

OPINION 8
100 DAYS OF REVOLT, &
STILL RARING TO GO

WORLD 11
MYANMAR SECURITY FORCES
KILL 2 ANTI-COUP PROTESTERS

SPORT 14
INDIA EVES TO FACE
ENGLAND IN TEST

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PARINEETI
CHOPRA
13 VIVACITY

Uproar in Houses over fuel price

First day of second part of Budget Session a washout

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The first day of the second part of the Budget Session of Parliament was virtually washed out due to the uproar created by the Opposition over fuel price rise.

In the Rajya Sabha, while the Congress wanted a discussion right away on the issue, Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu did not allow and said the matter could be raised during debate on the appropriation Bill in the coming days.

In the Lok Sabha, members of the Congress, the Shiv Sena, the Indian Union Muslim League gave adjournment motion notices over the continuous rise in petrol, diesel and LPG prices. After Speaker Om Birla rejected notices of adjournment motion moved by Opposition members over the issue, they started raising slogans.

Birla appealed to protesting members several times to let the House function so that women members can raise their issues on International Women's Day, but as the din continued around 5.15 pm, he adjourned the Lok Sabha till 7 pm.

The Congress made its intentions clear on disrupting the proceedings as soon as the Rajya Sabha met for the first day of the second half of the Budget Session. The newly-elected Leader of Opposition and senior Congress leader



Congress leaders Mallikarjun Kharge, Deepender Singh Hooda and others during a media interaction at Vijay Chowk in New Delhi on Monday PTI



Opposition leaders stage a protest over rise in fuel prices, in the Rajya Sabha during the Budget Session of Parliament in New Delhi on Monday PTI

Mallikarjun Kharge raised the issue and sought a discussion on the "burning issue."

"This is very important issue and it is a burning subject. Throughout the country, people are agitated," Kharge said. Petrol prices touched nearly ₹100 a litre while diesel rates were more than ₹80 per litre and LPG prices also increased, he said adding the Government had collected ₹21 lakh crore by putting excise duty and cess on petroleum products.

He said farmers and people were suffering because of rise in prices but the Chairman did not allow his notice under Rule 267 to suspend business for the day and discuss the issue.

Naidu reiterated that the members will get ample opportunity to put the Government on the mat on the issue during the forthcoming debates.

Continued on Page 11

Session likely to be cut short, to end before State polls start

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Budget Session of Parliament is likely to be cut short and may conclude before the first phase of elections on March 27, while the two Houses will resume their normal timing of 11 am onwards from Tuesday, sources said.

Several parties had requested that the session, which was originally scheduled to continue till April 8, be curtailed due to the Assembly elections in four States and one Union Territory being held between March 27 and April 29.

While Rajya Sabha



Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman greets Congress MP Anand Sharma at Parliament on Monday PTI

Chairperson M Venkaiah Naidu announced the new timings for the Upper House this morning on the first day of the second part of the Budget Session, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla made a similar

announcement in the Lower House. Birla said Lok Sabha members would also sit in galleries, apparently to maintain distancing norms.

Keeping in mind the social distancing norms due to the Covid-19 pandemic, both Houses were meeting in two shifts since the Monsoon Session, with Rajya Sabha meeting in the first half of the day and Lok Sabha in the second half. There was no Winter Session of Parliament due to the pandemic. Some Rajya Sabha members were sitting in Lok Sabha chambers to adhere to distancing norms.

Continued on Page 11

Batla House shootout: Cop's killer convicted

Court holds IM ultra guilty of shooting Inspector Sharma in 2008 encounter

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Monday convicted Ariz Khan for the murder of Delhi Police Inspector Mohan Chand Sharma and other offences in connection with the 2008 Batla House encounter. Khan is allegedly associated with the terror outfit Indian Mujahideen. The court will pronounce the quantum of sentence on March 15.

Additional Sessions Judge Sandeep Yadav said the evidence produced by the prosecution duly proved the case beyond reasonable doubt.

The judge said it is "duly proved that Ariz Khan and his associates caused murder of police official and fired gunshot on the police official."

The judge further said Khan managed to flee and did not appear before court despite being declared a proclaimed offender. "The evidence adduced on record, including ocular, documentary and scientific, prosecution has proved beyond reasonable doubt that Khan along with accomplices with common intention



Injured Inspector Mohan Chand Sharma File photo



House encounter in Jamia Nagar in south Delhi.

In 2013, Shahzad Ahmed and Khan had escaped the Batla House shootout while two of their accomplices, Atif Amin and Mohammed Sajid, were killed during the shootout. A third, Mohammed Saif, was arrested.

Delhi Police Inspector Mohan Chand Sharma lost his life while two other officers were injured.

Later, Shahzad Ahmed was also arrested and a trial court in July 2013 had sentenced Indian Mujahideen terrorist Ahmed to life imprisonment in connection with the case. His appeal against the trial court's verdict has been pending in the High Court.

Khan, a native of Azamgarh, was arrested by the Delhi Police's Special Cell in February 2018.

obstructed inspector Sharma in discharge of public function," the court said. "Khan, along with his accomplices, also fired gunshots at head constables Balwant and Balvir Singh," the court further said. The court also asked the Investigating Officer (IO) to ascertain the financial position of the convict to decide on the amount of compensation to be given to the victim's family.

Inspector Sharma of the Special Cell of Delhi was martyred during the 2008 Batla



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath handing over the Mission Shakti awards on the occasion of International Women's Day in Lucknow on Monday

Discrimination results in distorted form of society like Maoism: Yogi

Lucknow (PTI): Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday said whenever society discriminates against its own people, a distorted form of it like Maoism in Nepal is witnessed.

Addressing an event held to mark International Women's Day, the CM said the question remains why there is a discrimination against women and could solutions be found by remaining confined to the formality of holding programmes on the day.

Referring to the Tharu community, Adityanath said it was deprived of facilities even after the Independence of the country.

Once central and state government schemes started reaching them, the community joined the mainstream and started contributing to society, he said. "The same community turned Maoist in Nepal and disrupted arrangements there," he said.

"When society discriminates against its own people, then a distorted form of it like Maoism in Nepal is seen," the CM said.

Referring to his government's efforts to ensure inclusive growth, the chief minister said, "We included products made by the Tharu tribe under the 'One District, One Product' scheme in Lakhimpur Kheri

and I am happy that it is getting national and international recognition."

The CM claimed that his government has worked for the uplift of women and said Mission Shakti was launched for their empowerment.

According to an official statement, the chief minister also held a dialogue with leading women from different fields and assured them that the Centre and the state government are committed to the empowerment of women for which various schemes are being run. The chief minister also awarded Mission Shakti Puraskar to 11 women and inaugurated several schemes.

All booths in Bengal ph-I polls 'sensitive'

PNS ■ KOLKATA

In an unprecedented decision, the Election Commission of India has declared all the booths for the first phase of elections in five districts of Bankura, Purulia, Jhargram and East and West Midnapore in West Bengal as sensitive. This implies that all the 10,228 booths will have at least 4-8 Central forces jawans deployed, sources said, adding the EC has already banned "civic volunteers" or "green police" appointed by the State Government on a temporary basis from manning the polls.

The first phase — of the 8-phase elections — for 10 seats will take place on March 27.



West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee addresses a rally to mark International Women's Day in Kolkata on Monday PTI

Reacting to the EC's decision to deploy Central forces in all the booths, Bengal Minister Tapas Roy said, "We respect the EC's decision... they have the power to do so and they are doing accordingly... but the point is decisions should not be one-sided and favouring any one party."

Meanwhile, more Trinamool Congress leaders quit the ruling party either "feeling insulted" at not being given a ticket or getting "inspired" by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership ahead of the Assembly polls.

Sonali Guha, former Bengal Assembly Deputy Speaker and a trusted lieutenant of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for many decades, on Monday left the ruling outfit along with other outgoing Legislators Dependu Biswas of Basirhat and Jatu Lahiri of Howrah.

Continued on Page 11

Never asked rapist to marry victim, remarks misreported, says CJJ

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday said its observation during the hearing last week in a bail matter in a rape case was "completely misreported" and added that it has the "highest respect" for women and womanhood.

The comments — on International Women's Day — come in the wake of recent criticism against the Supreme Court

that it had purportedly asked a rape accused whether he would marry the victim, who was a minor when the crime was committed and has turned major now.

"We asked are you going to marry? We didn't ask him to marry" a bench headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde said, adding it had asked this to the man, in the context of the case.

"The fact of the matter is that we have the highest respect for

women," said the bench, also comprising Justices AS Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian.

The observations by the bench were made while it was hearing another case, a plea by a 14-year-old pregnant rape survivor seeking permission to abort the foetus of 26 weeks.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, who was appearing in the matter, said that the observation by the bench last week was reported out of context.

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BJP MLA in Bhadohi gets threatening call

Lucknow (PNS): An audio clip threatening to kill Bharatiya Janata Party MLA...



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Notify that I have changed my name from Alok Kumar Singh to Alok Singh S/o Surindra Singh for all purposes...

NOTICE

I have changed my name spelling from Radhika Khemka to Radhica Khemka. In future, I should be known Radhica Khemka...

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My Name is shown in High School Marksheet as Amit Kumar Dixit. Now I have changed my name as Amit Dixit. Hereinafter I shall be known and identified as Amit Dixit...

NOTICE

It is for the information that I have lost my marksheets of class 10th, 12th & B.tech degree also. enrollment no. T/4207/020, B/8681/004 and 2012/971. Any misuse of them will be illegal...

NOTICE

Due to mistake in some documents my name written Mohammad Zaheer S/o Mushtaq Mirza, D.O.B. 1.1.1959 whereas my correct name is Zaheer Ahmad Beg S/o Mushtaq Ahmad Beg...

NOTICE

I, Nakshatra Tomar hereby declare that my father's name appears incorrectly as JK Tomar in my Year 2019 ICSE Highschool marksheet UID 6984040. Index no. 1196318/064. His actual name for all purposes is Jitendra Kumar Tomar.

सूचना

सूचित हो मैं श्रीमती अर्चना पाण्डेय नि० HIG 341 सेक्टर-9 जानकीपुरम विस्तार लखनऊ मैंने सरमिला दत्त C/o श्री जगदीश गुप्ता से 3/225 वास्तु खर्च गोमट. निगर लखनऊ की रजिस्ट्री कराई थी जिसका मूल आवंटन पत्र खो गया है। अब से इसका उपयोग किसी अन्य के द्वारा अवैध होगा।

सूचना

सूचित किया जाता है कि मेरे मोन०-A-855, इन्दिरा नगर, लखनऊ की लीज डीड एवं बैनामा प्रति दिनांक - 12.06.1987 नामे अनादि नाथ सहगल एवं अधिकार पत्र (मुख्तारनामा) 14.07.2003 नामे राखी लाल की मूल प्रति वास्तु में कहीं खो गई है। तरुन रस्तोगी पुत्र कृष्ण कुमार रस्तोगी निवासी A-855 इन्दिरा नगर लखनऊ।

आवश्यकता है

श्री हनुमान महाविद्यालय वरद्वी जूजुं फतेहपुर में प्राथम्य एवं प्राथमिकी की विषय सम्बन्धित विज्ञान, गणित, जीव विज्ञान, वनस्पति विज्ञान, इतिहास, भूगोल, हिन्दी, अंग्रेजी, राजनीति विज्ञान, गृह विज्ञान शिक्षा शास्त्र 01 पद, यूजीसीसी0 एवं विश्वविद्यालय द्वारा निर्धारित योग्यता के अनुसार आवेदन पत्र, शैक्षणिक प्रमाण पत्र की रकम सम्बन्धित प्रतियों के साथ 21 दिनांक के अन्दर स्वयं अथवा रजिस्टर्ड डाक द्वारा भेजित करें। हरिनाथपथ सिंह प्रबन्धक मो० न०- 8823232399

UP govt committed to empowering women, their dignity: CM



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath with the winners of Mission Shakti award in Lucknow on Monday

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said here on Monday that his government was committed to ensuring the empowerment, dignity and safety of women and therefore it had given thrust to pro-women, pro-rural and pro-poor initiatives in the state. In his congratulatory message to women on the occasion of International Women's Day, the chief minister said that they were the architect of society. "She establishes the institution of family, builds home, brings up children and makes them good citizens. Her strength in totality contributes in the making of an ideal family, an ideal society and an ideal state," he said.

eral measures to ensure effective implementation of the women-centric schemes of the government, he said. The Kanya Sumangala scheme has been formulated in a way which ensures that parents take proper care of the girl child with respect to her health and education and other aspects as it provides a fund of Rs 15,000 to every family where a girl child is born. The amount is released to the family in a phased manner in installments at the time of birth, vaccination, admission to classes 1, 5, 9 and graduation. The state government has executed the scheme successfully to achieve its goal of providing a bright future to the daughters of the state. More than 6.53 lakh female students in primary, upper primary, secondary and higher education have availed immediate benefits under this scheme. In addition to this, the government has successfully reached out to the schools and colleges in all the 75 districts to directly connect the eligible girls to this golden scheme, Deputy Director, Women Welfare, Ashutosh Kumar Singh, said.

Make Amrit Mahotsav a festival of people: PM

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath took part in the video conference of Prime Minister Narendra Modi which was held in connection with the first meeting of the national committee constituted to commemorate the 75th anniversary of India's independence. This commemoration, named the 'Amrit Mahotsav of Independence', will continue for the next 75 weeks. The festival will begin on March 12, 2021. In his address through video conferencing, the prime minister said that the goal of this event was to make people understand the importance of India's freedom and freedom struggle. "The young generation has to be informed about the freedom movement. This is to connect the youth. This event has to be given the shape of a movement," he said. The prime minister said that this event was very important for the country. He said that all efforts would be made to make this event a festival of the people.



"It should be a festival in which the struggle for freedom is experienced. This event will reflect the pride of Sanatan India. It will also develop the concept of celebrating 100 years of independence in the year 2047," he said. The prime minister said that through this event, stories of unknown fighters of freedom struggle would also be taken to the people. It is worth mentioning that on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of Independence, a state level organising committee has been constituted for the state level Amrit Mahotsav under the chairmanship of the governor. The executive committee has been constituted under the chairmanship of the chief minister. The state government has prepared a grand plan for the commemoration. During the video conferencing, Chief Secretary RK Tiwari, Additional Chief Secretary (Information and MSME) Navneet Sehgal, Additional Chief Secretary (Revenue) Renuka Kumar, Additional Chief Secretary (Secondary Education) Aradhana Shukla, Additional Chief

"IT SHOULD BE A FESTIVAL IN WHICH THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM IS EXPERIENCED. THIS EVENT WILL REFLECT THE PRIDE OF SANATAN INDIA. IT WILL ALSO DEVELOP THE CONCEPT OF CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE IN THE YEAR 2047"

Secretary (Youth Welfare) Dimple Verma, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister and Information Sanjay Prasad and Principal Secretary (Culture and Tourism) Mukesh Kumar Meshram and other senior officials were present.

Price stabilisation fund mooted to tackle cane arrears problem

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With sugarcane arrears continuing to be a major issue, especially in the politically sensitive western Uttar Pradesh, the Central government along with NITI Aayog has started working on a mechanism to create a price stabilisation fund. This fund will address the problem of sugarcane arrears faced by the farmers. The details of the fund are yet to be worked out. The fund is proposed to compensate the cane growers in years of low price. The Centre has also suggested tweaking the C Rangarajan formula of revenue sharing, based on sugar recovery levels. The creation of the fund and the revenue sharing formula are relevant for Uttar Pradesh as the state is faced with galloping sugarcane and sugar production and arrears of the cane growers.

Due to excess sugar production and slump in demand for sugar, the UP government has not announced any significant hike in State Advisory Price (SAP) of sugarcane for the last three seasons. The sugarcane production during the last season 2019-20 was over 1.2 crore metric tons and this year the sugar production is likely to be more than that of last season. Though the Yogi Adityanath government has ensured payment of over Rs 1.25 lakh to the cane growers during the last four years, the cane arrears problem remains. The revenue sharing formula had suggested fixing sugarcane price at 70 per cent of the revenue realised from the sale of sugar and its byproducts and 75 per cent from the revenue realised if only sugar was taken into consideration for calculation. A formula for incentivising farmers who grow sugarcane with a higher-than-average

recovery rate, along with staggered cane payment schedule is also being looked into. Recovery rate is the amount of sugar extracted from sugarcane. Higher the quantum of sugar derived from sugarcane, greater the productivity of the sugar mill. Sources said the first meeting of the panel constituted to look into various issues pertaining to the sugar sector was held recently. The sources said discussions were also held on the shape and structure of the price stabilisation fund. The panel has sought the views of different stakeholders and ministries, along with the modalities of payment of cane price to the farmers in installments. The ministries of agriculture, food, commerce, finance and petroleum, NITI Aayog and representatives of all sugarcane growing states are part of the panel. On the price stabilisation fund, sources said such a fund was mooted to bridge the gap

between fair and remunerative price (FRP) and the liability of the sugar mills based on the revenue sharing formula. In UP, the SAP is determined by the state government while rest of the states follow the FRP determined by the Centre. To ensure farmers are not deprived in case of lower FRP, the NITI Aayog has recommended a special price stabilisation fund. The Agriculture Cost and Price Commission had earlier also recommended the setting up of a price stabilisation fund. The Commission every year determines the minimum support price for wheat, paddy and 20 other crops. The sources, however, added that details about the funds were yet to be worked out. They said the revenue sharing formula was likely to be implemented from the next sugarcane crushing season 2021-22. UP also goes to polls in early 2022.

Job-seekers duped by private company

LUCKNOW (PNS):

A company duped several job-seekers by promising them jobs and facilitating them visas. Police swung into action only after the victims of fraud marched to the police station, drawing media attention to their plight. On Monday, a huge number of youths assembled at the office of the firm and later moved towards the police station. A police team tried to counsel the protesters. Later, a case was registered in this connection and a probe started. "We have received complaints that that firm collected money from people by promising them jobs abroad. Owners of the firm have reportedly gone missing. We are trying to identify and track them," the police said. The office was being run in a rented shop. The firm promised jobs and work visas for Gulf and European countries. People who approached the firm were charged Rs 10,000 to 50,000 in the name of processing their applications. Later, the owners of the firm went untraceable.

Woman, daughter killed by lovesick youth

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a brutal double-murder on the eve of Women's Day, a woman and her daughter were hacked to death while a kin was injured when a lovesick youth barged into their house and attacked them with a sharp-edged weapon late Sunday night. The incident took place in Jarar locality of Bah in Agra. Five police teams have been formed to nab the killer. Reports said that Sharada Devi (50) was sleeping in her room with her daughter Kamini (19) when the accused, Govind, entered the house and stabbed her and her daughter late Sunday night. On hearing their screams, Vimlesh, the elder daughter-in-law of Sharada Devi, rushed to their room but she too was attacked with the knife by the accused. The locals also rushed to the house on hearing the commotion but by then the assailant managed to flee. All the victims were rushed to hospital where Sharada Devi and Kamini were pronounced dead

while the condition of Vimlesh was stated to be critical. Senior police officials, including JG Satish Ganesh and SSP Bablu Kumar, reached the scene of crime and a forensic team was called in to collect evidence. A dog squad was called to trace the accused. Ganesh told reporters that the accused was in love with the daughter of Sharada Devi but she did not respond to his love. To get rid of him, Sharada Devi had fixed her daughter's marriage with another youth and two weeks back her engagement ceremony took place. This had provoked the accused to kill both. The police official said that the accused would be arrested soon. The bodies were sent for post-mortem. In Sant Kabir Nagar, the body of an unknown woman was found inside a gunny bag lying in Kuwana river in Saakhi hamlet of Dhanghata on Monday morning. Some local residents who spotted the body informed the local police about it. The cops later sent the body for post-mortem.

The police said the girl was probably killed and her body was stuffed in the bag and thrown in the river. She was wearing a pink T-shirt and a mud colour salwar. Efforts are on to find out the identity of the victim so that the killers could be traced and arrested. Meanwhile, in a shocking incident, a 15-year-old girl was allegedly raped by a 16-year-old boy when she was returning home from school in Fatehpur district. Inspector in-charge (SSI) of the Hathgam police station Ashish Singh said the incident occurred on Wednesday and an FIR was lodged on Friday. He said the victim, a class 9 student, was returning home from school when a class 10 student of the same school, who is also her neighbour, allegedly caught hold of her and forcibly took her to a nearby forest area and raped her. The SSI said the accused minor student was held and would be produced before a juvenile court. The girl was sent to a government hospital for medical examination.

Senior Cong leader humiliated on Women's Day function

Lucknow (PNS):

When the entire nation was celebrating International Women's Day and organising programmes to honour the females, a senior office-bearer of the minority cell of Uttar Pradesh Congress openly humiliated a woman leader here on Monday. The woman leader is also a leading social activist of the city. The leader forced the senior female colleague to step down from the dais during a programme organised by UP Congress Committee minority cell to felicitate some women for their work on Monday morning. Surprisingly, the insult to the woman leader was made in the Congress when Priyanka Gandhi Vadra is in charge of party affairs in Uttar Pradesh and the programme was being held on UPCC campus and party state president Ajay Kumar Lallu was also there. Upset with the humiliation, that too during Women's Day function, the leader, who also went to jail during the anti-CAA protest in the state, reportedly made a complaint to Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and sought action. The party claimed to have felicitated 100 working women in the function. Meanwhile, when Priyanka Gandhi Vadra is leaving no stone unturned in Uttar Pradesh to revive the party before the 2022 assembly polls, the decision of the party's state unit has confused the rank and file leading to bickering among the leaders of the Lucknow City Congress. Congress appointed Lucknow city president Mukesh Singh Chauhan on December 24, 2019, who led or coordinated all the party activities during the lockdown period. However, the bickering started when Lallu first appointed Ajay Srivastava 'Aju' and later Dilpreet Singh as president of Lucknow (North) and Lucknow (South) respectively. After posting Dilpreet, the UPCC issued a press release claiming that posting of Dilpreet was made against Mukesh, after removing the latter. However, confusion arose that besides Lucknow North and South, who would lead the party in the rest part of the city as Mukesh was in charge of the whole city. Though no official clarification has been issued so far but some senior leaders claim that soon three more presidents, one each for Lucknow East, West and Central, will be announced.

party before the 2022 assembly polls, the decision of the party's state unit has confused the rank and file leading to bickering among the leaders of the Lucknow City Congress. Congress appointed Lucknow city president Mukesh Singh Chauhan on December 24, 2019, who led or coordinated all the party activities during the lockdown period. However, the bickering started when Lallu first appointed Ajay Srivastava 'Aju' and later Dilpreet Singh as president of Lucknow (North) and Lucknow (South) respectively. After posting Dilpreet, the UPCC issued a press release claiming that posting of Dilpreet was made against Mukesh, after removing the latter. However, confusion arose that besides Lucknow North and South, who would lead the party in the rest part of the city as Mukesh was in charge of the whole city. Though no official clarification has been issued so far but some senior leaders claim that soon three more presidents, one each for Lucknow East, West and Central, will be announced.

NOTICE: The Advocate Pradeep Yadav on behalf of Sunil Kumar s/o Yaduvender Singh R/o H. No. 165 near Pratham Swasth Kendra Kakaya Kanpur Nagar informs to all that Sunil Kumar s/o Yaduvender Singh has offered to Mortgage the concerned private plot No. 46 having area 10.52 sqm situated in part of Plot No. 247 situated in Gram Mohamadpur Pargana & Teh. & Dist. Kanpur Nagar. It is said by Sunil Kumar s/o Yaduvender Singh that the concerned private plot No. 46 of original sale deed dated 12.09.2013 executed by Amit Kumar s/o Raju in favour of Ramkishan Singh Yadav s/o Late Mevalal of the afore said Plot No. 46 which is duly registered in the office of subRegistrar Kanpur Nagar in Bahi No. 1 zild No. 62/16 on pages 199-224 SL No. 5625 is really last somewhere else. It has been informed dated 06-03-2021 with the Lost Article Information Report U.P. Police, L.A.R. No. 140845/2021. If any person or financial institute has any claim with under signed advocate within 15 days from publication of the notice, failing which will be presumed that proposed mortgage is free from Encumbrances & my Client L.L.C. H.F.L. Kanpur Nagar will be free to process further accordingly. Pradeep Yadav, Advocate L.L.C, H.F.L. Kanpur Nagar Mo.9935712367

NOTICE: The Advocate Pradeep Yadav on behalf of Sudheer Singh Gautam s/o Late Sughar Singh s/o Mohalla Ajeet Nagar P.S. friends society Etawah Dist. Etawah inform to all that Sudheer Singh Gautam s/o Late Sughar Singh has offered to Mortgage the concerned private plot having area 144.98 sqm, part of Arzi No. 532 situated in Mohalla Bheem Nagar Pargana & Teh. & Dist. Etawah. It is said by Sudheer Singh Gautam s/o Late Sughar Singh that the concerned private plot No. 7 of original sale deed dated 08.01.1998 executed by Manphool Singh s/o Buddha & Ram Dulare s/o Ram Dayal & Sone Lal s/o Girvar Singh in favour of Subhash Chandra Gautam s/o Ram Krishna of the afore said Plot which is duly registered in the office of subRegistrar Etawah in Bahi No. 1 zild No. 1190 on pages 265-292 SL No. 84 is really last somewhere else. It has been informed dated 02.03.2021 with the Under Police Station friend's society Dist. Etawah. If any person or financial institute has any claim with under signed advocate within 15 days from publication of the notice, failing which will be presumed that proposed mortgage is free from Encumbrances & my Client L.L.C. H.F.L. Agra-2 will be free to process further accordingly. Pradeep Yadav, Advocate L.L.C, H.F.L. Agra office-2 Mo.9935712367

NOTICE: The Advocate Pradeep Yadav on behalf of Pushpendra Kumar solanki s/o Ram Prakash Singh Solanki R/o H. No. 18/121 Karam Chari Nagar P.A.C Road Kanpur inform to all that Pushpendra Kumar solanki s/o Ram Prakash Singh Solanki has offered to Mortgage the concerned private plot No. 7 having area 55.5 sq sqm, part of Arzi No. 1363 situated in Gram Daheli Sujapur Pargana & Teh. & Dist. Kanpur Nagar. It is said by Pushpendra Kumar solanki s/o Ram Prakash Singh Solanki that the concerned private plot No. 7 of original sale deed dated 02.12.2001 executed by Mangala Sahakri Awasth Samli L.d. Kanpur through high school teacher Singh s/o Jamma Prasad in favour of Vastav Kumar Sonkar s/o Bal Govind Sonkar of the afore said Plot which is duly registered in the office of subRegistrar Kanpur Nagar in Bahi No. 1 zild No. 12544 is really last somewhere else. It has been informed dated 02.03.2021 with the Under Police Station friend's society Dist. Etawah. If any person or financial institute has any claim with under signed advocate within 15 days from publication of the notice, failing which will be presumed that proposed mortgage is free from Encumbrances & my Client L.L.C. H.F.L. Kanpur Nagar will be free to process further accordingly. Pradeep Yadav, Advocate L.L.C, H.F.L. Kanpur Nagar Mo.9935712367

पंजाब नेशनल बैंक Punjab National Bank Circle Office, Lucknow (West): General Administration Department, 4-A, Habubullah Estate, Hazratganj, Lucknow-226001. PREMISES REQUIRED ON RENT: Punjab National Bank, Circle Office Lucknow West, invites application requiring a space of 1000(+/-) 20% Sqft for branch premises at Rajendra Nagar, Thakurganj, Ashiana, Behanpur/Raja Ji Puram, Charbagh, Vidhan Sabha Marg, Dali Bagh, Raibareilly Road, Narhi M.G. Marg, Lal Bagh and Sadar in Lucknow and (2000-2500 Sqft) for currency chest at Raja Ji Puram/Bahari Pur, Lucknow. The distance of the premises proposed, must not be more than 200 Mtrs. from the existing branch of the Punjab National Bank at that place. Detail is available at bank's website www.pnbIndia.in. Applications may also be obtained from Circle Office Lucknow West at above address till 20.03.2021 upto 3.00 p.m. Last date of submission application is 20.03.2021 till 8:30 P.M. Circle Office, Lucknow (West)

यू.पी. प्रोजेक्ट्स कासपोरेशन लिमिटेड (उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार का उपकरण) C.IN: U150UP19786G0004285 कार्यालय:- परियोजना प्रबन्धक, निर्माण इकाई-7, गोमती बेराज, बाग्य तट, गोमती नगर, लखनऊ। ई-मेल: pm.upcl7@gmail.com, वेबसाइट: www.upprojects.org पत्रांक : 92/पीसीएल/परिष्कार/इकाई-7 दिनांक: 06.03.2021 अल्प कालीन ई-निविदा सूचना एतद्वारा इस इकाई के अन्तर्गत जनपद अयोध्या में घोघरा नदी के दायाे तट पर स्थित ग्राम रामपुर पुवारी माझा की बाढ़ से सुरक्षा हेतु ड्रेजिंग एवं वैनलाइजेशन कार्य हेतु निविदा सूचना संख्या -24/पी.सी.एल./परि.प्र.व./इकाई-7/2020-21 दिनांक 06.03.2021 द्वारा ई-टेंडरिंग के माध्यम से आइटम दरों के आधार पर ऑनलाइन निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। उक्त कार्य की बिड दिनांक 10.03.2021 से दिनांक 16.03.2021 अपराह्न 3:00 बजे तक ऑनलाइन सबमिट की जा सकती है, जो दिनांक 16.03.2021 को अपराह्न 4:00 बजे अयोध्याशाही के कार्यालय में खोली जायेगी। निविदा से सम्बन्धित आवश्यक सूचना, निविदा प्रश्न, निविदा शर्तें एवं ऑनलाइन निविदा अपलोड किये जाने व डाउनलोड किये जाने की तिथि आदि का समस्त विवरण www.upprojects.org एवं http://etender.up.nic.in पर उपलब्ध है। परियोजना प्रबन्धक

Robbers strike at jewellery shop in broad daylight

500 gm gold, 10 kg silver ornaments looted

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a broad daylight incident, three robbers entered a jewellery shop in Ashiyana and looted 500 gm gold & 10 kg silver ornaments at the gun-point on Monday afternoon. It was the second daring incident in Lucknow close on heels of dacoity at a courier company's office in Ravindrapalli in Ghazipur police station area on March 2.

Senior police officers, including DCP (East) Sanjeev Suman, also reached the scene to take stock of the investigation into the case.

As per reports, Deepak Rastogi of Ashiyana (sector-H) runs the shop on the ground floor of his house. Around 3:30 pm, a man wearing a helmet reached the shop and asked for some ornaments. Later, two of his aides who had their faces covered with masks also entered the shop and held the shop-owner at the gun-point. Reports said that the robbers trained a pistol at the shop-owner's minor son and threatened to kill him. The robbers collected the booty and fled the scene unchallenged.

On being informed, a team of police, led by Ashiyana

inspector, reached the scene. The police collected some CCTV footage and started examining them.

Deepak said the robbers looted 500 gm of gold and 10 kg of silver ornaments from the shop. He said he was checking the list of the items looted from the shop.

In an e-bite, DCP (East) Sanjeev Suman said the shop is located in the residential area and not a market area. It was an apparent bid to counter the allegations of slack policing in market areas. He said the child came in between the robbers and the shop-owner and was held at the gun-point. The DCP said the robbers were disguised as customers.

He said five teams had been formed to crack the case. "We are tracking the miscreants through the CCTV footage. Five teams are on the job and we hope to crack the case soon," he said.

Meanwhile, even as the police claimed that the shop is not located in the market area, sources said the policemen do not patrol the area.

"Several shops have come up in the pavement area all over Ashiyana, including near a shopping mall close to a hos-

pital. Rowdies often flock to these shops and intimidate shop-owners in connivance with low-rung cops. Besides, there have been incidents of scuffles among the shop-owners every other day. It has given an opportunity to the cops to earn fast bucks by helping the warring groups settle their disputes," the sources pointed out.

They said the area witnessed a huge police presence on Monday as senior officers reached there to oversee the investigation.

It surfaced during investigation that one of the robbers first entered the shop and asked the shop-owners to show him a gold chain. He was wearing a helmet. He then took out his phone and went out of the shops. He called his aides who entered the shop and trained pistol at the shop-owner. In the meantime, the jeweller's son returned from school and entered the shop. The miscreants trained pistol at him and asked the shop-owner to open the almirah in which ornaments were kept. They collected the booty and kept it in a backpack before leaving on foot. The robbers looted ornaments worth over Rs 35 lakh.

9,533 administered Covid vaccine jabs

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A total of 9,533 people were vaccinated at 96 hospitals across the state capital on Monday. As many as 605 women were given the vaccine jabs at three vaccination centres, exclusively for them, on the occasion of International Women's Day.

District immunisation officer Dr MK Singh, 5,744 beneficiaries were senior citizens who took the first dose while 1,451 others who took the first dose were aged between 45-49 years and had co-morbidities. Besides, 820 frontline workers got their first dose and 43 their second dose. As many as 826 health-care workers were given the first dose and 649 the second dose. Out of the 605 women vaccinated at the three centres, 568 were given vaccine shots at Civil hospital, 29 at BKT and 8 at Avanti Bai hospitals.

Mayor Sanyukta Bhatia, who also received the vaccine jab at Civil hospital, said that she went to attend the function of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath soon after.

Nodal officer at Civil hospital and Additional CMO Vivek Dubey said although the vaccinations were being carried out for women, they also vaccinated men who brought their wives.



Mayor Sanyukta Bhatia getting vaccine shot at Civil hospital on Monday

Pioneer

"At first, the husbands were being sent back, but then we changed the rules and vaccinated them too," he pointed out.

Bandhu hospital Dr Arun Tewari said the drive was smooth. "People were coming in queues following the token system. We have adequate arrangements for the senior citizens," he said.

The nodal officer at RMLIMS said the beneficiaries were less in number on Monday as compared to the time when the drive started.

Couple found in pool of blood with wrists slit

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A couple were found lying in a pool of blood with their wrists slit near Devi Kheda turn in Ashiyana on Monday evening. A team of Cantonment police got the information and reached the scene. They later rushed the couple to Lok Bandhu hospital from where the youth was

referred to KGMU Trauma Centre. Later, a team of Ashiyana police reached the hospital to collect details related to the incident.

Sub-inspector Praveen Gautam said the girl is a native of Unnao and works at a pizza joint in a shopping mall near Ekana stadium, while the youth is native of Lakhimpur Kheri. He said the two came in con-

tact 3-4 months back and met each other. The police suspected that the couple slit their wrists following some differences. A spokesman said that the police were investigating when the couple reached Devi Kheda. "They were lying in a pool of blood on the road in Devi Kheda leading to Telibagh and were spotted by some commuters," he said.

Woman asks husband to quit drinking, shot dead

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A railway employee allegedly shot dead his wife in a fit of rage at his house in Para on Monday morning over being asked to quit drinking. The victim was identified as Rakhi Mishra aka Ruby of Shahjahanpur. She had married Anupam Mishra of Jalalpur Baghia in Para in 2005. Police detained the accused and also seized a single-barrel handgun from his possession. Anupam is presently posted in Unchahar district and is staying in Lucknow these days.

As per reports, Anupam had been consuming alcohol and smoking cigarettes for the last three days following some difference with his wife.

On Monday morning, Rakhi asked Anupam to quit drinking. It led to a verbal spat during which Anupam picked up his gun and shot her wife. The bullet pierced through her head. Locals reached the scene on hearing the gunshot and called police and ambulance. A team of police reached the scene and rushed Rakhi to KGMU Trauma Centre where she was declared brought dead.

The police detained Anupam, who was said to be in an inebriated state. The police said Anupam was holding the handgun and it probably went off during a scuffle between Anupam and his family members, claiming the life of his wife. At the time of the incident, Rakhi's children Dev, Adi and Sakshi, her

brother-in-law Nirmal and mother-in-law were present in the house. The family of the deceased had a verbal spat with Nirmal after they reached the house on information. The police said they were waiting for a formal complaint from the parents of the deceased.



In another incident, a 33-year-old caterer died in a road mishap in Sarojinagar on Sunday night. A probe was started following receipt of a memo from the communi-

ty health centre. The victim was identified as Heera Lal Kashyap of Kanchanpuri Colony in Sarojinagar. Reports said Heera Lal was returning home riding pillion on a bike which was being driven by his friend. Around 11:50 pm on Sunday, the rider lost control of the vehicle near Sainik School and it rammed into a road divider. Heera Lal suffered injuries and was rushed to the CHC where he was declared brought dead.

Rakhi's father Ramveer Dwivedi lodged a case against Arvind and others alleging that she was tortured by them for dowry. In his complaint, he said Anupam was demanding Rs 5 lakh from him for his younger brother's marriage.

हर गर्भवती माँ को हो एहसास, कि वह है सबसे खास!

प्रधानमंत्री सुरक्षित मातृत्व अभियान

09 मार्च, 2021

खतरे के लक्षण

- योनि से स्राव
- तेज बुखार
- दौर पड़ना
- उच्च रक्तचाप
- त्वचा का पीलापन
- योनि से रक्त स्राव
- हाथ-पैर या चेहरे पर सूजन
- भ्रूण का कम हिलना या न हिलना
- तेज़ सिरदर्द/धुंधला दिखना

सतर्कता से जिम्मेदारी निभाएं, समस्त जांचें कराएं

हर माह की 9 तारीख को सरकारी अस्पतालों में

- गर्भवती महिलाओं की निःशुल्क विशेष स्वास्थ्य जांच
- परिवार नियोजन, पोषण तथा प्रसव स्थान हेतु काउन्सलिंग

1

ब्लड टेस्ट

2

यूरिन टेस्ट

3

ब्लड प्रेशर

4

हीमोग्लोबिन

5

अल्ट्रासाउण्ड

पहली बार माँ बनने पर प्रधानमंत्री मातृ वंदना योजना के अन्तर्गत तीन किशतों में ₹ 5000/- की धनराशि लाभार्थी को देय है।

अधिक जानकारी हेतु सम्पर्क करें

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समस्त जानकारी हेतु सम्पर्क करें **104**

WE-WIN

चौ० चरण सिंह विश्वविद्यालय, मेरठ

कोरोना हारेगा देश जीतेगा

32 वें दीक्षांत समारोह में पधारे अतिथियों का हार्दिक स्वागत

प्रो० एन.के. तनेजा

प्रो० एन.के. तनेजा

श्रीधर चरण सिंह विश्वविद्यालय, राष्ट्रीय राजधानी क्षेत्र का एक महात्वापूर्ण विश्वविद्यालय है। पिछले 50 वर्षों में विश्वविद्यालय परिवार के समस्त सदस्यों ने अपनी गहन निष्ठा, मेहनत और भविष्य युक्ति से अपने का अग्रक प्रयास किया है। पौरोहित्य काल से ही महत्वापूर्ण यह क्षेत्र देश की आजादी के आंदोलन में भी अपनी महती भूमिका के कारण विख्यात रहा है। विश्वविद्यालय आचार्यगुरु सुविधाओं की युक्ति से प्रदेश और देश में अपना विशिष्ट रचना रखता है। विद्यार्थियों को सर्वांगीण वैश्विक युवा की आवश्यकताओं के अनुसार गुणवत्ता युक्त शिक्षा देने में प्रयत्नशील है। उच्च शिक्षा का जन-जन तक पहुँचाने के दायित्व का निर्वाहन विश्वविद्यालय अपने सीमित साधनों में पूरी ईमानदारी व लगन से कर रहा है। यह विश्वविद्यालय लगभग 222 एकड़ भू-क्षेत्र में विकसित है, जिसमें प्रबन्ध-प्रबन्ध विभागीय शैक्षणिक भवन, नवीनतम उच्चतक उपकरणों से समृद्ध प्रयोगशालाएँ, आधुनिक सुविधाओं से युक्त पुस्तकालय, भव्य प्रशासनिक, विशाल प्रशासनिक भवन, सामुदायिक केंद्र, चिकित्सा केंद्र, कम्प्यूटर केंद्र, वातानुकूलित प्रहस्पति सभागार, मूल्यांकन केंद्र, आठ छात्रावास, अभियांत्रिकी व विद्युत विभाग के प्रबन्ध-प्रबन्ध भवन, छात्रकक्षा, बैंक, रेलवे आरक्षक केंद्र, ड्रीमा भवन, कुश्ती स्टेडियम, विशेष रूप से विकसित किये गये विविध खेल मैदान तथा कोर्ट, स्पोर्ट्स एवं साहित्य क्लब आदि आधुनिक सुविधाएँ हैं।

उपलब्धियाँ

- अनेक वर्षों से लम्बित नैक मूल्यांकन सम्पन्न एवं सम्मानजनक सेंड।
- विश्वविद्यालय के समस्त प्रवेश ऑनलाइन सुनिश्चित एवं प्रक्रियाओं का सरलीकरण।
- सुव्यवस्थित तथा सुगठित शैति से गत वर्ष तक के दीक्षांत समारोह का आयोजन। इस वर्ष भी समारोह के आयोजन की भव्य तैयारी।
- शैक्षणिक विभागों में रिक्त आचार्य एवं सहायक आचार्य के पदों पर नियुक्ति की प्रक्रिया पूर्ण हो चुकी है शेष रिक्तियों के आवेदन ऑनलाइन ओपेन कर किये गए हैं।
- परिसर को रैमिंग-मुक्त प्रदूषण-मुक्त तथा धुंधलान-मुक्त बनाना, जैविक खाद निर्माण द्वारा कृषि निस्तरण योजना का क्रियान्वयन।
- विश्वविद्यालय द्वारा 87 टीवी चैनलों को गोद लिया गया है। प्रत्येक माह उनको पुष्पाहार का वितरण किया जाता है तथा उनके स्वास्थ्य की देखरेख की जाती है।
- विश्वविद्यालय द्वारा 10 गांव गोद लिये गये हैं। उन गांवों में रह रहे लोगों के स्वास्थ्य व चिकित्सा का विशेष ध्यान रखते हुए समय समय पर उनको पुष्पाहार वितरण व जागरूकता हेतु उनकी कारखानों की जाती है।
- शैक्षणिक विभागों के अध्ययन, अध्यापन एवं अनुसंधान पर विशेष ध्यान। ई-पाठ्य सामग्री अपलोड तथा निस्तरण ऑनलाइन कक्षाओं द्वारा पठन-पाठन।
- अकादमिक गुणवत्ता सुनिश्चयन हेतु प्रकोष्ठ का पुनर्गठन एवं नियमित क्रियाशीलता को प्रोत्साहन।
- कोरोना महामारी के दौरान विश्वविद्यालय द्वारा एक माह तक जरूरत मंदों को भोजन वितरण किया गया। विश्वविद्यालय द्वारा प्रति दिन 3 हजार भोजन के पैकेट वितरण किए गए।
- विश्वविद्यालय में छात्रों की समस्याओं के निस्तरण हेतु Online Grievance Redressal System शुरूआत।
- राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति - 2020 को त्वरित रूप से स्वीकृत करते हुए उक्त परिप्रेक्ष्य में शोध अध्यादेश-2020 को विद्युत परिपत्र के माध्यम प्रस्तुत कर अनुमोदन।
- विश्वविद्यालय में ऑनर्स (बीए ऑनर्स इकोनॉमिक्स व हिन्दी बीकॉम आनर्स, बीएससी ऑनर्स रसायन विज्ञान तथा कम्प्यूटर साइंस) का विस्तारोत्तरण।
- योगा के प्रति बढ़ते हुए लोकाकर्षण हेतु योगा व ज्योतिष कर्मकांड कोर्स की शुरूआत।
- छात्रों की डिग्री कोरियर द्वारा पर पहुँचने की शुरूआत। ऑनलाइन आवेदन द्वारा पीसी, माइक्रोसॉफ्ट, अंकतालिका, डिग्री उपलब्ध।
- कामेंस विभाग द्वारा बोम्बे स्टॉक एक्सचेंज के साथ अनुबंध।
- हरिद्वारनापुर सेवुपी का डाटा तैयार करने लिए विश्वविद्यालय का नवीन योगदान। वन्य प्राणी और मानव के मध्य संतुलन बनाए रखने के लिए विश्वविद्यालय रिफॉर्ट तैयार करेगा और जाग्रति पैदा करेगा।
- कोरोना महामारी को देखते हुए विश्वविद्यालय के समस्त शिक्षक, अधिकारी व कर्मचारियों का कोरोना टेस्ट काराया गया।
- कोविड के दौरान मुख्यमंत्री कोविड राहत कोष में विश्वविद्यालय द्वारा 21.20 लाख रुपये दिए गए।

Study Programmes on the Campus

State Funded Courses :- Genetics & Plant Breeding (Ag. Batany) Botany, Chemistry, Economics-(MA, M.Phil & Ph.D.), Education (M.Ed., M.Phil, Ph.D.), English (MA, M.Phil, Ph.D.), Hindi, History, Horticulture, Mathematics, Microbiology, B.Sc. Food Microbiology, Safety & Quality Control, Psychology, Sanskrit, Statistics, Urdu, Zoology (Toxicology), Foreign Languages (Russian, German, French), B.Tech, Geography (PG), Physical Education (BP.Ed, MP.Ed, Yoga), Political Science

Self Finance Courses :- Institute of Business Studies (MBA, BBA, BBA (HA), B.Com, (Hon's), M.Com, MBA (Hospital Administration), MCA, Biotechnology, Home Science (Human Development Food Nutrition), Food Science & Technology (Plant Protection, Entomology, & Plant Pathology), Seed Science & Technology, BJMC, MJMC, M.Phil (MJMC), Fine Art, Law (BA -LLB, LL.M), Environmental Science, Geography (PG Diploma in GIS), Library Science (B.Lib, M.Lib), Sociology (MSW), Master of Public Administration (MPA), Diploma in Psychological Counselling, Vedic Math, Applied Microbiology, Medical Microbiology, Bioinformatics, Polymer Science, & Chemical Technology, M.Sc (Bio-Chemistry), B.Sc. Chemistry (Hon's).

धीरेन्द्र कुमार कुलसचिव **सुशील कुमार गुप्ता** विन्य अधिकारी **प्रो. वाई. विमला** प्रतिकूलपति **प्रो० एन.के. तनेजा** कुलपति



UP Minister Ravindra Jaiswal honouring several women on the occasion of International Women's Day in Varanasi on Monday

Pioneer

Minister honours many women under Mission Shakti

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Uttar Pradesh's Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ravindra Jaiswal, praising the Prime Minister and Chief Minister for launching various schemes for the uplift of women and girls, said that with these programmes the women are being made self-reliant apart from giving them

protection and respect. 'Women's safety is a top priority of the government,' he said while addressing a 'Mega Event Ananta' on the occasion of International Women's Day here on Monday.

On the occasion, for doing excellent work under the Mission Shakti Abhiyan, several women including Neelam Singh, Priyanka Singh, Asha Devi, Poonam Rani, Soni

Pandey, Bindu Singh, Varsha Sidhore, Seema Sharma, Sharda Mishra, Pooja Verma, Lakshmi, Jyoti Kumari, Chhaya Kumari, Shruti Nagvanshi, Aklim, Komal and Priyanka Singh Patel were honoured apart from 20 others from Sewapuri block, 25 counsellors of various departments / organisations and eight from Women's Welfare department.

Earlier, under the Mission

Shakti Abhiyan, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath interacted with some women who were felicitated through virtual platforms while launching various schemes from Lucknow. The function was also attended by ADG (Zone) Brij Bhushan, Divisional Commissioner Deepak Agrawal, IG (Range) Vijay Singh Meena and officers of various women's organisations and departments.

Only women get vaccine doses at three centres

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

It was all a women affairs during the vaccination at three pink centres when on Monday only women above 60 and aged 45-59 with co-morbidities received vaccine doses on the occasion of International Women's Day. These centres were Government Women's Hospital, Urban Community Health Centre (UCHC)

Durgakund and Primary Health Centre (PHC) Sewapuri where to encourage and show respect to women, pink booths were set up.

Besides, thousands of people above 60 and aged 45-59 with co-morbidities were also vaccinated at 53 health centres apart from 33 private hospitals.

To accelerate the pace of vaccination, District

Magistrate (DM) Kaushal Raj Sharma has appealed to all the beneficiaries to reach the vaccination centres on time and make the vaccination campaign 100 per cent successful in the district.

Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr VB Singh said that the vaccination drive is going on at Government Women's Hospital, Shree Shiv Prasad Gupta (SSPG)

Divisional Hospital, Pt Deendayal Upadhyay (DDU) Hospital Pandeypur, Ayurveda Medical College Chowkaghat and Sir Sundarlal Hospital in Banaras Hindu University (SSH BHU) from Monday to Saturday, while the beneficiaries will also be vaccinated on every Monday, Thursday and Friday at all the CHCs and PHCs from 9 am to 5 pm in the district.

GM inaugurates 'Manthan' in BLW

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

To strengthen training facilities, Disaster Management Training Cell 'Manthan' was inaugurated by General Manager (GM) Anjali Goyal in Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) here on Monday. The cell will be useful for training the employees and supervisors on safety precautions at the workplace and emergency response. This room will also be used to provide them with practical training on fire fighting and the correct use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits.

On the occasion, a live demonstration of fire, rescue and first aid activities was displayed at its preparations to combat fire emergency, with teams from RPF personnel, health staff and volunteers of Civil Defense and St. John Ambulance Brigade and Scouts and Guides. Fire is a major cause of industrial accidents leading to loss of property and



GM Anjali Goyal inaugurating 'Manthan' at BLW in Varanasi on Monday

Pioneer

life. As a step towards fire prevention, BLW has recently obtained a fire safety certificate from UP Fire Department for BLW Hospital and Cinema Club. The process of obtaining such NOCs for other service buildings has also been started which will ensure that the fire fighting measures are in adequate and proper working condition. Apart from taking steps for fire prevention, it is very important that all BLW

employees are given fire training.

The security department has started organizing regular training programs on firefighting and fire hydrant operations.

Activities being performed during ongoing National Safety Week will motivate and remind the BLW employees to perform their tasks safely and prepare to deal with emergencies. The theme of this year's campaign is 'Learn from disaster and pre-

pare for a secure future'. Safety is a very important aspect for any industry as the accident-free work environment increases the morale of the employees and increases their productivity. It is the duty of every employee to follow safety rules and take precautions to prevent accidents, said the GM.

The function was also attended by Principal Chief Electrical Engineer Rajesh Kumar Rai, Principal Chief Mechanical Engineer Vineet Kumar Saxena, Principal Chief Materials Manager DS Jangpangi, Principal Chief Financial Advisor Yogesh Kumar Srivastava, Principal Chief Engineer Santosh Kumar, Principal Chief Personnel Officer Pradeep Kumar Singh, Principal Chief Medical Officer Dr Sujit Malik, Principal Chief Security Commissioner (Railway Protection Force) Ranveer Singh Chauhan, Chief Safety Officer Nitin Mehrotra, and Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) Vijay.

Vishesh Singh wins Mr Purvanchal title

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Vishesh Singh Yadav of Kanpur showed his domination wearing the prestigious crown of Mr Purvanchal, while Akshit Chowdhary of Varanasi got the title of Mr Muscleman at a contest organised at Swayambar Lawn, Chowkaghat here on Sunday under the auspices of Purvanchal Body Building and Fitness Association in which body-builders not only of the district but also from across Purvanchal (eastern UP) showed their fitness and body

building stunned for the coveted title of Mr Purvanchal. Both of them, apart from receiving cash prizes of ₹10,000 each and certificates, also qualified for taking part in the forthcoming Mr India contest to be held in Ludhiana (Punjab).

In different weight categories, Arpit Yadav of Chandauli was ranked first in Under-50, while Atul Chaudhary of Jaunpur and Shamsher Ali of Varanasi received the second and third places respectively while in 50-55 kg, Vikas Yadav of

Varanasi stood first followed by Pankaj Singh and Rajkumar Patel; in 55-60 kg, Krishna Maurya of Jaunpur, Shera II of Varanasi and Amar of Lucknow were the top three place holders and in 60-65 category, Pratik Shukla I of Varanasi was placed first, while Tariq II (Varanasi) and Saurav Singh of Jaunpur finished second and third respectively.

Besides, in Fitness Physique, Ashutosh Yadav I, Tariq II and Avinash Pratap Singh were top three place holders. Divyang body

builders also participated in the competition in which Sujit Kumar of Lucknow was honoured. The winners were honoured by former MLA Ajay Rai by providing trophies, certificates, cash prizes and medals. The function was conducted by Ahmed Faisal Mahato while the participants and guests were welcomed by Milan Rai and Mohammad Sagir. The jury consisted of Fasruddin Khan, Awadhesh Yadav and Firdausi, while the function was also attended by Arpit Yadav, Riyasuddin and Mayank.

DM asked to initiate probe into allegations of medical negligence

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) took cognizance of news reports of the death of a three-year old girl at the gate of a private hospital in Prayagraj and asked the District Magistrate Bhanu Chandra Goswami to initiate an inquiry into allegations of medical negligence and submit report within 24 hours.

On Friday, the deceased girl's father Mukesh Mishra, a resident of Karhenda village of Prayagraj's Kareli area, had alleged that he had admitted his daughter to the private hospital near Jhalwa 20 days ago. The hospital falls under the jurisdiction of Kaushambi's Pipri police station.

The DM had on Friday ordered a probe by ADM (City) AK Kanaujia and Chief Medical Officer Dr Prabhakar Rai.

'Kaushambi police had sent the body for post-mortem on

Friday. A probe has been ordered after taking cognizance of tweets that a minor girl was ousted from the private hospital without stitches after abdomen surgery,' the DM said.

'Today, the NCPCR has asked the DM for an inquiry and submit findings within 24 hours,' said ADM (City). ADM City and CMO visited the private hospital and checked the records of the girl.

City Magistrate Rajnish Mishra, CO Kotwali Satyendra Mishra and CO Chail, Kaushambi Shyamkant visited the family and condoled the death. They assured the family that a thorough inquiry would be done and the guilty punished.

CO (Chail) Shyamkant said an FIR was registered on Saturday on the complaint of family. 'The post-mortem has been performed and the report is awaited,' he added. The last rites of the girl were performed by the family in presence of

police. Meanwhile, management of the private hospital accused of medical negligence held a press conference in the city on Sunday.

Medical director of the hospital Dr Pramod Kumar rebutted the allegations and said, 'The girl was admitted in ICU for 16 days. We performed surgery twice with her father's consent. The family was charged ₹6,370 for the same. When her condition did not improve, we advised them to shift her to Children's Hospital under MLN Medical College on March 3 and she was admitted there on the same date. We had put the stitches in, but what happened after we discharged her is not known to us.'

Authorities of the private hospital said that the girl was admitted on February 15 with acute intestinal obstruction. She underwent surgery with consent on February 24 where in the affected portion of intes-

tine was removed. On March 2, she had to be operated upon again due to leakage from intestine and was referred to SRN Hospital on March 3 for advanced care where she was admitted at 12.40 pm the same day.

In this regard, Dr Mukesh Veer Singh, head of pediatrics department at Children's Hospital, which comes under SRN Hospital of MLN Medical College, he said, 'The girl child was admitted on March 3 and remained under our supervision till March 4 evening when the girl's father left with the kid without informing us.'

Dr JK Singh, the surgeon who treated the girl at Children's Hospital, and he said, 'We monitored the girl continuously since she was admitted till March 4 evening when her father took her away. I had spoken to the doctor who treated her at the private hospital and had told her father that the girl's condition is not good.'

Man scripts his own abduction

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Stepped in debt, a 30-year-old Pratapgarh resident scripted his own abduction and demanded ₹30 lakh ransom from his family. He hatched a conspiracy to coerce his father to sell land and cough up ransom, which he would pocket and go underground. However, his father went to the cops, who blew the lid off the abduction plot.

The accused, Hem Bahadur, resident of Newada Gaura Daad, hid from his family that he took money from more than 12 people on the pretext of giving them jobs in Railways. He was nabbed by the crime branch and Lalganj police while he travelling in a roadways bus near Naya Purva canal bridge.

On March 4, he sent anonymous text messages to

his wife and another relative, threatening them to pay up ₹30 lakh, if they wanted him alive. The SMS also cautioned them against going to police. The message read — Hem Bahadur is in our custody, and if you want to see him alive, then arrange ₹30 lakh. If you contact police or politicians, you won't even get his body.'

SP (West) Dinesh Kumar Dwivedi said, 'The accused's father, Ramjiyan Verma, approached Lalganj police on March 4 and alleged that his son Hem Bahadur had gone missing. Verma also suspected his son had been kidnapped over a monetary dispute. Following the complaint, a case under Section 364 IPC was registered at Lalganj police station.'

After activating the surveillance mechanism, police found Hem Bahadur moving

towards Rae Bareilly from Lucknow on March 5 and a joint team of crime branch and Lalganj police was dispatched to Rae Bareilly-Lucknow highway, where they tracked him down in a roadways bus.

During interrogation, Bahadur confessed he had taken money worth lakhs from 12 people on the pretext of arranging jobs in the Railways. When these men began knocking on his door, asking for their money and jobs, he faked his own kidnapping.

Bahadur also confessed he planned to move to Lucknow on March 4 and send messages to his wife and relative from an unknown number, demanding ransom. He also told police he thought his father would sell land to arrange ₹30 lakh after getting

news of his abduction. He would then go underground with the money after framing those who had loaned him money.

CRIMINAL ARRESTED: A dreaded criminal Noor Mohammad alias Paglu was arrested on Monday by the Mauima police of the district. The police had announced a reward of ₹25,000 on his head.

At the time of arrest the police recovered from his possession fire arms and cartridges. Involved in big loot Noor Mohammad had been absconding for the past one year. Dozens of cases of different nature of crime are pending against him in half-a-dozen police stations.

Noor Mohammad is a resident of Mandhata police station area under the neighbouring Pratapgarh district.

Women made aware about cervical cancer

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

International Women's Day was celebrated at Indian Institute of Information Technology, Allahabad on Monday where women were made aware of one of the most common diseases cervical cancer.

The Health Centre and Unnat Bharat Abhiyan (UBA) team of IIIT-A jointly organised a special talk on 'Cervical Cancer Awareness' at Administrative building to mark the women's day on the campus.

Dr Kanchan Mishra speaking on the topic said that today's woman is multi-faceted;

who takes care of the family as well as her aspirations. There are times when she falls prey to lifestyle diseases. Women health problems are on the rise partly because of a constant race against time and partly due to sheer ignorance.

'Cervical cancer is highly preventable and treatable. Opting for routine Pap tests, getting vaccinated, practicing safer sex, and making healthy lifestyle choices such as cutting down on smoking can help prevent cervical cancer. Keeping your weight in check and not ignoring symptoms like abnormal or watery vaginal discharge and opting for a well-balanced diet can also be help-

ful. Try to include fresh fruits and vegetables in your diet, and do not forget to follow-up on abnormal Pap smears,' she added.

Prof P Nagabhushan, Director, IIIT-A said that Women's Day was our time to recognise and lift up women across the world. It was a day to take note of the wonderful contribution women make to society and life as a whole. 'It is important to recognize and appreciate the incredible and dynamic ladies in our lives. Each new day, they're inspiring us in ways often difficult to describe, he added.

Prof Krishna Mishra in her address said that women

should be educated and informed about their inherited skills in uplift of the society. The girls were now accepting engineering stream more than medical education, showing how they were accepting challenges. Laxmi Bhushan was honoured on the occasion.

Dr Vijayshri Tiwari, Registrar congratulated all ladies on the day that celebrates the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. It also marks a call to action for accelerating women's equality. Dr Rajendra Dayal, incharge Health Centre conducted the programme, while Dr Anurika Vaish proposed the vote of thanks.

Justice Anshuman Singh passes away

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Former Governor of Rajasthan and Gujarat and former Chief Justice of Rajasthan High Court, Justice Anshuman Singh breathed his last at SGPGI Lucknow on Monday morning after a prolonged illness. He was 85.

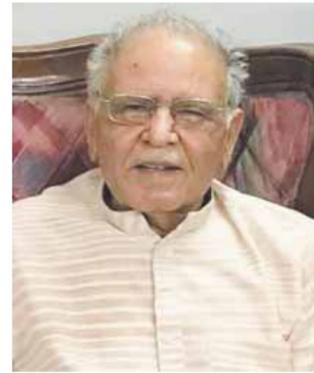
His mortal remains arrived here at his Georgetown residence, and in the afternoon hours the funeral procession reached Rasulabad Ghat where his son Varun Singh consigned him to flames.

He had been a leading lawyer in earlier days at the Allahabad High Court, and after 28 years he had been appointed as a judge of the Allahabad High Court. He became the Chief Justice of the Rajasthan High Court and after retirement he had been offered Governorship of Gujarat and then of Rajasthan.

Born on July 7, 1935 in Allahabad Justice Anshuman Singh rose to the seat of the Chief Justice of the Rajasthan High Court and after retirement became the Governor of Gujarat in 1998 and then of Rajasthan in 1999.

Justice Singh had come to limelight once again last year during Covid lockdown when he had asked his son to go back to the US from the airport itself without meeting him for health reasons.

Elite of the city including High Court judges, leading lawyers, bureaucrats, and politicians reached his Georgetown residence to pay homage, and a good number of them also reached Rasulabad Ghat to attend his funeral.



Justice Anshuman Singh

Ramakrishna Mission Mundera Chungi, and Adarsh Nagar Poghat Bridge Patanjali. The cabinet minister in his presence got it inaugurated by the local children. Chandan Singh in Krishna Vihar Colony, Shesh Mishra and Rinku Yadav in Ramakrishna Mission Mundera Chungi Colony and Vaibhav Singh and Yash Kesarwani did this at Adarsh Nagar Colony Poghat Bridge.

The children also looked very happy to be with the cabinet minister and having such an experience. Shivprasad Bhartiya, Anil Kushwaha, Deepak Kushwaha, Amarjeet Singh, Sanjay Kushwaha, Kaviraj Pawan Mishra, Dinesh Tiwari etc. were present on this occasion.

A meeting of the office-bearers of Ward 48, 49 and 50 was held in the BJP city unit office. It was presided over by city unit president Ganesh Kesarwani. The chief guest was Member of Legislative Council Laxman Acharya. He said that elections from Prime Minister to Village Head are important for BJP. The BJP takes each challenge as a resolution.

Election Steering Committee should be constituted at the ward level for good results in panchayat elections. This committee should be made the basis of social equation.

Thereafter, the worker should also work in a planned way. Gram Panchayat level meeting and chaupal should be organised till March 10. Ensure the active participation of local people in it. Devesh Singh, Rajesh Kesarwani, Ramesh Pasi, Pramod Modi etc. were present on this occasion.

MINISTER INAUGURATES MANY ROADS IN CITY WEST: The state government is committed to provide basic necessities to the people. People's cooperation is also necessary in this. Before 2017, many mohallas, colonies and village roads in the city west were in a bad shape.

The scenario is changing with the support of the public. This was said by the Cabinet Minister Siddharth Nath Singh. On Sunday, he inaugurated many roads in the city west with the hands of children.

Cabinet Minister Siddharth Nath Singh inaugurated the interlocking road and drain constructed by RES department next to Krishna Vihar Colony,

DC underlines need for apex trauma centre

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Divisional Commissioner Raj Shekhar, while visiting the four national highways crossing and Lucknow-Agra Expressway nearby Kanpur, underlined the need for an apex trauma centre with 200 bed capacity so as to save valuable lives in case of road accidents.

He said the UP government had taken it up as a priority and was following it up with the Government of India as well.

The divisional commissioner said the objective of his visit was to get a first hand report of the project and the current status.

He said as per the data put

up by the Traffic police in the last five years (from 2016 to 2020), on an average around 1,200 to 1,500 accidents occurred in Kanpur Nagar district in which 600 to 700 people died and over 1,000 people were injured every year. He said the important facts of the project were gathered and necessary directions were issued to speed up the work on a war footing.

He said around two acre land (approx 9,500 square metre) was identified and reserved on the medical college campus (LLR Hospital) for the project.

Shekhar said the apex trauma centre would have 200 beds with various specialties in trauma care and treatment.

He said the tentative estimated cost of the project was Rs 275 crore which included construction of the building, furniture. He added that the cost of medical equipment would be calculated separately as per the need.

He said the project report was sent to the UP government and then to the Government of India in October 2019 under the National Health Mission Scheme but because of COVID-19 pandemic and related financial issues, the project was not sanctioned in the current financial year.

He said the Government of India had referred back the proposal to the UP government to send it again for the year

2022-23 with the revised estimates, including the cost of the medical equipment.

The divisional commissioner said that the C&DS Jal nigram was being nominated as the work agency for preparing the estimates.

He then directed C&DS Jal Nigam and Principal of GSVM Medical College to get things checked on ground and to send the revised estimate latest by March 31 so that it could be taken up at the earliest by the UP government and the Government of India.

The divisional commissioner was accompanied by the principal of medical college and project manager, C&DS and other officials of the medical college.

'Lipid profile helps determine cardiovascular disease risks'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

GSVM Medical College Principal Prof RB Kamal while addressing a practical workshop on 'lipid profile' at Maharana Group of Institutions, organised by the pharmacy department, said in the current times when people hardly found time for exercise and consumed junk food due to paucity of time, the health was affected and if the cholesterol shot up one developed several complications. He said lipid profiles reflected cholesterol levels and helped in determining the risk of cardiovascular diseases.

He said the lipid test measured one's total cholesterol - 'good' HDL cholesterol, 'bad' LDL cholesterol, and the triglycerides (a type of fat found in blood) - present in the blood.

He said cholesterol was carried in the blood attached to proteins called lipoproteins. He said LDL could increase the risk of many fatal diseases such as atherosclerosis (blocking of arteries) which could lead to cardiovascular diseases. He said the HDL was good cholesterol because it acted as a shield and removed harmful bad cholesterol. Discussing causes of cholesterol, he said if cholesterol persisted in one's family, then one might be at a greater risk than others.

Prof Kamal said today lifestyles that entail junk food, alcohol, heavily processed meats and dairy on a daily basis, smoking and not being physically active could increase cholesterol levels tremendously.

He said apart from this, it was important to eat healthy food. He said obesity was another cause of high cholesterol and said one need to keep a healthy weight of the body.

He said most of the times there were no symptoms and this was the reason why it was advised to get one's cholesterol levels checked by a doctor regularly.

He said people who do not suffer from any heart disease or high cholesterol, should also get the cholesterol level checked every two years.

The welcome address was delivered by Maharana Group Principal Dr Vikram Sahu and Joint Secretary Gaurav Bhaduria. Others present were Rubia Farhaz, VP Rathore, Amit Mishra and several others.

Phool.Co bags BIRAC award

KANPUR (PNS): Phool.Co, a venture of Kanpur Flowercycling Pvt. Ltd., has been awarded the BIRAC Innovator Award 2021 for making 'fleather', a bio alternative to animal leather. Backed by the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, Phool.Co has made this biomaterial out of temple flowers and farm waste but it performs almost like leather. Besides being an eco-friendly substitute, fleather can be customised for aesthetic expression, flexibility, density and strength. IIT-K Director Prof Abhay Karandikar said, "I am happy that Phool.Co has been recognised for its work. It is not only a great business but also a great workplace providing livelihood to more than 100 women from the marginalised section of the society."

Phool.Co founder Ankit Agarwal said, "We humans love leather. It delivers status, luxury and comfort. But leather is a co-product of the livestock industry that produces around 18 per cent of the total earth's greenhouse emission. Fleather can perform like leather while significantly cutting down the emission and reusing temple and farm waste." Founded in 2017, Phool.Co. is at Startup Incubation and Innovation Centre (SIIC) at IIT-Kanpur and has developed the 'fleather' material on the principles of biomimicry. This is a means to sustainable fashion, and the product as well as its production will help to cut down the pollution caused by several traditional downstream leather tanning industries. At that same time, the fleather manufacturing units will open an archway of job opportunities to women from the marginalised sections of society.

Women honoured for their special contribution

CORRESPONDENT ■ JAUNPUR

On the eve of International Women's Day on Sunday at Veer Bahadur Singh Purvanchal University (VBSU)'s Aryabhata auditorium women who had made special contribution in various fields were honoured by Vice-Chancellor (V-C) Prof Nirmala S Mourya. Registrar Mahendra Kumar said that the programme had been organised to encourage women. In it Anganbadi and ASHA workers, ANM, women police, those of Gayatri Parivar and women who had done better work in primary and secondary education were hon-



oured. Coordinator of Mission Shakti at the University Dr Janhavi Srivastava welcomed the guests and threw light on the activities conducted under Mission Shakti. The programme was conducted by Dr Vanita Singh, Dr Priyanka and Dr Nitesh Jaiswal while the vote of thanks was proposed by Assistant Registrar Babita Singh. The special guests at the programme MLAs Dr Leena Tiwari and Dr Sushma Patel, Hina Desai, Dr Smita Srivastava and Dr Subha Singh were also honoured. On the occasion Controller of Examinations VN Singh, Prof Vandana Rai, Dr Nupur Tiwari and others were present.

Women feted for their achievements

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

Director Gyananda Law College Dr Sheela Singh while addressing a function organised on the eve of



International Women's Day on Sunday as the chief guest appealed to women to contribute to the nation with their ability and with self-confidence NPP Chairman Manoj Jaiswal, who was guest of honour, enumerated the schemes which were run by the government towards empowerment of women and said that women should show their ability with their acumen because government had provided a congenial atmosphere for them. Honouring the women who became an ideal for the society through their contribution, he exhort-

ed others too to avail themselves of the schemes of the government and work not only for themselves but for the society too. On the occasion Bhagwati Devi and Pragya Devi were honoured for earning their livelihood by driving e-rickshaw besides Uma Gupta, Poornima Singh, Shikha Mishra, Madhu Sailani, Rukmini Gupta and Prabhavati Devi who had become an example with their works. The programme was conducted by Abha Srivastava and convened by Dolly Agrahari. Earlier it started with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp and garlanding of the portrait of Rani Lakshmbai by the chief guest and guest of honour. Among those present were Uma Barnwal, Anita Srivastava, Vidya Singh, Rachna Gupta and Neeru Srivastava.

32nd CCSU convocation today

CORRESPONDENT ■ MEERUT

The 32nd convocation of Chaudhary Charan Singh University (CCSU) will be held on Tuesday. This was said by its Vice-Chancellor Prof Narendra Kumar Taneja on Monday. He said the convocation will be presided over by Governor

Anandiben Patel in which Deputy Chief Minister and Minister of Secondary and Higher Education Dr Dinesh Sharma will be the special guest. The chief guest will be former Vice-Chancellor of Gujarat University, MN Patel, he added. Meanwhile a meeting of the University Executive Council was also held on Monday

regarding the preparations for the 32nd convocation of the university and for awarding medals and degrees to the meritorious students. A total of 252 medals will be given at the convocation in which there will be one Chancellor Silver Medal, 23 Vice-Chancellor Gold Medals of the year 2019 etc.

Trains to be cancelled, diverted

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

In view of the non-interlocking (NI) work at Muzaffarpur station of East Central Railway (ecr) and doubling work between Nandganj-Ghazipur City the cancellation and diversion of special trains will be as follows, CPRO PK Singh said. The 04016 Anand Vihar Terminus-Raxaul special train to depart from Anand Vihar Terminus on March 12 and 14, the 04008 Anand Vihar Terminus-Raxaul special to depart from Anand Vihar Terminus on March 16 and 18 and 04016 Anand Vihar Terminus-Raxaul special to depart from Anand Vihar Terminus on March 17 will remain cancelled. Besides the 05268 Lokmanya Tilak Terminus-Raxaul special to depart from Lokmanya Tilak Terminus on March 22 will be diverted via Aurnihari-Bhatni-Chhapra.

STOPPAGE AT HAJIPUR STATION: Due to NI work at Muzaffarpur station of ECR the trains will be run on diverted route. For the convenience of passengers on the diverted route 09038 Barauni-Bandra Terminus, 02557 Muzaffarpur-Anand Vihar Terminus, 02558 Anand Vihar Terminus-Muzaffarpur, 09452 Bhagalpur-Gandhidham, 09040 Barauni-Bandra Terminus, 09039 Banda Terminus-Barauni and 09037 Banda Terminus-Barauni special trains will be provided a five minute stoppage at Hajipur station, SPRO said.

DOUBLING: In view of doubling of Jhansi-Kanpur Central rail section of NCR for yard remodelling of Bhua, Orai and Sarasoki stations due to non-interlocking (NI) work the cancellation and diversion of the following trains has been done, Senior Public Relations Officer (SPRO) CP Chauhan said. The 02032 Gorakhpur-Pune bi-weekly special to depart from Gorakhpur on March 11 and 15 will remain cancelled. The 02031 Pune-Gorakhpur bi-weekly special train to depart from Pune on March 9, 13 and 16 will remain cancelled. The 09465 Ahmedabad-Darbhangha weekly special to depart from Ahmedabad on March 12, the 09466 Darbhanga-Ahmedabad weekly special to leave Darbhanga on March 15, the 01803 Jhansi-Lucknow special to leave Jhansi on March 17 and 01804 Lucknow-Jhansi special to depart from Lucknow on March 17 will remain cancelled. Besides the 01019 Lokmanya Tilak Terminus-Gorakhpur special to depart from Lokmanya Tilak Terminus on March 11 will be diverted via Jhansi-Gwalior-Bhind-Etawah-Kanpur Central. The 06093 Chennai Central-Lucknow special to leave Chennai Central on March 16 will be diverted via Jhansi-Gwalior-Bhind-Etawah-Kanpur Central. The 02107 Lokmanya Tilak Terminus-Lucknow special to depart from Lokmanya Tilak Terminus on March 10, 13 and 15 will be diverted via Jhansi-Agra Cantt-Tundla-Kanpur Central. The

10408 Lucknow-Pune special to depart from Lucknow on March 11 will be diverted via Kanpur Central-Tundla-Agra Cantt-Jhansi. The 05064 Lokmanya Tilak Terminus-Gorakhpur special to depart from Lokmanya Tilak Terminus on March 16 will be diverted via Jhansi-Agra Cantt-Tundla-Kanpur Central. The 02589 Gorakhpur-Sunderabad special to depart from Gorakhpur on March 16 will be diverted via Kanpur Central-Tundla-Agra Cantt-Jhansi. The 05066 Panvel-Gorakhpur special to depart from Panvel on March 10, 12, 13 and 15 will be diverted via Jhansi-Agra Cantt-Tundla-Kanpur Central. The 05065 Gorakhpur-Panvel special to depart from Gorakhpur on March 11, 12, 14 and 16 will be diverted via Kanpur Central-Tundla-Agra Cantt-Jhansi. The 05102 Lokmanya Tilak Terminus-Chhapra special to depart from Lokmanya Tilak Terminus on March 11 and 18 will be diverted via Jhansi-Manikpur Jn-Prayagraj. The 05101 Chhapra-Lokmanya Tilak Terminus special to departing from Chhapra on March 9 will be diverted via Prayagraj-Manikpur Jn-Jhansi.

DIVERSION OF TRAIN: Due to non-interlocking work in Temburu station yard of Southern Railway the 05119 Rameswaram-Manduadih special to depart from Rameswaram on March 17 will instead of running on Chengalpattu-Chennai-Washeramanpet-Gudur will be run via Chengalpattu-Kanchipuram-Arakkonam-Perambur-Gudur route. The train will arrive at Perambur station at 14.30 hrs and depart at 14.35 hrs.

NI WORK AT AJMER YARD: Due to non-interlocking work at Ajmer Yard of North Western Railway (NWR) the following passenger trains will be run on the diverted route, SPRO CP Chauhan said. The 05013 Jaisalmer-Kathgodam special to run from Jaisalmer on March 19 and 20 will be run diverted route i.e. Jodhpur-Merta Road-Phulera Jn. The 05014 Kathgodam-Jaisalmer special to run from Kathgodam on March 18 and 19 will be diverted via Phulera-Merta Road-Jodhpur. The 09269 Porbandar-Muzaffarpur special to run from Porbandar on March 18 and 19 will be diverted via Marwar Jn-Jodhpur-Merta Road-Phulera. The 09601 Udaipur-New Jalpaiguri special to run from Udaipur on March 20, will be diverted via Adarshanagar-Madar. The 09602 New Jalpaiguri-Udaipur special to run from New Jalpaiguri on March 22 will be diverted via Madar-Adarshanagar.

ADDITIONAL RUN OF TEJAS: In view of huge crowd of passengers on the occasion Holi for their convenience the additional run of 82501/82502 Lucknow-New Delhi-Lucknow Tejas Express will be done on March 25, 30 and 31 and April 1. However, the 82501/82502 Lucknow-New Delhi-Lucknow Tejas Express will remain cancelled on March 29 and April 5, senior PRO said.

Ash consignment flagged off

CORRESPONDENT ■ SONBHADRA

The Rihand unit of NTPC, a Maharatna company of public sector, for participation in nation building and proper utilisation of ash has signed a contract for ash transportation. Under it from NTPC Rihand station 5.53 lakh CuM ash will be sent for the construction of four-lane road connecting NH-29 and NH-2 under NHAI's Varanasi Ring Road Project, Phase-2 Package

building have been well appreciated at the national and international levels. Among those present on the occasion were General Manager (Fuel Management) M Ramesh, General Manager (MTP) KC Tripathi, General Manager (TS) AK Papanaja, Additional General Manager (HR) SVD Ravi Kumar, Senior Manager (EMG) Amit Dhiman and Raghavendra Narayan and others.

INAUGURATED: The Security Week was recently inaugurated by the Rihand unit of Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) deployed in the security of NTPC Rihand station. General Manager (Maintenance) S Srikrishna, who was the chief guest, presented his views and expectations related to safety. He also appealed to the people present to meet the zero accident target. Earlier Assistant Commandant (Fire) Devchand, urged the people to adopt a safe working style. In the programme people were told that during the Security Week, various sports and quiz competitions will also be organised. The programme was attended by senior manager (Human Resources) Neeraj Kumar, manager (security) Mukesh Kumar, officers and jawans of Rihand unit of CISF. The programme was conducted by inspector CS Singh who also proposed the vote of thanks.



1. Through this contract the level of utilisation of NTPC Rihand station will increase significantly. In compliance with the contract the first consignment of ash was flagged off by General Manager (O&M) KN Reddy recently. The efforts made by NTPC Rihand station for increasing ash utility and support in nation

Women felicitated for their 'adam sahas'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The district administration on Monday felicitated women on World Women's Day as part of the 'Adam Sahasi Aaj ki Nari' theme under Mission Shakti at the Merchants Chamber Hall here.

The programme was presided over by Industrial Development Minister Satish Mahana and was witnessed by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. Top district officials were also present on the occasion.

A total of around 50 women were felicitated for their commendable work in different spheres and were handed over mementos and certificates of merit. Each awardee was then asked to narrate their success story.

They spoke out how they started from scratch but rose to success and proved to be motivators for other women as



Kanpur Divisional Commissioner, Raj Shekhar, felicitating women on Women's Day as part of Mission Shakti at Merchants Chamber Hall on Monday

well. The divisional commissioner, district magistrate, DIG, and dozens of other district and police officials took part in the function.

OPF honours its women employees

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Ordinance Parachute Factory General Manager DK Bangotra while addressing the women employees of the OPF on World Women's Day said the main objective behind celebrating this day was to promote peace with women's rights.

He said this particular day was marked to honour all the women, especially the women staff of OPF, for their achievements irrespective of divisions, whether national, linguistic or cultural.

He said it would be no exaggeration to accept that today women had excelled in every sphere and the women of OPF, be it from manufacturing parachute, medical or effective administration, and played a dominant role in many spheres. He said the women staff was certainly

devoted and hard working and thus they deserved all praise from the male counterparts.

Addressing the gathering DGM Pratiksha Saini said women had always remained in the forefront, be it the home front, society or nation welfare. She said the need today was that women should realise their importance and equally focus on their health as the health of the family also rested on their shoulders.

Addressing the gathering, Works Manager Aisha Khan said without the uplift of women there could be practically no real development of the nation. She made a fervent appeal to the women to ensure that they remained always ready to fulfill their duties towards nation and society.

She said during the COVID-19 pandemic the role of women had been excellent

in all the areas where they existed.

Aisha said today's working women not only continued to be that, but were pound-for-pound as fierce corporate warriors as men. She said apart from that they were mothers, partners, sisters and daughters who not only run their households but make great advances for the company while deeply nurturing their team and co-workers.

She said despite enduring more than men, women were proving that they were equally productive in the workplace.

Prominent among those who took part in the felicitation function were AGM Shishir Sinha, AGM Ashish Kumar, Anupama Tripathi, Kiran Rajpal and all the female staff of the OPF.

WOMEN'S DAY AT VSIPS: Virendra Swarup

Institute of Professional Studies Principal Dr Poonam Mandan while inaugurating the Women's Day celebrations at the institute on Monday said it was true that women had come to the forefront in every sphere which were earlier under the male bastion. She said without women empowerment there could be no progress of a nation or society. She said women could be motivated to empowerment through education and said each parent must ensure their daughters pursued higher studies and helped in nation building.

The students of the institute later took out a rally carrying posters and banners. All the students of BED took part. Dr Aruna Bajpai, Prof Poonam Gupta, Prof Sarla Madhyan, Prof Deepika, Prof Shipra and Prof Seema were present.

Kavya Samagam at KDA

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Under the 'Mission Shakti? Mahila Suraksha Saptah' celebrations, Kanpur Development Authority organised a 'Kavya Samagam' programme depicting the strong presence of women in the field of literature at Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee auditorium.

Apart from renowned poetesses of the country, female employees of KDA also recited their poetry highlighting women's contribution in society and family as well.

Nodal Officer Renu Pathak said the programme was designed by Tehsildar Archana Agnihotri and attended by the KDA Vice Chairman Rakesh Kumar Singh as chief guest.

Special guests present in the programme were KDA Secretary SP Singh and Additional Secretary Dr Gudakesh Sharma.

Poetries revolved around highlighting the importance of women empowerment, their challenges, struggle, responsibility and sacrifice in the society.

The entire event remained dedicated to women empowerment and lasted for around



KDA Vice Chairman Rakesh Kumar Singh inaugurates the Kavi Sammelan at Atal Behari Vajpayee auditorium.

three hours. Eminent poetesses who took part in the programme were Dr Rashmi Kulshreshtha, Dr Shital Bajpai and Neeru Srivastava while Pallavi Tripathi compered the event. The key attraction of the

programme was the participation of female employees of KDA who shared their sentiments through writing. They included Sarita Nishad, Rambeti, Siara Bano, Vandana, Ruchi and Kalpana. Other female employees, including

Lekhni Sachan and Rekha were also present.

Renu Pathak, who chaired the programme, proposed the vote of thanks.

The programme ended with the recital of the national anthem.

Indian Navy deploys 4 women officers on warships

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the objective to give more representation to women, the Indian Navy, in a major step, has deployed four women officers on board its warships for the first time after many years. So far, officers were serving only on shore-based assignments.

The demand for deploying women officers on warships was pending for the past many years. However, the Navy was reluctant to do so due to various practical issues including separate washrooms and living quarters on the ships.

So far, women officers in the Navy were deployed in land-based assignments. Some of them were also flying helicopters. However, a stint on the warship came about recently. They were deployed on ships about 23 years back and then it was discontinued due to logistical and related issues.

Giving details of the path-breaking step on the International Women's Day, Navy officials said here on Monday four women officers were recently posted on warships. Two of them were now serving on the aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya while two others are deployed on the tanker ship INS Shakti.

It was for the first time since 1998 that women officers will be posted on warships. Back then, women officers started getting deployed onboard warships but the decision was changed soon after due to certain logistical and other issues.

In the latest development, women officers deployed onboard the tanker vessel INS

Rajya Sabha members push for one-third reservation for women in Parl, Assemblies

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Several Rajya Sabha members on International Women's Day on Monday pushed for at least one-third reservation for women in Parliament and State Assemblies, saying this will ensure they get adequate representation. The demand comes in the backdrop of a Bill which sought to give 33 per cent reservation to women in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies lapsing a few years ago.

Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu on the occasion appreciated the services rendered by women members of the House for the country's development and prosperity. "We need to ensure an environment that allows women to express themselves to their full potential in the form of both words and deeds," Naidu said and wished them more strength and power. The chairman also acknowledged the contribution of women citizens to the development of the nation.

Congress member Chhaya Verma recalled that the Government of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had

Shakti include a doctor and logistics officer. The two women officers posted onboard India's lone aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya



On the occasion of International Women's Day on Monday, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla met women parliamentarians and women journalists in the Parliament House Complex. A first of its kind initiative, the event was also attended by Union Ministers Nirjala Sitharaman and Smriti Zubin Irani. Noting that women have led from the front while holding important positions like President, Prime Minister and Speaker among others, Birla reminded that the present Lok Sabha has the highest number of women parliamentarians

given reservation to women in local bodies. Similar provisions should be made for women in State Assemblies, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, she said. Nominated member Sonal Mansingh made a case of celebrating 'international men's day' on the line of women's day.

Shiv Sena member Priyanka Chaturvedi was of the opinion that as women form around 50 per cent of the country's population, their representation in Parliament and state assemblies too should be in the same pro-

portion, and not merely 33 per cent. Naidu earlier appreciated that women across the world and in our country have been at the forefront of tackling the covid pandemic, be it as doctors, healthcare workers, bureaucrats, scientists, innovators, community organisers or caregivers at home.

Referring to the history of India freedom struggle and active participation of women in all walks of life, Naidu said that the women of our country have been active participants in shaping the history and contemporary times.

cadre. To mark Women's Day, the Navy on Monday released a video shot aboard INS Shakti with messages from the two women officers posted on the

All-women crew fly maiden commercial passenger flight from Delhi to Bareilly

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

To mark International Women's Day, the first commercial passenger flight to Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh operated by an all-woman crew was flagged off from the Delhi airport by Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Monday.

In a tweet, Puri said Indian carriers employ close to 12.4% women pilots. "India tops in the proportion of women pilots than any other nation. Indian carriers employ close to 12.4% women pilots, which is much higher than the world average of 5.4%," Puri tweeted. In another tweet, the aviation minister said: "Women power soars high! 210 women pilots including 103 captains are a part of the Air India family. AAI is effi-

ciently women-ed by 507 women Air Traffic Controllers." The percentage of female pilots in India is twice as high as in most Western countries, including the United States and Australia. Globally, less than 5 per cent of pilots are women, according to the International Society of Women Airline Pilots.

Meanwhile, in a statement, the civil aviation ministry said that the Bareilly airport has been upgraded for commercial flight operations under the regional connectivity scheme - Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (RCS-UDAN) of the Government of India. The all-woman crew operated Alliance Air's Delhi-Bareilly inaugural flight on International Women's Day, it said.

Sub-Lieutenants Kumudini Tyagi and Riti Singh, were among the 17 officers who were awarded wings on graduating as observers at a ceremony held in Kochi.

As observers, the two women have been trained for a variety of roles including navigation, flying procedures, tactics employed in air warfare, anti-submarine warfare and airborne avionic systems. They are likely to be posted on warships by the year-end, officials said. These women officers will be posted onboard maritime reconnaissance and anti-sub-

marine warfare helicopters of the navy. In order to overcome the issue of separate washrooms and living quarters on board, the Navy some years back started building separate cabins and toilets for women officers on its warships.

The force also recently deployed a lady officer as the first women defence attache posted abroad. The lady officer is Lieutenant Commander

Karabi Gogoi who is posted at Moscow as naval attache. The IAF had opened the coveted fighter flying stream for women in 2015 by selecting four officers to fly MIG-21s. The Army is yet to induct women officers in combat arms including the infantry, artillery and armoured corps. As of now, there are nearly 9,120 women currently serving the army, navy and air force.

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States, UTs get ₹200 cr to ensure women's safety across country

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

On the occasion of International Women's Day, the Union Home Ministry on Monday listed out initiatives through the Nirbhaya Fund to enhance the safety and security of women in the country. For his part, Union Home Minister Amit Shah also said that women empowerment has always been the focal point of the policies of the Narendra Modi Government.

The MHA said ₹200 crore has been sanctioned to States and Union Territories (UTs) to set up women help desks in police stations and to strengthen anti-human trafficking units in all districts of the country.

A separate women safety division has also been set up in

the home ministry to sensitise states and UTs on women safety related issues including timely completion of investigation of sexual assault cases, it said.

"The Government has sanctioned ₹200 crore to States and UTs to set up Women Help Desks in police stations, and to set up or strengthen Anti Human Trafficking Units in all districts of the country as also on vulnerable borders," the statement said.

The home ministry said the Bureau of Police Research and Development has distributed 14,950 Sexual Assault Evidence Collection kits to states and UTs and these SAEC kits will facilitate the efficient collection, handling and storage of forensic evidence in cases of sexual assault.

Covid, attendant factors may cause 10 mn more child marriages by 2030: UNICEF

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Covid-19 is profoundly affecting the lives of girls as they face pandemic-related travel restrictions and physical distancing restricting their access to the health care, social services and community support that protect them from child marriage, unwanted pregnancy and gender-based violence, UNICEF has pointed out.

On the occasion of International Women's Day, in its analysis, "Covid-19: A threat to progress against child marriage", the world child body has warned that 10 million additional child marriages may occur before the end of the decade, threaten-

ing years of progress in reducing the practice.

More so as schools remain closed, girls are more likely to drop out of education and not return while job losses and increased economic insecurity may also force families to marry their daughters to ease financial burdens.

As per the report, India is among five countries in the world which account for about half of the total child brides while worldwide, an estimated 650 million girls and women alive today were married in childhood, with about half of those occurring in Bangladesh, Brazil, Ethiopia, India and Nigeria, according to the analysis. To off-set the impacts of COVID-19 and end the

practice by 2030 - the target set out in the Sustainable Development Goals - progress must be significantly accelerated, it said.

"One year into the pandemic, immediate action is needed to mitigate the toll on girls and their families. By reopening schools, implementing effective laws and policies, ensuring access to health and social services - including sexual and reproductive health services - and providing comprehensive social protection measures for families, we can significantly reduce a girl's risk of having her childhood stolen through child marriage," said UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore.

Naidu exhorts MPs to come to Parl to enrich their knowledge

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Peeved over some Elders not attending the parliamentary proceedings during the Session even when they are in the national Capital, Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu on Monday urged the MPs to come to the House to enrich their knowledge and be present during their allotted standing committee meetings.

Making this point when the Upper House met for the first day of the second half of the budget session, he appealed to the members to be present to enhance understanding of parliamentary procedures and also use the library facility.

Naidu said he was told that some members do not attend the proceedings even when they are in the national capital. He, however, made it clear that he was not referring to any particular member or any party. "I appeal to all the members, please make it a point to be in the House and then observe debates, enrich your knowledge," he said.

"The Parliament Library is completing 100 years this year. It has a huge collection of about 14 lakh books including hundreds of journals in all languages. I am told that the footfall of Members of Parliament in this source of information and knowledge is

not very encouraging," Naidu said, stressing that sufficient homework is required on the part of members to make quality contribution to debates and interventions.

Naidu also gave an account of the examination of the Demands for Grants for 2021-22 of various ministries undertaken by the eight Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committees of the Rajya Sabha during the three-week recess after the first part of the ongoing Budget session of Parliament. He referred to several positives that emerged during the Budget scrutiny by the Committees of Rajya Sabha and some concerns as well.

Explosives car near Antilia: NIA takes up investigation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/MUMBAI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has taken over the case of a vehicle laden with explosives being found near top industrialist Mukesh Ambani's residence in Mumbai, an official spokesperson said on Monday.

"NIA has received orders from MHA (Ministry of Home Affairs, GoI (Government of India) for investigation of case FIR No 35/2020 registered at Police Station Gamdevi on 25.02.2021. This case relates to recovery of explosives from a Mahindra Scorpio parked at Carmichael Road, Mumbai," the NIA said in a statement.

NIA is in the process of re-registering the case, it further said. The Scorpio, with 20 gelatin sticks inside, was found near Ambani's high-rise south Mumbai home on February 25. According to the police, the vehicle was stolen from Airoli-Mulund Bridge on February 18.

In yet another twist, Hiren Mansukh, the purported owner of the vehicle, was found dead

in a creek in Thane on Friday. Meanwhile, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Monday said the NIA taking over the case suggests something was "fishy".

Talking to reporters in Mumbai, Thackeray said governments come and go, but the official administrative machinery remains the same and one needs to trust it.

On Sunday, the Maharashtra Anti-terrorism Squad (ATS) registered the FIR against unidentified persons on the orders of the State Home Department under IPC Sections 302 (murder), 201 (causing disappearance of evidence of offence) and 120-B (criminal conspiracy).

Thackeray said, "We had handed over the case of the vehicle laden with explosives and the mysterious death of Mansukh Hiren to the ATS. The NIA taking over the case shows something was fishy."

The ATS will continue to conduct its probe into Hiren's death, the CM said. He said the opposition does

not have faith in the state machinery and wanted to show it doesn't function.

"If that is so, why is it demanding that the state government reduce taxes on fuel?" the chief minister asked.

Thackeray also said the state police will conduct probe into the alleged suicide of Lok Sabha member Mohan Delkar and punish the guilty.

Delkar (58), a seven-term MP from the Dadra and Nagar Haveli Union Territory, was found dead at a hotel on Marine Drive in south Mumbai on February 22.

"A Union Territory is governed by the Centre. We will take the case to its logical end. I wonder how the Opposition here is quiet on the issue of the seven-term MP ending his life," Thackeray said. On Monday, Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh said in the Assembly that the state police was capable of solving the case of auto parts dealer Mansukh Hiren's death and the recovery of the explosives-laden car near Ambani's residence.

He said the opposition does

Bumper yield to keep potato, onion prices in check this yr

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The production of two main kitchen staples - potato and onion - is estimated to be higher than last year, as per the Ministry of Agriculture. However, in case of tomatoes, the production is pegged slightly lower to 20.14 million tonnes this year from 21.17 million tonnes last year and this may hit the common man budget in the coming days. With 326.58 MT horticulture crops production in 2020-21, the first advance estimate of horticulture crops for the year 2020-21, the Ministry has estimated that onion production is likely to be 26.29 Million Tons (MT) as compared to 26.09 MT in 2019-20 and potato production is estimated to be 50.19 MT against production of

48.56 MT last year. The tomato production is expected to be less from 21.17 MT last year to 20.14 MT in 2020-21. Nevertheless, retail onion and tomato prices are running between ₹35-60 a kg for the past two months due to lower supply in the mandis across the country. Onion prices across the country, particularly in primary agricultural markets near the growing regions, have crashed between 30 per cent and 40 per cent over the last 10 days as the late kharif crop has begun to flood the markets. Traders and exporters fear further fall in the bulb's prices as the rabi crop is all set to hit the markets any time after March 15. "Onion prices had topped ₹4,000 a quintal in Nashik in the third week of February, but they have now dropped to

levels of ₹ 2,500 as late Kharif crop arrivals have increased since the last 4-5 days," said a trader.

Potato prices have crashed by about 80 per cent in various primary agricultural markets in major producer-states from a peak of Rs 2,750-2,900 a quintal seen in November last year as arrivals have begun to flood the markets. Potato is ruling to Rs 10-12 a kg.

As per the first advance estimate, the fruits production too is estimated to be 103.23 MT compared to 102.03 MT in 2019-20 and vegetables production is estimated to be 193.61 MT compared to 188.91 MT last year. Total horticulture production in 2020-21 is estimated to be 326.58 MT, an increase of about 5.81 MT from 320.76 million tonne last year.

whichever is high on branded country liquor only.

The deputy chief minister said that owing to the State Excise Duty and VAT on liquor, the state government was expected to net an additional revenue of Rs. 800 crore.

Pawar proposed to increase the rate of Value Added Tax (VAT) on the sale of liquor as prescribed in Schedule-B of Value Added Tax Act from the existing 60 percent to 65 percent. He also proposed to increase the rate of Value Added Tax (VAT) on the sale of liquor as prescribed in Section 41 (5) of Value Added Tax Act from the existing 35 percent to 40 percent.

Pawar said that owing to the VAT, the state government was

expected to get additional revenue of Rs 1000 crore.

In a tax concession measure announced on the occasion of International Women's Day, the Deputy chief minister proposed concession of one per cent in the Stamp Duty on the prevailing rate exclusively to Women, "provided the transfer of house property or registration of sale deed is in the name of woman or women only".

Pawar said that owing to the proposed tax concession, there would be revenue shortfall of around Rs 1000 Crore to the State Exchequer.

In a couple of several health infrastructure measures announced in the wake of the continuing Covid-19 crisis in the

Protest against rise in fuel prices will continue: Congress

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday said it would continue to protest against rising inflation and high prices of petroleum products, and would demand a discussion on the issue in Parliament. The first day of the second part of the Budget Session of Parliament in Rajya Sabha was virtually washed out due to the uproar created by the Congress.

Congress has alleged the Modi Government has earned at least ₹21 lakh crore in the last over six years by raising prices of petrol, diesel and LPG.

Talking to media outside the Parliament, Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha

Mallikarjun Kharge said he had given a notice to the chairman under rule 267 for a discussion on rising prices of petrol, diesel and LPG, due to which farmers, women and common people are upset, but it was disallowed. "We wanted to raise the anger among people against the rise in prices and wanted to raise it in Parliament. But the Government did not agree to it as it was not ready. We will continue to raise our demand, and our agitation for raising the voice of the common man will also continue in Parliament," Kharge said.

Kharge said when the Congress raises such issues, it is not given time to raise them in Parliament.

He also announced a cancer Diagnosis Facility in 150 hospitals and establishment of new Government Medical Colleges at Sindhudurg, Osmanabad, Nashik, Raigad and Satara. He said that medical colleges would also be set up at Parbhani and Amravati.

RSS 2-day annual meet from March 19 in B'luru

New Delhi: The Akhil Bharatiya Pratinidhi Sabha (ABPS), the highest decision-making body of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), will hold its two-day annual meet from March 19 to March 20 in Bengaluru which is expected to affect key changes in the organization. The meeting was earlier planned for Nagpur, but had to be relocated due to the active COVID-19 cases in Maharashtra. According to sources, the meeting - which will have in attendance about 500 to 550 RSS brass will be held on March 19 and 20. Election to the highest executive post of the organisation, Sar Karyavah (general secretary), is expected to take place during the meeting.

Last year, the meeting was scheduled to be held in Bengaluru from March 15 to 17 but was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. "About 500-550 delegates are likely to participate in the event. Sarsangchalak of RSS Dr Mohan Bhagwat, Sar Karyavah Bhayyaji Joshi and other leaders of the outfit will be in attendance. Several outfits of the RSS will not be attending the meet on account of COVID-19 protocol. The meeting will review the work done by the RSS in last three-years and set the road map for coming years. Sources said Covid-19 offered RSS workers opportunity to work with people extensively and the meeting would also appraise that experience. PNS



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Future perfect?

Is Tikait using the farmers' agitation to carve a place for himself in the Assembly or LS polls?

Riding the crest of farmers' protests, Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) leader Rakesh Tikait is putting in his best efforts to find a firm ground for his political future, if his latest utterances are anything to go by. By saying that the "Government has gone to Kolkata and we will meet it there only", he has made it clear that he will continue raking the farm laws issue to the BJP's discomfiture wherever and whenever an opportunity presents itself. This might irk the BJP a bit but it's certainly no reason for worry as Tikait most likely will not find any resonance in the West Bengal elections unless he gets to share the platform with the State's big guns or openly sides with the TMC or the Congress against the saffron party. Tikait is up in arms against the Centre and the BJP; however, many a time what is seen on the surface is nothing more than eyewash, especially in politics. An overambitious leader who has had no political career might be used as a "safety valve" by the Centre to defuse the farmers' anger. The nation witnessed how the Centre, despite all its might, failed to prevent the farmers from storming the Red Fort on the Republic Day. It was only after this incident that the protest's focus shifted from Punjab's growers to the cultivators of western Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Haryana, and Tikait acquired the centre stage while the more belligerent farm leaders from Punjab were gradually sidelined. Tikait then went through a gamut of



manoeuvres including breaking down during a speech, threatening to hang himself if the farm laws weren't repealed and of marching to Parliament with 40 lakh tractors, besides making many other inciting comments to keep the protest alive.

The political stint of Tikait — the son of legendary farmer leader Mahendra Singh Tikait who held sway over Jat farmers in western UP and founded the BKU and the Bahujan Kisan Dal — has been rather unsuccessful. He ended up at the sixth spot in the 2007 UP Assembly elections (though he was backed by the Congress) and lost his deposit in the 2014 Lok Sabha polls when he fought on the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) ticket from Amroha. Tikait is basically consolidating his position among Jat voters, the community he banks upon, in western UP. He is probably eyeing the 2022 UP Assembly or the next Lok Sabha elections. However, the jury is still out on whether he will float his own party or contest on another party's symbol. If he forms his own party, it would be a severe setback to the RLD and the Congress who also count on Jat votes. The BJP naturally would have an advantage as the votes against it would split. On the other hand, seat-sharing may not be easy if he decides to join hands with the RLD or the Congress as the traditional parties will not like him to be in the driver's seat. As of now, Tikait would like to use the farmers' protest to get a leg up in his political career. However, the NDA Government's "pro-corporate" and "anti-farmer" image is unlikely to help the BJP but its strategists would know what it means to win the Hindi heartland.

PICTALK



Himachal Pradesh Police's women officers celebrate International Women's Day, in Shimla

Institutionalised racism

What did Prince Harry Windsor and Meghan Markle's interview to Oprah Winfrey teach us?

Let us make no bones about it; the interview that Prince Harry Windsor and Meghan Markle, the now effectively excommunicated members of the British Royal Family, gave American television personality Oprah Winfrey was a way for them to remain in the limelight. It shone brightly at them and it also reminded many of us who either watched the entire interview or even snatches of it on social media that Miss Winfrey remains a master at her art. It is extremely difficult to feel sorry for the Duke and Duchess of Sussex. They are, and remain, extremely wealthy and privileged individuals, one by virtue of his birth and the other through the Hollywood hype machine. This interview is just a precursor to an upcoming series on streaming platform Netflix, which ironically also broadcasts a very lightly fictionalised story of Harry's grandmother's life, 'The Crown'. But it was difficult to not feel sorry when Meghan and Harry spoke about the racism that they faced when the potential skin tone of their then unborn child, a son now known as Archie, was brought up. Neither of them mentioned who it was that spoke



to them about this, whether it was a family member or a member of the royal household bureaucracy, but this again highlights that even an evolved family or institution can remain horribly rooted in a racist past.

The British Royal Family might reign over a realm that is uniquely multi-racial and multi-ethnic, but racist undertones still exist in Britain. Of course, this is not a problem unique to the country as the "Black Lives Matter" that followed the brutal murders of black individuals by white members of the American police force highlighted that even eight years of having a black President hadn't changed the racist mindsets of many Americans. And while racist undertones in India seem to be more subdued, make no mistake because they do exist. The attitude of the average Indian to African students or even those from the North-East is downright racist and, worse, casteism is still widespread. Many of us might have evolved with regards to our views on matters such as race and caste, but the institutionalisation of those views over centuries will take much longer to eradicate, not just in the British Royal Family but across the world.

100 days of revolt, & still raring to go

As the farmers' protest against farm laws enters the summer season, they brave high temperatures and the paucity of basic necessities



INDRA SHEKHAR SINGH

As an orange sun hung over the Tikri border; Rakesh Tikait along with other leaders was addressing the gathering of farmers on the 99th evening of the farmers' revolution. To mark the 100th day, plans were to be made. Farmers were preparing to block the National Highway into Delhi for five hours; a task they did well and peacefully. Tikait gave a call again to farmers around the nation "to be prepared for the harvest" and to bolster the revolution simultaneously. Speeches ended and a selfie frenzy began. The young, the old, the media and the police, all wanted to be in this moment as it was special in the history of the world. Winter, spring and now summer, yet the farmers' revolution lives on.

But far from the maddening crowds, the revolution had got a new friend. Against public advice, he kept ramming into the yellow police barricades, trying to enter Delhi. I caught him red-handed. Shyly, he ducked and began to look at the carrot shavings. His mind was yet to understand why humans used barricades. The suspect was big, blackish and middle aged. His curved big black horns made him stand out; he was an Indian humped bull.

The advances in farm machinery and artificial insemination have made the indigenous bull redundant. Most farmers sell off the male calves at birth and the remaining ones roam the streets of cities and townships scavenging on garbage. The more lucky ones are sold to slaughterhouses to meet death quickly. There is also a special class of bulls that is part of the artificial insemination industry; they are bred and dishonoured by sophisticated instruments, robbing them of their spermatozoa. Today the Indian bull, far from being Shiv's 'Nandi', is a pariah and first victim of industrial agriculture. With less than one per cent bulls working the farms, India flaunts a large dairy and cattle-rearing sector. The Indian species are so intermixed



with foreign breeds, mainly Jersey and Holstein, that it's hard to tell what is indigenous anymore. Many farmers fear that the story of the Indian bull will be their story, too, if the three farm laws and a neo-company raj enter India. Only with minimal farmers and maximum fossil fuel-based machines will the fields be cultivated.

The more immediate challenge to the revolution is, of course, the increasing heat — political and physical. Temperature variations have already started affecting people's health. With hotter days ahead, the entire encampments are modifying their tents. Many farmers are now constructing high bamboo-and-canvas tents for better air circulation. The supply of drinking water and perishable items like milk is becoming slightly problematic. Food wastage may also increase due to insufficient refrigeration facility. Farmers have mobilised another round of fundraising for installing reverse osmosis (RO) plants within the encampments at Tikri border because the groundwater is highly contaminated with industrial effluents.



WHILE ALL EYES ARE ON BENGAL, THE FARMER LEADERS ARE EXPANDING THEIR BASE TO THE STATES OF RAJASTHAN, MADHYA PRADESH AND UTTAR PRADESH. THE MORALE ON THE GROUND AT THE REVOLUTION SITES HAS NEVER BEEN HIGHER

The Ghazipur border is also going for a summer makeover. Much of the encampment at this border is on the Asian Highway 2 (AH2). Surrounding it are Ghazipur's garbage mountain, posh apartments and an open sewage canal that flows underneath it. The summer will bring mosquitoes and diseases. Both the sites will have to be prepared to combat vector and water-borne diseases. As these fears grow, a farmer from Jind died by suicide at the Tikri border. An avoidable death!

The farmers' revolution has transformed from an agrarian movement into a united opposition to the totalitarian Government. The BJP has suffered electorally in Punjab and Haryana and a strict boycott of the BJP and its leaders is in place in these States. While all eyes are on Bengal, the farmer leaders are expanding their base to the States of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. The morale on the ground at the revolution sites has never been higher. Because the encampments have become a breeding ground for hope, camaraderie is the only cure for hate. Many of these farm-

ers have stepped out of their region for the first time, yet they quickly learnt to work and endure suffering together. The movement is more disciplined than earlier and the farmers are ready to continue resisting.

Penance has been the path to spiritual awakening — Jesus on the cross or Buddha starving under the Bodhi tree — and the farmers are also suffering for the sins of our world. A bullet may bring them death as a slaughter may begin any day but they hope their deaths will not be in vain and shall wake up a sleeping world. It will bring together farmers and citizens all over the world to rise against this evil. Despite the odds, the farmers are hopeful.

Our world and democracy is at a dangerous crossroads — Earth and millions of farmers on one side and Big Ag and corporate tyranny on the other. If Indian farmers win, democracy of the world lives; otherwise, Aldous Huxley's 'Brave New World' awaits us all.

(The author writes on agriculture and environment, and is the Director — Green India. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WOMEN SHOULD RISE AGAINST TORMENTORS

Sir — Each year, March 8 is celebrated as International Women's Day. It goes without saying that women have proved their worth in all spheres and their progress is beyond any doubt. Indian women, too, have shown men that they are second to none. But we need to introspect that why we still have to talk about women empowerment and gender equality.

We have not achieved these things and the reality is very disappointing. Daughters are committing suicide daily in our country as they are forced by their husbands and in-laws to meet their demand for dowry. Many people in villages still hesitate to send their daughters to schools and marry them off at an early age. Even in big metros, women are faced with discrimination of various types at the workplaces and at their homes. They are sexually abused and harassed at the hands of their male colleagues, while at home they are subjected to domestic violence. The situation of women in politics is also not much better. There are very few women in politics as compared to men and they are not enough to pressure the Government to make laws more favourable for the women.

The fair sex is rather treated unfairly in our country and working women in traditional domains of men are looked down upon by their peers. When will this situation change? What are the responsibilities of NGOs, States, the Centre and civil society with respect to improving the condition of women? When will women rise against their tormentors?

Bal Govind | Noida

TAKE ALL SHOTS WITHIN STIPULATED TIME

Sir — As COVID-19 cases are again on the rise in India, it is time to accelerate our vaccination drive. The Government must involve more private hospitals and set up mobile clinics for vaccination. The States and Centre must deploy their ambulance services for getting people inoculated. The elderly should have the facility of calling ambulance home for taking them to the nearest centre for getting the jab. Further,

No cakewalk for Mamata



This refers to the editorial "Risky resolve" (March 8). Mamata choosing to contest from Nandigram shows her nervousness and the Trinamool Congress (TMC) not giving tickets to many sitting MLAs and Ministers shows that Didi no more has confidence over her old guards. Mamata banking on new faces might cost dearer to the TMC in the Assembly elections. She is already distraught by a spate of defections when many of her close confidants left the party at such crucial juncture. Suvendu Adhikari has made the

matters worse for her and winning from Nandigram will not be a cakewalk for Mamata as the Adhikari clan holds significant influence in the area.

However, Mamata's chances of winning the battle of prestige at Nandigram are quite good but it will definitely affect the TMC's performance elsewhere. The TMC's rule has been fraught with corruption and its Ministers were neck-deep in malpractices and nepotism. She should have controlled her MLAs, party workers and Ministers before the elections. Tightening noose when elections are round the corner will not improve the party's image, rather it would prove counterproductive. Those who have been denied tickets may not campaign for the party whole-heartedly and may even go against it. The BJP, on the other hand, is putting all its weight behind campaigning and winning the elections. Top party leaders are holding rallies, sabhas and road shows on war footing.

Sravana Ramachandran | Chennai

a door-to-door vaccination drive should be conducted not only in big cities but also in towns and villages.

Vaccination is a safe and effective way to prevent disease and save lives — now more than ever. Today there are vaccines available to protect against at least 20 diseases. Further, there should be no crowding at the vaccination centres and arrangements for potable water and toilet facilities should be made available to all, especially the elders.

We must also not forget that safety precautions are the key to keep Coronavirus at bay and wearing of masks and sanitising hands is essential.

Those who have taken the shot must take the subsequent doses within the stipulated time, else it might prove futile and defeat the very purpose.

CK Subramaniam | Mumbai

BJP LIKELY TO WIN BENGAL ELECTIONS

Sir — If the massive crowd at the Prime

Minister's rally at the Brigade Parade Ground in Kolkata is anything to go by, the indication is clear that the TMC is going and BJP is coming to power in West Bengal. Further, the schemes of the Centre will give BJP an edge; however, the recent rise in the prices of fuel and LPG cylinder will have a bearing on the BJP's vote bank.

The Centre should not have allowed the prices of petrol, diesel and LPG to touch the sky. The rise in LPG prices especially worries women a lot and, despite the Centre's Ujjwala Yojana, might affect the BJP's vote bank.

What will happen cannot be exactly predicted but it seems that the people of West Bengal are fed up with the rule of Mamata Banerjee and will most likely vote her out of power.

Yash Pal Ralhan | Jalandhar

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

Women in our country have always played a great role in nation-building and in upholding national integrity, peace and harmony. Women have always been an inspiration to society.

Andhra Pradesh Governor — Biswa Bhusan Harichandan

The Government has signed an advance purchase agreement for 8.5 million additional doses, enough to vaccinate 4.25 million people against COVID.

New Zealand PM — Jacinda Ardern

Women play multiple roles in their life: of a daughter, wife, mother, sister and so on. To make everyone around them happy, they sometimes compromise their real self.

Actress — Sunny Leone

Nowadays everybody is looking for a big total; every game we want to score more than 250 but for that you need some time and matches.

Indian women's ODI vice-captain — Harmanpreet Kaur

The social organisations could also contribute to ensure comfortable commuting and convenient accomplishment of the vaccination process.

Union Minister — Jitendra Singh



FIRST COLUMN

INDIA MUST NOT LET CHINA WOO HASINA

Ties between New Delhi and Dhaka would benefit both countries and Modi's trip should take this forward



KALYANI SHANKAR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's forthcoming visit to Dhaka on March 26 is quite significant as it will be his first foreign trip after the COVID-19 outbreak. It is expected to consolidate bilateral ties as Bangladesh is a gateway to southeast Asia and part of Modi's 'Act East' policy. In the last six years, the Prime Minister has established a rapport with his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina. There have also been frequent ministerial and official-level visits and continuous interaction between New Delhi and Dhaka. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar visited Dhaka last week to pave the way for the Prime Minister's visit as part of Bangladesh's celebrations of 50 years of independence. It also marks a decisive victory of the Indian Army over Pakistan. Coincidentally, Modi's visit is just before the first phase of the Assembly polls in West Bengal and Assam, which share common borders with Bangladesh. The enormous improvement in bilateral ties in the recent years led Hasina to call it a "golden period."



Yet, the steps taken in the domestic sphere during Modi's second term are causing concern to Bangladesh, even though New Delhi contends that it is a domestic matter. These measures include the abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), the passing of the controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) and the creation of the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

During Modi's trip, the two leaders are expected to discuss bilateral issues, especially the matter of Teesta river water sharing. Despite achieving breakthroughs in several areas in India-Bangladesh ties, both countries are yet to resolve the issue and Teesta has emerged as an emotive matter in Bangladesh and West Bengal. Dhaka has been pushing New Delhi to settle it early as Teesta water is vital for irrigation during the dry season in the northern part of Bangladesh. The Modi Government had successfully persuaded West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on the tricky Land Boundary Agreement and the enclaves' resolution, but Didi has stuck to her guns on Teesta. Jaishankar, during his recent Dhaka visit, said, "The position of the Government of India has not changed." However, it is a political necessity for both sides to find a solution soon. A deal would help New Delhi get more political leverage over China's growing influence, particularly in the Bay of Bengal region. It will also help Hasina politically. Meanwhile, a desperate Dhaka has turned to Beijing and a massive project funded by China has been adopted to manage the Teesta river.

On the domestic side, illegal immigration has been a political and electoral issue for the BJP since 1996 when its national executive in Bhopal passed a resolution on it. Even the 2019 manifesto said, "We will continue to undertake effective steps to prevent illegal immigration in the north eastern States." The other issue is that of Rohingya refugees. Millions of Muslims from the Rakhine province of Myanmar, following the Tatmadaw's crackdown in 2017, fled to Bangladesh and other neighbouring countries, including India. New Delhi is caught in a dilemma between two close strategic neighbours, Myanmar and Bangladesh.

Connectivity is another important area where both the countries are focusing, and many new projects are on the way and New Delhi has come to Dhaka's rescue by exporting nine million vaccines as part of its COVID diplomacy. On its part, Bangladesh is all set to graduate out of the Least Developing Countries with its GDP growth of eight per cent. New Delhi must keep up the partnership that allows for economic growth, defence cooperation, connectivity and improved developmental parameters for both nations. A collaboration between India and Bangladesh would benefit both countries. New Delhi must not lose the moment to take the ties forward.

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

Gender inequality in Indian labour market

It is not only participation in higher education that will provide a broad solution but skills training relevant to the market demand is also necessary



BALWANT SINGH MEHTA

Every year on International Women's Day the world celebrates the achievements of women in social, economic, cultural and political spheres. Not many are aware that this special day for women began as a labour movement in 1908, when 15,000 women marched through New York City demanding shorter working hours, better pay and the right to vote. March 8 was taken up as the official International Women's Day in 1975 by the United Nations. This year's theme was centred around celebrating the tremendous efforts of women/girls in shaping a more equal future and also in aiding recovery from the pandemic. However, it is imperative to highlight the gaps that remain and the way forward to address them successfully.

Gender inequality in the labour market, particularly in the context of developing nations, is one area of concern that still poses a great challenge, particularly in a country like India. Historically, women have been denied many opportunities due to deep-rooted biases in the social system. These eventually lead to labour market inequality as such discrimination is not limited to the domestic arena only but extends beyond the household. The underlying factors that cause such discrimination in India are the sex ratio at birth, life expectancy at birth, the infant mortality rate, the under-five mortality rate, the maternal mortality rate, nutritional deprivation, inequality in literacy rates and the gender gap at the highest level of political decision-making. These inequalities have direct implications for labour market outcomes in terms of women's participation in economic activities. Even with similar educational attainments and skill sets as men, women are denied opportunities, which leads to significant differences in status of work, income and occupations. Despite the introduction of many affirmative policy actions, such exclusionary approaches remain.

Inequality in the labour market: While some studies have noted an improvement in employment conditions for women, with rising salaries and more participation in quality or decent jobs, other studies have highlighted jobless growth and declining participation in the labour market in the past decades. The pandemic severely hit economic activities of those who were at the lower rung of the occupation hierarchy, particularly women working in the informal economy. They were out of jobs for a significant period of the outbreak and those who managed to hold on to one had to face wage cuts. This has further precipitated the vulnerability of women.

Employment and education/skill level: Globalisation has led to an increase in women's participation in the labour market in India. But there is still a huge gender gap, with only 18 per cent of women employed as compared to 47 per cent men. It is often argued that women are engaged in mostly low-skilled, low-paid work under precarious work conditions. Education and skill level play a key role in access to the labour market and in the quality of work one gets.

Almost half of the working women (42 per cent) are illiterate compared to 19 per cent men, and around 77 per cent are educated up to the upper primary level as compared to 62 per cent men. There is a significant difference between the higher education level of working women and men, i.e. 23 per cent of women as compared to 38 per cent of men are educated above the secondary level.



GLOBALISATION HAS LED TO AN INCREASE IN WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE LABOUR MARKET IN INDIA. BUT THERE IS STILL A HUGE GENDER GAP, WITH ONLY 18 PER CENT OF WOMEN EMPLOYED AS COMPARED TO 47 PER CENT MEN

The writer is senior faculty at Institute for Human Development, New Delhi. The views expressed are personal.

**Job quality and occupations:**

More than half of working women (53 per cent) are engaged in self-employment, whereas one-fourth take up some form of casual work (25 per cent) and only 22 per cent are in regular salaried jobs. The share of men engaged in regular work (24 per cent) is relatively higher, while their share in casual employment (24 per cent) is slightly lower. Further, differences are also observed in terms of occupational segregation in the labour market i.e. the difference in the share of men versus women within an occupation. Such segmentation is widespread within occupational groups.

The occupational distribution by gender shows that women (28 per cent) are relatively more involved than men (22 per cent) in low-paid and unskilled jobs, such as elementary occupations (domestic helpers, cleaners, street vendors and garbage collectors), services (personal care, housekeeping and salespersons) and as office and customer service clerks. Women (10 per cent) are also under-represented in high-skill and well paid jobs, such as those of professionals, technicians and associate professionals, as compared to men (13 per cent). Additionally, the percentage of women (92 per cent) engaged in informal employment in the country is higher than men (88 per cent).

Unemployment, NEET and inactive people: The overall employment level among women (five per cent) is less than their male (six per cent) counterparts. The unemployment

rate among young (15-29 years) women is not only significantly high (18 per cent) but also greater than men (17 per cent). The trend also shows a sizable increase in youth who are not in employment, education and training (NEET), among whom a large proportion is that of women. More than half of young women (55 per cent) are in the NEET category with only 13 per cent of young men featuring in it. Additionally, 84 per cent of young women are inactive as compared to 41 per cent of men. The inactive youth include those who face employment difficulties and may drop out of the labour force when jobs are hard to find, whether for study, leisure, illicit activities or due to inertia. Women face many social and economic hurdles which limit their participation in the labour market and this may lead to labour market inactivity.

Factors aiding inequality: There are many factors that contribute to labour market inequality. Mehta and Awasthi (2019) analysed various factors through an econometric decomposition exercise. Their study revealed four important factors: Educational qualification or skill level is one of the most important factors contributing to inequality, as individuals with high education or skill level can access better jobs or have higher chances of getting a decent job; access to a decent quality job or a regular formal salaried job, which provides better and secure income, while casual work is irregular and low paid; gender, as various socio-economic con-

ditions and other restrictions cause women to have a lower labour force participation rate and lastly work experience, as people with experience are more likely to get better access to the labour market. There are other factors such as social groups, income level or poverty and rural and urban location which play a key role in gender inequality in the labour market.

The way forward: Rising inequality in the labour market is a reality, with the differences between the male and female population growing wider. Though, over the years, female presence in regular or high-skilled and better-paid jobs has improved but still a large number of them are engaged in low-paid and unskilled jobs. In recent years, the growing enrollment of young women in secondary and tertiary-level education has resulted in them being better-skilled employees and their proliferation in decent employment. This trend is seen particularly in the services sector, especially in financial services and information technology. Hence, apart from a gender-friendly environment, it is necessary to make education up to the secondary level universal and free.

However, the growing number of women in the NEET category and the higher unemployment level among educated or skilled women is negating the advances made through such measures. Therefore, it is not only participation in higher education that will provide a comprehensive solution but skills training relevant to the market demand is also necessary.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

BENGAL TRUSTED DIDI FOR 'PORIBORTON'. SHE BROKE THE TRUST. I HAVE COME HERE TO MAKE YOU BELIEVE IN 'ASOL PORIBORTON'.
—PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI



HE SAYS THERE IS NO 'PORIBORTON' IN BENGAL. BEFORE POLLS IT IS 'UJJWALA' AND POST POLLS IT TURNS INTO 'JUMLA.' THIS CANNOT CONTINUE.
—WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER MAMATA BANERJEE

Govt land monetisation will boost infrastructure development

The proposed SPV meant to carry out the monetisation should take essential steps for making land assets of PSUs free of any hindrances

Urban development in India is largely obstructed by the lack of availability of land at affordable prices, a key prerequisite for infrastructure development and housing. According to the Numbao database for 2021, Mumbai is among the top 10 cities with the highest price-to-income ratios. The reason for the high price of land available for infrastructure development or residential stock in India is directly linked to the complexities of the land acquisition process.

With a number of loopholes in its current design, it has been largely debated by various researchers and policymakers. Making matters worse, the lack of clear land titles and the need for obtaining approvals and clearances from civic authorities impedes the progress of a project.

As it has been a long-



PRERNA PRABHAKAR

The writer is an Associate Fellow at the National Council of Applied Economic Research. The views expressed are personal.

standing problem, it is imperative to seek solutions and adopt appropriate policy models to address it. Taking cue from China's journey can prove helpful. The improved infrastructure quality has been a fundamental source of China's economic growth, which currently stands on a par with the advanced economies.

As per the World Bank's Infrastructure Index for 2018, Beijing appeared in the top 20 ranks alongside other advanced economies with a score of 3.75. India, in contrast, was one of the low-scoring countries on the index at 2.91. This fast-paced development of the Chinese economy forces one to think about its model of infrastructure development.

Of the many steps taken by the Chinese Government, a significant effort relates to monetisation of public land to develop infrastructure. According to

an estimate by Chinese researchers, the Government allocated 1,38,267 hectare of land in 2010 for infrastructure, which was around 20 per cent of the total State-owned land.

Financial support in the form of this land allocation can be gauged by the fact that had State Governments purchased the same at market rates, they would have ended up paying 1,292.8 billion yuan, amounting to 31.8 per cent of their total revenue in 2010. This model can be replicated and adopted by India by making unutilised land with Government departments and Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) available to private players for infrastructure development or housing construction, thereby filling the existing gap.

The Union Budget 2021-22 has proposed monetisation of land belonging to the



Government-owned companies and PSUs by way of direct sale, concessions or other suitable means. The plan is to launch a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) in this pursuit. The decision is likely to free up a large extent of land for building infrastructure and affordable housing projects. According to various estimates available in public domain, the

land held by various Government agencies is over 5,00,000 HA, of which, over 1,60,000 HA is held across various airports, seaports and by the railways. Approximately 11.8 lakh acres is owned by the Railway Ministry, out of which about 1.26 lakh acres is not in any kind of use. For the proposed land monetisation, it is pertinent to ensure preparation on various fronts. First, record of lands with plot ownership and boundaries should be available in an updated form, without any disputes or any other encumbrances like lease terms of the PSUs. Though States are making substantial progress in digitising land records, there is still a long road ahead for improving its quality, as has been exhibited by National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) Land Records and

Services Index (N-LRSI) in its 2020 and 2021 editions. The proposed SPV meant to carry out the monetisation process should take the essential steps for making land assets of PSUs free of any hindrances.

Canada's experience can offer some useful lessons in designing an SPV — Canada Lands Company — identifies and purchases surplus properties (including Government-owned land) at market prices. It further manages the purchased properties and finally sells it to private entities.

Since 1995, it has developed 2,000 affordable housing projects. Second, land prices valuation, which has proved to be a major roadblock for loan acquisition procedures, should be determined through a detailed analysis of market rates and potential gains from the proposed project.

Lastly, Central and State

Governments should take the necessary steps to limit the requirement of multiple approvals required to kick off an infrastructure or real estate project. This comes across as the biggest bottleneck as observed from heaps of land parcels lying unutilised in the States' land banks as private companies avoid the tedious approval and clearance processes that are necessary to secure access.

With increasing requirements of infrastructure resources and housing stock in Indian cities, there is an urgent need to optimise land resources. If adopted with adequate measures, Government land monetisation can be an efficient policy step that captures real estate value of unutilised public land, augments revenues of local, Central and State Governments and also mitigates problems posed by escalating land prices.

Govt to amend telecom licence norms to control sourcing from China

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
The Government is likely to amend the telecom licence norms this month to incorporate the guidelines of national security directive on telecom communication sector that will help in controlling installation of network equipment from China and other non-friendly countries.

week," an official source said.
Notably, Chinese telecom gear maker Huawei has had its run-ins in the past with the governments of Canada and the US. The US has alleged that it did not comply with its cybersecurity and privacy laws, leaving the country and the citizens vulnerable to espionage.

Govt nets ₹53,346 cr from Vivad Se Vishwas scheme till Feb 22

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government has realised Rs 53,346 crore through direct tax dispute resolution scheme Vivad Se Vishwas till February 22, Parliament was informed on Monday.

This include Rs 27,720 crore worth payments made by the central public sector undertakings (PSUs), Rs 1,023 crore by state PSUs, and Rs 24,603 crore by others.

India's domestic air traffic falls 37 pc to 78 lakh passengers in Feb: Report

PTI ■ MUMBAI

India's domestic air traffic fell 37 per cent year-on-year to 78 lakh passengers in February amid travel curbs and capacity restrictions due to the pandemic, according to Ica.

one (May 25, 2020, when domestic operations were resumed) to 2,885 on day 267 (February 14, 2021).
"For February 2021, the average daily departures were around 2,296, significantly lower than the average daily departures of 3,137 in February 2020, though better than around 2,190 in January 2021," said Kinjal Shah, Vice President, Ica.

Equities slip on high crude oil prices; Realty stocks fall

PTI ■ MUMBAI

India's benchmark equity indices ended Monday's trade session on a flat-to-positive note even as high crude oil prices along with rising bond yields subdued sentiments.

due to high oil prices spooked investors. Globally, Asian shares broadly reversed course to trade lower on Monday as higher crude oil prices raised inflation worries.

below recent averages signalling lower institutional participation. On Monday, FIIs pulled out Rs 1,494.49 crore from the Indian markets.

LPG price double in 7 yrs; tax collection on petrol, diesel jumps 459%: Pradhan
PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Price of domestic cooking gas, LPG has doubled to Rs 819 per cylinder in the last seven years while the increase in taxes on petrol and diesel has swelled collections by over 459 per cent, Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said on Monday.

In written replies to a spate of questions on rising fuel prices in the Lok Sabha, Pradhan said the retail selling price of domestic gas was Rs 410.5 per 14.2-kg cylinder on March 1, 2014. This month, the same cylinder costs Rs 819.

NIFTY 50 table with columns: SCRP, OPEN, High, LOW, LTP, CHANGE. Lists various stocks like NIFTY 50, UPL, GAIL, etc.

BSE 500 table with columns: Script, Open, High, Low, LTP. Lists various stocks like TATAMOTORS, SBIN, RELIANCE, etc.

Table with columns: TOP GAINERS, TOP LOSERS. Lists stocks like ITC, NSE Nifty, etc.

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NIFTY NEXT 50 table with columns: SCRP, OPEN, High, LOW, LTP, CHANGE. Lists various stocks like NIFTY NEXT 50, PFC, NMDC, etc.

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BRIEFS

TATA POWER-DL BIDS GOLDEN PEACOCK AWARD
Tata Power Delhi Distribution (Tata Power-DDL), a leading power distribution company serving a populace of 7 million in the national capital, has been presented with the prestigious 'Golden Peacock Award for Energy Efficiency' for the year 2020 under the 'Power Distribution' Category by the Awards Jury under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Justice M. N. Venkatchaliah, former Chief Justice of India.

MAYOR OF NORTH DELHI, DY HEAD OF MISSION AUSTRIAN EMBASSY INAUGURATES PICTORIAL EXHIBITION
North Delhi Mayor Jai Prakash and Deputy Head of Mission, Austrian Embassy, Matthias Radosztics on Monday inaugurated a pictorial exhibition on the subject of women empowerment at North DMIC headquarters on the occasion of International Women's Day. On the occasion Deputy Mayor Ritu Goel, Standing Committee Chairman Chail Bihari Goswami, ex-Mayor Rajni Abbi were also present.

NORTHERN RAILWAY DEDICATES ITS WDP4B, WDP4D CLASS LOCOMOTIVES TO WOMEN WARRIORS
As a token of homage and respect, Northern Railway takes pride in dedicating its WDP4B and WDP4D class locomotives of Tughlakabad to these brave warriors, Tughlakabad locomotives Rani Ahilyabai, Rani Avantibai, Rani Velu Nachiyar, Rani Chennamma, Rani Laxmibai and Jhalkaribai will soon be joined by Uda Devi and others in celebrating our immortal heroes' women with character of steel.

CSCs COLLABORATES WITH GOODWORKER TO CONNECT RURAL WORKERS WITH EMPLOYERS
NEW DELHI: Centre's digital India arm Common Services Centres (CSC) is partnering with GoodWorker, a job matching platform, for connecting blue-collar workers with employers through its extensive reach in rural India. A Ministry of Information Technology official said the partnership promises to bring one lakh job opportunities through CSC Gramin Naukri Portal. The job opportunities will include profiles like Sewing Machine Operator, Delivery Executive, Customer Support Executive/Tele caller, etc.

SRM CONDUCTS WORKSHOP ON ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR SELF-HELP GROUPS
Kattankulathur: SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST), Kattankulathur and Pudihiya Thalaimurai Foundation together with ISRB EXPOTM Indian Small and Rural Business Exposition conducted "Entrepreneurship Orientation Programme on Area plates and spirulina production and marketing" at Government Middle School Campus, Orathur village. Under the Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, SRMIST has adopted eight villages (Orathur, Kolathur, Chettipunnam, Nattarasappattu, Themelpakkam, Patravakkam, Anjur, and Kalivandhapattu.) from Chengalpattu and Kanchipuram district.

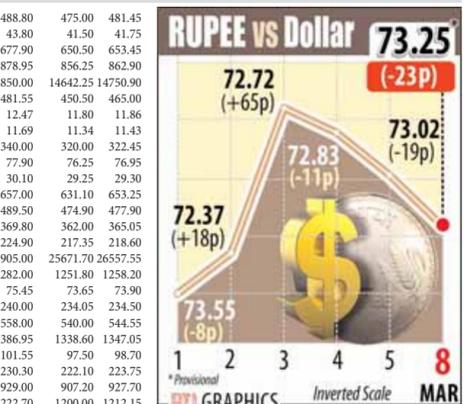


Table with columns: RUPEE vs Dollar, 73.25. Lists various stocks and their prices.

Myanmar security forces kill 2 anti-coup protesters

AP ■ MANDALAY

Security forces shot dead two people in northern Myanmar on Monday, local media reported, as the military government continued its attempt to stamp out opposition to its February 1 coup.

The Irrawaddy newspaper said the victims were shot in the head during anti-coup protests in Myitkyina in Kachin State. Graphic video on social media showed protesters in the street backing away from tear gas, responding with rocks, then fleeing after a fusillade of what seemed to be automatic gunfire.

Demonstrators hurriedly carried away a number of casualties, including one apparent fatality, a person who had clearly sustained a severe head wound.



Anti-coup protesters discharge fire extinguishers to counter the impact of the tear gas fired by police during a demonstration in Naypyitaw, Myanmar on Monday. AP

A second body was seen a little later, on a stretcher, his head covered with a cloth.

Security forces also clamped down on anti-coup protesters elsewhere Monday, firing tear gas to break up a

crowd of around 1,000 people who were demonstrating in the capital, Naypyitaw.

The protesters deployed fire extinguishers to create a smoke screen as they fled from authorities.

Biden order could change how colleges handle sex misconduct

AP ■ WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden is set to sign an executive order on Monday directing the Department of Education to review policies implemented by Donald Trump's administration, including changes to Title IX regulations that prohibit sex discrimination in federally funded institutions, according to administration officials.

Biden focused on gender equity during his campaign and promised to strengthen Title IX if he won the White House. He also will sign a second executive order formally establishing the White House Gender Policy Council, according to two administration officials who briefed reporters on the plan. Biden's transition team announced his plans to create the council before he took office. The order directing the



President Joe Biden speaks in the State Dining Room of the White House. AP

review of Title IX could pave the way to a major shift in how colleges handle allegations of sexual misconduct moving forward.

Trump's education secretary, Betsy DeVos, in 2018 rescinded an Obama-era administration standard in cases of reported sexual assault from requiring a "preponderance of evidence" — meaning it is more likely than not that sexual harassment or violence occurred — to "clear and convincing evidence." The DeVos changes

reduced the liability of colleges and universities for investigating sexual misconduct claims and bolstered the due process rights of the accused, including the right to cross-examine their accusers through a third-party advocate at campus hearings.

Biden, as Vice-President, along with then-Education Secretary Arne Duncan in 2011 laid out the legal guidance of what was expected of college campuses in response to allegations of sexual violence on behalf of President Barack Obama's administration.

With the Education Department review, Biden's intent is to set policies that help ensure students have an environment that's free from sexual harassment and without discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, according to one White House official who briefed reporters on the orders.

IN EXPLOSIVE INTERVIEW Meghan reveals suicidal thoughts, royal racism



This image provided by Harpo Productions shows Meghan, The Duchess of Sussex, left, in conversation with Oprah Winfrey. AP

PTI ■ LOS ANGELES/LONDON

Meghan Markle struggled as a new member of Britain's royal family after her marriage to Prince Harry to such a degree that she even contemplated suicide, the Duchess of Sussex revealed in an explosive tell-all interview with American chat show host Oprah Winfrey.

The two-hour special, aired on the CBS network in the US on Sunday and set to be aired on ITV in the UK on Monday night, saw Prince Harry joining his wife half-way through as the couple also spoke about concerns of racism within the royal ranks after being asked about their son Archie's expected skin colour when mixed-race Meghan was pregnant with their first child.

"I just didn't want to be alive anymore," Meghan said, adding that when she "went to the institution for help" she was told it would not be forthcoming as it "wouldn't be good for the institution".

The 39-year-old former American actress, who is pregnant with her second child, revealed that the couple are expecting a baby girl and shared how the palace decided that their first-born, Archie, could not be a prince and would therefore have no security.

She alluded to "concerns and conversations about how dark his skin might be when he's born".

"Who is having that conversation?" asked a stunned Winfrey. Meghan replied: "That was relayed to me from Harry, those were conversations the family had with him, and I think it was really hard to be able to see those as compartmentalised conversations. They were saying they didn't want him to be a prince or a princess and that he wasn't going to receive security."

The Duke and Duchess of Sussex's children do not automatically become princes or princesses because of a rule that has been in place since 1917, unless the Queen steps in.

Both Meghan and Harry refused to divulge who exactly made remarks about their son's skin tone, with Meghan admitting that if she revealed who was involved in such talks it "would be very damaging to them".

"That conversation I'm never going to share," asserted Harry. The 36-year-old Duke of Sussex, who is still sixth in line to the British throne, also spoke of his hurt at his father Prince Charles not taking his calls after the couple decided to step back as frontline royals last year. "[I had] three conversations with my grandmother [Queen Elizabeth II] and two conversations with my father [Charles], before he stopped taking my calls," he said.

"It was, like, I needed to do this for my family. This is not a surprise to anybody. It's really sad that it's got to this point. But I've got to do something for my own mental health, my wife's and for Archie's as well, because I could see where this was headed," he said, in reference to the couple's decision to relocate.

They have since moved to California after formally stepping down from royal duties in March 2020, and it was announced last month that they would not be returning as working members of the royal family. Harry said the couple were only able to afford their new life in California because of his mother Diana — Princess of Wales.

"My family literally cut me off financially. I've got what my mum left me. Without that, we never would have been able to do this... I think she saw it coming," he said.

Asked by Winfrey how they would respond to accusations that they were "money-grabbing" because of deals they have signed with Netflix and Spotify since moving to California, Harry replied: "First of all this was never the intention. We're certainly not complaining. Life is great. We've got a beautiful house, beautiful family. The dogs are really happy."

"From my perspective all I needed was enough money to be able to pay for security, to keep my family safe," he said.

During the interview, the royal family were also accused of failing to protect the Duke and Duchess, with Meghan saying the situation "started to really worsen" after the couple married in May 2018.

Oz ends defence cooperation with coup-hit Myanmar

Canberra: Australia has suspended its defence cooperation with Myanmar and is redirecting humanitarian aid because of the military takeover of the government and ongoing detention of an Australian citizen.

Foreign Minister Marise Payne said on Monday that Australian diplomats only had access to economic policy adviser Sean Turnell twice since he was detained in early February. AP

Escalating violence raises pressure for Myanmar sanctions

Bangkok: The escalation of violence in Myanmar as authorities crack down on protests against the February 1 coup is raising pressure for more sanctions against the junta, even as countries struggle over how to best sway military leaders injured to global condemnation.

The challenge is made doubly difficult by fears of harming ordinary citizens who were already suffering from an economic slump worsened by the pandemic but are braving risks of arrest and injury to voice

outrage over the military takeover. Still, activists and experts say there are ways to ramp up pressure on the regime, especially by cutting off sources of funding and access to the tools of repression.

The UN special envoy on Friday urged the Security Council to act to quell junta violence that this week killed about 50 demonstrators and injured scores more. More shootings were reported over the weekend, and a coalition of labor unions called a strike for Monday. AP

First lady Jill helps honor women from 15 countries for courage

AP ■ WASHINGTON

First lady Jill Biden says nearly two dozen women the State Department is honoring for their courage made an "intentional decision" to persist and demand justice despite their fear.

The 21 women being recognized Monday with the department's International Women of Courage Award include seven from Afghanistan who are receiving posthumous honors.

Jill sees teachable moment in the depths of a pandemic



In this file photo Jill Biden watches a student work as she tours the Benjamin Franklin Elementary School, in Meriden, Ct. AP

AP ■ WATERFORD, PA.

Jill Biden sees a teachable moment in the depths of the coronavirus pandemic. The first lady sat in a socially distanced circle in the library at Fort LeBoeuf Middle School in Pennsylvania, listening and taking notes as parents expressed relief that the school had reopened and their kids were back in the classroom.

One mother talked about the "bumpy patches" of online learning and said reopening "has been so to the T" that she doesn't worry about her son and daughter. Another mom said the district included parent input and she was comfortable her children were in a "safe environment."

A teacher herself, Biden praised the small circle of parents, teachers and administrators for working together to help reopen Fort LeBoeuf. And she repeated a message she had delivered earlier that day while visiting Benjamin Franklin Elementary School in Meriden, Connecticut.

"We've been through really tough, hard times, but I think the one good thing about educators that I love — and that includes the cafeteria workers, the bus drivers, the teachers, everyone involved — is we've all learned from this," Biden said of the pandemic and its emotional, social and human toll.

"We're all going to take everything that we've learned and are going to turn it into opportunity to make things better for students as we move forward," she said.

The first lady seems intent on turning every aspect of her new job into an opportunity, for that matter, especially anything related to her triple passions for education, fighting cancer and supporting military families.

A few days after she became first lady, Biden told governors' spouses during a virtual meeting at the White House that her new platform is "one that I would never let go to waste."

The couple lost son Beau to brain cancer in 2015 at age 46. Her parents died of cancer, and one of her sisters had a stem cell transplant. Doctors also gave the dreaded breast cancer diagnosis to four of her girlfriends within a one-year period in the 1990s.

As US mulls Afghan exit, activist sees long fight for women

KABUL (AP): Prominent activist Sima Samar has been fighting for women's rights in Afghanistan for the past 40 years. She believes her struggle is far from over — especially at a time when violence is on the rise, peace talks between rival Afghan groups are stuck and the U.S. mulls a May departure from her country.

Samar, 64, worries about the future, noting that insecurity and instability in Afghanistan have reached frightening levels.

"No one knows what will happen tomorrow," she said in an interview at her home in the Afghan capital, Kabul, protected by blast walls, guards and a German shepherd, who races to his vantage point overlooking the street when a car even slows as it passes.

Yet much is at stake and "a lot of sacrifices have been made in these 20 years," she said, reflecting the anxiety among civil society leaders as the U.S. searches for the best exit from its longest war.

Under a 2020 deal between the Taliban and the Trump administration, all U.S. troops are to leave Afghanistan by May

1. The Biden administration says it's reviewing the deal, suggesting it may not meet the deadline.

Last week, Samar and other civil society representatives participated in a Zoom call with U.S. peace envoy Zalmay Khalilzad. He assured them that Washington stands with Afghanistan's civil society to protect the gains made in the past 20 years.

The call seemed last-minute to Samar — held just before Khalilzad was leaving Kabul for Qatar to meet with Taliban negotiators, following two days of face-to-face meetings with political leaders and warlords-turned-politicians.

"I feel a little like history is repeating itself," said Samar, questioning the prominence given again to warlords and a political leadership that struggles to win over the trust of Afghans.

When the Taliban regime was ousted in 2001 by the US-led coalition she had pressed for justice — that those who had committed crimes in previous regimes should be punished, that accountability, equality and justice should be given priority.

Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam 'fully welcomes' proposed electoral changes

Hong Kong: Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam said on Monday the city's government "fully welcomes" changes to the city's electoral system that will substantially increase central government control over Hong Kong politics and exclude Beijing's critics.

Chinese authorities have said the draft decision before China's National People's Congress would mean the largely pro-Beijing committee that elects Hong Kong's leader would also choose a large part of the legislature.

The Election Committee would also have the right to vet candidates for the Legislative Council, weeding out any suspected of being insufficiently loyal to China and the ruling Communist Party. Currently, half of Hong Kong's legislature is directly elected by voters, although the mass resignation of opposition legislators to protest the expulsion of four of their colleagues for being "unpatriotic" means the body is now entirely controlled by Beijing loyalists. AP

20 DEAD IN EQUATORIAL GUINEA BLENDS

Washington: US President Joe Biden on Monday welcomed Pope Francis' historic visit to Iraq, describing it as a "symbol of hope" for the entire world.

Damascus: Syrian President Bashar Assad and his wife have tested positive for the Covid-19, the President's office said on Monday, with both having only mild symptoms of the illness.

Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso): A series of explosions at a military barracks in Equatorial Guinea killed at least 20 people and wounded more than 600 others on Sunday, authorities said.

London: Prime Minister Boris Johnson hailed the "national effort" as schools and colleges opened on Monday to mark the step one in the UK's phased roadmap to lift strict lockdown restrictions in place for months to control the spread of Covid.

FROM PAGE 1

UPROAR IN HOUSES OVER FUEL PRICE

He also said the Chair did not want to take drastic action on the first day of the session and asked the agitated members to let the House run.

The Opposition, however, did not oblige him and started shouting slogans forcing the Chairman to adjourn the House till 11 am. Similar scenes were witnessed when the House reassembled with Kharge again seeking a discussion.

When Deputy Chairman Harivansh clarified that Naidu's ruling was final and the Opposition could raise the issue later, the senior Congress leader said it was important to discuss the matter immediately as people were suffering due to the frequent increase in fuel prices.

As the Chair decided to continue with the legislative business, Opposition members started shouting slogans forcing the Deputy Chairman to adjourn the House till 1 pm. The House was ultimately adjourned for the day shortly thereafter without transacting any business.

Some of the Bills listed by the Government for this session include the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (Amendment) Bill, National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development Bill, Electricity (Amendment) Bill, and Crypto Currency and Regulation of Official Digital Currency Bill.

SESSION LIKELY TO BE CUT SHORT, TO END BEFORE STATE POLLS

Similar was the case with Lok Sabha members. Some Lok Sabha members

were also seated in the visitors' gallery above the House chamber.

The move to return to normal timings was taken a day before Covid-19 vaccination drive for members of Parliament beginning from Tuesday. Floor leaders of various political parties on Monday urged the Lok Sabha Speaker to curtail the Budget Session to allow them focus on the Assembly polls in four States and one Union Territory.

At a meeting of Lok Sabha's Business Advisory Committee (BAC), Birla spoke with various floor leaders on a one-on-one basis to take a sense on curtailing the session.

While members of the Trinamool Congress and the DMK did not attend the meeting, Biju Janata Dal was of the view that Assembly elections keep taking place every few months and the session should not be curtailed on this ground. YSR Congress Party member PV Midhun Reddy said if the current session is curtailed, the next session should be longer.

Nearly 145 members have written to the Speaker seeking curtailment of the session. In a letter to the Rajya Sabha chairperson, TMC national spokesperson and RS member Derek O'Brien said due to the polls, MPs of his party would not be able to attend the Parliament session.

"I am writing to you as the parliamentary party leader (Rajya Sabha) for the All India Trinamool Congress. Sir, we urge you to consider the adjournment of the ensuing Parliament session, because of the declaration of elections in five States," he said. TMC MP Sudeep Bandyopadhyay wrote to the Lok Sabha Speaker on the same issue.

O'Brien, in his letter, mentioned two precedents when Parliament sessions were adjourned due to polls in States. He cited the example of the 222nd session which

commenced on February 21, 2011, and was scheduled to conclude on April 21, 2011. However, due to State Assembly elections in Assam, Kerala, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, the House was adjourned sine die on March 25, 2011, he said.

The second instance he provided was of the 214th session which commenced on October 17, 2008, and was adjourned early on October 24, 2008, to meet again on December 10, 2008. The session, as per the original schedule, was to continue up to November 21, 2008. However, due to State Assembly elections in some States, the House was adjourned till December 10, 2008.

ALL BOOTHS IN BENGAL PH-I POLLS 'SENSITIVE'

Guha joined the BJP at its Hastings party office on Monday.

Former Bengal Minister and Singur MLA Rabindranath Ghosh too quit the party along with his son a local TMC leader. None of these outgoing MLAs were given nomination by the party and "felt insulted at not being consulted or even informed by the Chief Minister once about her decision to drop us..."

Guha a former Deputy Speaker said, "I had been with Mamata Didi like her shadow for decades ... till she became the Chief Minister no one could even conceive a photograph of her without me by her side... I stood by her through all the rough times and see what I got at the end. I could not believe my eyes when my name was dropped," the four-time MLA from Satgachia said.

She went on to add that Didi could at least have informed me personally ... but she would not even call me up once."

Sarala Murmu another former TMC MLA who was given nomination this time round from Habibpur in Malda district too left the party alleging "unruliness and lack of opportunity to work." The TMC election committee was hurriedly trying to name another candidate from Habibpur, sources said.

Not only Murmu but at least 14 sitting members of Malda district board too left the party on Monday. All of them joined the BJP rendering the TMC into minority and prompting the saffron outfit to stake claim to form the Board, sources said adding the Trinamool leadership had swung into action to control the damage. A South Dum Dum councilor too had quit the party and joined the BJP, sources said.

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister launched a scathing attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the second consecutive day on Monday for "peddling lies" against her Government.

Leading a huge women's rally on the event of Women's Day in Kolkata, Mamata attacked the Prime Minister for leading the "biggest syndicate of the country." She said, "The Prime Minister is calling Bengal a crime hotspot whereas the BJP-ruled UP leads the country in incidents of rape ... Gujarat too is high on the list of incidents of rape, murder and attempted murder," wondering why the Prime Minister was not for once mentioning the rising prices of fuel and cooking gas.

"The women who have to bear the brunt of the price hike in their kitchens will give him a befitting reply in the elections," the Chief Minister said alleging instead of handling the basic problems of the people the Prime Minister was more interested in renaming stadiums after his name.

Don't evoke false sense of security over Covid: IMA

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan and Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain talked about nearing the end of the (Covid-19) pandemic, the Indian Medical Association (IMA) has cautioned politicians and the Government not to invoke a "false sense of security". It is painful to note the discussion on endemic Vs pandemic status of diseases is echoing in the political corridors, however it ought to be substantiated by scientific evidence by the World Health Organisation (WHO) or ICMR only," the IMA said. The apex body of the doctors pointed out that "invasion of muted virus UK variant, South Africa variant and Brazil variant continue to haunt."

"While corona pandemic with its disastrous tentacles and widespread infectivity were under control amid spike here and there by the dedicated and coordinated services rendered timely by Governments and private modern medical healthcare providers, the stage is not ripe to call it the end of pandemic or endemic," the IMA said in a statement here.

"The introduction of much efficacious and safe corona vaccine in our country is a tool for us to face this challenging war with confidence. But for India and Argentina, whole world had faced the second wave and its much vitreous consequences.

"The last one week has shown 35 to 40 per cent increase in the number of cases from different parts of the State and even

in Capital of India the daily average has risen up from 100 to 140 patients.

"Hence, let us not boast or trumpet ourselves and indulge in prognosticating the course of this viral disease and off guard our preventive measures against this dreaded disease of this stage," said the association.

The IMA, which is an umbrella organisation for private doctors in the country, also sought to remind the Government that good gain of cohesive front services of upkeeping physical distance, hand and respiratory hygiene, masking and the timely supportive vaccination drive, shall not go in vain with this "tussle of words".

Pointing out that the Association lost about 740 frontline warriors in pandemic, it said unauthorised political statements shall only invoke false sense of security.

On Sunday speaking at the Delhi Medical Association's (DMA's) 62nd Annual Delhi State Medical Conference (MEDICON 2021) in collaboration with Dharamshila Narayana Hospital on Sunday, Vardhan had said, "We are in the 'end game' of the Covid-19 pandemic in India and to succeed at this stage, politics should be kept out."

At another event, Jain too had said coronavirus is nearing an endemic phase in Delhi. "Experts say some cases continue to occur in the endemic phase. Delhi witnessed a swine flu outbreak around 10 years ago, but still some cases are reported every year. Coronavirus is not going to end completely... we will have to learn to live with it," Jain had said.



Artificial Vision

Researchers are developing a retinal implant that works with camera-equipped smart glasses and a microcomputer that may help the blind people in getting artificial vision. "Our system is designed to give blind people a form of artificial vision by using electrodes to stimulate their retinal cells," said researcher Diego Ghezzi from the Ecole Polytechnique federale de Lausanne in Switzerland



DOCYARD
DR SHOBHA GUPTA

Medical Director,
Gynaecologist and
IVF Specialist
MOTHER'S LAP IVF CENTRE,
NEW DELHI



Keep thyroid under check



Most people know that stress can cause various health problems. We are living in a scenario where every person lives under stress. Especially the pandemic has taken a toll on everyone's health apart from that sedentary lifestyle such as lack of exercise, smoking, drinking, junk food eating, lack of sleeping especially where people work in the night shifts, desk jobs, tension of target completion, the pressure of board meetings, client pressure, etc. All these factors in totality lead to stress.

Many people don't know that stress can also cause thyroid. Hypothyroidism or thyroid refers to any state in which thyroid hormone production is below normal. The symptoms are usually milder at the beginning but develop gradually as the condition deteriorates.

The symptoms of hypothyroidism are often subtle but can include:

- Increased cholesterol levels
- State of depression
- Losing or gaining weight
- Swollen neck
- Mood swings
- Low energy
- Hair loss
- Constipation
- Dry skin
- Brittle nails
- Problem with vision
- Trembling of hands.

In today's generation thyroid is a very common problem especially post 25 years of age and women are 4 times more prone to thyroid disorders than men. Undiagnosed and untreated thyroid disease can be a cause for infertility or frequent miscarriage.

An underactive thyroid (hypothyroidism) is a condition in which the thyroid gland doesn't produce enough of certain important hormones. For women, there is a link between hypothyroidism and infertility. Low levels of thyroid hormone can interfere with ovulation, which impairs fertility.

Since standard thyroid blood tests are not sensitive enough to detect low ovarian tissue levels the majority of the time. Women must find a knowledgeable physician who understands that standard tests will often not be useful in detecting low ovarian thyroid levels. If you feel the above-mentioned symptoms immediately go for TSH (thyroid-stimulating hormone) test, Chest X-ray, T4, or thyroxin test.

Treatment: Hypothyroidism can be treated in many ways. However, a doctor chooses the line of treatment based on several variables like the underlying cause of hypothyroidism, the age of the patient, the size of the thyroid gland, and the presence of coexisting medical illnesses.

SUMMERCoolERS

FENNEL SEEDS: Highly aromatic and flavourful herbs, fennel seeds are used to treat some common digestive ailments including heartburn, intestinal gas and bloating.

Some people eat fennel seeds as mouth fresheners. Chewing fennel seeds can also help in getting rid of bad breath as they increase the production of saliva thereby washing out the bacteria. They also help to



PREVENT RENAL AILMENTS

World Kidney Day is on March 11. To mark the occasion, DR SUNIL PRAKASH explains chronic kidney diseases and how one can prevent or treat them

Millions of Indians are affected by Chronic Kidney Diseases (CKD). Various epidemiological studies suggest prevalence of CKD to be around eight to 10 per cent. Multiply this with our population and age is no bar! Though prevalent among the elderly, younger patients are also known to have progressive loss of kidney function. CKD is associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease and end-stage renal disease (ESRD).

The various causes of CKD can range from strong medication, Diabetes, obesity, agricultural food chain pollution, water treatment pollution, to dehydration and kidney impact among others. Diabetes Mellitus is the leading cause of CKD. Of every 100 diabetics, nearly 40 land up with CKD. Diabetis is a coinage to emphasise the havoc created by marriage of diabetes with obesity. One plus one becomes eleven here. Of those with high uncontrolled blood pressure, one in five will have CKD. Glomerulonephritis, which is inflammatory condition of kidneys as well as chronic shrinking of kidneys called chronic interstitial nephritis are again factors that can cause CKD. Young people working in farms have a special proclivity. Indiscriminate usage of agricultural pesticides and fertilisers along with heat dehydration can cause irreversible CKD, robbing the nation of its young working force.

Obstruction to urine flow due to kidney stones, enlarged prostate and gynaecological problems can also be major causes. Congenital

causes like polycystic kidneys, reflux of urine and many other diseases target children right from the mother's womb or at birth causing young people to get CKD.

Kidneys filter waste products from the blood. All the nitrogenous end products, sulfuric acid, phosphoric acid and innumerable organic wastes which are inimical to good health are excreted by our indefatigable friends. Milieu Intérieur, the internal environment of the body, a requisite to good health is the prime responsibility of kidneys as they regulate blood pressure, enable new blood formation in bone marrow by producing the hormone erythropoietin, maintaining fluid and electrolyte balance and by forming active vitamin D, kidneys keep our strong bones in good humour!

Recognising early kidney damage is imperative and there are many early symptoms that can be a giveaway to kidney health. Paradoxically passing more urine specially at night is a classic symptom. Frothing in the urine, high BP especially in young people, unexplained anaemia, muscle aches and bone pains, swelling over feet or face (how so ever slight and transient) and the inability to have a baby are all symptoms to watch out for.

Knowing how to prevent or manage the wellness of our kidneys is equally important. One should keep in mind the seven sins of this disease — sugar, salt, stress, smoking, sedentary lifestyle, spirits i.e., alcohol and sleep (the lack of it). CKD is associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular diseases like heart

attacks and heart failure. Many a times the "seed of disease is in kidneys and the fruits of illness is borne by our heart". Invest a small sum of money and a little time in your health to reap bumper dividends of good health. Regular BP and blood sugar monitoring at home should be done religiously.

Periodic health checks detect asymptomatic early kidney disease which are amenable to correction. High risk patients above 50 years of age, people with Diabetes or high BP and patients having a family history of kidney diseases, stones and cystic diseases should all opt for periodic health checks. Every person should have a health insurance from first day of their earnings, whether personal or employer supported and people below poverty line should have coverage by schemes like Ayushman Bharat, ESI etc.

Are kidney diseases on the rise? The answer is an unequivocal yes. Ironically early CKD (stage 1 to 4) has no symptoms. Typically, it is not until stages 4-5 where there is severe reduction in Glomerular filtration and kidney functions that water, electrolyte and acids accumulate and cause flooding of lungs leading to cardio respiratory failure. Dialysis is a process by which a person is hooked up to a dialysis machine which filters out all toxins and acidic wastes from the blood thus reestablishing milieu interior, albeit only for a few days. So, a person will need a four-hour session of dialysis every two to three times a week.

If prepared in advance, dialysis is a seamless and painless procedure

which can lead many years of useful life. Getting a small surgery called AV fistula done well in time can enable a safe and a high-quality dialysis. We have patients living well for more than 15 years on dialysis. In fact, dialysis is a lifesaving and life prolonging procedure. Bluntly put, it boils down to 'either dialysis or death'.

Nearly every person has two healthy kidneys. In the event of someone landing in End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD), changing one kidney with a healthy kidney from a relative will enable complete recuperation of the patient. The transplanted patient can lead a normal life with some regular medications and checks. The donor also leads a full and fulfilling life capped with the ultimate altruistic deed.

If suffering from CKD, do ask your healthcare specialist about the other relevant advice for ESRD and how to manage medications and routine exercises to stay healthy. A quick visit to the dietician to get tips on managing good nutrition, food suited for the body, and to prevent thirst will go a long way in living well with kidney diseases. Given that kidney diseases are an epidemic, it is important to maintain a positive attitude with self-help and from the family. The treatment of kidney disease is not just medical, but it is about comprehending your life on a daily basis and understanding the choices you can make based on your condition and available therapeutic modalities.

The writer is Senior Director & HOD, Nephrology & Renal Transplantation, BLK Super Speciality Hospital

EXPERIENCE
THE RELIEF

Meditation allows humans to gain power over their mind, body and desires, says DR

PRIYA KAUL

Meditation is a thousand-year-old practice. The older the practice, the greater are its effects and benefits. In this modern time, our life is with stress and excess consumption of information. Meditation is a tool to fight these effects of stressful life and find a peaceful living.

Meditation is to train the mind and actions, create self-awareness, and achieve a stable, emotionally calm and mentally clear state of mind. The good thing about meditation is that it does not require any equipment. It is, though, best practised in a quiet, peaceful surrounding. It is commonly a means to find answers to burning questions of the mind.

Mental health: Most mental health issues can be resolved, with the help of meditation. Researchers have believed that meditation could be a solution in many mental health cases to eliminate medication. In the recent pandemic, mental health issues became a grave concern in many nations around the world. Those suffering from depression and anxiety due to the pandemic are advised to practise meditation to gain relief. It has become an effective and important part of daily life.

Take control: It is often when the chaos of daily life takes control meditation comes handy. It helps rid away negative thoughts and allows the brain to find its zen and focus. It permits zero in on positive thinking and finding an equilibrium. It penetrates serenity into the mind that assists in fulfilling the answers for an individual. Answering desired questions is best achieved in a quiet and peaceful environment or surrounding.

Motivation: Meditation allows humans to gain power over their mind, body and desires. The chaotic consistency of daily life prevents individuals to stay motivated and confident in their endeavours. Meditation gives them dominating thinking to stay on the course of positivity and healing. It gives them the strength to ignore distractions and manipulate the mind to do differently.

Stay calm: Meditation is useful for school students, busy corporate employees, business people and professionals in different fields. It helps gain concentration, resilience and improves performance. People who meditate are known to be kind in their actions and thoughts. They are also more humble and gentle beings. A study shows that meditation makes people softer, agile minded and thoughtful as they can stay calm and consider situations before impulsively taking action.

Be disciplined: Meditation lets an individual free from limitations and shortcomings. It leads them to peace and calmness. It helps bring stillness to a racing mind and controls fast-paced thinking. Meditation allows individuals to take control and be disciplined about life and daily habits.

The benefit of meditation is that it gives an individual the ability to find peace. It is a practice chosen by world leaders and highly successful people. Meditation is adopted as part of the corporate world as well. It is a significant part of daily life and is utilised, as a way to live a happy life.

The writer is Spiritual life coach & Healer

DadiKaKehna

Keeping your eyes healthy should be your priority, given that most of us are still working from home. ROSHANI DEVI shares easy home remedies that can help relieve the discomfort



Taking care of eyes is important, especially when work from home has probably left you with longer working hours. This definitely calls for extra care for the eyes. Here are a few tips that can help.

One, don't forget to take breaks every 20 minutes. Stop for a while, look away from the screen for at least five minutes or close your eyes for two minutes.

Two, use cold water to wash your eyes every time you take a break. Even in the morning, just after you get up splash water on the eyes for a good two-three minutes.

Three, if your eyes feel tired or puffy, cut cucumber slices and put them over the eyes. Rest for 10 minutes. One can also use cotton pads soaked in rose water to soothe the tired eyes. One can use the soaked cotton pads in the fridge for half an hour before using them.

Four, if your eyes are itchy or red, use ice cubes over the eyelids. However, don't use them directly, wrap them in a towel or a cotton cloth and then use. Do this for at least 20 minutes. However, if the itchiness continues do visit the doctor.



Ayurveda shows way

Experts tell ARCHANA JYOTI that it is important to maintain personal hygiene to keep infections at bay

In the last few years, women's hygiene has been the talk of the town, given that there are so many diseases that stem because of unhygienic practices. Despite the awareness being created, India has still a long way to go before being able to talk about it openly.

When one talks about hygiene, intimate washes is the first thing that comes to mind. Loaded with natural ingredients and Ayurvedic benefits, rooted in ancient traditions, these washes are fast catching attention of the urban women looking for alternatives to the chemical-loaded products.

More so, when Coronavirus threat is looming large and health and hygiene have become a top-most priority. There are many who prefer time-tested Ayurveda based intimate hygiene that offers a level of security against infections.

Health experts support this choice saying that one should not lower one's guard

when it comes to personal hygiene. They opine that washes made of natural solutions retain the good bacteria, which protects the intimate area and kills bad bacteria.

"Those intimate washes which enhances skin health and serve as a helpful add-on therapy for those with infections should be used," Dr RP Prashar from a Delhi-based Ayurveda Hospital tells you. Sanchit Sharma, Executive Director of AIMIL Pharma, engaged in manufacturing Ayurvedic drugs points out that keeping in mind the hygiene needs of women, they have, after intensive research and development prepared Ayurveda Vagitone Intimate Hygiene Wash that is rich in green tea, *haridra* and *amla* among others, replacing chemicals like silicon and artificial colours.

Apart from the use of Ayurvedic medicinal ingredients in hygiene wash,

researchers have supplemented the Vagitone formulation with natural fragrances and employed refining techniques endorsed by the Fragrance & Flavour Development Centre, Kannauj, an institution set up by the Union Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Ministry.

However, there is a widespread ignorance among women when it comes to their intimate hygiene, laments Prashar revealing that around 95 per cent of the intimate hygiene products in the market are full of chemicals, and, globally, approximately 75 per cent of the women suffer from a vaginal yeast infection at least once in their lifetime.

According to various surveys, in India at least eight out of 10 women are vulnerable to vaginal infection while at least 80 per cent ignore the importance of the internal hygiene due to which they face various infections.

INBRIEF

Women leaders representing doctors and corporates on March 8, 2021 underscored the need to change how women are perceived by the society and advocated that women must look after themselves before noting what others need. Attending the summit titled Women's Health Matters by the Integrated Health and Wellbeing (IHW) Council ahead of International Women's Day, they hoped that a substantial part of the allocations for Atmanirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana, announced during the Union Budget last month, is allocated for women's health issues.

Noting that gender discrimination is a critical component that impacts women's health Dr Nandita Palshetkar, Director, Bloom IVF Centres, said: "COVID has hit the women badly - 60 per cent of them have been pushed to poverty and unemployment due to the pandemic and she is 20 per cent more likely to become unemployed than men. We launched a campaign to make women safer from the violence and abuses, smarter in terms of her reproductive choices and stronger by focusing on wellness and mental wellbeing. We definitely need more women-centric policies. We have been focusing a lot on maternal mortality in the past, but the government is now looking at it more holistically, which is a welcome change, and I hope they will prioritise women's health under the allocations for Atmanirbhar Swasth Bharat Yojana."



Bollywood
 'When I wanted to become a producer, that wasn't looked upon kindly'
 —Pooja Bhatt



Basically, there are two major categories, one which includes rides with water, and the other is without water. While the firms haven't made the water rides operational as of now but if they decide to open them soon, then, it will become increasingly challenging to curb the transmission of the virus. However, in case they re-launch their water rides, then they will have to adopt specific safety measures. They will have to use a certain chemical that can help in eliminating the virus from the water and is also skin-friendly.

They can also make sanitising compulsory before stepping into the water. Changing or purifying the water at regular intervals after a certain amount of people have entered is another basic yet important step that can help in ensuring the safety of the people while savoring the water rides. The provision of COVID-19 tests at the entrance of the parks that too at nominal charges will further aid in keeping everyone safe and sound.



Stand up for yourself: Arjun

Actor Arjun Kapoor feels it is crucial for women to stand up for themselves and their dreams, and shatter stereotypes.

"It is crucial for women to stand up for themselves and their dreams and shatter stereotypes. I have always been a staunch supporter of women's causes and have always tried to contribute in my own way as much as possible," Arjun said.

On the occasion of International Women's Day, Arjun interacted and celebrated girls who have broken stereotypes, challenged norms, and have themselves become a role model, inspiring a generation to share their experiences and their journeys.

Arjun conversed with these girls, shared anecdotes from his life on how women can do anything they set their mind to.

"It was an eye-opener for me to know the amazing stories of these girls and their inspiring personal journeys," added the actor, who spearheads a digital IP called *Bend The Gender* that is aimed at saluting girls who have been shattering the glass ceiling across India.

On the work front, Arjun currently awaits the digital release of his forthcoming cross-border love story featuring Rakul Preet Singh.

He will also be seen in the horror-comedy *Bhoot Police*.

The theme parks are the hub for heady adventures, thrilling rides, and adrenaline rush. However, visiting them was, perhaps, the last thing on people's minds when the pandemic struck us in 2020 as it brought a lot of difficulties across businesses and brought our lives to a halt. Despite 2021 being the year of recovery for some, it is still a sluggish period for the Indian theme park industry. Earlier, it used to be a booming industry with a good employment rate of a minimum of 80,000 people, but now, the employees are jobless or bearing salary cuts.

Dealing with this major hit to the theme parks, the industry is trying to focus on the path of recovery. While the future seems promising, it will require some time and effort in the right direction to revive the customer base. Currently, all they are focussing on is that their operation adheres to the government guidelines.

THE PRESENT

Now, with the unlocking, most theme parks in the country have reopened after being shut for approximately 10 months as per the guidelines. The parks are taking every possible safety precaution for their visitors and making sure to follow all the norms issued by the government. Their utmost priority is ensuring the safety of the people.

ROAD TO RECOVERY

While the future of theme parks seems promising, it will require some time and effort in the right direction to revive the footfall, says Major DINESH SHARMA

They are trying to adapt to the new normal and grasp the online working methods. Online pre-booked admissions, markings showing where to stand, maintaining social distancing, temperature screening, and sanitising the visitors and employees at the entry time and other prominent zones inside the parks are some of the steps taken to ensure safety. The park operators are also pushing for contactless transactions with food orders, menus on applications, and for buying things from the stalls and shop inside the venue.

The parks are being properly sterilized — swings, surfaces, seat belts, and handlebars — before and after every ride. They have allocated their funds on the safety of the visitors and are spending approximately 10,000-15,000 or even more than this per day.

It has, indeed, been a roller coaster



ride for the industry with theme parks having to reopen and then shut down multiple times due to the volatile COVID-19 situation. In order to have a blooming future, strengthening their present situation is essential. The recreational firms have realised this and hence, are working towards achieving the same objective.

Increased expenses, the imposition of safety measures, social distancing, and the provision of limited tickets are some of the ways in which they are looking at reviving their businesses. There are hardly 40 visitors per day and rides are running at less than half the capacity as compared to the pre-pandemic times.

It is undeniable that theme park authorities are struggling with financial issues to protect their employees and mainly to apply the right strategies to draw visitors to the theme parks.

ATTRACTING CUSTOMERS

One of the common ways in which theme parks are attracting customers is running creative advertisements and campaigns as a part of their marketing strategy to grab attention. Additionally, they are offering the ticket at nearly 30 to 40 per cent discount on its full ticket price. In the present times, the park's price point is 10-15 per cent lower than 2019 prices but they are optimistic and hopeful that if the demand sustains over the next couple of months then the theme parks will function in full swing. They will be able to roll back to original ticket prices.

THE FUTURE

The present might seem blurry but the future of recreational parks is indeed promising. As to the present risky situation, all these hygiene solutions need to be adopted for the next 12 to 18 months as the virus is here to stay and we need time to minimise its risk.

Almost every company and business was affected terribly by the pandemic. Hence, it will take time to recover and we need to imbibe relevant strategies to overcome the losses and get back on our feet. This is especially so in the case of theme parks as the challenge for them is huge and the revival journey is troublesome. However, it isn't impossible as everyone wants cheerful and enthusiastic moments after the lockdown, and theme parks will be the perfect resort for the same. Hopefully, with all the relevant strategies in place, that day won't be far when the theme parks will again be crowded!

(The writer is the founder of Delta 105, Army theme park.)

'Empower each other'

Actor RANI MUKERJI says women can change the perception about their representation in every aspect of filmmaking

Actor Rani Mukerji says that the power lies with women to change the perception about how they are represented in every aspect of filmmaking. On the occasion of Women's Day on Monday, Rani added that if women celebrated each others success, they would be heard all the more.

"In my journey in the Hindi film industry, I have realised that the power is with the women to change the perception about how women are represented in every aspect of filmmaking. We have to support each other, root for each other and empower each other, so that the road is smoother for others who want to make a name for themselves in the male-driven industry. We have to celebrate each other and our successes collectively to ensure that we are all heard all the more," Rani said.

She considers herself fortunate to have got the opportunity to bring fantastic



characters to life.

"As an artiste, I have been fortunate enough to play some really fantastic self-reliant women on screen and live their inspiring stories closely. Like me, many actresses over generations have tried to change the conversation about how women are portrayed on screen," she said.

Rani feels blessed that through her films she was given an opportunity to change the conversation of female representation in India.

Rani's last two films were *Hichki* and *Mardaani 2*. She says she wants to continue finding unconventional scripts as these while representing women on screen.

"I have throughout my career made conscious decisions to portray strong women characters on screen who command respect, because of their uninhibited life choices," she said.

"I will be inclined to pick projects that have a powerful story to tell through the eyes of a bold, upright woman who doesn't fear voicing her opinions and is confident about being herself," she summed up.

Yatra Naryasthu is a title that Adwaita Gadanayak, DG, NGMA, took from the Sanskrit shloka: *Yatra naryastu pujiyante ramante tatra devata*, which means where women are worshipped, there the gods rejoice. A historic show gives us a glimpse into the tapestry of the life of several women artists. It straddles India's greatest names like Zarina, Arpita Singh, Arpana Caur, Jayasri Burman, Anupam Sud, Soghra Khurani, Jyotsna Bhatt, Dipali Daroz, Jayashree Chakravorty and many more. Created as a corollary among printmakers, sculptors, ceramic artists and painters, the show has something for everyone. Special is the requiem for artists who have passed away. A number of works have been specially loaned to the NGMA by eminent collectors from Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai.

ZARINA'S MY DELHI

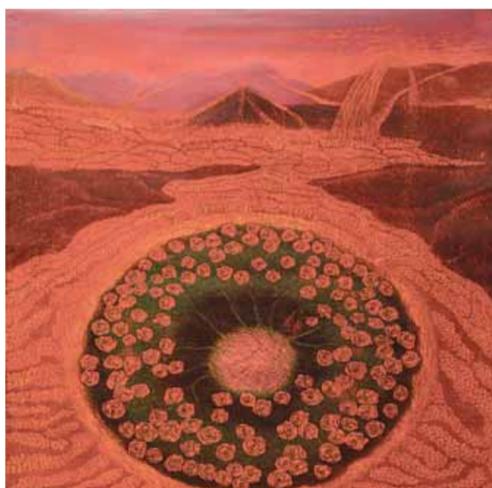
Zarina passed away last year on April 20 in London. Poet, printmaker and teacher Zarina was born in Aligarh, India. After receiving a degree in Mathematics, she went on to study woodblock printing in Bangkok and Tokyo, and intaglio with SW Hayter at Atelier-17 in Paris.

Her experiences and personal life define Zarina's works. An early interest in architecture and Mathematics is reflected in the use of geometry and her emphasis on structural purity. While her work gravitates towards minimalism, its starkness is tempered by its texture and materiality. Her art poignantly chronicles her life and features recurring themes of home, displacement, borders, journey and memory.

Zarina mined her memory and experience to reflect on the nature of belonging. Delhi 1, II &

THE OTHER HALF

Yatra Naryasthu details the passion and devotion of a woman artist's journey of creation, says UMA NAIR



III, are three prints that address the theme of home within the context of individual and national identity, displacement, isolation and community. Yet when you look at them together, it's like a meditation on belonging.

MANISHA BHATTACHARYYA'S SONG OF THE SEA

Ceramic artist and mentor Manisha Bhattacharyya passed away after a battle with cancer and her cluster of three raku pots

belong to her series of the sea. Laden with crackled glaze and the sandy tone of a murky white, it shows her prowess and passion for creating pots that had a minimal accent and a Zen echo of rare rhythms.

LEENA BATRA'S PORCELAIN PLATTERS

In the history of ceramics in India, former Garhi artist and co-founder of Delhi Blue Pottery, Leena Batra is an important name.



Three porcelain platters are a treat for tired eyes. She was one of the first to experiment with porcelain and these three platters speak of precision, perfection and the finesse needed to create celadon glazed platters.

MADHURI JALAN'S LINGAM

Madhuri Jalan was a ceramic artist. She used to create sculptural pots and among her experiments was a copper lingam that was a part of her show at Habitat Centre in 2010. This copper lingam with a small trunk of an elephant is on loan from a collector. As a work of art, it blends both

mythic and spiritual yearnings in a deeply materialistic world. The *lingam* initiates an exchange of ideas/emotions around the themes of the creative process, inviting the viewer to weigh in on deeper artistic sources and cognitive triggers that stir them to create.

PRABHA SHAH

At the Triveni studio creating canvases for more than two decades is abstractionist Prabha Shah, who creates work in silence because she can neither hear the world nor speak her heart out in syllables.

Prabha's canvas is a testimony to the process of abstraction being an experience — not only is it the crux of creation but it is also a residue that evolves with both precision and fervour. Prabha's visual language is the key to her own odyssey. In her canvas, the addition, the summation and the erasure all come into play. These postulations of personal choice become a paradigm of a self-referential and self-editing intention that is in parts voluntary and involuntary — as an act of creating in a silent world that has no sound.

Ultimately for art lovers *Yatra Naryasthu* details the passion and devotion of a woman's journey of creation.

(The show is on till March 29 at NGMA.)

TRENDBLAZER



ANUSHKA'S ANIMAL SHELTER TO OPEN NEXT YEAR?

ANUSHKA SHARMA has been a champion for animal rights for years now. She had revealed that she wishes to build an animal shelter in the outskirts of Mumbai and looks like that dream is coming true.

A source said, "If all things go as per plan, the shelter will be ready for operations sometime next year! The work has resumed in full swing. She is leaving no stone unturned to ensure this happens. The shelter is based on the principle that animals too have equal rights in this world."

fairtalk

SAINA NEHWAL



'Everything is quite surreal. What I have achieved in life is all due to the constant support of my family. It has been my huge honour to play a sport I love and put my country on a pedestal. Parineeti (Chopra) is a fabulous actor and we both connected so easily when we met. I wish the team all the best for the film and hope everyone leaves the theatre with dreams.'

dailytalk

SAJID KHAN



'Please feel free to call me Sajid Wajid because I have changed my surname to Wajid. As long as I'm alive, I'll keep working hard so that everyone remembers his name. Somewhere I have a feeling that he is always with me. He was just 47, and in these 47 years he has never been separate from me. I still can't believe he passed away.'

NICOLAS CAGE CONFIRMS MARRIAGE WITH RIKO SHIBATA

Actor **NICOLAS CAGE** married Riko Shibata on February 16 in Las Vegas as confirmed by E! online. "It's true, and we are very happy," he was quoted as saying.

This is the 56-year-old's fifth marriage, and comes nearly two years after his marriage to Erika Koike in March 2019, which was annulled after just four days.

According to the report, the couple exchanged vows at the Wynn Hotel on the day of Nicolas' father's birthday.



Dhawan, Rahul battle to partner Rohit

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

The Indian team management faces a problem of plenty going into the five T20 Internationals against England, an assignment which marks the beginning of the side's build-up to this year's T20 World Cup at home.

There are 19 players available for selection and with two in contention for each slot, the XI for the five games, starting here on Friday, will be an indication to how head coach Ravi Shastri, captain Virat Kohli and bowling coach Bharat Arun are looking at the next six to seven months for the shortest format.

Will they look for a settled combination to first clinch the series and then experiment or will they field absolute rookies in the squad looking at the bigger picture?

For a team that's so closely followed, the result does matter and that's why one can expect a settled first eleven for the first three games since all matches are at the same venue on similar kind of tracks.

The roaring comeback of Rishabh Pant will lead to a lot of interesting developments at the top of the order.

Pant's inclusion means that KL Rahul, who till a few months back was the first choice keeper-opener, is unlikely to don the big gloves.

Shikhar Dhawan and Rohit Sharma were a settled white ball opening pair till recently but Rahul's emergence as a potent white ball specialist has spiced up the competition.

Dhawan recently had a score of 150 odd in the Vijay Hazare Trophy for Delhi and when it comes to Rohit, there's nothing to be discussed.

So where does the team management fit in Rahul, who has been a successful IPL opener? Will he be slotted in the middle-order as Dhawan's game is not suited to batting lower down?

These are two pertinent questions and in the answer, will be a follow-up question.



With skipper Kohli himself coming in at No 3 and two game-changers like Pant and all-rounder Hardik Pandya expected to play the big shots at Nos 5 and 6, where does it ideally leave Rahul?

The only place he can be slotted is No 4 but Shreyas Iyer and Suryakumar Yadav are also jostling for a place.

If one closely follows the pattern of picking the playing XI, Surya, a sentimental favourite, will have to wait for his turn as Shreyas has done nothing wrong.

But when it comes to a three-way battle between Rahul, Shreyas and Surya, the Karnataka man beats the two Mumbai boys hollow with his repertoire of strokes and ability to shift gears.

India Women to face Eng in Test

PTI ■ MUMBAI

BCCI secretary Jay Shah on Monday announced that the Indian women's team will be pitted against England in a one-off Test match, which will be held later this year.

The last Test match that Mithali Raj and her team played was against South Africa women at Mysuru in December, 2014 and it will be another traditional format game after six long years.

Currently, the 'Women in Blue' are playing the five-match ODI series against South Africa in Lucknow after almost 12 months of COVID-19 enforced break. This series will be fol-

lowed by a T20 series. Shah took to Twitter to make the announcement on the International Women's Day.

"On the occasion of International Women's Day, I'm pleased to announce that TeamIndia, @BCCIWomen will play a one-off Test match against @ECB_cricket later this year. The "women in blue" will be donning the whites again," tweeted Shah.

However, Shah did not announce the venue of the Test on the occasion but it is expected to happen during the women's team tour of UK and tentatively some time in June or July.

The women's team is coached by former India all-rounder WV Raman. Similarly, in the pace department, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, once upon a time India's best white ball exponent, is coming back after a long lay-off and will be engaged in a two-way fight with Deepak Chahar and Shardul Thakur.

For Bhuvneshwar, his experience and being a better bowler at the death compared to Chahar holds him in good stead but he hasn't played a lot of cricket save a few Mushtaq Ali games.

Ditto for Chahar, a potent opening bowler but more of a one-trick pony with lack of variations during the back-10.

Shardul is a crafty bowler who can swing it at brisk pace and among the three can use the long handle to the best effect.

Yuzvendra Chahal, Washington Sundar and Axar Patel are the three

spinners expected to feature in the playing XI on the sluggish Motera tracks.

In another three-way fight, Thangarasu Natarajan, with his variation of yorkers, stands a better chance to start off compared to Navdeep Saini.

Two players, who will only get a look-in if someone is injured or forcefully rested are Ishan Kishan and Rahul Tewatia as the two simply can't be fitted anywhere.

In all, there are too many good players and very little space to fit all of them with three sure-shot picks — Mohammed Shami, Ravindra Jadeja and Jasprit Bumrah already resting or recuperating from injury.

Once they comeback, it will be a bigger selection headache for the management but one that they won't mind.

There were

Mitali & Co aim to bounce back

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Rusty Indian women's cricket team will be seeking some rhythm in the second ODI against South Africa here on Tuesday after being outplayed by the visitors in the series-opener.

Though captain Mithali Raj and her deputy Harmanpreet Kaur had insisted that rustiness won't be an issue in their first series in 12 months, India clearly looked a side which had not played for a long time in the opener of the five-match series on Sunday.

A better prepared South Africa, on the other hand, were clinical and will be hard to beat in the coming games.

After the game, Kaur realised the players needed some time to gel as a unit. Barring Kaur, Raj and Deepti Sharma to a certain extent, none of the batters could apply themselves on a decent batting surface.

A lot of them were guilty of poor shot selection as pointed out by Kaur after the game.

The spinners, who are traditionally considered India's strength, hardly troubled the South African duo of Lizelle Lee and 21-year-old Laura Wolvaardt, who put up the highest ever opening wicket against India to run away with the contest.

There were

some positives, however, such as Raj scoring a gritty half-century and pacer Jhulan Goswami showing she is still among the best in the business. Both the veterans were playing their first game since November 2019.

Kaur too looked good in her 100th ODI but would have liked to convert the start into a big score.

Opener Smriti Mandhana struck three delightful fours before falling to a loose shot and would be backing herself to bat long on Tuesday.

"Few of them got starts but couldn't convert. The bowlers need to be more consistent with lines and lengths, maybe they weren't consistent because they're coming back after a long break," Raj acknowledged after the match in which India could post only 177 that South Africa chased down in just 40.1 overs.

Pacer Monica Patel was handed her debut on Sunday and more caps can be handed out in the second game with the management keeping one eye on preparations for the World Cup next year.

Pulling off one back against South Africa seems like a daunting task considering the way they played in the opener. They looked a team high on confidence having blanked Pakistan at home recently.

Their pace attack led by Shabnim Ismail was impressive and Indians will have to find a way to negate that threat.



LOCAL EVENTS



FELICITATED

Principal secretary (sports) Kalpana Awasthi handed over the Rani Laxmi Bai award to athlete Priyanka on the occasion of International Women's Day. Priyanka missed on the opportunity to receive the award from Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on January 24, as she was taking part in the Olympic Games trials. She was also given the memento and a cheque of Rs 3,11,000. Principal secretary also congratulated her for Olympic qualification. Director (sports) RP Singh was also present on the occasion.

DHRUV ACADEMY WIN

Dhruv Cricket Academy defeated DYA by five wickets in a league match of the BBD Super League at Akhilesh Das Stadium on Monday. Batting first, DYA scored 119 runs in 25 overs with Rohan Bambi (42) being the top scorer. In reply, Dhruv Cricket Academy achieved the target for the loss of five wickets in 25.5 overs. Shivansh Kapoor slammed an unbeaten 54 runs off 52 balls.

BRIEF SCORES:

DYA: 119 (Rohan 42, Kabir 23, Shailendra 19, Anurag 19/3, Vaibhav 2/2, Sujal 33/3)
DCA: 123 (Shivansh 54, Milan 21, Ansh 18; Abhinav 33/3)

HANDBALL CAMP

A joint handball practice camp of Uttar Pradesh and Railways women's probables began at Chowk Stadium on Monday. Both the teams would take part in the 49th National Senior Women's Handball Championship to be held at Bareilly from March 17-21.

UP probables: Shiva Singh, Sonia, Sonali Yadav, Sugandh Yadav, Akansha Singh, Nisha Rani, Shalini, Asha, Tejaswini Singh, Supriya, Ragini, Anika Ratan, Aarti, Moni Chaudhary, Saroj Gangwar, Satakshi Pal, Radhna Bhaskar, Hina Khatoon, Ritu, Rikha Yadav, Sapna Kashyap, Sarita, Nisha, Damini Sagar, Vaishali Chandra. Coach: Asif Khan, Prabhakar Pandey.

Railways probables: Srishti Agarwal, Sushma, Manjula Pathak, Bhavika, Santhiya, Deepa, Ramya Krishna, Priya, Kusum, Neena Sheel, Sonam Singh, Mona, Jyoti Shukla, Indu Gupta, Jyoti, Mamta, Suman, Ashika, Sudhesh, Ekta Chauhan, Monika, Monika Khanal, Pavitra, Pooja Pal, Deepa Devi, Menka, Simran. Coach: Sachin, Arvind, Sandhya.

TANMAY SHINES

Tanmay Tiwari of KKC bagged the best batsman award in the National Deaf Zone Cricket Tournament. Playing for Central Zone, Tanmay scored 172 runs in four matches to help his team reach final.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India will play their inaugural World Test Championship final against New Zealand at Southampton's Ageas Bowl Stadium from June 18-22, BCCI president Sourav Ganguly confirmed on Monday.

Initially, the final was supposed to be held at the Lord's but Southampton, with a five-star facility inside the stadium, will make it easier for both the ICC and the England and Wales Cricket Board to create a bio-bubble for the two teams.

"Yes, the final will be held at Ageas Bowl," Ganguly replied to a query from PTI.

India qualified for the marquee clash after beating England 3-1 in a just-concluded Test series.

Southampton, with its slowish

WTC final in Southampton: Ganguly

track, puts India on even keel with New Zealand as spinners will come into the game at the venue.

"I will go for the World Test Championship and hopefully we can get past New Zealand in the final. New Zealand will be there before us and they will play a couple of Test matches (against England)," Ganguly told 'India Today' channel.

He lavished praise on the team for its stupendous performance in both the away series against Australia and home games against England.

Massive achievement? "Oh yes, specially after what players have gone through to be in



those bubbles and play cricket day in and day out. It was remarkable. Right from IPL till now. What they have achieved is fantastic," he told the channel.

"I think we must congratulate Ajinkya Rahane, first in Australia and Virat Kohli in England, the head coach, support staff, everybody. (Rahul) Dravid who does a

lot of work behind the scenes with these boys. To see that day in Brisbane was outstanding," he said.

Ganguly believes that Rishabh Pant is a match winner in the mould of Virender Sehwag, Yuvraj Singh and Mahendra Singh Dhoni. "I have seen him for past two years and I have belief in match-winners. A player, who on his day will win you games. Pant is one such guy."

"Sydney Test, if he had been there for six more overs, he would have won us that game too. He is like Dhoni, Sehwag and Yuvraj, who can win matches alone," said the former India captain.

He was mighty impressed with Pant's game sense during his under-pressure hundred at Motera.

"...And look at how he played in Ahmedabad. His game sense while facing the second new ball against James Anderson, who has bowled well in the series. He counter-attacked and changed it."

He also lauded National Cricket Academy head Rahul Dravid, whose behind the scenes work has helped in creating a solid bench strength. "That's why I say Dravid has done a great job. Mohammed Siraj and Shardul Thakur did so well in Australia and we won the final Test without Jasprit Bumrah."

Eng leadership power lies with Morgan: Vaughan

PTI ■ LONDON

Former captain Michael Vaughan has argued that England Test skipper Joe Root should also get to pick his best players irrespective of ECB's rotation policy, just like limited overs leader Eoin Morgan "gets what he wants".

In a column for Telegraph, Vaughan wrote England fielded a weakened team in the four Tests against India with the likes of Jos Buttler and Moeen Ali returning home in the middle of the series only to be back for the limited overs leg of the tour.

"It is very clear where the leadership power lies in English cricket - it is with Eoin Morgan and not Joe Root."

"I am pretty sure that Morgan went to the selectors and Ashley Giles and said he wanted his best team at all times this year in Twenty20, so he could build for the World Cup in



India in October. He has his wish," the Ashes winning skipper wrote.

"I understand rotation. Nobody argues against the fact players need breaks from Covid bubbles but the frustration for me as a lover of the game's longest format is why has our Test team been weakened this winter, yet the Twenty20 side is at full strength? "When you win a World Cup as captain you are bombproof. I experienced it

when I won the Ashes. Do you think Ed Smith is going to say 'no' to Morgan? No chance," Vaughan said referring to England's World Cup triumph in 2019 under Morgan's leadership.

Vaughan fears that Morgan being too powerful could end up harming English cricket.

"But it is dangerous for so much power to be invested in one person because it is rare they see the bigger picture. As much as he is a brilliant captain, it is wrong for Morgan to always get what he wants because understandably he will prioritise what is good for his team, and inevitably that will be at the expense of something else."

"But at some point the management around him - Giles and Tom Harrison - have to take into account what is right for all England sides, not just one format, and level up the balance of power."

Windies win third T20I, seal series

AP ■ OSBOURN

Fabian Allen hit three mighty sixes in the 19th over to help the West Indies to a series-clinching, three-wicket win over Sri Lanka in the third Twenty20 international.

Chasing Sri Lanka's modest 131-4, the West Indies were again constrained by Sri Lanka's spin attack and came to the 18th over at 105-7, needing 27 runs from 18 balls.

Captain Jason Holder, cool and with a plan in mind, blocked out the 18th over, the last from dangerous spinner Wanindu Hasaranga, save for a six from a free hit which helped break the mounting tension.

With 20 runs needed from the last two overs, Allen hit sixes from the first, third and last balls of the 19th over from Akila Dananjaya to get the West Indies home with an over to spare to clinch the series 2-1.

Allen hit 21 runs from six balls and also took 1-13 from four overs to earn player-of-the-match honors. He said there was no panic in the West Indies dressing room, even when it's biggest hitters failed to fire. Sri Lanka chose to bat on winning the toss on Sunday.

GOLD FOR NO 1 BAJRANG

PTI ■ ROME

Olympic-bound Indian wrestler Bajrang Punia pulled off a two-pointer in the last 30 seconds of the Gold medal bout to defend his title at the Matteo Pellicone Ranking Series event, a result that propelled him back to world number one rank.

Up against Mongolia's Tulga Tumur Ochir, Bajrang was trailing 0-2 till the final moments of the 65kg final but managed to level the scores, 30 seconds from the final whistle.

Since the last scoring point came from the Indian, he was declared the winner on criteria on Sunday night.

Bajrang's leg defence seemed to be a particularly improved aspect of

his game in the one-year break, forced by the coronavirus pandemic.

The 27-year-old though said he needs to work more on his defence as he is eyeing a medal at the Tokyo Games.

"I found that my leg defence has improved compared to where it was before the break. I have got better but it still needs more work. I also need to be better on my attacking moves," Bajrang told PTI.

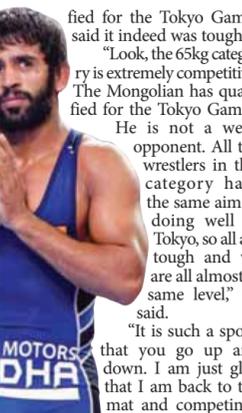
Asked about his struggle in the final against the Mongolian, one of the three men's Indian wrestlers to have quali-

fied for the Tokyo Games said it indeed was tough.

"Look, the 65kg category is extremely competitive. The Mongolian has qualified for the Tokyo Games."

He is not a weak opponent. All the wrestlers in this category have the same aim of doing well in Tokyo, so all are tough and we are all most at same level," he said.

"It is such a sport, that you go up and down. I am just glad that I am back to the mat and competing,"



he said.

Bajrang will now be back in the national camp but wants to train outside before the Asian championship, scheduled to be held in Kazakhstan from April 9 to 11.

"I am looking for a training stint abroad. Let's see if it happens because restrictions are back in Europe because of rising virus cases. Travelling is not easy these days. You have to fill a lot of forms, download apps, fill too much information."

Bajrang was placed second in the rankings before the event and is now on top of the table in the 65kg category with 14 points.

The fresh rankings are based on results of only this tournament which means that Gold-medallists get the top spot.