SERVICES IN SERIC BUILDING AT HARYANA 112 BIDS	CLOSING DATE: 09.03.2021	END TENDER NO 2020 HRY 151935.1	https://etenders.hry.nic.in
7	DISTRICT FOOD CIVIL SUPPLIES CONSUMER AFFAIRS CONTROLLER, REWARI	TENDERS ARE INVITED FOR TRANSPORTATION AND LABOUR & CARTAGE FOR KOSLI MANDI REWARI MANDI BAWAL MANDI AND RAIL HEAD KHORI FOR THE YEAR 2021-22 IN RESPECT OF STATE SUPPLIES DEPT.	05.03.2021 13.03.2021	946673086 drcwre@hry.nic.in	https://etenders.hry.nic.in
8	PANCHAYATI RAJ, PANDPAT	RETENDER REPAIR & CONSTRUCTION OF ROOM IN G.V.H + 7 OTHERS	01.03.2021 15.03.2021	106.53 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in
9	GENERAL MANAGER, HARYANA ROADWAYS, GURUGRAM	TENDER FOR PUTTING UP ADVERTISEMENT BOARD/ROADS/IN THE PREMISES OF BUS STANDS: GURUGRAM, WAREHOUSE AND OLD OFFICE, BUS STAND SECTOR-29, RAJIV CHOWK, SONHA, PATANGI	02.03.2021 18.03.2021	12 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in

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To prevent the situation from going out of control, the BSF fired one round of non-lethal weapon in the air, he said.

Aggressive villagers confronted BSF personnel and the pick-up vehicles managed to escape. On pursuit with the escaped vehicles, the villagers started pelting stones and empty bottles on BSF personnel," the spokesperson said.





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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Scorcher ahead!

Climate change is real; not acknowledging it is not going to protect us from the inevitable

If the rising temperatures in the last few days of February and an unusually hot March are bothering you, it is because most of the northern, western and eastern parts of India breached the 30°C mark nearly two to three weeks before they usually do. In fact, the country needs to brace for a hotter-than-usual summer this year as the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast that day temperatures are likely to be 0.86°C higher than normal in the north, northeast, parts of east and west India between March and May. The worst impact is likely in Odisha and Chhattisgarh, where the maximum temperatures will deviate 0.86°C from their usual averages. Last week, Bhubaneswar was the first region to record 40°C anywhere in the country this year and Delhi, Himachal Pradesh,



Haryana and Uttar Pradesh should brace for summer temperatures anywhere from 0.46°C to 0.71°C above normal. The IMD last month had said the minimum temperature recorded in the country in January was the warmest for the month in 62 years, with South India being particularly warm. It is not surprising that we experienced a shorter winter and are getting warnings of a sizzling summer ahead as, according to a Government report on current climate change impacts and future scenarios till the end of the century, India needs to control greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions on a war footing. The failure to do so will mean major heatwaves, droughts, cloudbursts, floods and a more degraded coastline, says a report by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM).

Worryingly, India's average temperature rose by around 0.7°C during 1901-2018 and, unless urgent steps are taken to control GHG emissions between 2070 and 2099 average, the temperature will rise by approximately 4.4°C relative to the recent past (1976-2005 average). The high GHG emissions would increase the heat on Earth's surface by 8.5 watts per square metre. Called RCP8.5, this is the worst-case scenario used by climate modellers worldwide. In a medium GHG emissions scenario, called RCP4.5, the average temperature in India would rise by 2.7°C in the last 30 years of this century. Before that, during 2040-2069, India's average temperature would rise by 2°C in a medium emissions scenario, and by 2.4°C in a high emissions scenario. Despite all nations making pledges under the 2015 Paris climate agreement, current emissions are taking the world to the worst-case scenario, though other development pathways are not only available but economically more attractive in the medium and long term. So, the only option before us is to go green, else we will perish because we are already feeling the effects of a planet that has been pushed to breaking point. The most recent examples of this are the Chamoli tragedy in Uttarakhand and the "Big freeze" in Texas. It is the collective responsibility of the peoples, every business and every industry on the planet to fight climate change so that we leave a greener, cleaner world for our children and not a dying planet.

## PICTALK



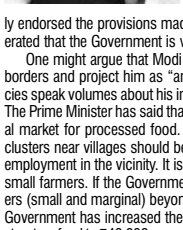
Mount Sinabung spews volcanic material during an eruption in Karo, North Sumatra, Indonesia, on Tuesday

AP

## The right path

Modi's plans and policies speak volumes about his intention to empower the 'real' farmers at the grassroots

Thousands of farmers in India die by suicide every year as they see no option to get out of the debt trap. The poor and marginal farmers depend upon loans for purchasing seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, irrigation and even harvesting. Most of these growers find it more convenient to borrow at heavy interest rates from moneylenders or big cultivators rather than from banks, thanks to the cumbersome paperwork and the broker-bank officials' nexus. However, these deaths, as recorded by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), fail to shake the collective conscience of society and are just another figure for most of us. Ironically, there is no outcry, no borders are sealed, no tractor rallies organised, no national monuments sieged, no violence. This is because these deaths don't affect the interests of the politically connected and powerful "arhatiya" community that drives the Agricultural Produce Marketing Community (APMC) in Punjab, Haryana and parts of Western Uttar Pradesh. This strong community is at loggerheads with the Government over three new agril laws for shielding its own interests. Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently endorsed the provisions made for the agriculture sector in Budget 2021-22 and reiterated that the Government is working for small and medium-level farmers.



One might argue that Modi is not concerned about the farmers camping at Delhi's borders and project him as "anti-farmer" and "pro-corporate", but his plans and policies speak volumes about his intention to empower the "real" farmers at the grassroots. The Prime Minister has said that India needs to expand its agriculture sector to the global market for processed food. He also emphasised that the number of agro-industry clusters near villages should be increased so that the rural populace gets farm-related employment in the vicinity. It is indeed a plan that will likely empower the marginal and small farmers. If the Government succeeds in providing market access to these farmers (small and marginal) beyond *mandis*, it would prove to be a milestone. Further, the Government has increased the agriculture credit target to ₹16.50 lakh crore and infrastructure fund to ₹40,000 crore, besides doubling the micro-irrigation fund. All this proves that the Government is striving to bring systemic changes in the agriculture sector with the focus on empowering the "have-nots" among the farmers. We also would like to see the real farmers get empowered and not the ones with enough resources and money to camp at Delhi's borders for months and hold the Government to ransom.

# The Internationale: Kumbh of protests

The agrarian issue is being politicised by media magicians but, for the farmers, it's a question of livelihood and existence

Green mango flowers are now bursting and kites dance in the sky while bright yellow, purple flowers bloom one last time and farmers in Tihar Jail, New Delhi, welcome a silent spring. The warm air rustles the yellow plastic tents at the Ghazipur Border, January from AH2 to the Tikri Border, announcing a new season and the next phase of the Farmers' Revolution begins.

It's been over a month since farmer leader Rakesh Tikait's tears galvanised the farmers from Uttar Pradesh (UP) to Rajasthan and much has happened over the spring — *Basant Ritu* — since then. Lakhs of devotees have cleansed themselves taking dips in the holy Ganga from Haridwar to Prayagraj, Prime Minister Narendra Modi may have shed expiatory tears as he reassured his followers that the three farm laws are good for farmers and for business. But the farmers of the world are not convinced.

Recently, major US-based farmer groups like Agrarian Trust, National Farmers Union and 87 other organisations have started an international movement expressing solidarity with the farmers' revolution. Over 50 Canadian organisations have also extended support. They have been exerting pressure on their public representatives too to end this "injustice". Their criticism comes from having suffered due to the market-led agricultural policies since the 1960s in the US. This is no longer an "international conspiracy" or "attack on India's sovereignty" or "sedition" perpetrated by "international media celebrities like Rihanna or Greta" but a moment of true global solidarity beyond race and religion.

Foreclosures and debt have destroyed millions of US farm families. Suicides and despondency plague rural America while Big Ag grows. It's not only the older generation but young farmer leaders like Severine Fleming who have supported the farmers' revolution. All, save for the corporate media, see the invisible hand behind these



reforms — Big Ag. Modi has led the Big Ag to India's doors and sacrificed Indian farmers for agri-dollars.

India farmers are jubilant about the US support but, as the harvest season nears, some of them are now returning with the stories of their struggles and indignation to their villages to work the fields, while others farmers are on the road to Delhi's borders. In Haryana, media reports indicate, hundreds of villages have pledged to send one person from each house to join the revolution. The farmers' revolution is getting ready for the hot summer. Although the Modi Government's version occupies the media discourse, the farmers may have outwitted the Government once again.

How? With the help of the returning farmers, their unions and leaders have now expanded their base far beyond Delhi's borders. YouTube videos and independent vernacular citizen journalists have spread each update across the country. The tune of Farmer Revolution's Haryanvi anthem — "Modi ji hum Dilli aage" — now sways young and old farmers from Bengal to Rajasthan.

From Ganganagar to Kerala, the farmer unions have

THE FARMERS' REVOLUTION IS GETTING READY FOR THE HOT SUMMER. ALTHOUGH THE MODI GOVERNMENT'S VERSION OCCUPIES THE MEDIA DISCOURSE, THE FARMERS MAY HAVE OUTWITTED THE GOVERNMENT ONCE AGAIN

addressed millions of people in a short span of 30 days. Now that the movement has reached a mature stage, it will spread even faster. Even the Government is finding it hard to call them "a handful of farmers" as it did in early January. Now the discourse has become "crowds don't get the work done". The movement today represents not just farmers but all those who work the land — migrant workers, labourers, urban *mandi* workers and the traders. This is a united rural India resisting a corporate auction. Meanwhile, the Government has unleashed the biggest round of privatisation of public assets since Yeltsin's Russia.

No one knows why fuel prices have skyrocketed. Why taxes and cess keep increasing, squeezing the middle class, and yet arterial roads of Delhi have potholes? The fuel prices directly impact farmers' input costs and offset the MSP calculations. India is being rigged for food inflation. Indian agri produce vastly outperforms against the highly subsidised imports from countries like the US.

The agricultural bubble is soon going to burst; the collateral will be rural India and millions of lives. History

will repeat itself as from its ashes shall emerge a new class of *neo-zamindars* that shall profit from each morsel. The US is a fine example of this, where four corporations control over 80 per cent of the food and about 50 per cent of all produce is wasted!

The Modi Government needs to correct course by abandoning the laws and making a fresh start with farmers, for their movement is no longer an Indian affair or internal matter as the External Affairs Ministry is already involved in this diplomatic issue.

We as a nation should remember that India loses face in the world only because democracy dies at home. This is an agrarian issue that is being politicised by media magicians, swaying public opinion inciting more hate in society. But for the farmers, at home and abroad, it's a question of livelihood and existence. We need to stand in solidarity because it's a fight for the survival of our soul and *roti*, together.

(The author writes on agriculture and environment, and is a former Director — Policy and Outreach, National Seed Association of India. The views expressed are personal.)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### CONGRESS MUST BOUNCE BACK FAST

Sir — It is said that the BJP is afraid of losing a State and the Congress is shy of winning one. It does not matter for the BJP how big or small the State is, it just wants to form a Government there.

Though it had a minuscule presence in Puducherry, the astute power game of the BJP ensured its indirect control over the Union Territory (UT). Assam, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, West Bengal and Puducherry are going to polls shortly, and the party has a stake in each State. But what about the Congress? The Congress' grip over the States is loosening each passing day.

For the Congress, the intention to go all the way and the determination to win appears to be missing. That the Congress is enjoying power in only three States is an unmistakable sign of decay and degeneration in the party. Of the three, the wind may change direction in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh anytime. So, what's the party left with? When a party is reluctant to learn even after repeated drubbings, nothing can infuse hope among the people in the party's future.

Despite top leaders saying "enough is enough", nothing has been done to revive the party. The flip-flops over Rahul Gandhi assuming the party presidency should end. Either he should assume party presidency or leave politics. Even at the cost of some leaders leaving the party, the Congress must resolve its issues soon.

Ganapati Bhat | Aklota

### FULL SPEED AHEAD WITH INOCULATION

Sir — This refers to the editorial "Taming the virus" (March 2). By taking the job, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given a promising impetus to the pace of vaccination in the second phase. This phase of vaccination for senior citizens and those above 45 with comorbidities is expected to witness a good foothold or inoculation rate.

So far, the drive hasn't matched up to India's immense population challenge but the opening of centres at private hospitals and flexible options for registration can give it a big boost. All Chief Ministers,

## Make the cyber system robust



The Maharashtra cyber department has submitted a provisional report to the State Government on the recent massive grid failure. If the massive power outage in Mumbai in October last year is the result of a Chinese cyber campaign against India, it should be a cause of concern for the Indian Government. If it is true, it means none of our establishments, including the Defence Research and Development Organisation and other institutions

related to national security, are safe from malware attacks by foreign forces.

A cyber threat is looming large on India's security and the Government needs to counter it effectively. According to unverified sources, the 100-page report confirms that a malware attack was behind the blackout and about 14 Trojan Horses and eight GB of unaccounted data was found in the system installed at the Maharashtra State Electricity Board.

An American firm has said that the Chinese could have introduced the malware. The State Government, however, did not want to confirm which country was behind the possible malware in the system as it felt there could be far-reaching international ramifications. However, it's time for the Centre and State Governments to think about and act upon it. Our Government must devise a robust system which is not to be breached by the hostile foreign nations. India must be prepared for cyber war.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

Union and State Ministers and Opposition leaders must follow suit so as to encourage others for inoculation. Not only politicians but also bureaucrats and celebrities must take the job.

Since February 13, India's seven-day rolling average of daily COVID infections has shown a steady surge, signalling a fresh need to ramp up the campaign. India's vaccination strategy is closely intertwined with its economic fortunes. A GDP contraction of eight per cent in 2020-21 requires a big bounce-back in the new year. But the restrictions on interstate movement in response to February's COVID surge are symptomatic of persisting jitters.

N Sadhasiva Reddy | Bengaluru

### STOP HARASSING WOMEN FOR DOWRY

Sir — India has an alarming trend of dowry deaths, harassment and domestic violence, and yet society is indifferent towards it. It was heart-wrenching to watch a video on the social media in which a girl in Gujarat

committed suicide. She recorded a video message and then jumped into a river. She was allegedly facing harassment from her husband since their marriage in 2018.

A case of abetment to suicide has been lodged against the husband. Her story is similar to the plight of lakhs of women who face harassment on a daily basis either in office spaces or inside their homes. Despite several NGOs championing the cause of women rights, strict laws for crime against women, special courts and women-only branches in police, nothing seems to have changed on the ground. Women are still vulnerable and are subjected to various sorts of atrocities by their relatives. Even the religious organisations, which keep crying foul over one or the other issue, keep silent over women's issues until it is related to religious tenets.

Asim Sohail | Bihar

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

## SOUND BITE

The Budget that the Madhya Pradesh Government presented today is a pack of lies. It is directionless, hope-less and just a maze of data.

Congress leader — Kamal Nath

I think it's time to make efforts to adopt a new Constitution in October of this year by a national referendum, and transition to a semi-presidential system should be one of the possible options.

Armenian Prime Minister — Nikol Pashinyan

Another day another FIR, yesterday Javed Chacha with help of Maharashtra Government got a warrant issued for me and now another FIR for supporting farmers' Act.

Actress — Kangana Ranaut

I want to play for West Indies. That's where my heart is. I'm never going to turn down anything pertaining to West Indies cricket at this particular time.

Cricketer — Chris Gayle

Close to 40 lakh people have registered themselves to receive the COVID vaccines on the CoWIN portal till Tuesday morning.

Union Health Minister — Harsh Vardhan

## FIRST COLUMN

### CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

We still have a narrow window for vaccinating most people amid the falling number of new infections

RAJINDER DHAMIJA

A year ago the Coronavirus made its entry into the country. Since then, we have come a long way from the hard lockdown beginning in March-end to the second phase of the vaccine rollout which started from Monday with Prime Minister Narendra Modi taking a shot. By opting for the ICMR vaccine, he sent a clear signal that our indigenous vaccines are safe. Right now we are at a crucial stage of the pandemic's trajectory as we still have a narrow window for vaccinating the maximum number of people amid the falling number of new infections in most parts of India. This is the time to focus on mitigation with no scope for complacency. The pandemic is not over until it is actually over in all States and the virus does not have an adequate number of susceptible individuals to infect and survive. We need to chase the virus aggressively rather than the contagion chasing us.



It has been a sort of partial success so far as we have managed to keep infections as well as mortality rates low as compared to many countries in the West with a better infrastructure and capacity to contain and mitigate the virus. However, still more needs to be done as we enter into the next stage of the trajectory with an upsurge in cases in Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Gujarat and looming signs of increasing numbers in Delhi. Vaccine hesitancy remains an issue, with half of the eligible people coming forward for the inoculation. This is a universal phenomenon seen across the globe. Much of this is due to misinformation on social media and the tendency of many individuals to wait and watch. This needs to be aggressively countered and the State has made all efforts to quell this phenomenon. This all-out effort by the Government needs to continue in order to accelerate the vaccination drive which can gain momentum if more vaccines are made available to the public and in the open market so that everyone can get the job on demand both through the public as well as private healthcare system.

The second strategy should be to continue mass-scale RT-PCR testing. There is no reason to scale down testing as we have seen lately in many States because that can be disastrous, especially with new mutant variants of the virus making entry into our cities. These variants will be seen in India as it is difficult to stop the transmission in view of relaxation of movement in an era of necessary international travel. More genomic sequencing would perhaps help us in early detection of these new variants arriving in the country and within India. We need to prepare for the inevitable and the focus should remain on both COVID-appropriate behaviour as well as vaccinating the masses.

Third, we need to create resilient district health systems. A weak link in most States is the poor status of district hospitals. In contrast to the prevailing political and bureaucratic response with focus on hardware (beds, ventilators, oxygen, and so on) in healthcare facilities, we should also focus on software development (capacity building and better-quality health workers) which is more important. The current pandemic provides us opportunity and finances to influence politicians and bureaucrats to build resilient and responsive health systems at both primary and secondary healthcare centres in States. Since health is a State subject, a collaborative and collective effort both by States and the Centre should be made to augment these district hospitals. Excellence in secondary healthcare is crucial and well-placed, well-funded, well-staffed and well-equipped district hospitals should be developed as the most important component of the healthcare chain to respond to future outbreaks. We have the opportunity to create a resilient secondary district healthcare system that is responsive to the needs of the public with focus on preventive, promotive, curative and restorative patient care.

(The writer is Head of Neurology Department, Lady Harding Medical College and SSK Hospital, New Delhi. The views expressed are personal.)

# A less talked about crime against women

Witch-hunting is used as a tool to subjugate women and there will always be a new reason to brand a woman a witch in the hinterlands of India



ARCHANA DATTA

I can never forget the night when the entire village, including women, armed with weapons came to attack a helpless woman on the suspicion of being a witch. I would also have been killed with her had I not called the police," recalls 72-year-old Birubala Rabha, a victim-turned-crucifier from Assam's Goalpara district, referring to a ghastly incident that took place in a small village on the Assam-Meghalaya border in 2007. This year the primary school-educated Rabha was the recipient of the Padma Shri, India's highest civilian award for her crusade against witch-hunting. The award was a much-deserved pan-India recognition of her work. Rabha, ostracised and branded as a witch, devoted her life for the cause of other women like her, and, through her organisation Mission Birubala, has been the force behind the State's law to check the practice of witch-hunting in Assam.

There is no dearth of women like Rabha in Assam, who came close to death or got killed, as more than two-thirds of its districts reported incidents of witch-hunting. As per the State Government's records, 107 people, mostly women, got killed between 2011-2019. Locally, even a village on the Assam-Meghalaya border, is called 'daingaon (village of the witches)', where many ostracised women live in isolation.

"In rural hinterlands, a *Doodhni*, *Bez* or an *Ojha* (people who allegedly specialise in healing, casting out unclean spirits and telling fortunes) wields tremendous influence. They often target a widow, a single or a guardian-less woman,....with little or no formal education....and label her a witch, when they are clueless about a malaise. Many poor people fall into their clutches, not solely out of superstitious belief, but also because of their inability to pay for a qualified doctor," says a 2014 field report from the districts of Goalpara and Sonitpur, conducted by the Partners for Law in Development (PLD), a Delhi-based legal resource group.

Rightly, Rabha in her '*Manuhle Manuhle Babe*' campaign, cautions gullible villagers against falling prey to such quacks who are nothing but "money-making racketeers exploiting people's ignorance."

The PLD's field study in Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh, also reveals that "women are more often targeted for material motives." Dibyajyoti Saikia, a human rights activist, who leads a Guwahati-based organisation, Brothers, feels that "individual factors like personal rivalry, jealousy, conspiracy come into play in such targeting in semi-urban and rural areas." Mamani Saikia, district co-ordinator, Goalpara, further explains that "in calculated attacks, gender relationship determines the selection of targets, often driven by ulterior interests like grabbing a property or for sexual exploitation, whereas, in surprise attacks, which are more violent in nature, the goal is supposedly to eliminate an evil."

Dalit and marginalised women are doubly prone to such attacks because of systemic patriarchy and also because of their social identity. However, Nityabir Das, a medical practitioner and a co-ordinator of Mission Birubala, says: "Though women as victims are more in number but in recent times, men are also facing such accusations."

Now, as per the National Crime Records



AS INCIDENTS OF WOMEN BEARING THE BRUNT OF PERSONAL VENDETTA AND UNFOUNDED SMEAR CAMPAIGNS CONTINUE TO POUR IN FROM MANY PARTS OF INDIA, THE ISSUE OF WITCH-HUNTING DESERVES GREATER ATTENTION NOT ONLY FROM THE LEGAL POINT OF VIEW BUT FROM A WIDER SOCIO-ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE



Bureau, more than 2,500 people, mostly women, got killed in such incidents between 2000-2016, while many believe that the number is much higher, as most States don't list witchcraft as a motive for murder.

Nevertheless, some States like Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Rajasthan, Assam, Maharashtra and Karnataka have framed anti-witchcraft Acts. Commenting on the existing Tonah Pratadna Nivaran Act, 2005, Chhattisgarh, Dinesh Sharma, a doctor-turned-activist and founder of Andhrashradha Nirmoolan Samitee, rues that "hundreds of cases are pending under the Act. Many victims have died and without fast-track courts, the purpose of the Act is somewhat defeated."

Moreover, in such incidents of organised community violence, the law cannot overlook the complicity and accountability of a village sarpanch or a kotala.

Ajay Agarwal, Secretary, Association for Social and Human Awareness, Ranchi, Jharkhand, echoes similar sentiments. He says: "Though more than 1,300 women were killed since 2000 in the State, there's no official data available under the Prevention of Witch (DAWN) Practices Act, 2001. Some cases get registered under the IPC and only one or two get convicted, while almost the entire village is responsible for such killings."

Assam's new Act, notified in 2018, has been feted as India's

toughest anti-witch-hunting law, which makes any offence under it non-bailable, cognisable and non-compoundable.

However, the State's ADGP, LR Bishnoi, highlighted that the wider scope of legal protection included in the Act with the setting up of special courts and addition of new offences related to targeting, humiliation and ostracism, and so on are hitherto not part of the IPC.

Dibyajyoti Saikia opines that "the Act is yet to make any visible impact....and the police still have a tendency to settle cases through a compromise." Nityabir Das says that agencies like the ASTEC (Assam Science Technology and Environment Council) have been chipping in through awareness drives, but admits that "a thorough training of police officials is required." Executive Director, PLD, Madhu Mehra, states that the Assam Act is definitely an improvement, more like the Rajasthan Act. But, unlike Rajasthan, the State is yet to frame rules regarding compensation and rehabilitation.

Manisha Behal, Executive Director, North East Network, a Guwahati-based women's rights organisation, also laments that the menace could have been better tackled on the ground by the front-line workers had the rules been in place.

Many activists point out that the existing legal regime, be it the IPC or special Acts, vests enormous

power with the police, who are often found to be wanting in their preventive and protective role, particularly when the victim is poor or a woman.

Thus such Acts remain merely as pieces of paper failing to make any dent in the impunity attached to the practice. The legal vacuum for compensation of losses due to social ostracisation, forced displacement, or deprivation in livelihood opportunities is another drawback. Mehra, however, is sceptical about the actual realisation of compensation even if such a provision gets legal backing as the process of conviction is a long-drawn affair, with the accused mostly being as poor as the victim.

Many activists vouch for socio-legal measures like dialogue and awareness creation to help people distinguish between what is a socially permissible act and a crime. Some also voice the need for a central legislation reviving the Prevention of Witch-Hunting Bill, introduced in the Lok Sabha in 2016.

Witch-hunting is used as a tool to subjugate women and there will always be a new reason to brand a woman as a witch. As incidents of women bearing the brunt of personal vendetta and unfounded smear campaigns continue to pour in from many parts of India, the issue of witch-hunting deserves greater attention not only from the legal point of view but from a wider socio-economic perspective.

## POINTCOUNTERPOINT

TIE-UP WITH THE ISF MILITATES AGAINST THE CORE IDEOLOGY AND GANDHIAN SECULARISM, WHICH FORMS THE SOUL OF THE CONGRESS. —CONGRESS LEADER ANAND SHARMA



WE ARE IN CHARGE OF A STATE AND DON'T TAKE ANY DECISION ON OUR OWN WITHOUT ANY PERMISSION. —BENGAL CONGRESS CHIEF ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY



# Don't treat Puducherry differently from the rest of India

Do nominated members in other State legislatures, Union Territories and in Parliament, too, enjoy voting rights during a trust vote?

*Expressio unius est exclusio alterius* (expression of one subject, object or idea is the exclusion of other subjects, objects or ideas), is a maxim in Latin, which is heard quite frequently in law classes as well as in courtrooms. It finds application in the construction of Constitutions, statutes and similar instruments. This phrase came to mind after watching the proceedings in Puducherry that led to the fall of the V Narayanasamy-led Congress Government last week.

The resignation of Narayanasamy as the Chief Minister (CM) has not surprised any of the political observers. The only question being asked by them is why did it take four years for Narayanasamy to quit his post.

Though the BJP is accused of political manipulation, encouraging defections from



KUMAR CHELAPPAN

"Why did the Congress high command appoint Narayanasamy, who had not contested the 2016 Assembly election as CM, superseding many party heavyweights in the Union Territory?" wonders Kolahala Srinivasan, political chronicler of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. "There were seasoned leaders like former CM Vaithilingam and A Nammasivayam who were in the running for the top post," says Srinivasan.

Narayanasamy, the all-powerful Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) during the United

Progressive Alliance (UPA) regime under Manmohan Singh, had been defeated in the Lok Sabha election held in 2014. Sources say that the interests of other Congress leaders were overlooked by the party high command while appointing him. Apparently, there was strong discontentment among the Congress MLAs when he was hand-picked by the party president.

The appointment of Kiran Bedi, the former super cop of Delhi as the Lieutenant Governor (L-G) of the Union Territory (UT), was like opening another war front by the BJP. Consequently, the running battle between the CM and the L-G shined the limelight in the last four years. This style of functioning of the L-G was a new experience for the population of the UT and naturally, Narayanasamy got annoyed!

The nomination of three

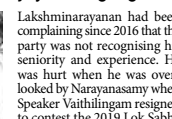
Lakshminarayanan had been complaining since 2016 that the party was not recognising his seniority and experience. He was hurt when he was overlooked by Narayanasamy when Speaker Vaithilingam resigned to contest the 2019 Lok Sabha poll and appointed first-time MLA Sivakozhundu as the presiding officer of the House.

The resignation of John Kumar from the House, too, speaks about the discontentment that had set in. John Kumar was elected as an MLA in 2016 but resigned his seat to facilitate the election of Narayanasamy to the House. Though John Kumar was elected subsequently to the House in 2019, he too fell out with Narayanasamy eventually.



Though Venkatesan, the DMK MLA, announced his resignation from the House well in advance, the party leadership in Tamil Nadu kept

sealed the trust vote.



the trust vote.

the trust vote.

silence over the issue. Despite the declaration by Venkatesan that he quit from the House with the concurrence of his party leader (MK Stalin), the DMK did not do anything till Tuesday to pay peace with him. It was on Tuesday that the party's general secretary Durai Murugan announced the removal of Venkatesan from all official posts in the party.

Last month saw Stalin deputing party MP and moniesbags Jagathrakshakan to rejuvenate the DMK in the UT. "This gave rise to many doubts in the minds of the Congress and DMK leaders in Puducherry. What we saw during the last two days was the impact of this decision," said Srinivasan.

The question why Jagathrakshakan was sent to Puducherry at this juncture remains unanswered. Narayanasamy did not include

his alliance partner, the DMK, in the Government and this resulted in a lot of heartburn. Though the Congress and the DMK challenged the L-G's nomination of three BJP leaders to the Assembly, the apex court upheld her act. But how the nominated members were allowed to cast their votes in the Assembly reminds one of the Latin maxim '*expressio unius...*'

Do nominated members in State legislatures, other UTs and in Parliament, too, enjoy voting rights. There cannot be one rule for Puducherry and another for the rest of the country. Let's have the same rules for the whole country. This was what Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared when Parliament abrogated Article 370: "Now people in Jammu and Kashmir enjoy the same status as that of the rest of the Indians." People of Puducherry, too, should get the same status. Shouldn't they?











An MBA degree from a premier Indian B School can give several lucrative opportunities to earn. Many might have this question in their mind. 'What exactly do MBA graduates do at work after business school?' This largely depends on the area of specialisation that they choose and the organisation that they join. Some organisations ensure that the MBA graduates have an experience in all functional areas.

They make them have a short stint in marketing, finance, operations human resources and even in International Business. There are others who make them take executive assistant roles, and make them get the experience of working with the top leadership of the organisation. There are others who make them work in core functional areas of business. The initial period of six months goes in understanding the culture of the company along with the organisational politics.

During the initial years an MBA in sales and marketing generally spend time in research and generate lists of potential customers, provide input on customer briefs, prepare presentations and sales literature. They also help to develop client relationships and retain existing accounts. They assist in evaluating new clients and maintain records. They also work with experienced sales and marketing professionals, attend meetings, and participate in other networking activities.

## KNOW YOUR JOB

During the initial years, an MBA in sales and marketing generally spends time in research and generates lists of potential customers, provides input on customer briefs, prepares presentations and sales literature, says DR RAMAKRISHNAN RAMAN

**An MBA in operations is expected to have the ability to thrive in a fast-paced environment as well as work under pressure, especially when there are clients facing operation roles**

ities. An MBA Finance helps in assisting the process of developing and reviewing budgets.

They also provide accurate cash flow projections to the finance division. They work on the monthly budget and work closely with experienced finance executives in decision making. They help in general ledger management, reconciliation of balance sheets, follow up with various internal stakeholders; prepare monthly schedules for specific accounts and support in the monthly book closing process for expense accrual and accounting adjustments, and also manage prepaid expenses. Some organisations make the MBA finance graduates prepare statutory financials, make notes to accounts and schedules; coordinate external and internal audits; answer audit queries. They also make them support the accounting

manager/finance director on expenses and balance sheet analysis, compliance with internal controls and complying with internal controls for accounting functions.

An MBA Operations person is expected to have a customer — focused, 'service first' mentality. He/she is expected to assimilate data rapidly and create timely resolutions and solutions to all levels of stakeholders. He/she is expected to be proactive in assessing the processes & procedures and evaluate room for enhancement.

An MBA in operations is expected to have the ability to thrive in a fast-paced environment as well as working under pressure, especially when they are in a client facing operation roles. An MBA specialised in human resources (HR) works alongside the HR Business Partner and HR

Operations teams as well as the local Management team to provide generalist HR support to the business. An HR Generalist works alongside the HR Centres of Excellence and is responsible for the management and administration of employees through the entire employee life cycle including onboarding, HR Programme support, offboarding among others.

Irrespective of the specialisation MBA graduates are expected to create and present impressive presentations to the internal and external customers of the organisation. They are also expected to be good in using software and data management tools, which can help their reporting managers in better decision making.

The writer is Director — Symbiosis Institute of Business Management (SIBM) — Pune & Dean — Faculty of Management — Symbiosis International (Deemed University)

## QUOTE OF THE DAY

**Children should be taught how to think and not what to think by equipping them with the weapons of discernment and knowledge.**

— VD.

## Make way for online school

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The first online school of India has been launched in the Millennium city of Gurugram in Delhi-NCR. Known as Cyboard School, the salient feature of the virtual school is a hybrid model of delivery encompassing a mix of online classes which will be followed by physical camps spread over 30 days in a year and city-level interactions. The school targets enrolment of about 5000 students in Classes I to III by the end of March 2021.

A brainchild of two serial entrepreneurs and visionaries — Rajat Singhal, Co-Founder & CEO, and Kunal Singhal, Co-Founder & CTO, the model aims to expose the drawbacks in conventional K-12 education, including lack of personalised learning, lack of requisite infrastructure and good teachers, limited student-teacher interaction and increased dependence on tuitions and impart futuristic education to students through expert faculty members, irrespective of any geographical barriers.

"The online K-12 segment is projected to be nearly 3.7 times its existing size of 1.16 billion by 2025. The pandemic has accelerated the significance of digitisation across sectors and education is no exception," said Singhal.

## Masters programme

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The ILAMED is going to start its Masters Course in Micropigmentation & Microblading for doctors with live sessions followed by hands-on training. This is the flagship programme which is the most sought after in the field of Aesthetic Medicine. This course is designed by experienced practitioners, which helps them in adding a new dimension to their practice and answers most of the clients' needs. This programme covers the latest techniques and procedures which are followed around the world by the eminent aesthetic medicine expert including the best practices as per the global standards.

This Masters Course is backed by the best Institutes and Associations around the world along with the renowned faculty who are having more than two decades of experience in the field of teaching and training.

This course is certified by The Plastic Surgery Center of Western New York.

The duration of this course is seven days. The curriculum is very detailed and covers most of the important topics and procedures which are delivered in the form of lectures, and the candidates are given hands on training on Live Patients which helps them to enhance their skills in their clinical practice.

This Masters programme covers most of the key topics related to Micropigmentation and Microblading such as Introduction to PMU & Microblading (Basic & advanced), full blown reconstruction (Alopecia), faux skin, eyebrows micropigmentation, Lip micropigmentation, Lip Blush, Lip Liner, Lip correction, Eyeliner micropigmentation, BB glow, BB glow Blush, BB Glow contouring, Scalp micropigmentation (SMP), Scalp Microblading (SMB), PMU correction and many more. To get enrolled one can call/whatsapp on +917838606869/9599224093. For more information you can email info@ilamed.org and log on to [www.ilamed.org](http://www.ilamed.org).

With the union budget of 2021 focusing like never before on Healthcare through the three-pronged, holistic approach - including preventive care, curative care, and well-being, there will be a bigger push toward a healthier country. To meet the demand for healthcare solutions that was generated last year, there has been many frugal state-of-the-art innovations associated with touchless diagnostic tools, ventilators, medical and surgical devices that support better patient outcomes and faster healthcare administration in hospitals.

At a national scale, there has been an unprecedented push towards digitisation through upskilling across sectors. The main reason why it is considered as an unprecedented push towards digitisation, is because this was not limited to just the key employees who were used to the IT infrastructure that was provided, but also all the support staff that included the Admin, HR, Finance, Training and development, etc. to get aligned with the new protocols of communication and also be effectively able to perform the organisations functions without any lacuna. This sea of change was not any different for the health care professionals of the country.

Without any differentiation of urban or rural, all doctors were expected to get used to online consultations, ordering online diagnostics and prescriptions, resulting in the patients getting the said medicines at home, based on the diagnosis. While there was initial reluctance by some of the doctors

## Upskilling surgeons must

To fill the gap of technical superiority, industry-academia partnerships should initiate programmes that allow the surgical residents to get acquainted with the future of surgical care, says Dr SVS DEO



and staff, everyone was quick to overcome their limitations and technology for the larger benefit of the patients and the country at large. The demand for healthcare solutions also prompted fast-tracking digitisation initiatives by the Government and providers. One such game changer was the Government approval for telemedicine usage in India. This changed the landscape of how doctor-patient visits were being managed in India, resulting in making healthcare more accessible to both urban and rural areas across the country.

Another outcome of the pandemic has been the acceptance of

the larger public to become more willing to undergo regular health check-ups to ensure that they remain healthy. This has resulted in identifying more people with different adverse health conditions. This situation has put additional stress on the current healthcare ecosystem resulting in the need for better and faster treatment protocols to support patient care and outcomes. This is an area that can be upgraded by upskilling the medical fraternity. While there is ample such continuing medical education for Masters in Medicine (MD), there are only limited options for Masters in Surgery (MS) special-

sations, related to new age technology.

To fill this gap of technical superiority, industry-academia partnerships should initiate programmes that allow the surgical residents to get acquainted with the future of surgical care. Such programmes should engage with resident surgeons/fellows early on in their career, equipping them with knowledge on robotic/tech-enabled surgery and its clinical applications. Facilitating such programmes with Robotic-Assisted Surgery (RAS) will allow the residents to understand the functionality, and scope for such tech-enabled surgical procedures.

These kind of programmes can give the budding surgeons theoretical knowledge about how the robot works, and the clinical applications of the technology that will be imparted by trained and successful RAS practitioner. Early RAS sensitisation programmes may lead to better adoption of technology which could result in not just reducing the learning curve, but also enable the country's surgical healthcare landscape to function more effectively.

The writer is Professor & Head, Department of Surgical Oncology, BRA-IRCH, AIIMS, Delhi

## Tips to stay relevant

Skills such as basic calculation of construction cost, estimation of appreciation and basic knowledge of building codes come in handy for a real estate manager, says ANNUJ GOEL

If you have remained mesmerised with buildings and skyscrapers during your childhood, a career in the real estate sector can be a rewarding choice. From relationship manager to direct sales executive, there are several roles to make a head start in the property market. However, like every other job, you must be equipped with a gamut of skills to succeed and stay relevant in the real estate industry.

Skills such as basic calculation of construction cost, estimation of appreciation, knowledge of rules related to stamp duty and registration charges, and basic knowledge of building codes etc., come in handy for a real estate manager. Here is a list of five critical skills needed for landing a job in a real estate firm.

**Communication skills:** If you are foraying into a career in the real estate sector, be prepared for a one-on-one with the potential home-buyers. Excellent communication skills are an essential part of the job. The executives must be able to lay bare the features of the project in simple words.

As real estate investment is a cost-intensive proposition, one must be able to spell out the pros and cons as well as the approximate 'Return-on-Investment' (ROI) clearly. You can develop these skills gradually by



practising in front of a mirror and taking feedback from friends about your body language.

**Active listening:** Along with effective speaking skills, active listening is equally important. Attentively listening to the exact requirements of the customer is essential. Only then you will be able to suggest him the options in the given budget and configuration.

Being enthusiastic, empathetic and honest with the customer will automatically incite your interest in him. You can also develop active listening skills by listening to online podcasts and making notes out of them.

**Negotiation skills:** It is business

at the end of the day. You must be able to convince the customers that they are making the right choice. However, as real estate investment is heavy on pocket decision, be prepared for a lot of questions.

Be thorough with the details and communicate effectively. Satisfying the customers with all their queries and being honest will put you in the right stride. Learn to negotiate effectively. Following up is a part of the process, and you must be persistent in keeping track of a beneficial lead.

**Tech-savvy:** Being tech-savvy is not about being a cybersecurity expert. It is about essential computer skills such as making a presentation, excel sheet and use of social media. Before making a pocket decision, be prepared for a lot of questions.

**Social cues and local dialect:** Be prepared to face people from every income strata and background. While meeting an international client, you must be presentable with adequate mannerisms. While dealing with a native client, you might have to incorporate some local sayings and serve them accordingly. Knowledge about the local dialects, societal trends and using it to seal the deal win the confidence of the client.

The writer is Managing Director, Goel Ganga Developments

## Higher education summit

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Education Network recently hosted the 9th edition of the Higher Education Summit in association with Shobhit University at Le-Meridian Hotel. The objective of the summit was to discuss the new education policy, its implementation on the ground and the challenges and solutions to it.

Over the years, the Indian Education Network hosted successful editions of the summit. Last year, the education sector around the world and more so in India has seen a big shift due to pandemic. The Covid-19 pandemic has put a lot of restrictions on traditional classroom-based teaching and learning in educational

institutions and has transformed it into digital-based education. This year, the summit witnessed many delegates from higher education institutions, including industry veterans and representatives from the Ministry of HRD, AICTE and other Government authorities who shared their thoughts and insights on higher education in India.

Kunwar Shekhar Vijendra-Chancellor, Shobhit University, said: "Disruption due to COVID-19 has given us a reason to innovate new things, to create new things, to do new things. I take this opportunity to congratulate our Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the dynamic Ministry of Education for taking this step when the world was not able to do anything."

## Int'l recognition for IP varsity teacher

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

An assistant professor of nano-science & technology at University School of Basic & Applied Sciences (USBAS) Dr Satyabrata Mohapatra has been assigned as the editor of coveted international nano-science research journal — NANO.

This Singapore-based research journal has tendered this responsible assignment seeing his outstanding contributions in the field of nano-science & technology. Around 110 peer-reviewed



Dr Satyabrata Mohapatra

research papers in the related field in the international journals are already to his credit. He leads a multi-functional nano-materials laboratory at the university.

It definitely makes a special mention that Stanford University, USA had adjudged Dr Mohapatra as among the World's top 2 per cent scientists in the field of applied physics some times back.

While the university is busy promoting a culture of research at present, this news will definitely boost the endeavour.

## Young researchers conference

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, Dwarka, New Delhi, in collaboration with, JNU Jean Monnet Module, Centre for European Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, is organising an online Young Researchers Conference 2021.

The theme is "Global Dynamics and Emerging Trends: India and Europe" on March 4 and March 5, 2021. This conference

intends to deliberate upon the emerging trends, global changes and current socio-economic and political crises in changing landscapes and how these crises pose challenges to India, and Europe.

His excellency Ugo Astuto, Ambassador of the European Union to India has kindly consented to address the inaugural session of the conference on March 4, 2020. The guest of honour of the inaugural session is Dinesh K Patnaik, Director General, ICCR.



# Add value to future

Skill advancement is a continuous process. If one envisions to form an organisation that is constantly learning, growing and achieving targets, he needs to have learning employees who are keen to adopt new skills. PIONEER AVENUES lists programmes to pursue



In today's era of digital technology, survival of many organisations is contingent on how they leverage cutting-edge technologies to transform their workplaces into augmented environments. However, for this transformation to happen, organisations must make prudent decisions and avoid the costly buy, not build talent strategy — opting for expensive new hires instead of re-skilling or up-skilling the existing employees.

Skill advancement is not a static process, rather it is crucially important to continue it at all levels. If one envisions to form an organisation that is constantly learning, growing, and achieving its targets, they need to have learning employees who are keen to adopt new skills and move in pace with ever-evolving business landscape.

Up-skilling is a term well-known. With technology causing a tectonic shift in the workplace and creating new possibilities that can be fully realised only by a modernised workforce, there is an ever-increasing need for students and employees to learn new skills and competencies that are required for the emerging job market.

Here we have rounded up a list of courses that can help you upskill and boost your job prospects.

**Cloud Architect Certification Programme:** This specialised course offered by one of India's leading ed-tech company, Intellipaat, equips you with proficiency in Cloud and DevOps. As part of the program, you get to work on real-world projects in AWS, Azure, DevOps, Python, Java, Splunk, Linux, and much more. In this program, it will cover 11 courses, 26 industry-based projects, and the CAPSTONE Project. As part of this masters in Cloud Computing, you will also receive official course material issued by Microsoft for integrating on-premises identity infrastructure with Microsoft Azure and implementing security in Azure Development Solutions.

**Data scientist master's programme:** This course offered in joint collaboration introduces students to integrated blended learning, equipping them with expertise in both AI and data science. This advanced course will make students industry-ready for skills in AI and data science and consequently render them job-ready.

With technology causing a tectonic shift in the workplace and creating new possibilities that can be fully realised only by a modernised workforce, there is an ever-increasing need to learn new skills and competencies that are required for the emerging job market

**Content Writing Course:** This course teaches you to become a content creator & skills to translate thoughts into words that can attract everyone. It upgrades your resume with certifications and industry experience, differentiating your profile from masses and accelerates your career to a better job profile. The course enables participants to translate their thoughts into structured words and explore new ways to express themselves in the best possible way at the workplace. It enables the participants to investigate deeper into any topic and become a deemed expert by developing skills pertaining to creating, evaluating, reorganising, repackaging, strategising and presenting content. Taking the course helps in improving one's persuasive skills which comes in handy especially for professionals in sales, marketing, advertising and communications. This course shapes you into a dynamic writer who can write on any subject at any forum which drives conversations and actions on social media, search engines, e-commerce, blog and landing pages.

**PGD in software development (Big Data):** This comprehensive diploma program offered by UPGrad is designed for those who

wish to deep dive into the world of Big Data, its key processes and industrial applications. This course teaches in-depth about concepts related to Big Data such as data warehousing, real-time processing, data processing and Big Data analytics. Students also get to work with tools like Java, Python, Spark, Kafka, and Hive etc. The program includes seven-plus case studies and projects which will assist you in sharpening your real-world skills.

**Professional teaching:** Sarasa is a leading teacher-growth-focused EdTech and JobTech platform, offers internationally-recognized UK Level 6 Teaching Qualifications in India. Designed by a team of veteran educators, cognitive scientists, and data scientists in consultation with thousands of teachers and industry specialists, the two qualifications — Professional Graduate Certificate in Teaching & Learning (PGCTL) and Diploma in Teaching aim to help teachers accelerate their professional growth and be successful in creating a high impact learning environment in their classrooms.

They empower teachers with 21st Century teaching skills, crucial to engage the new generation of Gen Z and Gen Alpha students.

## 'Demand for cyber security professionals on rise'

Advancement of digitisation has spurred an increase in cybersecurity solutions leading to lucrative options, says DR SANJEEV KUMAR SHARMA

In COVID-19 era world economy and society are now interconnected by supply chains, communications technology and travel. The rapid growth of the number of appliances, devices, vehicles and infrastructure are linked which is foremost to the only interconnected world. Rise in demand of digitalisation services creates a network of Internet of Things devices to enable better consumer experience but also raises the high incidence of cyber attacks.

Cyber security jobs have been one of the hottest jobs for students today. The demand is unmatched in any other technology domain. Companies across the world have been continuously targeted for cyber-attacks. This scenario has given massive opportunities for professionals willing to enter the security domain. Cyber security today serves as a major source of employment and a lucrative career option. First step is to acquire basic cybersecurity skills, followed by choosing a specific domain based on personal interest and market demand. For a successful career, students need to get in-depth training, develop skills, and acquire specific certifications in security.

India faced around seven lakh cyber-attacks in August 2020 report by (MeITV). As per the report India was ranked third and one of the biggest victims of cyber-attacks in recent years, makes it even more exigent.

In recent years Government and private players have introduced a flurry of specialised and standalone courses on cyber security. From part-time to distance learning to online mode with varied provisions for certification, diploma and degree programmes, these courses have found much popularity among students as well as career professionals.

The professionals are focused on delivering technologies that help move business operations forward while preserving sensitive information. Despite the recent increase in popularity of cyber security as a course in our universities, colleges and institutes, are not much enough. The demand of cyber security experts in India has even less than a paltry 10,000 professionals. For a second largest economy of world



Dr Sanjeev Kumar Sharma  
Dean Academics, Sanskriti University

India and sustained by the second largest population of the world with expanding digital footprints, such a minuscule number is grossly insufficient. Therefore, it is time that cyber security as a specialised discipline with all its attendant sub-disciplines becomes an integral component of any IT syllabus being taught within our university systems as well as outside.

Innovations and trends in technology have a direct impact on digital security. Recent advancement of digitisation and the Internet over things has spurred a significant increase in cybersecurity solutions. We are moving forward and creating a digital and smart world that gives no place for vulnerable cybersecurity and mediocrity.

Apart from a relevant degree in technology, students need to have a basic knowledge about advanced cybersecurity concepts, extensive cybersecurity work experience, industry certifications, knowledge of regulatory policies is usually required to make a career in cybersecurity. The rise in cyber attacks is increasing the opportunities for professionals from all backgrounds who want to make a career in cybersecurity. Even people from Humanities can make a career in cybersecurity.

A recent parliamentary report states that due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, the Indian automotive industry suffered ₹2,300 crore loss per day and an estimated job loss in the sector was about 45 lakh. This report clearly indicates that there is still a mismatch in the education we impart to the youth and the demand they have to meet at the job.

This gap will widen further if we don't initiate structured reforms and initiative in the next Union Budget, which will be tabled in less than a week's time. The dream of achieving a self-reliant \$5 trillion economy completely depends upon the education and the skill level of its citizens.

### Training the workforce to get adapt to the digital setup

With the advent of COVID-19 vaccines and India's emergence as the soft-power in the medical industry, companies are re-evaluating the year 2021 with full of hopes. They are slowly and steadily adapting to the new normal by upskilling, relearning and learning the importance of advanced technologies in order to retain their relevance and competitiveness in this digital era. At this juncture, the public and private partnership can help in the major shift in skilling/relearning programmes in tandem with the government skilling programs.

Apart from this, the academic curriculum in schools and colleges must be

## MINDIT

rebooted to remain in sync with the current realities of the post-pandemic era. It is alarming to see how India despite being renowned for its large talent pool, most graduates are unemployable due to mismatch of their skill sets with industry requirements. The Ministry of Education and Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship should work together to come up with a new curriculum and skilling programs as per the industry standards.

### New job opportunities demands new

**skills**  
In order to cope with the company's new transformation, the existing and new workforce also needs to have constant skilling, relearning and upskilling. The new job requirements will also demand the knowledge of a new set of areas including IoT, mechatronics, robotics, 3D printing, AI, machine learning and deep learning, analytics, virtual collaboration, automotive design, and computational thinking.

A lot of training programmes are the need of the hour to build the capacity of

these workforces.

Even the current time demands a complete change in the mindset of youth and their parents. An engineering student's goal should be getting a job, becoming financially independent and merely holding a degree. Once this mindset sets in, there is no way India can be taking the lead in becoming a hub for manufacturing, and supplier of skilled talent.

### Continuous reskilling programmes in organisations

Surveys have found out that those companies who launched successful reskilling programmes are also the ones who were able to better address the skill

gaps caused by technological disruptions or to implement new business models or strategies in order to stay relevant and competitive.

The lesson here is that simply getting started on reskilling programs is not enough. Organisations better prepared for potential future role disruption and is preferable to waiting. There is a need for continuous skilling programmes and they should not be short term. Companies need to understand that whatever talent reskilling or redeployment they should also be used to expand their reskilling capabilities going forward.

The writer is Ankit Shyamshaha, CEO, ICA Edu Skills



The University of Hamburg invites applications for merit awards. These opportunities are available for international students to concentrate fully on their studies and gives them the opportunity to develop their skills.

**Eligibility:** You are entitled to funding if you are pursuing an academic degree at the university and enrolled in degree programme for at least two semesters (master's students can apply after one semester). Not hold German citizenship and are not eligible for the federal student loan scheme.

**Upload:** CV, letter of motivation: use this form (PDF), proof of social and/or intercultural activities (if applicable), a record of achievements: STINE printout or list of course certificates.

**Admission requirements:** The applicants need to enrol at the University of Hamburg at the time of application. **Language:** English

**How to apply:** Students go to <https://login.uni-hamburg.de/idp/profile/SAML2/Redirect/SSO?execution=e2s1>  
**Application deadline:** April 15, 2021 & October 15, 2021.

The Swinburne University of Technology, Australia invites applications for its Australia Awards for brilliant candidates.

**Eligibility:** The bursary is available for undergraduate, postgraduate, or TAFE study at the university. Candidates must meet the criteria as per their country guidelines.

**Supporting documents:** Aspirants must send the completed application with the required documents as per their respective nationalities.

**Admission requirements:** Applicants must need to have good grades in their previous academic study, equivalent to the minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) for their desired degree at the university.

**Language requirement:** If English is not your first language, you will need to show that your English language skills are high enough to succeed in your studies.

**How to apply:** To apply for this bursary, applicants must have to complete the application procedure via an online portal.

**Application deadline:** The last date to apply for this award is April 30, 2021.

### HR ADMIN & RECRUITMENT AT K21 ACADEMY

**Location:** Work From Home  
**Stipend:** ₹8,000-₹12,000 per month  
**Link:** [internshala.com/j/7308350](https://internshala.com/j/7308350)  
**Deadline:** March 9, 2021

### CUSTOMER SERVICE AT CLERK-TECH

**Location:** Work From Home  
**Stipend:** ₹20,000 per month  
**Link:** [internshala.com/j/7308351](https://internshala.com/j/7308351)  
**Deadline:** March 9, 2021

### CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MGT AT REACH 2 FITNESS

**Location:** Delhi, Faridabad, Gurugram  
**Stipend:** ₹15,000-₹20,000 per month  
**Link:** [internshala.com/j/7308353](https://internshala.com/j/7308353)  
**Deadline:** March 9, 2021

### CONTENT WRITING AT PROMOTEDIGITALLY

**Location:** Lucknow  
**Stipend:** ₹6,000-₹8,000 per month  
**Link:** [internshala.com/j/7308355](https://internshala.com/j/7308355)  
**Deadline:** March 8, 2021

### MARKETING AT BYJU'S APP

**Location:** Ranchi  
**Stipend:** ₹16,000 per month  
**Link:** [internshala.com/j/7308357](https://internshala.com/j/7308357)  
**Deadline:** March 7, 2021

### FRESHER JOBS

**PRODUCT MANAGER AT INTERNSHALA**  
**Location:** Gurugram  
**Stipend:** ₹6-₹8.28 lakh per annum  
**Link:** [internshala.com/j/7308360](https://internshala.com/j/7308360)  
**Deadline:** March 18, 2021  
**Skill(s):** MS-Excel, English Proficiency (Written)

### RESEARCH EVANGELIST AT DEEPTHUGHT EDUTECH VENTURES

**Location:** Remote  
**Stipend:** ₹3-₹5 lakh per annum  
**Link:** [internshala.com/j/7308361](https://internshala.com/j/7308361)  
**Deadline:** March 25, 2021

## INBRIEF

### AUV LAUNCHED TO SANITISE SPACES

The Mahindra University has launched an Autonomous Unmanned Vehicle (AUV) Disinfecting Robot, Mahindra Unmanned UV Disinfectant Robot (MUDRA). This robot is designed to disinfect rooms, labs, offices, shop floors, and various other spaces using Ultraviolet C (UVC) rays.

Dr Yajulu Medury, VC, Mahindra University said, "We are constantly focused on enabling solutions that impact our day to day lives in a positive sense. In this pandemic time, safety is of paramount importance. I am proud that we have created an indigenously designed, developed in-house and

funded disinfecting robot, that helps in the sanitisation of surfaces thereby, ensuring that spaces remain infection free."

The robot has been designed to navigate autonomously on the floor without needing any extra infrastructure. It maps and plans its path to move around, and avoids obstacles and re-charts its path intelligently. It moves from room to room on a floor automatically without any human intervention. In addition, it has the capability to operate elevators and move from one floor to another using Wi-Fi or wireless connectivity.

The robot is is completely safe and non-hazardous to humans as it automatically switches off its UVC function whenever it detects human presence.

### ONLINE TALENT SEARCH EXAM FOR CAT

The Triumphant Institute of Management Education (TIME) is a test-prep institute with a pan-India presence and is headquartered in Hyderabad.

From its entrepreneurial roots in 1992, the institute today has 251 centers and has trained over 22 lakh students for various courses since inception.

The institute is conducting the T.I.M.E. Talent Search Examination (TTSE) for CAT21/22 aspirants on March 7, 2021.

The test will be conducted in two slots viz., 10 AM and 6 PM. Students can choose to write the test any day.

Attractive performance-based fee waivers (up to 100 per cent on CAT 21/22 classroom/online courses) will be available for the students. A minimum assured discount of 10 per cent of the total course fee will be given to those who write the free mock and enroll in the mentioned courses before March 7, 2021. Interested students can register using the link given below: <https://www.time4ed.com/online/local/articles/page.php?d=4430>. To know more: <https://www.time4ed.com/online/index.php>.

## SRM all set to welcome students



Admissions are now open to various programmes at the Faculty of Science and Humanities (FSH) at SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST), Kattankulathur and Health Sciences programmes at SRM Medical College Hospital & Research Centre (SRM MCHRC), Kattankulathur.

Under the Faculty of Science & Humanities, SRMIST offers various Undergraduate and Post Graduate programmes from the College of Science and Humanities, School of Management, and School of Law. Several UG and PG programmes are also available for students in the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences that has the College of Pharmacy, College of Physiotherapy, College of Occupational

Therapy, College of Nursing, School of Public Health, among others.

The soft launch of application forms for Dr CA Gurudath, Dean Health Sciences, and Faculty of Science and Humanities was held at the Institute's premises in the presence of SRMIST's Pro VC (Medical) Lt Col Dr A Ravi Kumar, Director (Admissions) Dr KS Lakshmi, Director of Communications R Nandakumar, Assistant Director (M&H) Venkata Ramakrishnan, Assistant Director (S&H) Dr Vivek Shivhare, Dean (FSH) Dr Jothikumar, Dean (Law) Dr CA Gurudath, Dean (Dental) Dr N Vivek, Dean (SHP) Dr Padma Venkat, Dean (Pharmacy) Dr V Chitra, Dean

(Physiotherapy) Veera Goutham and Dean (Occupational Therapy) Dr U Ganapathy Sankar. FSH and SRM MCHRC has several disciplines that prepare students to fill that growing need and take advantage of that growth opportunity. Admissions to any of these programmes will be based on the eligibility, Board examination marks, department level examination conducted by the respective schools in SRM and one-to-one interaction. Candidates applying should have secured a minimum aggregate of 50 per cent in the Boards. Indians and non-resident Indians can apply. Interested students can visit the site: [www.srmist.edu.in](http://www.srmist.edu.in) for more information.

