

WORLD 7FUEL TANKER BLAST IN
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11 Covid patients die in Maha hospital inferno

5th fire case in State hospitals in current year; probe ordered

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a fifth accident of its kind in a hospital in Maharashtra during the current year, as many as 11 Covid-19 patients died and six others sustained burn wounds after a massive fire broke out at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of a civil hospital in Ahmednagar district on Saturday.

Seventeen Covid-19 patients were undergoing treatment at the ICU of the hospital, when the fire broke out there at 10.30 am. Of them, 10 died on the spot, while one more person succumbed to burn wounds later. Six others are undergoing treatment at some other ward of the hospital.

Expressing his condolences over the death of Covid-19 patients in the mishap, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray announced a comprehensive enquiry into the circumstances leading to the fire.



Charred remains at the ICU of Civil Hospital after a fire broke out in Ahmednagar on Saturday

PTI

"A high-level committee headed by Divisional Commissioner will go into the cause of mishap. It will fix responsibility, if any, for the negligence on the part of the hospital staff. Stern action will be taken against the erring hospital staff," the Chief Minister said.

Shortly after the fire broke out, three fire tenders and several water tankers belonging to the Ahmednagar fire brigade rushed to the scene and brought the situation under control within 45 minutes.

According to one version, an electrical short-circuit might have caused fire. The other ver-

sion said that an air-conditioner caught fire, prompting the hospital administration to switch off the oxygen supply to the ward. Some of the patients died due to suffocation, while others died because of fire wounds.

In a related development, the Chief Minister announced a compensation of ₹5 lakh to the family members of each of the patient killed in the mishap, while another ₹2 lakh would be given to the families of each of the patient from the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) fund.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed his anguish

over the Ahmednagar hospital mishap. "Anguished by the loss of lives due to a fire in a hospital in Ahmednagar, Maharashtra. Condolences to the bereaved families. May the injured recover at the earliest," Modi tweeted.

President RN Kovind, Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari, Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnis and others expressed grief over the tragedy.

The district administration identified nine of those killed in the mishap as Sitaram Dagdu Jadhav (83), Bhivaji Sadashiv Pawar (80), Ramkisan Vitthal Harpude (70), Kondabai Madhukar Kadam (70), Chababi Ahmed Sayyad (65), Satyabhama Shivaji Ghodchaure (65), Kadubal Gangadhar Khatik (65), Asrabai Govind Nangare (58) and Deepak Vishwanath Jagdale (37).

The identities of two more patients - one of who died on the spot and another succumbed to burn wounds - were not immediately known. The remaining six patients have been shifted to a Covid-19 ward in another hospital.

Continued on Page 4

EMERGENCY MEASURE TO CURB TOXIC SMOG



Workers spray water to curb air pollution, as a thick layer of smog engulfs the national Capital on Saturday. The Delhi Government deployed 114 water tankers to sprinkle water on roads to settle dust, one of major contributors to air pollution, after the national Capital's air quality deteriorated

PTI

CAPSULE

RAMAYANA YATRA: IRCTC PLANS SERIES OF TOURS

New Delhi: To promote religious tourism, the IRCTC has planned a series of Shri Ramayana Yatra Tours, which will mark a gradual resumption of domestic tourism by trains in view of the improved Covid-19 situation.

20-YEAR-OLD KILLS SELF OVER LOW MARKS IN NEET

Salem: Depressed over securing low marks in the National Eligibility and Entrance Test (NEET), a 20-year old medical aspirant allegedly died by suicide in the district, police said. Subhashchandra Bose, a resident of Vadugumalai, had appeared for NEET, the results of which were announced four days back, and had scored fewer marks in it.

HOOCH CLAIMS FOUR MORE LIVES IN BIHAR

Samastipur/Patna: Four more deaths, caused by illicit liquor consumption, were on Saturday reported in dry Bihar, where hooch has claimed close to 40 lives in different districts since Diwali. The latest deaths have been recorded in Samastipur district. Earlier, at least 33 people died in Gopalganj and West Champaran districts upon consuming spurious liquor.

AKHILESH DEFENDS JINNAH REMARK

Lucknow/Balla: The Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Saturday defended his widely criticised statement equating Muhammad Ali Jinnah with Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Jawaharlal Nehru and saying they helped India get freedom even as an Uttar Pradesh Minister suggested a narco test for him for "glorifying" the Pakistani leader.

India, France to deepen ties on defence, security

NSA Doval holds talks in Paris with French Foreign, Defence Ministers

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



India and France will further strengthen their strategic and defence ties with a focus on maritime security, including in the Indo-Pacific region. The two countries will also work together closely in the sphere of nuclear energy and space.

These were the major takeaways from the meeting between the National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval and French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian and Defence Minister Florence Parly in Paris on Friday, officials said here on Saturday. The two sides also reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral ties, they added.

The meeting took place on

the occasion of the 35th session of the Indo-French strategic dialogue. Following up on the meeting between President Emmanuel Macron and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on the sidelines of the G20 in Rome recently, Le Drian stressed his country's commitment to deepening the Indo-French strategic partnership and strengthening its various aspects, particularly in the areas of defence, space, civil nuclear energy and security.

Doval and Le Drian also discussed the priorities in the fight against climate change with his interlocutor.

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Sidhu obstructing functioning of Govt, my office: Punjab AG

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH



In what could be seen as another round of turf war between Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi and State Congress president Navjot Singh Sidhu, Punjab Advocate General APS Deol on Saturday attacked the PCC president, accusing him of obstructing the functioning of the State Government and his office as well as "spreading misinformation to gain political advantage".

Deol's remarks came a day after Sidhu withdrew his resignation as Punjab Congress chief but declared that he will not resume charge till Deol is removed as AG and a panel set up for the appointment of the new director general of police (DGP).

Sidhu had resigned from the post on September 28.

In a statement, Deol said Sidhu's "repeated utterances seek to derail the earnest efforts of the State Government to ensure justice in the drugs

matter and the sacrilege cases".

"Sidhu is obstructing the functioning of the Government and the office of the advocate general," he alleged, adding that he was spreading misinformation to gain political advantage over his political colleagues.

"There is a concerted attempt by vested interests to malign the functioning of the Congress party in view of coming elections in Punjab for their selfish political gain by politicking the constitutional office of the Advocate General of Punjab," Deol added.

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BJP's meet to discuss ways to win 5 States

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



The BJP will hold its much delayed National Executive meeting on Sunday here. The meeting will begin with the inaugural address by the party president JP Nadda and, among other things, deliberate the "winning strategy" for the upcoming Assembly elections in five States, including Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Punjab. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to deliver the concluding address.

At the conclusion of the National Executive meeting, the BJP will pass a political resolution drawing focus on the Modi-Governments' "achievements" in domestic and international arena and its success in fighting pandemic.

There will not be any economic resolution adopted this time in the meeting.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Surface Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal among others will attend the meeting.

The meeting would witness exhibitions on the Central

Government's "all-round efforts" to mitigate people's suffering during Covid and focus on the "milestone" of over 100 crore vaccination across the country, according to BJP general secretary Arun Singh.

Addressing a Press conference, Singh said deliberations will be held on the preparations and campaign strategy for the Assembly polls in UP, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Goa and Manipur. The party leaders in the poll-bound States will stay put in their respective places and connect with the meet virtually, he said.

The meeting will take place in "hybrid" form, with some attendees to be present physically, while others will attend virtually.

Continued on Page 4

Delhi Govt to extend free ration supply till May 2022: Kejriwal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Government has decided to extend its free ration scheme by six months till May 2022, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said on Saturday.

Kejriwal also appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to extend the Centre's free ration scheme for six months through the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY).

"Inflation is at its peak. The common man is struggling to manage even two square meals a day. Many have lost their jobs due to Covid-19. Prime Minister sir, please extend the scheme of supplying free ration



to the poor by six months. The Delhi Government is extending its free ration scheme for the next six months," he said in a tweet in Hindi.

Kejriwal's remarks came a day after Food Secretary Sudhanshu Pandey said the Centre had no proposal to extend distribution of free ration through the PMGKAY beyond November 30.

NIA team in Canada to get Khalistani outfits terror tag

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A National Investigation Agency (NIA) team probing the funding of local NGOs by foreign secessionist Khalistani outfits like Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) has liaised with the Canadian authorities in Ottawa to seek legal action, including their listing as terror entities.

The NIA team was in Ottawa on Thursday and Friday at the invitation of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or RCMP for better coordinating investigation against entities and individuals suspected of terrorism and to discuss other criminal matters.

The NIA had earlier this year formally requested Canada to declare SFJ a terrorist enti-



ty. To buttress its case, the NIA shared dossiers with the Canadian law enforcement authorities during interactions in Ottawa, sources said.

The NIA team's visit comes as the federal anti-terror agency has evidence to substantiate India's claim that SFJ was fuelling violence in India, particularly in Punjab, as part of its separatist agenda. The SFJ is also spearheading the Punjab Referendum at the behest of Pakistani agency Inter-Services

Intelligence (ISI).

Headquartered in New York, the SFJ, aided by ISI, has spread its tentacles globally and has emerged as an influential voice among pro-Khalistani elements in Canada. The SFJ was banned in India last year under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

Public Safety Canada's currently listed entities include two Khalistani outfits — Babbar Khalsa International and International Sikh Youth Federation — other than groups like the Taliban, Islamic State, Al Qaida and its affiliates Boko Haram, Haqqani Network, Hizbul Mujahideen, Indian Mujahideen, Jaish-e-Mohammad and Lashkar-e-Tayabba among several others.

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‘I like human interest stories’

ROHIT ROY, who plays Ajay, a lawyer in MX Player’s Sanak- Ek Junoon, speaks with SUPRIYA RAMESH about his role, his experience whilst shooting and the challenges

■ What is your role?
It’s a very interesting layered role. It’s about a small town boy with big dreams in his eyes and it’s about what lengths he wants to go through to attain what he thinks is success. Also it shows the cut throat world of the legal world in Mumbai. Being a junior lawyer, he desperately wants to become a senior lawyer and what all he does, that’s Ajay in a nutshell.

■ How did you come on board for this project?
Vikram Bhatt is somebody who I have worked with in the past. In 2018, we did a show called *Memories*. Obviously he must have enjoyed something that he saw because the show was very good and I think my performance wasn’t bad either. So he called me back again last year for *Sanak- Ek Junoon*. I think there is some level of trust that he has in me as an actor, that whatever is given to me will be delivered to the best of my abilities. So I think that’s the reason sanak happened.

■ Do you relate to the role in real life?
Not at all. It’s as different like chalk and cheese. Forget about relating to the character, I would not even think of stuff that Ajay actually ends up doing in the show. That’s because we have a very different mentality. That’s why I say it’s the most challenging role I have done in my career till now.
Challenging because there is no commonality and similar thought process between me and the character so I had to clearly build a brand new character. A lot of actors actually do that but when there is absolutely zero common ground between your real self and your character, you have to start everything from scratch and usually we don’t have that kind of time, liberty and luxury. But with Sanak I had to do it because I realized that it would not have been believable.

■ How was it to act besides your co-



star Aindrita?

Aindrita is such a bundle of joy. I really love her. She is like a little kid. She is a big star down South but she’s got the hunger of a newcomer and that’s what I like. Because I had the

same hunger and jitters on day 1. You know I really got along with her. Infact I know her from before personally and socially which made things easier. I’m very fond of her and she is very fond of me. That kind of really

makes a difference when you are doing a show like *Sanak* where you are playing husband and wife. Our intimate scenes and husband-wife scenes were very comfortable to shoot because I know her and I’m fond of her and vice versa. It was really good to work with her.

■ An anecdote from the series which is very close to your heart.
There are several anecdotes from the stories but one thing that I’ll never forget is the first shot that Aindrita and I did. On day 1, she kept fluffing up her lines and it went to a stage where we were wondering whether we could finish the show. That’s one thing that I can narrate as it was day 1. Day 2, she was a completely different human being. I would fluff up some dialogues but she was going on like a rocket. I think that’s one more thing that I realised working with her. Sometimes the beginnings can be slow but the end is at speed.

■ How did acting happen?
Acting happened to me in a way quite by accident I would say. It’s not something that I had planned. I had come to Mumbai to do my MBA and I didn’t get a visa. I had never desired to become an actor or model. But I had no plan B as my visa got rejected. I had nothing to do and at that point I kind of got an offer to become an actor. Quite frankly, the offer didn’t come to me but came to Mansi to act in *swabhiman*. She wasn’t interested in acting in television. I called the producer and asked him whether I can do this role and audition. So that’s how *swabhiman* happened and I call myself an actor by accident.

■ How is working for a TV show different from a film?
TV shows are shot very fast and back to back. We don’t have the liberty to spend time on characterisation, dialogues and look. Whatever is given to us we quickly enact it and get it on the way because it is going to telecast the next day and that’s the pressure of television. But having

said that, that’s also a very good training ground for an actor. Now when I do movies, you don’t have to tell me anything.
I’m already prepared, that pressure is a great help in your acting. We used to do seven pages of dialogue on 1 shot in television. We used to remember our dialogues and also the co-actors’ lines. That helps you but in cinema you have the luxury of building a character, role and creating a brand new character from scratch. Working on the nuances, clothing, just the way the character stands, talks, walks and all of that. I think that’s the essential difference. Film is a little larger than life whereas in television it should be a little more natural.

■ What kind of stories attract you?
I like human interest stories. For me that’s what I really like and *Sanak* is a part of a genre that I like. It’s a thriller but it is still a human interest story. Its about a couple and their relationship. Other than that I like romance and watch romance. I hate doing romance because I’m bad at it. I find it very odd but I love watching romance and comedy.

■ What have the challenges been like till now?
I don’t know what challenges I faced on a particular project but every project has it’s different set of challenges. Like coming back to creating a role, not knowing what the outcome is going to be so you are taking a risk about what you think is right. You know the way I played Ajay is not necessarily the way people might perceive, see or like it. That’s a risk you are taking. All that stays in your mind when you are shooting for a project. But half way through the project, you go into auto pilot.
Then recent times have been tough and challenging because of COVID. But otherwise it’s all a great journey. I don’t see it as the challenges I faced but I see it as part of the process.



GA-GHAZAL WITH HARIHARAN

‘Ga Ghazal’ is a first-of-its-kind masterclass by Hariharan, where he will teach the participants one newly composed ghazal of Ghalib. The ghazal has been specially composed for the masterclass, giving the participants the unique opportunity to not only learn from the this ghazal maestro but also learn a composition hitherto unheard.
Over 2 sessions, Hariharan will split the Ghazal into two learnable sections, so as to allow participants to grasp the

finer nuances of the lyric and melody. A Q&A segment shall conclude each session. Hariharan is a name that has come to symbolize soulful singing. From his hits ‘Thamizha Thamizha’ and ‘Tu Hi Re’ in Roja, to 2 National Awards for the songs, he has sung in multiple languages and remains most popular playback singers in India.
What: Workshops
Where: Online
When: November 20 and 21, 2021
Time: 6 pm and 7 pm

SHOULD ART 2021

new work | on his poetry
Javed Akhtar and Sumantra Ghosal
should art

On His Poetry, a very special Sunday morning presentation! Poet, lyricist, screenwriter, and activist, Javed Akhtar and filmmaker and translator extraordinaire Sumantra Ghosal, come together for the first time in public, to share love of poetry, translations and wicked sparring.
A jugalbandi of words, worlds, and languages, Javed Akhtar will present his poems in Urdu followed by

Sumantra Ghosal’s luminous translations in English, interspersed with thoughts on inspiration, discovery, process, blocks, happy resolutions. Internal journeys and candid insights all shared with a sparkling humor and wit.
What: Theatre and Arts
Where: Online
When: November 7, 2021
Time: 11 am

TELLYTALE

‘HAATHI MERE SAATHI IS INSPIRED BY ONE OF MY TRAILS’

When humanity serves nature, nature serves humanity! This festive season, echoing the importance of coexistence, & pictures brings a heart-warming tale of friendship, love, harmony and full-on hope with the channel premiere of Haathi Mere Saathi on 7th November at 8 pm. Translating the remarkable bond shared between humans and animals, the film narrates the heroic story of how the two races come to protect each other from people trying to destroy the ecosystem. With the premiere of this film, the channel aims to bring mindful cinema to fore and celebrate a thoughtful and spirited festive season with its audiences.
With a powerful message that strings us all together and reflects on our deeds, this adventure film is written and directed by the talented Prabu Solomon. Haathi Mere Saathi is an essential plea of great relevance and the cast including Rana Daggubati, Pulkit Samrat,



Shriya Pilgaonkar, Zoya Hussain and Anant Mahadevan deliver this message with utmost dynamism. This Diwali weekend, get ready to revel in the land of the mighty elephants with the & pictures premiere of Haathi Mere Saathi on 7th November at 8 pm.
Sharing his experience, Rana Daggubati said, “The unspoken bond between humans and animals has always been special to me. Haathi Mere Saathi has taken the emotion to a new height. I have always taken something back from my projects, but this film has

transformed me in ways I never thought. It helped my conscience grow bit by bit. As an actor, my focus has been to give quality content to my audience and Haathi Mere Saathi is a movie that will entertain and inspire the viewers. I am glad to be a part of cinema with a cause.”
Sharing his thought behind making this movie, Prabu Solomon said, “I have tried my best at exploring the land in its rawest form. Haathi Mere Saathi is one such story inspired by one of my trails. I believe art adds an edge to a cause and this film was my canvas to the world. I wanted this film to be a thought-provoking masterpiece and seeing the response obtained from the audience quenched my purpose to an extent.”
Haathi Mere Saathi is a heartening tale of Bandev’s (Rana Daggubati) perseverance and his deep connection with nature.

DIWALI CLEANING- A FUN ACTIVITY

Diwali is here and with the festival comes the task of cleaning every nook and corner of the house. ‘Ziddi Dil Maane Na’ producer Sudhir Sharma calls it fun as his whole family actively participates in doing it. “Diwali is the festival of lights, and togetherness. For me, it means realignment of all negative thoughts, and bringing more light in our life. I love putting lights in my house and lighting diyas and then spending time with my family with lots of sweets and other delicacies. We decorate our mandir area and have a Laxmi puja at home in the evening. It looks so beautiful and you get such positive energy from it,” he said. “Of course the day starts with deep cleaning of the house, where all family members participate. It’s such a fun activity. Everyone contributes and it’s a great lesson for kids too because they get to know everything that happens around a festival,” he added.
Sudhir, however, feels that every festival has its own charm and it’s a good excuse to flaunt your best outfits. “I think every festival has its own charm and that’s why I don’t have one favorite festival. Having said that, Holi is something I always look forward to. I love colours and I can play with them all day long. I feel we all are very lucky that we get to celebrate so many festivals. There is something special in each one of them. Not to forget that’s the time to shine and dress up,” he said.
So what are your Diwali plans this year? “I will be celebrating it with my Ziddi Dil Maane Na team and my family,” Sudhir concluded.



DIPALI PANSARE ON DIWALI

Chikoo Ki Mummy Dur Kei Gactress Dipali Pansare loves Diwali and says her child enjoying the festival as much as her is her best Diwali memory. “I love Diwali. I feel Diwali time has an amazing and different feel. Since childhood I have loved this festival. Lighting the diyas, making rangoli and meeting family members bring so much positivity. Being a Maharashtrian girl, I also love all the amazing farali,” she said.
“I was never fond of firecrackers, but when I see

Ruaan growing up I see how fascinated he is for anar and phooljhadi. Last year only he understood the meaning of Diwali, so my child enjoying Diwali as much as me is the best memory,” she added.
Her husband and Ruaan are currently in Jammu. “I have taken a break for a few days. I am going to my in-laws’ place (Jammu) and will be celebrating it with my family,” said the actress, who features in the show produced by Herumb Kot and Nilanjana Purkayastha.

DIWALI BRINGS LIGHT INTO PEOPLE’S LIVES

Chikoo Ki Mummy Durr Kei producer Herumb Khot has shared the significance of Diwali and his plans this year. “For me, Diwali is a festival that brings joy and light into people’s lives,” he said. Sharing his Diwali plans this year, he said, “It will be same as every year. I’ll either go for a biking trip or will be at home.” He is spiritual, but he is not much into rituals. Festivals are seen as occasions to get all dressed up. “It’s a part of the joy of Diwali, especially after the pandemic we need a rocking Diwali and a reason to dress up well and party hard. Work from home has spoiled everyone,” he said. While growing up, his favourite festival was Diwali. “I would love the traditional sweetmeats, the new clothes and the holidays of course,” he shared. We wish audiences continue loving your show!



WAGLE PARIVAAR KICKS OFF DIWALI CELEBRATIONS

Sony SAB’s Wagle Ki Duniya - Nayi Peedhi Naye Kissey continues to light up India’s mood every week with a new set of struggles that the Wagle Parivaar tackles with their individualistic charisma and charm. The show caters to three different generations making it the channel’s most popular and loved show on Indian television. Wagle Ki Duniya adopts the true essence of Diwali and continues to spread its heartwarming simplicity and joy through the show. This Diwali is even more special for the cast as they welcomed the festival of lights onto their sets with a fun-filled Diwali party.

What is a Diwali party without fun and games? The cast was split up into two teams, and it was time for fun activities to begin. The laddoo making activity engrossed the two teams in a healthy competition, and they were eager to see themselves as the champions. Later the atmosphere was filled with a melodious mood with an Antakshari mehfil, leading all the actors to jam to their favourite songs. Like the show, the party’s atmosphere was filled with laughter, chatter and banter which was a true celebration of their beautiful bond.



Wagle Ki Duniya - Nayi Peedhi Naye Kissey truly embodies the spirit of every Indian family and portrays their problems with positivity and optimism, much like the spirit of Diwali.
Bharati Achrekar essaying the role of Radhika Wagle, said, “Wagle Ki Duniya is loved by the audience so much, and I am really thankful to our viewers who have accepted us with open arms and are showering their love on us. ‘Wagle Parivaar’ is my second family and having this opportunity of celebrating Diwali with my family made me so happy. The concept of our show resonates with the audience, and what’s better than celebrating it with your

favourite cast? This Diwali, I urge all my fans and well-wishers to spend quality time with their families and make the most of this festival. I wish my viewers a pleased and prosperous Diwali.”
Sumet Raghavan, essaying the role of Rajesh Wagle, said, “Working on the sets is always so fun, and I relate with the stories that I’m usually portraying as I find myself thinking of past incidents from my life similar to that shown the show. This Diwali became even more special as I got to celebrate it with all my cast members. I loved the laddoo making competition; it is my favourite Diwali sweet, and to compete to make the most laddos, brought the child in me to

life. I must say I got a little too competitive. But none of this fun and merrymaking would have been possible without our viewers and our fans who keep showering their love onto us. I wish them all a happy and prosperous Diwali.”
Pariva Pranati, essaying the role of Vandana Wagle, said, “To see the set transformed with Diwali decorations was absolutely breathtaking. I’m glad I got to celebrate Diwali with my cast; we have all grown close to each other, almost like a real family. I especially had fun playing antakshari with them and reminisced about my childhood days where no party was over without a round of antakshari. So in a way, Wagle Ki Duniya reminds me of all the different stages in my life because there is always a character, young or old, who is going through something that all of us might have gone through and to see it come to life with such a lighthearted spirit is absolutely magical. We all would know a Vandana or a Rajesh or someone like Sakhi and Atharva, and I think that’s what everyone loves about the show, and I am grateful that we get to play those characters and bring a smile to people’s faces.”

SNEHA NAMANANDI VOICED FOR PAW-SAFE DIWALI

Diwali means spending fun time with family and friends, gorge on good food, decorate our houses with lights and diyas and bursting crackers the whole night. While all these make us happy, we should not forget that bursting crackers disturbs pets, says actor-entrepreneur Sneha Namanandi. Phonophobia, the fear of loud sounds, is commonly seen in a lot of pets during Diwali. Some pets may even show their anxiety by salivating too much, yawning continuously or pacing up and down.
“Diwali is a wonderful festival. It gets people together. Laxmi puja is a very auspicious occasion for all of us in India and we celebrate it with a lot of conviction. It’s a belief system. We all believe so much in the Laxmi puja and we actually celebrate it with a lot of dedication and sincerity,” says the Bade Acche Lagte Hai 2 actor, adding that there are certain things concerning animals that one should keep in mind while having fun.
“It’s wonderful getting people together



and enjoying the festival and praying. But, we should not be selfish while doing all of these. Animals, who are outside on the streets and

also in our homes, really get affected by the sound of crackers. They get anxiety, panic and a lot of things related to crackers affect animals. Along with the sound, they go through a lot of chemical reactions because of the crackers, which is really harmful for the strays. It is our duty to be responsible and take care of the animals around us because if we don’t do that who will. All I want to say is be selfless and also be responsible and take care of the strays around you. One small moment that we initiate can actually help the pets to have a happy and safe life,” she adds.
It’s heartbreaking to see how crackers affect pets and strays, how they react to the sounds of crackers. “My own dog hides in the corner and sits quietly, panicking. We really don’t want to see them like that. So we personally take care of it and don’t use a lot of crackers, one or two phuljaris and some colorful ones. I’m sure there are chemical-free crackers, which are available in the market. Please look out for that,” she shares.

Higher wind speed to flush out pollutants



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The air quality in the national Capital improved slightly on Saturday due to higher wind speed, which is expected to flush out pollutants further over the next two days, weather experts said.

According to Central Pollution Control Board's (CPCB) Sameer app, the city's air quality index (AQI) stood at 449 in the severe category at 8 am on Saturday. It was 462 on Friday.

An AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200 'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', and 401 and 500 'severe'.

Due to rampant bursting

of crackers on Diwali on Thursday despite restrictions in place, the air quality in Delhi was the poorest in five years post the festival with rise in incidents of stubble burning in neighbouring states.

The city's AQI slipped to the 'severe' category on Thursday night and continued its upward trend to reach 462 at noon on Friday.

The weather office has predicted strong surface winds that will help clear out pollutants in the city's air on Saturday. Experts said the air quality degraded to severe in Delhi-NCR due to unfavourable weather conditions. Calm winds, low temperature and low mixing height. And a poisonous cocktail of

emissions from firecrackers, stubble burning and local sources.

The Ministry of Earth Sciences' air quality forecast agency, SAFAR, stated that stubble burning accounted for 36 per cent of Delhi's PM2.5 on Friday, the highest in this season so far.

Delhi witnessed a cold morning on Saturday as the minimum temperature in the city was recorded at 14.7 degrees Celsius, normal for this time of the season.

The city will witness a partly cloudy sky with shallow to moderate fog in the morning and strong surface winds during the day, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Saturday.

The maximum temperature is likely to hover around 28 degrees Celsius, it said. Humidity at 8.30 am was 78 per cent, the IMD said.

Weather scientists said the fog/smog condition has improved in Delhi-NCR as forecasted.

There was shallow fog and visibility remained in the 600 to 800 metre range reported at Delhi's two airports from 5.30 am to 9.30 am, weather office said. "Due to westerly to north-westerly winds set in and have also reached a speed 8 to 15 kmph and some humidity reduction or moisture dry up," it said in a statement.

Govt's yudh against pollution has failed: Cong



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With the air quality continuing to deteriorate in the national Capital, Delhi Congress attacked the Delhi Government, saying that Delhi Government's "yudh" (war) against pollution has failed to address the issue.

"The toxicity of Delhi's air has galloped to 'severe' level two days after Deepawali, to make a mockery of Delhi

Chief Minister Arvind's "Yudh" (War) against pollution, his verbal utterances only adding to the noise pollution, as Delhi continues to be a "gas chamber", endangering the lives of the people," senior Congress leader and former MLA Anil Bhardwaj said on Saturday.

Addressing the media, Bhardwaj said that after the Covid-19 pandemic devastated people, Delhi hospitals are now

flooded with dengue patients and those with respiratory diseases and dedicated Covid beds being used to treat dengue patients.

"The Kejriwal Government's 'war' against crackers bursting on Diwali day was also a big flop, with Arvind blaming the BJP for 'encouraging' people to burst crackers, resulting in a spike in air pollution," he said.

The Congress leader fur-



ther said that Delhi Chief Minister Arvind is indulging in shadow boxing with the BJP-ruled Municipal Corporations of Delhi, to cover up his Government's failure on all fronts. He said that all of Arvind's action plans for summer, monsoon and winter have come to a naught.

Bhardwaj said that the failure of the Arvind Government's plans to check water-logging, dengue and air

pollution were due to no effective long-term, mid-term and short-term plans.

He said that instead of owning up to his Government's utter incompetence to check air pollution, Arvind was blaming others and other factors like stubble burning by farmers, cracker bursting etc to offer lame excuses, though 41 per cent air pollution is due to vehicular traffic.

Even CP smog tower couldn't give breathable air

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Even the recently installed smog tower at Connaught Place could not give breathable air to residents nearby on Diwali night as the air quality across Delhi-NCR nosedived to the 'severe' zone following rampant cracker bursting, Government data showed.

Around 9 pm on Thursday, the 24-metre-high air purifier, considered the first such structure in India, recorded a PM2.5 concentration of 642 micrograms per cubic metre at the inlet and 453 micrograms per cubic metre at the outlet.

The smog tower could only reduce the PM10 level from 649 micrograms per cubic metre to 511 micrograms per cubic metre, as per the readings taken at 9 pm.

The safe limit for the lung-damaging fine particles PM2.5 and PM10 is 60 micrograms per cubic metre and 100 micrograms per cubic metre, respectively.

Earlier, it lowered the PM2.5 concentration from 538 micrograms per cubic metre to 261 micrograms per cubic metre and the PM10 levels from 603 micrograms per cubic metre to 288 micrograms per cubic metre at 9

am.

At 10 am, the PM2.5 concentration was reduced from 481 micrograms per cubic metre to 228 micrograms per cubic metre and the PM10 levels from 544 micrograms per cubic metre to 250 micrograms per cubic metre.

There was no immediate reaction from the office of Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai to queries on the smog tower data.

Official sources, however, said smog towers can "reduce pollution only to a certain extent and one cannot expect the large air purifiers to provide clean air on hazardous air quality days like Friday", Sunil Dahiya of the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air said all environmentalists and scientists have been saying there is no proven record or data globally that establishes that smog towers are effective."

This experiment at Connaught Place has shown that smog towers can never be a solution to the problem of air pollution.

Any further wastage of money on such structures should be stopped immediately. The money should be utilised to reduce pollution at source," he said.

114 sprinkling tankers deployed to settle dust



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government on Saturday deployed 114 water tankers to sprinkle water on roads to settle dust, one of major contributors to air pollution, after the national Capital's air quality deteriorated following the Diwali festival.

Environment Minister Gopal Rai flagged off the water tankers, after the national Capital's air quality deteriorated following the Diwali festival.

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it dust, vehicle or biomass pollution," Rai told reporters.

He added that on Diwali, instances of crop residue burning in Punjab and Haryana along with bursting of firecrackers in the city added to air pollution.

"Even today, incidents of stubble burning are increasing. Yesterday, about 3,500 incidents were recorded and today, it is more than 4,000. All this is impacting Delhi's air. As an emergency measure and to help people, we are sprinkling water from the tankers. We have even installed smog guns," the Aam Aadmi Party leader said.

Rai on Friday blamed the BJP for defying of the fire-

cracker ban by people, alleging that the saffron party made them burst crackers on purpose, as the city's air quality index (AQI) entered the 'severe' category on Diwali night and continued its upward trend to reach 462 at noon on Friday.

The 24-hour average air AQI the day after Diwali was 435 last year, 368 in 2019; 390 in 2018; 403 in 2017 and 445 in 2016. The AQI was 382 on Diwali day this year, 414 in 2020; 337 in 2019; 281 in 2018; 319 in 2017 and 431 in 2016.

The Delhi Pollution Control Committee also shut down 92 construction and demolition projects across the city on Friday for flouting dust control norms.

Man stabbed to death in Govindpuri

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 38-year-old man was stabbed to death by unidentified assailants on Saturday morning in southeast Delhi's Govindpuri area.

According to a senior police official, at 5.15 am, a police control room (PCR) call was received regarding the incident at Navjivan Camp in Govindpuri.

"In the call, a girl said that some people have beaten up her father and he was lying unconscious. A team was rushed to the spot and the injured, Rajender Kumar, a resident of Navjivan Camp, was taken to a hospital where he was declared brought dead by the doctors," said the senior police official. "There is no eyewitness to the incident. Kumar was stabbed five times and a case under section 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code has been registered at the Govindpuri police station," police said, adding that investigation is underway. Kumar was a driver by profession and previously involved in criminal cases, police added.



BJP trying to prevent Purvanchalis from performing Chhath Puja, alleges AAP

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Politics over Chhath Puja in Delhi intensified on Saturday with the AAP accusing the BJP of not letting 'Purvanchalis' prepare 'ghats' required to perform rituals pertaining to the festival.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) urged the BJP to stop playing "dirty politics" over Chhath Puja and let people celebrate the festival in Delhi.

"And, if they (BJP) continue playing dirty politics over Chhath Puja, Purvanchalvasi (People who hail from Purvanchal region of Uttar Pradesh) will not forgive them," AAP legislator Sanjeev Jha warned while addressing a press conference at the party headquarters here.

There was no immediate response from the BJP over the AAP's allegations.

The Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) has prohibited celebrations of Chhath Puja on the banks of the Yamuna this year.

In a recent order, the Authority said Puja celebrations will be allowed at designated sites in the city, except on the banks of the river Yamuna.

Following this, Jha requested L-G Anil Bajjal to allow Chhath Puja celebra-

tions on the banks of the Yamuna, saying ghats (banks) are cleaned before the devotees perform rituals.

"At the behest of the BJP, however, L-G sahab issued an order barring Chhath Puja celebrations at Yamuna banks," the AAP MLA alleged.

"The BJP is now trying to prevent the celebration of Chhath Puja at DDA and municipal corporations' land in Delhi. It's clear that the BJP hates Purvanchalvasi," he charged.

Jha alleged that authorities are not letting devotees prepare ghats for Chhath Puja at various locations in Delhi at the behest of the BJP.

"Preparations for Chhath Puja ghat were underway in Dwarka.

The mayor of the BJP-ruled municipal corporation visited the spot and said Puja will not be allowed," he said, adding that the AAP MLA of the area has been sitting on a dharna at the site in protest against denial of permission by the mayor.

Lashing out at the BJP, AAP leader Somnath Bharti claimed that the saffron party is "insulting" 'Purvanchalis' by putting hurdles in their preparations for Chhath Puja.

Fire at shop in Jafarabad, 7 injured

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A fire broke out at a gas stove repair shop in north-east Delhi's Jafarabad area on Friday, injuring five fire service personnel and two civilians, officials said.

The injured were shifted to GTB Hospital, they said. According to the officials, a gas cylinder explosion triggered the fire. The injured fire personnel have been identified as Suhil, Feroz, Suresh, Rakesh and Mahavir, officials said, adding that Suhil's condition is serious. A call about the fire in Jafarabad was received by the fire brigade around 8.15 pm, they added.

According to police, the fire broke out at a gas stove repair shop and also affected an adjoining grocery and a mobile store. Eight fire tenders brought the blaze under control. People residing in the affected building were evacuated to ensure safety. The area is densely populated and accordingly, all necessary precautions were taken, a senior police officer said. An inquiry into the incident is being conducted and accordingly legal action will be initiated, the police added.

₹1,544 cr OK'd for possible third wave outbreak in city



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Cabinet on Friday approved a budget of ₹1,544 crore under the Emergency-Covid-19 Response Package to bolster health systems in order to be prepared for a possible third wave, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said.

"The cabinet was of the consensus that Corona is not over yet and a third wave can be expected. Thus...There should not be any hesitations with respect to the control and prevention of the spread of Covid-19. In this direction, the Delhi Cabinet unanimously approved a budget of ₹1,544.24 crore for the State

ECRP 2021-22 to further strengthen the fight against Corona," Kejriwal said.

The Chief Minister said that in view of a possible wave of Covid-19, the Delhi Government is trying its best to strengthen its health systems and preparedness at every level.

"As a responsible Government, we are taking all measures and steps necessary in this fight against Covid. In view of the advent of a possible wave of Covid, the Delhi government is trying its best to strengthen its health systems and preparedness at every level," he said.

According to officials, the budget will be spent on further

enhancing testing and labs, procuring supplies, mobilising additional human resources, increasing health facilities in hospitals and managing Covid Care Centres, among others.

"Of the total budget, ₹415 crore will be used for the strengthening of Covid-19 testing and labs. ₹445 crore will be allotted for procurement of supplies. A budget of ₹280 crore will help bolster health facilities and hospitals along with an amount of ₹125 crore that will aid the management of Covid care centres," the Government said in a statement.

"The experts are anticipating a third wave of Covid-19 cases in India, including Delhi, bigger than the earlier surges of Covid-19 cases. The Delhi government in that view had constituted a state level task force under state nodal officer and several task-based sub committees to prepare for management of pro in Delhi," it added.

Officials said that 6,836 ICU beds will be added in seven hospitals in Delhi after which the capacity of ICU beds in the national capital will increase to 17,000.

Parking collapse: City Govt orders probe



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government has ordered an enquiry into the automated multilevel parking incident, asking the director of the civic body to submit its report within 15 days.

The parking lot which collapsed was inaugurated by the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) in November last year.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said that the Delhi Government will not tolerate wastage of taxpayers' money and negligence in public safety. "The Government has taken cognizance of this matter and ordered the director of local bodies to investigate the matter through the 'Public Works Department' of the Delhi Government.

"The director has to submit

a report within 15 days to recognise the lapses in parking construction so that appropriate action can be issued. The MCD collected huge money from the nearby shopkeepers in the name of parking conversion charges. Traders' shops were sealed and a parking space was constructed. But within a year, the parking space was engulfed in corruption by the BJP-ruled MCD and had started to collapse. Due to which many cars have been damaged," he said.

Sisodia said that the BJP ruled MCD in Delhi always weeds for lack of money, but even when they have the money, they indulge in corruption and are dishonest with public money. "The multi-level parking of Green Park has fallen prey to the BJP-ruled MCD's corruption.

This parking lot was inaugurated by the BJP leaders with great enthusiasm in November last year but within a year it broke down. Electric floor plates have started to fall apart inside the parking lot, which has damaged many cars and many people have suffered heavy losses. It is obvious that it is the result of BJP's rigging and corruption that the parking could not last even for a year," he said.

Sisodia alleged that huge money was collected from the nearby shopkeepers in the name of parking conversion charge by the BJP ruled MCD. "Shops of traders were sealed and the parking space was constructed.

This parking lot has started falling apart due to corruption and scam. The BJP-ruled MCD has not only been dishonest with the public and wasted their tax money, but have also caused immense damage to their vehicles in this parking lot and even before operationalizing this parking space, its safety audit was not even conducted," he added.

The automated stack parking facility was inaugurated in November last year by Lieutenant Governor Anil Bajjal and Union minister RK Singh along with senior SDMC officials.

BJP'S REACTION

Delhi BJP accused the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leaders of "constantly" running a vicious campaign against BJP ruled municipal corporations, saying that the inquiry ordered into the Green Park Car parking incident is nothing but an attempt to malign the image of the civic bodies.

Delhi BJP spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor said that the AAP leaders including Deputy CM Manish Sisodia are constantly running a vicious campaign against BJP ruled MCDs and the order of inquiry against alleged break down of South DMC's Green Park Car parking is part of their malafide campaign to malign SDMC image.

"South DMC Mayor has already clarified three days ago that there was just minor mechanical malfunctioning at Green Park car parking which was set right in a few hours but AAP leaders have been constantly trying to portray as if the car parking has collapsed," he said. "There has been no corruption in Green Park Car Parking construction and it is functional and inquiry is just a waste of administrative resources by Delhi Government," he said.

Gowda congratulates PM for his dedication to transform Kedarnath

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda on Saturday congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his 'dedication' to transform the holy site of Kedarnath following the unveiling of Adi Shankaracharya's statue.

He also said he was proud of the fact that there was a Karnataka connection to the endeavour as the statue was sculpted by Mysuru sculptor Arun Yogiraj and the black schist was extracted from H D Kote in Mysuru district.

The 88-year-old JD(S) supremo also wished that he would soon visit Kedarnath to see the newly installed statue of the eighth century seer.

"I am deeply moved to see the very impressive black schist statue of the great saint Sri Adi Shankaracharya being unveiled by you in Kedarnath on November 5.

I congratulate you for the dedication you have shown to the transformation of the holy site," Gowda wrote in his letter to Modi.

The JD(S) supremo said he is an ardent follower of the Sri Sringeri Sharada Peetham in Chikkamagaluru district in Karnataka, which is one of the four cardinal centres established by Adi Shankaracharya. Recalling the 'inclusiveness' of the Sringeri Math, the former Prime Minister said Sringeri has been a spiritual counselor across the centuries to many rulers and kingdoms.

He said the Wadiyar, the Peshwas, the Keladis, Travancore rulers, Hyder Ali, Tipu Sultan and the Nizams of Hyderabad had immensely gained from their devotion to the Math and the wise counsel it offered. "The glorious tradition of the Math's guidance has continued to the present day. The Sringeri Math, personally for me, has been a refined symbol of inter-faith harmony," Gowda noted.

The 12 feet tall statue, weighing 28 tons, has been installed on a rebuilt samadhi of Sankaracharya at Kedarnath, an important Hindu pilgrimage centre in the Himalayas.

Medical aspirant in TN kills self over less marks in NEET

Salem (TN): Depressed over securing low marks in the National Eligibility and Entrance Test (NEET), a 20-year old medical aspirant allegedly died by suicide in the district, police said.

Subhashchandra Bose, a resident of Vadagumalai, had appeared for NEET, the results of which were announced four days back, and had scored fewer marks in it.

Dejected over the inability to clear the entrance exam, he allegedly consumed pesticides on November 2. His parents noticed him struggling in bed and took him to the Government hospital in Athur.

As his condition was said to be serious, he was referred to a private hospital in Salem for further treatment, they said. However, Bose succumbed on Saturday around 3.30 AM.

His body was taken to the Government hospital in Salem for post-mortem, where a large number of relatives gathered, leading to tense moments.

The state has already witnessed



alleged suicides of some medical aspirants who had appeared for NEET.

Expressing anguish over the medical aspirant's death, AIADMK top leader K Palaniswami extended his sympathies with the family of the deceased.

In a tweet, the Leader of Opposition in the state Assembly also appealed to students to not resort to such "wrong" steps. **PTI**

Counselling for admission to medical courses to begin after NEET results

Puducherry: Counselling for admission of candidates to medical courses in the Union Territory for 2021-2022 would begin as soon as the list of results of NEET (National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test) is received.

A press release from the Directorate of Health and Family Welfare Services of Puducherry said on Saturday said the National Testing Agency had announced the NEET undergraduate 2021 results on its official website. Candidates who took the test can check the results.

The release said the Department of Medical Education attached to the Ministry of Health, New Delhi, is yet to communicate to the territorial government the complete list of the results in respect of the Union Territory of Puducherry.

The release said the results would be available positively on November 9 on the website of the NEET. The Health Department here would publish the results on its website. Once the results are available, the counselling for admission through Centralised Admission Committee (CENTAC) of Puducherry government would be conducted to admit the students to the medical course.

Maneka urges Govt to bring down LPG cylinder prices

PTI ■ SULTANPUR (UP)

Former Union Minister and Sultanpur MP Maneka Gandhi on Saturday welcomed the cut in petrol and diesel prices and also called for lowering the LPG cylinders rates. Maneka Gandhi made the request to the Union Government while touring her parliamentary constituency on a four-day visit.

"The petrol and diesel prices have come down. The Union government should consider lowering the prices of other things, like gas (LPG cylinder), too to provide relief to the people," she said during a programme in her constituency.

The BJP MP made the request days after the centre slashed the excise duty on petrol and diesel by Rs 5 and Rs 10 respectively followed by various BJP-ruled states too lowering the VAT on the two fuels in significant relief to the common man.

While participating in her party's membership drive program in the Dehli Bazar township of Isauli assembly segment, Gandhi said, "Our efforts will be to win Isauli. Wherever I will go, I will keep making members. There will be 100 programs in 100 days but it does not matter much until we don't make up our minds."

L-G reviews Covid situation in J&K Directs strict enforcement of norms

Jammu: Jammu & Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha reviewed the coronavirus situation in the Union Territory on Saturday and directed for strict enforcement of Covid-appropriate behaviour to check any spike in the cases.

Sinha also reviewed the situation of dengue in Jammu and directed the officials concerned for effective prevention efforts even as a central team is in Jammu to assess the on-ground situation in the Union Territory.

Reviewing the Covid-19 situation during a series of meetings with the members of the Covid Task Force, deputy commissioners and superintendents of police, Sinha emphasised on the need to take effective and quick actions to minimise Covid-19 impacts.

He termed rapid asymptomatic testing and contact tracing as important tools to help reduce the spread of the virus.

The lieutenant governor directed the deputy commissioners, superintendents of police and health department to strictly enforce Covid-appropriate behaviour in hospitals, shopping complexes and other public places. He passed specific directions to the health department for monitoring all the relevant data on a regular basis for swift action.

While appreciating the efforts of the district administrations for making tremendous efforts in the fight against Covid on various fronts, Sinha said the good practices must be replicated by other districts as well for a better outcome.

"The main line of defence is now vaccination. We have secured sufficient supplies to support vaccination and efforts should be made to maximise uptake," the L-G said, setting a timeline of one week for 100 per cent coverage of the overdue second doses. Instructions were also issued to the officials concerned to ensure that restrictions on the public gatherings continue, besides declaration of red zones and micro containment zones in areas registering surge in positive cases on priority, an official spokesperson said.

During the meetings, the lieutenant governor sought district-wise feedback on various critical aspects of Covid management and implementation of the directions passed in the previous meetings.

Sinha directed the deputy commissioners to regularly monitor the functionality of the oxygen plants in their respective districts and get the audit of oxygen generating plants done for operational readiness.

In the meeting, they also discussed the way forward for more effectively tackling and containing the spread of the infection across the Union Territory, the spokesperson said, adding the lieutenant governor was informed that around 59 per cent of the targeted population has already received the second dose of Covid vaccine. The lieutenant governor reviewed the situation of dengue in Jammu and directed the officials concerned for effective prevention efforts.

UP: 1.25 lakh pilgrims bathe in Yamuna on Yam Dwitiya festival

Mathura (UP): Over one lakh pilgrims and local devotees took a dip at different ghats of Yamuna river on Yam Dwitiya festival on Saturday. "At least 1.25 lakh pilgrims have taken a dip in the holy Yamuna at Vishram Ghat," Navneet Singh Chahal, District Magistrate, Mathura said. To avoid congestion, pilgrims and locals also bathed at other ghats of Yamuna along with those in Gokul, Vrindavan and rural areas of the district. There was no untoward incident reported owing to foolproof planning, the DM claimed.

After bathing in the river, pilgrims also paid

their obeisance in Yamuna Yamraj temple located at the banks. People from different parts of the country came in for the festival including Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Bihar.

If a brother and sister jointly take a dip in the holy river at Vishram Ghat, it is said to open the gates of salvation, a local priest said quoting a famous legend. The boons, on the request of his sister Yamuna, were granted by Yamraj as he was said to be pleased with her owing to the hospitality extended during to his visit on the auspicious day, the priest added. **PTI**



Tourists enjoy a light fall of snow at ski resort Gulmarg in Baramulla District of North Kashmir, Saturday

PTI

Sidhu obstructing functioning...

From Page 1

Sidhu, the Amritsar East MLA, has been opposing Deol's appointment as the State AG and Iqbal Preet Singh Sahota's as DGP. Both Deol and Sahota are considered Channi's choices. Last month, Sidhu had said the Congress would have "no face" if the AG and DGP were not removed.

Deol had represented former Punjab DGP Sumedh Singh Saini in cases related to the 2015 sacrilege incidents and police firing on protesters and got blanket bail for him, while Sahota was the head of the spe-

cial investigation team formed by the previous SAD-BJP Government to probe the sacrilege incidents in which nothing much came out of the investigations. Deol had replaced Atul Nanda, who had stepped down in September following the resignation of Amarinder Singh as Punjab Chief Minister. Early this week, there were reports that Deol had offered to resign as the AG. However, the senior advocate refuted the reports.

A day before Sidhu had targeted the Chief Minister over alleged inaction in the sacrilege

cases. Denying reports of having differences with the Chief Minister, Sidhu has said he spoke to him for all the good that can be done for the State. "There's nothing personal. I speak to him for the State. I speak to him for all the good that can be done for the State. I have no differences with Channi, not at all. Whatever I do is for Punjab. I stand for Punjab. Punjab is my soul. That's the goal," Sidhu had said. The latest salvo by Deol is understood to be a counter to what Sidhu had said about Channi.

BJP's meet to discuss...

From Page 1

Singh said 124 members of the National Executive would be present in the NDMC Convention Centre, while BJP ruled States Chief Minister, deputy-Chief Ministers and State presidents would sit in the BJP headquarters at Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Marg and connect with each-other virtually.

"All 36 State units have been provided with Nation Executive meet link," said the BJP general secretary.

The National Executive meeting which, according to party's constitution, must be held "once every three months" has not seen the day in last two years. The last time the ruling party called a full-fledged national executive conclave was more than two years ago - in January 2019. The centralisation of powers since the onset of the Modi-Shah regime in 2014 has considerably reduced the significance of the National Executive platform and squeezed the scope of dissent and discussion.

The meeting, however, assumes significance as it comes just a few months before five States are going to polls in February-March next year. Of these, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur have BJP Governments, while Punjab

is the only Congress-ruled State. In late 2022, Assembly elections will take place in two more States ruled by BJP-- Gujarat, and Himachal Pradesh.

The meeting would also look into the party's reverses in the bypolls and in particular defeats in Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan.

The BJP had a mixed performance in the bypolls held on the last Saturday for three Lok Sabha and 29 Assembly seats across 13 States. The BJP won only one Lok Sabha seat, and lost the other two, including the Mandi parliamentary constituency in poll-bound Himachal Pradesh. The Opposition Congress made a clean sweep in the hill State, winning the Mandi seat and three Assembly constituencies for which by-elections were held.

In West Bengal too, the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC) registered victory in all four Assembly seats, while in Karnataka, another BJP-ruled State, the party suffered defeat in the Hangal Assembly seat that forms part of Haveri, the home district of Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai who this year had replaced the veteran B S Yediyurappa.

In Assam, the BJP bagged all five Assembly constituencies.

Adityanath warns people against parties which equate Sardar Patel with Jinnah

Auraiya (UP): Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Saturday warned people against political parties which equate Sardar Vallabhai Patel with Muhammad Ali Jinnah, an apparent reference to a recent remark by Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav.

Speaking at the foundation stone laying of a Government medical college here and inaugurating other projects, Adityanath, without naming Yadav, said, "A leader of a party had a few days back in a speech attempted to equate Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel, the man who symbolised the unity of India, with Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who divided the country. The entire state should reject such shameful and condemnable remarks."

"Sardar Patel, who symbolised India's integrity, united over 563 kingdoms with India (at the time of Independence). We have to understand the mindset of the elements, who are trying to equate Sardar Patel with Jinnah. Sardar Patel united the country, while Jinnah divided the country, both cannot be contemporaries ('samkaksh'). Sardar Patel was a 'rash-tranayak' (national hero), but

Jinnah was the one to break the unity of India. We have to remain alert of people who are trying to equate them," he said.

The Samajwadi Party chief had on Sunday spoke of Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Patel, Jawaharlal Nehru and Jinnah in the same breath as leaders who fought for India's independence.

Yadav had lavished praise on Patel on his 146th birth anniversary but raised eyebrows at one point when he appeared to equate the four leaders, including Jinnah, the

founder of Pakistan.

Speaking on the law and order front, Adityanath said that the image of the state is changing.

"Earlier, professional criminals and mafia had made the lives of the poor, traders and women miserable. Earlier, there was a race to embrace the mafia elements, and derive political mileage. But, today everybody knows that bulldozers are running over the mafia, and it can also run over those who give refuge to the mafia," he said.

Jinnah row: Read books again, Akhilesh to detractors

Lucknow: Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Saturday sought to defend his Muhammad Ali Jinnah remark as he hit out at his detractors, asking them to read history books again.

On Sunday, Yadav courted controversy when he named Jinnah, along with Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, and Mahatma Gandhi, saying they had helped India achieve independence and never shied away from any struggle. He had also said the three leaders studied at the same institute for their bar-studieship.

Asked by reporters here on Saturday at the inauguration of the office of ally Janvadi Party Socialist about that row, Yadav shot back, "Why should I say the context? I would say read the books again."

His comments drew a sharp response from Uttar Pradesh BJP chief Swatantra Dev Singh, who in a Hindi tweet said,

11 Covid patients die in Maha hospital...

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After his visit to the fire-hit civil hospital, District Guardian Minister Hasan Mushrif said: "A few days back, I had given instructions to the hospital authorities to ensure against occurrence of any mishap. The state government will initiate stern action against those indicted for negligence in the inquiry"

Saturday's was the fifth mishap to have taken place in the State since early this year. Of them, three took place in designated Covid-19 hospitals, while one in at a hospital where Covid-19 patients are undergoing treatment.

Earlier on April 29, four patients were killed when a major fire broke out at Prime Criticare Hospital at Mumbra's Kausa area in Thane district in

the early hours of Wednesday.

On April 23, as many as 14 Covid-19 patients died in the early hours of Friday, when a fire swept through an Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of a pandemic hospital at Virar in Maharashtra's Palghar district.

On April 21, as many as 24 Covid-19 patients who were on ventilators and on Oxygen support died at a civic hospital at Nashik in north Maharashtra on Wednesday afternoon, following the sudden interruption in liquid Oxygen supplies caused by a leakage in the pipe carrying the life saving gas from a tank installed at the hospital.

On March 26, a massive fire at the Sunrise Hospital in Dreams Mall in Bhandup had left 11 Covid-10 patients dead.

India, France to deepen...

From Page 1

The two sides underscored the importance of the mutual trust between France and India, as well as that of the Indo-French partnership in working to strengthen multilateralism and defend a free and open Indo-Pacific based on the rule of law. They also called for continued Indo-French coordination, including at the UN Security Council, on Afghanistan.

Doval and the French Defence Minister discussed ways to expand bilateral and regional co-operation, deal with new threats and support India's defence industrialization and self-reliance. India also welcomed European Union's (EU) Indo-Pacific strategy and looked forward to the French presidency of the EU in the first half of next year as an opportunity to give further shape to the EU's engagement in the Indo-Pacific region, including security, connectivity, sustainability and economic development.

The Indian NSA stressed the point that France is one of India's premier global and Indo-Pacific partners. In the talks, both sides agreed that the emerging trends in global affairs reinforce the need for a closer partnership between India and France.

The two sides discussed global security scenario, including current developments and long term challenges in the Indo-Pacific region, the situation in Afghanistan, Africa, Southeast Asia and West Asia, the challenge of terrorism and emerging threats in maritime, cyber and space domain.

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India may lift ban on Italian firm Leonardo

Modernisation of armed forces



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India may lift the ban on Italian conglomerate Leonardo in an effort to sustain the momentum of modernisation of the armed forces. AgustWestland, the helicopter manufacturing unit, was part of the Leonardo group. India cancelled the deal in 2013 for VVIP helicopters for the IAF on charges of ₹3,600 crore kickbacks.

Consultations are now on between the Defence Ministry and Law Ministry to look into all the legal angles before giving the go-ahead to the Italian company to do business in

India, sources said here on Saturday.

However, the lifting of the ban may be partial and the ongoing investigations by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) into the helicopter deal scam will continue, they clarified. Also, Leonardo cannot claim any compensation for the earlier deals, sources said adding the lifting of the ban is conditional.

Sources said the removal of the ban will allow India to access world-class technology for some projects like Black Shark torpedo for the Scorpene submarines now under con-

struction at the Mazagon Docks Limited(MDL). The navy needs these torpedoes for more lethality. The torpedoes are manufactured by one of the subsidiaries of Leonardo group.

They said discussions were on at various levels in the Government and with Italy regarding the removal of the ban. The VVIP helicopter scandal erupted in late 2010 and early 2013 in Italy.

Later, the Italian Government even arrested some Augusta Westland officials in connection with alleged kickbacks. The then Defence Minister A K Antony cancelled the deal in 2013.

Srinagar int'l airport declared 'major airport'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After connecting Srinagar International airport to the United Arab Emirate (UAE), the Ministry of Civil Aviation has declared it a major airport in the country. A notification to this regard was issued by the Ministry on Saturday. The Government plans to start more international flights from Srinagar in the coming days. The airport has recently seen a sharp increase in passenger influx.

"In exercise of the powers conferred by Sub-Section (i) of Section 2 of the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India Act, 2008 (No.27 of 2008), the Central Government hereby declares the airport at Srinagar as Major Airport," the notification read. The move will help to bring the airport at international arena.

Officials said that the Government may announce more international flights from Srinagar in the coming days. "Discussions are on with Gulf countries to start flights from Srinagar," officials added. Officials said that the Government has planned to invest ₹1,500 crore at the Srinagar airport in the coming days.

As per data, a total 2,152 domestic flights took place in September this year as compared to 1,093 last year. The airport has witnessed almost 12,000-13,000 daily passengers footfall this year as com-

Union Home Minister Amit Shah had inaugurated international flight operations from Srinagar to Sharjah on October 23

pared to 2,500 daily passengers footfall last year.

At present, the major airports that have an annual capacity to handle about one and a half million passengers remain under the purview of the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India (AERA).

Union Home Minister Amit Shah had inaugurated international flight operations from Srinagar to Sharjah, UAE on October 23. Under pressure from internal politics, Pakistan had denied to use its airspace. The journey now takes nearly 40-50 minutes extra due to a longer route to stay clear of the neighbouring country's airspace as planes will have to fly via Udaipur, Ahmedabad and Oman due to the decision. However, India has approached Pakistan through diplomatic channels to start using its air space for Srinagar-Sharjah flights in the interest of common people. Pakistan has not responded till date.

Withdraw 'clean chit' to China, Cong tells Modi



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Citing a Pentagon report that claims China has entered 4.5 km into Arunachal Pradesh, the Congress on Saturday sought an apology from Prime Minister Narendra Modi and asked him to "withdraw" his "clean chit" to Beijing that no one has entered the Indian territory.

Congress spokesperson Pawan Khara said the PM must give answers and give deadlines on when there will be status quo ante as on April 2020 on all our borders with China.

The demand came after the Congress cited the Pentagon report.

Khara said the Chinese intrusion has now been con-

firmed by the Pentagon to the US Congress in its annual report. The villages across the border are of dual-use that have not only civilian population but act as cantonment for the Chinese army.

He said in June 2020, BJP MP in Arunachal Pradesh Tapir Gao had written to the Prime Minister and the Home Minister warning them of the transgressions made by China into Indian territory.

Khara said the Prime Minister and the Home Minister denied the transgressions and it has been 17 months since PM Modi gave a "clean chit" to China.

"That clean chit is a dark chapter in our history because it was used by China across the world. China was emboldened

by this clean chit, not just in Arunachal Pradesh and Ladakh but also in Uttarakhand, where PLA entered and destroyed our infrastructure," he told reporters.

"This is a very serious issue. The Prime Minister must withdraw his clean chit given to China and give a deadline to the nation and tell when the status-quo ante of April 2020 be restored across all our borders with China, whether it is Depsang, Gogra Hot Springs, Daulat Beg Oldie or Arunachal Pradesh," he said.

Khara said, "We need answers, we need deadlines, we need dates and we need an apology for misleading the world that China has not entered our territory."

Cooperative societies too not secure, get in crosshairs of cyber criminals



ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

As digitisation has become the buzzword amid the Covid-19 pandemic, cooperative societies, particularly banks — whether big or small — are finding themselves in the crosshairs of cyber criminals. This has prompted stakeholders like the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) to step forward to ensure cyber security of digital assets of these institutions.

"There has been growing awareness of an organisation's cyber preparedness and defence mechanisms. A large number of institutions wake up to this reality only after an incident. Considering the seriousness of issues connected with cyber-security and protecting the interests of members of various cooperative societies including banks, we have already constituted

Cooperative Institutions Cybersecurity Advisory Forum (CICAF) way back in May 2019.

"We have been holding several rounds of training programs on cyber-security for cooperative institutions, including banks since then. Also, a draft model framework for "Cyber-security and IT Guidelines for User Interaction" has also been formulated under the supervision of former Cyber Security Advisor in PMO Dr Gulshan Rai, who is now Senior Advisor (cyber security) with our organisation," NCDC MD Sundeeep K Nayak said.

However, he refused to share details of the draft stating that it was still being discussed. The NCDC will be holding a meeting on November 8 with all the interested stakeholders to discuss the draft as well as ways to further tighten the system and

plug the loopholes in cyber attacks.

In fact, the need for the guidelines for cyber security of the cooperatives has been consistently felt for the past few years particularly after reports of hackers attack in various cooperatives dealing in finance business. For instance, in late 2018, Cosmos Bank, India's second largest co-operative bank, was attacked by hackers who siphoned off over Rs. 94 crore through a malware attack on one of its servers.

Similarly, later in May 2019, a cooperative bank known as Urban Cooperative got hacked and in the process lost ₹68 lakh from one of its biggest accounts. In December 2019, data leak from insiders led to the loss of ₹29 crores from Shamrao Vitthal Co-operative Bank while the Chembur Nagarik Sahakari bank which has only 10 branches and serves customers

located in the Chembur suburb of Mumbai has reported hackers trying to attack its servers.

This seems to be just the tip of the iceberg as a lot of incidents go unreported either because the banks don't realise a data breach in the first place or fear reputation loss, pointed out players in the sector.

Jyotindra Mehta, President, National Federation of Urban Cooperative Banks and Credit Societies Ltd. (NAFSCUB), pointed out that as most of the banks are very small the price involved in following RBI guidelines to adopt the cyber security technology is very huge. "These banks need to be provided with a technology umbrella to cover their risk. We have to come together to face the cyber security challenge in terms of advisory and functionally as well," he said.

Dr Gulshan Rai talked about the gravity of the problem in today's fully networked society artificial intelligence and machine learning which, he said, makes it easy to manipulate the software. "Software manipulation poses risk to the digital assets and may have huge financial and strategic impact. Moreover, convergence of technology and high speed of communication coming up with 4G & 5G will make it even more difficult to have security of digital assets and information contained in digital assets.

As per the RBI data, in at least ten years till 2018, banks in India faced 130,000 reported cases of cyber fraud involving an estimated ₹700 crore. In comparison to the asset value held by the banks, this is a small amount, however, a severe cyber-attack can result in bank failure even when no money is lost directly, said the experts.

'Dapagliflozin can be used for treatment of chronic kidney disease: Lancet

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Dapagliflozin — a common diabetes drug can be used as an option for treating people with chronic kidney disease (CKD) in adults, claims a study published in the journal Lancet. Dapagliflozin belongs to a group of medicines called 'sodium glucose cotransporter-2 (SGLT2) inhibitors'.

An SGLT2 inhibitor works by blocking the SGLT2 protein in the kidneys. Blocking this protein alleviates kidney damage by reducing pressure and inflammation in the kidneys. It also helps to stop protein from leaking into the urine, and reduces blood pressure and body weight.

A clinical trial of 4,304 participants with CKD revealed that dapagliflozin reduces the rate of kidney function decline in patients with chronic kidney disease (CKD).

The participants were divided into two groups: With dapagliflozin 10 mg or placebo once daily, added to standard care.

Although participants without diabetes also experienced a slower rate of kidney function decline with dapagliflozin, the effect of dapagliflozin was greater in those with diabetes.

"The key conclusion is that dapagliflozin is an effective treatment to slow progressive kidney function loss in patients

The participants were divided into two groups: With dapagliflozin 10 mg or placebo once daily, added to standard care

with CKD with and without type 2 diabetes," said lead author Hiddo Lambers Heerspink, from the University Medical Center Groningen.

"Therefore, in addition to reducing the risk of heart failure or mortality, dapagliflozin also slows the progression of kidney function decline," Heerspink added.

CKD is a long-term condition in which the kidneys do not work as they should. It is common, especially in older people. In the early stages, there are usually few symptoms and people can have the condition without knowing it.

CKD is often caused by other conditions that affect the kidneys. These include diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and kidney infections. Making healthy lifestyle choices and controlling underlying conditions are important. CKD can get worse over time, but treatments can stop or delay this, and many people live for a long time with their condition well controlled.

Population control: Fresh plea in SC seeks to make States, UTs as parties

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A fresh plea has been filed in the Supreme Court seeking to make States and Union Territories as parties in a PIL that has sought certain steps, including two-child norm, to control the country's growing population.

The plea filed by lawyer Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay said population explosion is the root cause of many problems, including the excessive burden on natural resources of the country.

Upadhyay had filed the PIL challenging a Delhi High Court order that dismissed a plea seeking certain steps, including two-child norm, to control the country's growing population.

The Centre has earlier told the SC that India was unequivocally against forcing family planning on its people and any coercion to have a certain number of children was counterproductive and leads to demographic distortions.

In an affidavit filed in the top court, the Centre had told the apex court that the family welfare programme in the country was voluntary in nature, which enabled couples to decide the size of their family and adopt family planning methods best suited to them, according to their choice and without any compulsion.

The PIL said the

THE PLEA IN THE HIGH COURT HAD CLAIMED THAT THE POPULATION OF INDIA HAD MARCHED AHEAD OF CHINA

high court failed to appreciate that the right to clean air, drinking water, health, peaceful sleep, shelter, livelihood, and education guaranteed under Articles 21 and 21A of the Constitution could not be secured to all citizens without controlling the population explosion.

The plea in the high court had claimed that the population of India had marched ahead of China, as about 20 per cent of Indians did not have Aadhaar and therefore, were not accounted for, and there were also crores of Rohingyas and Bangladeshis living illegally in the country. It claimed that population explosion was also the root cause of corruption, apart from being a contributory factor behind heinous crimes such as rape and domestic violence.

It also held population explosion responsible for pollution and the dearth of resources and jobs.

More fresh rain in store for S India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

More fresh rain is in store for South India, especially Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal, for the next five days. These places are likely to witness the brunt of heavy rains and thunderstorms. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Saturday predicted heavy to very heavy rain in parts of Tamil Nadu over the next few days due to formation of low pressure over Bay of Bengal.

Fishermen are advised not to venture into southeast Bay of Bengal during November 9-10 and southwest Bay of Bengal during November 10-12.

"A cyclonic circulation lies over Southeast Bay of Bengal & adjoining equatorial Indian Ocean off Sumatra Coast. Under its influence a low pressure area is like-

ly to form over Southeast Bay of Bengal around 9th. It is likely to become more marked and move west northwards towards north Tami Nadu coast during the subsequent 48 hours," the IMD said in its forecast on Saturday.

The IMD said that due to this low pressure, increase in rainfall activity with heavy to very heavy rainfall at a few places and extremely heavy rain at isolated places likely over north coastal Tamil Nadu and heavy to very heavy rainfall at a few places over south coastal Andhra Pradesh during 11th-12th November.

"Fisherman are advised not to venture into southeast Bay of Bengal during 09th-10th and over southwest Bay of Bengal and along & off Tamilnadu and adjoining Andhra Pradesh coast during 10th-12th November, 2021," it said.

IRCTC plans series of Shri Ramayana Yatra to mark gradual resumption of domestic tourism

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

To promote religious tourism, the IRCTC has planned a series of Shri Ramayana Yatra Tours, which will mark a gradual resumption of domestic tourism by trains in view of the improved COVID-19 situation.

One such tour wil begin from November 7, the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) said on Saturday.

"IRCTC has planned the train tour packages utilising its Pilgrim Special Tourist Trains and Deluxe Tourist Trains duly understanding the requirement of the budget and premium segment tourists," it said in a statement.

"The first departure on the Ramayana Circuit train will commence on November 7 from New Delhi

followed by four other departures in the subsequent month," the IRCTC said.

Other packages include 12 nights / 13 days Shri Ramayana Yatra Express-Madurai, which will depart on November 16.

To meet the requirement of the pilgrim tourist market of south India, IRCTC will be operating Shri Ramayana Yatra Express-Madurai with its budget-segment train comprising of sleeper class coaches, the statement said.

The train will start from Madurai with boarding points at Dindigul, Tiruchirappalli, Karur, Erode, Salem, Jolarpettai, Katpadi, Chennai Central, Renigunta, and Cuddapah.

It will cover Hampi, Nasik, Chitrakoot, Allahabad, Varanasi and will return to Madurai.

The statement said

that there is also the 16 nights / 17 days package of the Shri Ramayana Yatra Express-Sri Ganganagar and the train will depart on November 25.

For budget segment tourists of North India, the IRCTC is operating the Shri Ramayana Yatra Express-Sri Ganganagar with its pilgrim special tourist trains, it said.

The train will start from Sri Ganganagar with boarding and de-boarding points at Abohar- Malout, Bhatinda, Barnala, Patiala, Rajpura, Ambala Cantt., Kurukshetra, Karnal, Panipat, Delhi Cantt, Gurgaon, Rewari, Alwar, Jaipur, Agra Fort, Itawah and Kanpur, the statement said.

It will cover Ayodhya, Sitamarhi, Janakpur, Varanasi, Prayagraj and Chitrakoot, Nasik, Hampi and Rameswaram, Kanchipuram and will return to Sri Ganganagar.

Have taken 'possible steps' to protect rights of third gender: Bihar to SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Bihar Government has told the Supreme Court that it has taken all "possible steps" to protect the rights of the transgender community, including establishing a State Transgender Welfare Board to monitor their social development.

A bench headed by the then Chief Justice S A Bobde (since retired) on April 12 this year had sought responses from the Centre and states on a plea of Kinner Maa Eksamajik Sanstha Trust seeking directions to establish a transgender welfare board to address their social welfare issues.

Filing the reply affidavit, Rakesh Ranjan, the Assistant Director of the Social Welfare Department of Bihar government, said, "All possible steps are being taken so that the

rights of the transgender community is protected and they could live a respectful life like any other citizen in the country."

The state government said the Bihar State Transgender Welfare Board has been constituted in 2015.

"The measures for the social development of the transgender community are being implemented and monitored by the Board from time to time. Its composition included the members of the transgender community to ensure their recognition and empowerment."

The state said that other welfare measures are also being taken and a case on this issue is being monitored by the Patna High Court which has been passing several orders from time to time. "For the welfare of the transgender community, several decisions

have been taken with regard to the establishment of 'Facilitation Centre' at the district level in which at least two members of the transgender community are included as members," the state said.

A separate web portal for the third gender has been prepared to disseminate relevant information such as legal provisions about the third gender, it said.

"Besides, at least half a dozen short films or documentary..Will be developed with the help of the transgender community members," it said.

The Sikkim Government, meanwhile, also filed its response to the plea and said that no order was needed to be passed to it as there was "no registered transgender person in the state of Sikkim and no certificate of identity has been issued to any person."

Op to smoke out ultras extended to Khabla forest Road briefly closed



Jammu: The main road connecting Jammu & Kashmir's Rajouri to Thanamandi was briefly closed for traffic on Saturday as security forces extended the ongoing search for a group of terrorists to the Khabla forest following information about their suspected movement in the area, officials said.

The counter-insurgency operation in Surankote and Mendhar forest in Poonch district and Thanamandi in Rajouri district entered the 27th day on Saturday.

While the operation to track down the terrorists in the forest belt of Poonch-Rajouri was underway, the security forces received information about the suspected movement of terrorists in the vast forest area of Khabla along the Mughal Road in the early hours of Saturday, the officials said.

An operation was jointly launched by the Army and the police in the forest area of Khabla but there was no con-

tact with the suspected terrorists, they said.

In view of the operation, the traffic on the Rajouri-Thanamandi road was suspended as a precautionary measure for the safety of commuters, the officials said.

Nine soldiers, including two Junior Commissioned Officers (JCOs), were killed in two separate encounters with the terrorists on the first day of the search operation in Surankote forest on October 11 and in Mendhar forest on October 14.

A Pakistani terrorist, Zia Mustafa, who was shifted from Kot Bhalwal Central Jail, Jammu to Mendhar on police remand for questioning in connection with the operation, was killed when the security personnel accompanying him to identify a hideout in the Bhatti Durrian forest in Mendhar came under fire from the hiding terrorists on October 24.

Hooch claims 4 more lives in Bihar

Samastipur/Patna: Four more deaths, caused by illicit liquor consumption, were on Saturday reported in dry Bihar, where hooch has claimed close to 40 lives in different districts since Diwali.

The latest deaths have been recorded in Samastipur district. Earlier, at least 33 people died in Gopalganj and West Champaran districts upon consuming spurious liquor.

According to Manavjeet Singh Dhillon, the Superintendent of Police of Samastipur, all four deceased, including an Army jawan and a BSF personnel, were residents of villages falling under Rupauli panchayat in Patori police station area.

"Two persons, who had taken ill, are currently undergoing treatment at a hospital. We have learnt that all of them had attended a funeral after which they consumed liquor brought by the Army man who was visiting his home on a holiday," Dhillon said. He said a bottle of Indian-made foreign liquor was recovered from the spot where alcohol was said to have been consumed and a team of FSL officials has been summoned for chemical analysis of the con-



tents.

"We are investigating the matter further. Some more people are said to have consumed liquor and understood to have taken ill afterwards. We urge their family members to report the matter to the police. Our top priority is to get the sick treated," the SP said. Sale and consumption of alcohol was banned in Bihar by the Nitish Kumar government in April, 2016.

Meanwhile, a group of young Congress leaders held a press conference in the state capital to inform that they have written to the governor with the request that ₹10 lakh ex-gratia be paid to the next of the kin of each deceased, since "the deaths expose the failure of the state government to properly enforce prohibition".

Rishi Mishra, a former

MLA and one of the signatories to the letter, alleged that "the role of the BJP, which is a partner in the ruling alliance, also needs to be investigated. Liquor has been seized in the past from the premises of one of its ministers".

Mishra, who is the grandson of late Lalit Narayan Mishra, a powerful member of the Indira Gandhi cabinet, was alluding to Ram Surat Rai, a member of the state cabinet. Liquor was recovered from a property owned by his estranged brother earlier this year.

"Moreover, the BJP seems to be so enthusiastic about the ban on liquor in Bihar though it has not imposed prohibition in any other State ruled by it. This duplicity needs to be exposed," said Mishra, who was earlier a member of Nitish Kuma's JD(U).

Bypoll setback forced Govts to reduce tax on fuel marginally: Cong

Mangaluru: The Central and State Governments were forced to marginally reduce tax on fuel prices after the setback in the recent bye-elections, Congress leader and former Minister U T Khader MLA said on Saturday.

Addressing reporters here, he said the marginal reduction in petrol prices is to temporarily pacify the people who are angry at BJP's governance.

He said if it took 70 long years for petrol prices to reach ₹70, the BJP government took only seven years to cross the ₹100 mark.

The Union Finance Minister who claimed that fuel prices were not in the control of the Government has now exposed the Government's double game, he said. Khader also wanted the Government to initiate steps to bring down the soaring prices of essential commodities.

On the controversy over the proposal by BJP MLA Bharath Y Shetty to name a circle in Surathkal after V D Savarkar, Khader said the need of the hour is to discuss public issues rather than naming circles.

BJP demands Andhra Govt to cut VAT on fuel

Amaravati: The BJP organised State-wide protests in Andhra Pradesh on Saturday demanding that the State Government immediately reduce Value Added Tax on petrol and diesel and provide relief to the people.

Leader of the Opposition and Telugu Desam Party president N Chandrababu Naidu, separately, held a press conference and demanded that Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy keep his word and bring down the prices of petrol and diesel to the lowest level in the country.

BJP state president Somu Veeraju, who led the protest in Rajamahendravaram, said the Centre has cut the Excise Duty on petrol and diesel by ₹ 5 and ₹ 10 a litre respectively.

"Several states across the country have reduced VAT on fuels following the Centre's call. The Jagan government blamed the Centre for spiralling fuel prices, but when the latter provided relief in the form of Excise Duty cut, why is the state not following that?" he asked.

Veeraju said the BJP would step up the agitation with people's support if the State Government did not reduce VAT on petrol and diesel forthwith.

BJP cadres organised protests at all district Collectorate on the petrol price issue. At his press conference, the TDP chief recalled Jagan's claims, when he was then in the opposition, that he would bring down the petrol prices to the "lowest in the country".

EXTORTION-LINKED MAHA MONEY LAUNDERING CASE Court sends Maha former HM Anil Deshmukh to 14 days jail

REFUSES TO ENTERTAIN ED'S PLEA FOR EXTENSION OF HIS CUSTODY BY 9 DAYS

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Having declined to entertain a plea by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) seeking extension of his custody by nine days, a Special Holiday Court on Saturday remanded Maharashtra's former Home Minister and accused in a money laundering case Anil Deshmukh in judicial custody for 14 days.

On a day when his son Hrishikesh Deshmukh-- who is also being investigated -- approached the Sessions Court seeking anticipatory bail, Sr Deshmukh was produced before Holiday Special Court Judge P. R. Sitre. The Special Judge rejected the ED's plea to extend Sr Deshmukh's custody for nine more days. Instead, he sent the former State Home Minister to judicial custody for 14 days.

Seven-one-year-old Deshmukh was arrested in the early hours of November after intense grilling lasting for more than 12 hours in the alleged money laundering case linked to the charges of extortion made against him by Mumbai's former Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh.

Deshmukh -- who had skipped the summons issued by the ED on five occasions -- had said ahead of his arrest: "A

false narrative and erroneous impression is being created by the vested interests that I am evading or avoiding to appear before the Enforcement Directorate. Undoubtedly, such propaganda is baseless. All that I ever wanted is a transparent, fair and objective probe without any fear or favour so that the truth is not rendered causality".

Deshmukh had resigned from his post as the State Home Minister on April 5 2021 within hours after the Bombay High Court ordered a "Preliminary Enquiry" (PE) by the CBI into the serious charges of corruption made against him by Mumbai's former Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh. He is being investigated by the CBI and Enforcement Directorate (ED) over the allegations of corruption made by Param Bir Singh.

It may be recalled that on March 20, the former commissioner of police had alleged that State Home Minister Deshmukh had asked now arrested and dismissed police officer Sachin Vaze to "collect" a staggering Rs 100 crore per month from bars, restaurants and other sources in Mumbai.

Deshmukh is being investigated by the CBI in connection with a First Information Report (FIR) registered by it on April 24 section 7 of the amended

Prevention of Corruption Act and section 120-b (conspiracy) of IPC for an "attempt to obtain undue advantage for important and dishonest performance of the public duty".

Having prima facie found "cognisance offences" of corruption and conspiracy against him during a Preliminary Enquiry (PE) conducted by it into the allegations made against him by Mumbai's former Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh, the CBI on April 21 registered a regular case against him and other unknown people.

Having established a trail for Rs 4.7 crore allegedly paid by the 10 bar owners in Mumbai over a period of three months December 2020 and February 2021, the ED had conducted raids on the three residences and one property of Deshmukh on June 25.

The ED has alleged that of the total amount, Rs 4.18 crore was then deposited in cash with four Delhi-based shell companies-- Reliable Finance Corporation Pvt. Ltd, VA Realcon Pvt. Ltd., Utsav Securities Pvt. Ltd. and Sital Leasing and finance Pvt. Ltd. These firms subsequently donated the entire money to Shri Sai Shikshan Sansthan Trust, a charitable trust headed by Anil Deshmukh and his family.



One-horned rhinoceros seen at the Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary in Morigaon district on Saturday

PTI

3 men booked for attempting to rape woman in UP village

Muzaffarnagar: Three people have been booked for allegedly attempting to rape a woman in a village here and beating up her family members, police said on Saturday.

According to police, the incident took place on Friday in a village under Khatoli Police Station area.

The woman, 20, was accosted by three men when she had gone out to give cattle fodder, police said.

As per the complaint lodged by the victim's family, the three men took the woman to a nearby field where they attempted to rape her.

When the family members confronted the accused, they beat them too, said the complaint, according to police.

All three accused are on the run and a search is on to nab them, police said.

In another incident, a half burnt body of a man was found in the fields on Friday at Biharipur village in Khatoli, police said.

The yet to be identified body has been sent for postmortem and an investigation is on in the matter, they said. It is suspected that culprits dumped the body after killing the man and tried to burn it to prevent it from being identified, police said.

Gold smuggling case: Swapna Suresh released from jail

Thiruvananthapuram: Sixteen months after her arrest in the sensational gold smuggling case, Swapna Suresh, one of the prime accused in the racket, walked out of jail here on Saturday after securing bail on November 2.

Suresh, who completed the necessary bail procedure, left for her residence with her mother, days after the Kerala High Court granted bail to her and seven others in a UAPA (Unlawful Activities Prevention Act) case lodged by the NIA in connection with the smuggling of gold through diplomatic channels.

The court, while allowing her bail, had held that prima facie it did not find that the accused committed any terrorist act as alleged against them.

Suresh was taken into custody by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) along with another accused Sandeep Nair from Bengaluru on July 11, 2020, also a Saturday.

Today, Suresh refused to talk to the media initially, but said she will respond later following which the television channels followed her to her residence in the city.

However, her mother told the waiting media there her daughter was not feeling well as she just got released from the jail, and will not be talking to them today.

Earlier, after completing the official bail proceedings, Suresh left the "Vanitha" jail at Attakulangara here, where she had been lodged.

The court had granted bail to Suresh, a former employee of the UAE consulate here, subject to furnishing a bond of ₹25 lakh with two solvent sureties each for the like amount.

The NIA, ED and Customs conducted separate investigations into the racket that was busted with the seizure of gold worth ₹15 crore from the diplomatic baggage of the UAE Consulate at Thiruvananthapuram airport on July 5, 2020.

Gujarat: 5 workers die while cleaning effluent tank at pharma unit

Ahmedabad: Five workers died after inhaling toxic gas while cleaning an underground tank at a pharmaceutical unit in Gujarat's Gandhinagar district on Saturday, an official from the fire department said.

The incident occurred at an effluent treatment plant of the pharmaceutical unit in Kalol taluka in the afternoon, chief fire officer of Gandhinagar Mahesh Mod said.

"As the plant was shut today, the management had decided to clean the tank, which stores the factory's liquid waste before it is sent for treatment.

Although there was hardly any liquid waste in the tank, the workers were unaware about the presence of toxic gas inside it," Mod said.


Tripura civic polls: 821 nominations found valid

Agartala: As many as 821 nominations filed for elections to 20 civic bodies in Tripura -- comprising Agartala Municipal Corporation (AMC), 13 municipal councils and six nagar panchayats -- were found valid after scrutiny, officials in the state election commission said.

Civic body elections in the northeastern state are scheduled to be held on November 25. Results will be announced three days later, on November 28. As many as 334 seats, including 51 of the AMC, will be up for polls.

The ruling BJP has fielded candidates in all 334 seats, while the opposition CPI(M) has named nominees for 212 seats, the CPI for six seats, AIFB for five seats and the RSP for two seats.

The TMC has fielded nominees in 124 seats and the Congress in 100. Twenty-nine Independent candidates have also joined the fray. The last date for submission of nominations was November 3.



NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

TENDER NOTICE

Agra Division



TENDER NOTICE No. GEM/2021/B/1609950

Date: 01.11.2021

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (General) N.C. Railway, Agra for and behalf of President of India invites "Open Tender" through on line only (E-Tendering) for the following works.

S N	Tender No.	Name of work with its location & Completion Period	Approx. Cost of the work (₹)
1.	GEM/2021/B/1609950	Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) of 01 No. Escalator installed at Mathura Jn. Rly. Stn. PF-1 for 36 months. Completion period 36 months.	1926837.26/-

For full details and submission of bid please see the GeM website. **Tenders can only be submitted through web portal GeM upto 15.00 hrs. on 25.11.2021.**

 North central railways www.nctr.indianrailways.gov.in  North Centra. Railway@CPRONCR 1168/24 FA

रायगढ़ जिला अर्बन पब्लिक सर्विस सोसायटी

तृतीय निविदा सूचना

कं. 1968/रा.सि.अ.प.स.सो./रा.पा.नि./2021

रायगढ़ दिनांक 03.11.2021

मुख्यमंत्री सरस्वी दवा दुकान योजना (श्री घनवंतरी योजना) के अंतर्गत रायगढ़ जिला के निम्न निकायों के तृतीय निविदा में प्रकाशन का विवरण निम्नानुसार है:-

System Tender No.	Description Project	Last date for online submission
86499	Selection of Private Partner for establishment of Establishment of Fair Price Outlets for Medicines Consumables etc at Lailunga city under state sponsored Mukhya Mantri Sasti Dawa Dukan Yojna (MMSDDY) (3rd Call) (कार्यालय नगर पंचायत देवुंगा)	11/11/2021
86498	Selection of Private Partner for establishment of Establishment of Fair Price Outlets for Medicines Consumables etc at Gharghoda city under state sponsored Mukhya Mantri Sasti Dawa Dukan Yojna (MMSDDY) (3rd Call) (कार्यालय नगर पंचायत घर्घोडा)	11/11/2021

निविदा से संबंधित विस्तृत जानकारी निम्न वेबसाइट (<https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>) के माध्यम से प्राप्त की जा सकती है। निविदा दस्तावेज जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि 12/11/2021 तक स्वीड पोस्ट/रजिस्टर्ड पोस्ट के माध्यम से सायं 04:00 बजे तक नगर पालिक निगम रायगढ़ कार्यालय में पहुंचना अनिवार्य है एवं दिनांक 12/11/2021 को सायं 05:00 बजे निविदा खोली जायेगी।

हस्ता./-
नोडल अधिकारी
(पु.स.न.द.गो.)
रायगढ़ जिला अर्बन पब्लिक सर्विस सोसायटी
रायगढ़ (छ.ग.)

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR SHORTLISTING OF PROPRIETARY ARTICLES (CATERING PRODUCTS) FOR SUPPLY IN RAILWAY CATERING STATIC UNITS

No:C/SECR/BSP/Catg./EOI/PAD/PDW, Date: 28.10.2021.



Applications in the prescribed format are invited from the Interested Manufacture Companies/Firms for short-listing/ registration of **PROPRIETARY ARTICLES** brands for sale in the Static Catering Units on South East Central Railway for a period of **Two years**.

The application form may be obtained from the office of Principal Chief Commercial Manager, South East Central Railway, 1st floor, New GM Building, Bilaspur (C.G.)-495004 by hand on payment of ₹ 5,000/- or by post by sending a Demand Draft of ₹ 5,050/- . If the form is downloaded from the Railway website i.e. www.secr.indianrailways.gov.in, the same should be submitted along with a Demand Draft of ₹ 5,000/- issued in favour of Principal Financial Advisor, South East Central Railway, Bilaspur or Money Receipt issued from Booking Office/Divl. Cash & Pay office/South East Central Railway. The firm should have FSSAI approval and having the experience of at least 02 years with annual turnover during last two years as fixed for each/respective item/s.

The firm should submit a non-refundable fee of ₹ 1,00,000/- + applicable GST 18% (₹ 1,18,000/- One Lakh Eighteen Thousand only) through Demand Draft issued in favour of Principal Financial Advisor, South East Central Railway, Bilaspur for each brand. The fee amount shall be refundable only to those applicants whose products/brands are not approved. The Railway reserves the rights to accept/reject any application without assigning any reason whatsoever. Railway also reserved the right to withhold or withdraw the process at any stage with intimation to all the applicants who have submitted the application.

The application forms duly filled in along with requisite documents should be submitted or sent through Registered Post by **09.12.2021** on any working day (timings 10 hours. to 18 hours) from 01.11.2021 to 09.12.2021, addressed to: CCM (Catg & PS), Room No. 139, 1st floor, New GM's Building, South East Central Railway, Bilaspur (C.G.)-495004.

CPRI/10/230 **For Principal Chief Comm. Managar, Bilaspur.**

 South East Central Railway  @seccrail

Won't tolerate more neglect, quitting party, says BJP leader Joy

Kolkata: Actor-turned-BJP leader Joy Banerjee on Saturday said he has decided to resign from the primary membership of the party, after having "faced neglect" in the recent years.

Banerjee, who joined the BJP in 2014 and unsuccessfully contested Lok Sabha elections twice, also said that he has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, informing him about his decision to sever all association with the saffron party. "I want to work for common people and that isn't quite possible if I continue to be a part of the BJP," he told reporters.

Mentioning that he has been removed from BJP National Executive, Banerjee further said, "My security has also been taken away by the central leadership. I am not a new member; I had joined the party way back in 2014.

"I had told Narendra Modi in 2017 that I would want to do more for the organisation. But there was no response. I won't tolerate more neglect," he added.

To a question if he had any plan to join the Trinamool Congress, Banerjee said he hasn't taken any such decision as yet.



Women devotees pray on the banks of the Yamuna river on the occasion of Bhai Dooj festival in Prayagraj on Saturday

PTI

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

TENDER NOTICE FOR MISCELLANEOUS WORK

Tender Notice No.- Sr. DEE (RS&G) BSP/OTP/21-22-10

Date: 28.10.2021

Name of Work : (I) Provisioning of a new 'B' class block cabin between Katara and Surajpur stations. (II) Provision of new ARM office and associate offices at KRBA. (III) RPF dog Kennels at Raigarh, Shahdol & Manendragarh (IV) Replacement of existing FOB at Naila station by providing new FOB to remove infringement. (V) Construction of 01 room for ladies staff at RPF Barrack Korba, Champa & Raigarh. (VI) Augmentation of storage, office space and maintenance infrastructure at C&W points BJRI, APR, RIG and KRBA. **Tender Value: Rs. 52,91,301.64/-**, EMD: NIL, **Tender Closing Date Time: 22.11.2021, 15:00 Hrs.**

For further details, eligibility criteria & complete details for the above work, please refer/download tender document which is available on websites www.ireps.gov.in.

Sr. Divl. Elect. Engineer (RS&G) **CPRI/10/227 S.E.C. Railway/Bilaspur**

 South East Central Railway  @seccrail

GLOBE TROTTER

RUSSIA REPORTS RECORD DAILY COVID COUNT

Moscow: Russia's Covid-19 cases hit another one-day record as the country struggles to contain a wave of infections and deaths that has persisted for more than a month. The national coronavirus task force on Saturday reported 41,335 new cases since the previous day, exceeding the previous daily record of 40,993 from October 31.

BRAZILIAN SINGER DIES IN PLANE CRASH

Sao Paulo: Marília Mendonça, one of Brazil's most popular singers and a Latin Grammy winner, died Friday in an airplane crash on her way to a concert. She was 26. Mendonça's press office confirmed her death in a



statement, and said four other passengers on the flight also perished. Their plane crashed between Mendonça's hometown Goiania and Caratinga, a small city in Minas Gerais state located north of Rio de Janeiro. Minas Gerais state's civil police also confirmed Mendonça's death, without providing details about the cause of the accident, which occurred before arrival.

KNIFE ATTACK ON GERMAN TRAIN INJURES 3 PEOPLE

Berlin: A knife attack on a high-speed train in Germany left three people severely wounded, the Bavarian Red Cross said Saturday. Police said a man has been arrested in connection with the morning attack. The train, one of Germany's high-speed ICE trains, was traveling between the Bavarian cities of Regensburg and Nuremberg at the time of the attack.

PREZ JOE BIDEN HAILS INFRASTRUCTURE WIN

Washington: President Joe Biden on Saturday hailed Congress' passage of his \$1 trillion infrastructure package as a "monumental step forward for the nation" after fractious fellow Democrats resolved a months-long standoff in their ranks to seal the deal. "Finally, infrastructure week," a beaming Biden told reporters. "I'm so happy to say that: infrastructure week." The House passed the measure 228-206 late Friday, prompting prolonged cheers from the relieved Democratic side of the chamber. Thirteen Republicans, mostly moderates, supported the legislation while six of Democrats' farthest left members opposed it.

Sudan activists reject power-sharing with army, call strikes

AP ■ KHARTOUM

Sudan's protest movement has rejected internationally backed initiatives to return to a power-sharing arrangement with the military after last month's coup, announcing two days of nationwide strikes starting on Sunday. The movement called for the establishment of a civilian Government to lead a transition to democracy.

The call came as a leader of the country's main political party accused the military leadership of negotiating in bad faith. The Sudanese military seized power Oct. 25, dissolving the transitional administration and arresting dozens of

Fuel tanker blast in Sierra Leone, kills 92

AP ■ FREETOWN, SIERRA

An oil tanker exploded near Sierra Leone's capital, killing at least 92 people and severely injuring dozens of others after large crowds gathered to collect leaking fuel, officials and witnesses said on Saturday.

The explosion took place late on Friday after a bus struck the tanker in Wellington, a suburb just to the east of Freetown.

The mortuary at Connaught Hospital reported 92 bodies had been brought in by Saturday morning. About 30 severely burned victims were not expected to survive, according to Foday Musa, a staff member in the intensive care unit.

Injured people whose clothes had burned off in the fire that followed the explosion lay naked on stretchers as nurses attended to them on Saturday. Hundreds of people milled outside the main gates of the mortuary and near the hospital's main entrance, waiting for word of their loved ones.

It was not immediately known how many people were undergoing treatment for burns because patients were taken to hospitals and clinics across the metropolitan area.

Video obtained by The



In this photograph issued by Sierra Leone's National Disaster Management Agency, people gather around the charred oil tanker that exploded after being struck by a truck in the Wellington suburb of Sierra Leone's capital Freetown on Saturday

Associated Press of the explosion's aftermath showed a giant fireball burning in the night sky as some survivors with severe burns cried out in pain. Charred remains of the victims lay strewn at the scene awaiting transport to mortuaries. President Julius Maada Bio, who was in Scotland attending

the United Nations climate talks on Saturday, deplored the "horrendous loss of life."

"My profound sympathies with families who have lost loved ones and those who have been maimed as a result," he tweeted.

Vice-President Mohamed Julehd Jalloh visited two hos-

pitals overnight and said Sierra Leone's National Disaster Management Agency and others would "work tirelessly" in the wake of the emergency.

"We are all deeply saddened by this national tragedy, and it is indeed a difficult time for our country," he said on his Facebook page.

Key CPC conclave next week set to endorse 3rd term for Xi

PTI ■ BEIJING

A key conclave of China's ruling Communist Party next week is widely expected to pass a resolution on the major achievements besides "historical experience" of the 100-year-old party and pave the way for an unprecedented third term for President Xi Jinping.

Xi, 68, holding China's all three power centres- General Secretary of the Communist Party of China, (CPC), Chairman of the powerful Central Military Commission, (CMC) the overall high command of the military and the Presidency- will attend the "high-profile Party plenum" of the Party on Monday, a lengthy commentary by state-run *Xinhua* news agency said.

Titled "Xi Jinping, the man who leads the CPC on a new journey", the commentary said "a landmark document will be



tabled at this important meeting — the resolution on the major achievements and historical experience of the CPC's 100 years of endeavours", it said. The Plenum is scheduled to be held from November 8 to 11.

Politically, it is regarded as a key meeting for Xi who in the last ten years of his tenure in power has emerged as the most powerful leader after party founder Mao Zedong as he is widely expected to take up an unprecedented third term in

office. All China's top leaders derive their power from the post of the General Secretary of the CPC. All the predecessors of Xi have retired following the mandatory rule of two five-year terms or completion of 68 years of age.

Xi is widely regarded to be in power after the end of his second tenure later next year, possibly for life in view of a key constitutional amendment in 2018 which removed the two-term limit for the President. He has also been made "core leader" of the party in 2016, a status enjoyed by Mao.

Over 370 full and alternate members of the CPC Central Committee will take part in the Plenum being held in Beijing under tight Covid-19 control measures as the city in the last few weeks has reported several cases of the virus prompting officials to tighten entry and exit controls.

Afghan rights activist, 3 other women slain

AP ■ ISLAMABAD

Two suspects have been arrested in connection with the killings of a civil society activist and three other women whose bodies were found in a house in northern Afghanistan last week, a senior Taliban security official and a co-worker of the slain activist said on Saturday.

The suspects confessed to luring the women to the house in the city of Mazar-e-Sharif, Sayed Khosti, the spokesman of the Taliban-run Interior Ministry, said in a video statement posted on Twitter.

He did not say whether the suspects also confessed to the killings. He did not offer a motive for the killings or identify the victims. The case is being referred to a court, he said.

One of the victims was Frozan Safi, 29, according to a local cultural center where she worked. Safi had been desper-

8 dead in stampede at US music festival

PTI ■ HOUSTON

At least eight people have died and scores of others injured in what authorities described as a "mass casualty" incident on the opening night of a popular music festival here in Texas attended by some 50,000 fans of American rapper Travis Scott.

The sold-out concert by Scott at the Astroworld Festival in Houston had to be cancelled immediately after people started falling after the massive crowd began "to compress toward the front of the stage" around 9:00-9:15 pm (local time) on Friday, *CNN* reported.

Multiple fans were trampled as hundreds rushed the event's perimeter. Once inside, some people began climbing onto portable toilets as security personnel worked to try and contain the crowd, *ABC 13* news website reported.

"We had scores of individuals that were injured," Houston Fire Chief Sam Pena said during a news conference early on Saturday morning.

"The crowd began to compress toward the front of the stage, and people began to panic," Pena said.

Describing what unfolded as a "mass casualty" incident, the fire chief said that 17 patients were rushed to local hospitals. More than 300 people were treated at the field hospital set up near the festival,



Travis Scott performs at Day 1 of the Astroworld Music Festival at NRG Park on Friday in Houston

Pena said, adding that the concert drew about 50,000 attendees. So far, eight people have died and hundreds of others injured during the opening night of the popular weekend music festival, authorities said.

Astroworld organisers did not immediately respond to *CNN's* request for comment early Saturday morning.

Organised by rapper Scott, the third annual festival featuring multiple acts was scheduled to run from Friday through Saturday, according to the event's website. The view from SkyEye overhead Friday night showed the heavy police and fire department activity in the area of the event as organisers ended it early.

The organisers, rapper Scott and LiveNation, stopped

the show when it was apparent that multiple people were hurt, according to Houston Police Chief Troy Finner, *ABC 13* reported. The crowd disregarded metal detectors and security guards who were checking bags.

Members of the Houston Police Department's (HPD) Mounted Patrol Unit were also on scene and worked to contain the chaotic scene. HPD Executive Assistant Chief Larry Satterwhite was on-duty at the festival along with 367 police officers and 241 security officers, according to the *ABC 13* report.

Giving his first-hand account, he said, "Once we started having the mass casualty incident, they were starting CPR on several people, and it happened all at once."

Afghan Min to visit Pak with resetting ties high on agenda

Islamabad: The Interim Foreign Minister of the Taliban Government in Afghanistan is expected to visit Pakistan in the coming days as part of efforts by the two sides to reset their ties in the wake of

the Taliban's takeover of Kabul, a media report said.

Amir Khan Muttaqi was invited last month by Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi during his visit to Kabul.

BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL

Ground Floor, Corporate Bhawan, Madhya Pradesh, Sector-27-B, Chandigarh. CP/18/ (BB) 11/7/2021 FORM-6. (Refer Sub-Rule (1) of Rule 7)

APPLICATION BY CORPORATE APPLICANT TO INITIATE CORPORATE INSOLVENCY RESOLUTION PROCESS UNDER CHAPTER – II OF PART – II OF THE CODE.

[Under Rule 7 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy (Application to Adjudicating Authority) Rules, 2016].

The National Company Law Tribunal, FROM: OFFICE BEANZ Private Limited, Ground Floor, Corporate Bhawan, 220, Suncity Success Tower, Madhya Pradesh, Sector-65, Gurgaon-122001, Haryana.

IN THE MATTER OF : OFFICE BEANZ Private Limited, ...CORPORATE DEBTOR.

(A) Registrar of Companies, 4th Floor, IFCI Tower, 61, Nehru Place, New Delhi – 110019. Phone No.: 011-26235703, 26235708. Email: roc.delhi@gmca.gov.in

(B) The Principal Chief Commissioner of Income Tax, North West Region, Ayazkari Bhawan, Sector-17E, Chandigarh – 160017. Phone No.: 0172-2701645; 2544244; 2544626. Email: chandigarh.dci.admin@gmcometax.gov.in

(C) Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India, 7th Floor, Mayur Bhawan, Shankar Market, Connaught Circus, New Delhi – 110001. Phone No.: 011-23462841. Email: santosh01.d@ibbi.gov.in

1. Realini Realty Private Ltd., C-1122, Second Floor, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058. 2. Man Mohan Singh Mahila, 42/43, West Punjabi Bagh, New Delhi-110026. 3. Gurneet Singh Mahila, 13, North Avenue Road, Faridkot, New Delhi-110026. 4. Realini Realty LLP, A-31/2, DLF Phase-I, Gurgaon, Haryana-5. Jasjeet Singh & Sandeep Singh, 13, North Avenue Road, Punjabi Bagh, New Delhi-110026. 6. Realm Realty Private Limited, C-1122, Second Floor, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058. 7. Sambhav Builders, LLP, Unit No. 5, Basement, M.G. Road, Sultanpur, New Delhi-110030. 8. Mananand Mahila, 42/43, West Punjabi Bagh, New Delhi-110026. 9. Teemaa Infrastructure & Holding Limited, Birla Mil Complex, 61 Road, Near: Anand Enclave, Kirti Nagar, New Delhi-110027. 10. Sambhav Builders, P. Unit No. 5, Basement, M.G. Road, Sultanpur, New Delhi-110030. 11. Naveen Kohli & Simla Kohli, A-12/4, Paschim Vihar, New Delhi-110063. 12. H.B.R. Chemicals Private Limited, 26, Banarsi Dasta Estate, Civil Lines, Delhi-110054. 13. Saraj Gupta, House No. B-434, Meera Bagh, New Delhi. 14. Jitender Rajpal, B-150, Part-I, Gurugram, New Delhi-110099. 14. Akshay Anand, House No. 02, Road No. 65, West Punjabi Bagh, Punjabi Bagh, Delhi-110026. 15. Alka Bajaj, Sami Bajaj, Anil Kumar & Sons (HUF), Sahi Bajaj, 3/47, Roop Nagar, Delhi-110077. 16. Samyak Mehta, Plot No. 719, Pooa City-II, Sector-37, Gurgaon-122001. 17. Anand Kumar Lal, Kushi Kumar Lal, Deepika Lal, and Vanita Lal, 17, Kapil Vihar, Opposite Metro Pillar No. 351, Piplampur, New Delhi-110034. 18. PLICA India Private Limited, 149, Model Town East, Ghaziabad-201001, Uttar Pradesh. 19. Kiran Rana, F-505, Son Vihar Apartments, R.K. Puram, Sector-10, Delhi-110022. 20. Smt. Manju Khanna, 50/48, Beverly Park-I, M.G. Road, Gurgaon-122009. 20. Ms. Arati Wagle, 4B, Jangpura-B, Mathura Road, New Delhi-110014. 21. Smt. Rekha Devi Mukin, 18, Pigeon Post Road, Civil Lines, Delhi-110054. 22. Shri. Anand Singh, 28, Shri. Karan Singh, V-B-110, Second Floor, Sunehri, New Delhi-110026. 23. Shri. Kamlesh Singh, 29, Smt. Krishna Kapur, B-4/15, Paschim Vihar, New Delhi. 30. Shri. Taj Mohan Sachedev, 67, Sunder Nagar, Mathura Road, New Delhi-110003. 31. Shri. Munish Chopra, F-1/7, Model Tower-II, North West Delhi, Delhi-110009. 32. Smt. Manju Chopra, F-1/7, Model Tower-II, North West Delhi, Delhi-110009. 33. Jagdish Chander Chopra, F-1/7, Model Tower-II, North West Delhi, Delhi-110009. 34. M/s. PaeDee Build Con. Pvt. Ltd., House No. 155, 34, Sector-29, Panchsheel Park, New Delhi-110028. 35. Shri. Khushi Chhabra, Chhabra, House No. 219, Second Floor, Block B-1, Paschim Vihar, Delhi-110063. 35. RSR Agencies Private Limited, Flat No. 506, HEWO-1, Sector-56, Gurgaon-122011, Haryana. 35. Smt. Saraj Bhatia, House No. 914, Sector-8, Panchkula, Haryana. 36. Shri. Sanjeev Arora, BE-15/4 Janakpuri, B-1, West Delhi, Delhi-110058. 36. Smt. Prem Soni, House No. A-87, Gujranwala Town, Part-I, Delhi-110009. 37. Shri. Bhagat Singh, Smt. Sarish Choudhry, House No. 785, Sector-80, Phase-II, SAS Nagar, Mohali, Chandigarh. 38. Shri. Deepak Arora, Smt. Usha Arora, 9/49, IFCO Colony, Sector-17/8, Gurgaon, Haryana. 39. Shri. Vinod Kumar Mehra, D-23, South City-1, Gurgaon-122001, Haryana. 40. Smt. Preeti Saral, 102/37, Khushi Ki Bajarani, Lashkar, Gind, Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh. 41. M/s. Prudent Real Estates & Developers LLP, Plot No. 10, Block-D, RBC Nagar, Raya, 42, M/s. Fil Fibrecomics Private Limited, J-4/23, DLF Phase-II, Gurgaon, Haryana. 43. Smt. Ushi Dhadwan, W-70, Greater Kailash, New Delhi-110048. 43A. Shri. Rajesh Chopra, F-1/7, Model Tower-II, North West Delhi, Delhi-110009. 43B. Smt. Anjali Varma, Shri. Shiv Kumar Varma, Shri. Rajni Raj Chawla, Shri. Deepak Kumar Tiwari, Shri. Anil Kumar, 220, Suncity Success Tower, Sector-65, Gurgaon-122001, Haryana. 83. M/s. Sahara Engineers and Consultants, K/14, Ground Floor, Main Rajapuri Road, Opposite Dwarika Sector-5, Near Indane Gas Agency, Sector-5, New Delhi, Delhi-110059.

Please take notice that the above captioned Company Petition (IB/BB/11/7/2021) under Section 10 of the Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code, 2016 is pending before the National Company Law Tribunal, Chandigarh Bench, pursuant to issuance of notice by Order dated 28.07.2021. By the said Order, the Hon'ble Tribunal was pleased to direct:-

"Reply/response by the aforesaid authorities be filed within 3 weeks and Rejoinder/response thereto, if any within two weeks from the date of receipt of copy of Reply/response exchanging the copies between the Parties"

Copies of the Petition and documents filed in support have been sent to all Parties by electronic mode/Email pursuant to further Order dated 26.10.2021 passed by the Hon'ble Tribunal. This notice is issued for intimation of all concerned and for compliance of the Order dated 28.07.2021 passed by the Hon'ble Tribunal. The said Order dated 28.07.2021 has also been sent by electronic mode/Email to all Parties.

OFFICE BEANZ PRIVATE LIMITED, CORPORATE DEBTOR (APPLICANT THROUGH: AKMID LEGAL), Advocates, Place: Gurgaon, 3356, Second Floor, Sector-23, Gurgaon-122017, National Capital Region, Haryana, Date: 07.11.2021 Tel 9810072932, 0124-4016932; 4208630. Email: akmidlegal@gmail.com

AP ■ GLASGOW, SCOTLAND

Cheering and marching to the beat of drums, tens of thousands of climate activists paraded on Saturday through the streets of the Scottish city hosting the UN climate summit, demanding that Governments step up actions to reduce the use of climate-warming fossil fuels that are damaging the planet.

The mood in Glasgow was upbeat despite bursts of rain and the crowd was peaceful. Protesters condemned govern-



Climate activists attend a protest organised by the COP26 Coalition in London on Saturday

ment leaders around the world for climate talks that activists say have so far failed to produce the fast action needed. Climate protests were also held in other cities across Europe, including London, Paris, Dublin, Copenhagen, Zurich and Istanbul.

"We're having these conversations, but there's no policies to actually back them," said Daze Aghaji, a marcher from London at the Glasgow demonstration, shouting over the steady beat of the drums.

"And on top of that, the real

people should be in the room," Aghaji said, echoing complaints from climate advocates that the Glasgow summit has too sharply limited participation by the public. "How are we expecting to make decent policy when the people who are the stakeholders of this aren't even present in the room?"

Marchers held signs with messages including "Code Red for Humanity," "Stop big polluters," "COP26, we are watching you" or simply "I'm angry."

Megan McClellan, 24, of Glasgow said she doubted that

climate negotiators were listening: "This is a very easy thing for them to ignore. They're nice and comfortable" inside the summit conference center.

But her friend Lucette Wood, 30, of Edinburgh disagreed.

"They might not actually do anything about it but they pretend that they do ... and they will just put it off for 20-30 years," Wood said.

As marchers neared the climate summit, a rainbow arched through the sky.

Real GDP expected to grow at 8-9%: Motilal Oswal



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's real GDP is expected to grow at 8-9 per cent year-on-year (YoY) in Q2FY22, Motilal Oswal Financial Services (MOFSL) said.

The real GDP is the inflation adjusted figure of all the finished goods and services produced in a country within a specific time period.

In a report, MOFSL said its in-house estimates suggest India's real GDP grew at 8-9 per cent YoY in Q2FY22, marginally higher than "our expectations".

The second quarter GDP numbers have not yet been released. The macro-economic data points are slated to be released on November 30.

MOFSL said: "Looking at our EAI estimates, we believe that better growth was largely supported by massive government spending in 2QFY22."

Besides, the report said the economic activity for October 2021 appeared promising.

"Most of the indicators - PMI manufacturing, toll collections, e-way or vahan registrations, mobility indicators,

and power generation - improved last month."

However, the brokerage house's preliminary estimates indicate that Economic Activity Index (EAI) for India's GVA posted a seven-month low growth of 5.4 per cent YoY in September 2021 versus 11.7 per cent YoY in August 2021.

"Consequently, EAI-EVA grew 9.2 per cent YoY in 2QFY22 on account of lower growth in the aFarm and Non-Farm sectors.

This further indicates the favourable base effect is waning off."

Macro-data to dictate market trend

HIGH VALUATIONS A CONCERN

FIANS ■ MUMBAI

Ongoing quarterly results season, along with the release of macro-economic data on industrial output and inflation, will determine the trajectory of the key Indian equity indices in the week ahead.

Besides, market experts expressed concern over high valuations as well as global cues impacting FPI inflows.

However, healthy quarterly earnings combined with production growth and normalisation of supply chains will keep investors' sentiments high.

"FPI selling has abated for the time being. However, we need positive FPI flows for the markets to keep rising from here," said Deepak Jasani, Head of Retail Research, HDFC Securities.

"A 17,613-17,757 band is crucial on the downside, while a breach of 18,013 could lead to more upsides."

On Thursday, during the hour-long 'Mahurat Trade Session', FIIs sold Rs 328.11 crore worth of stocks on the BSE, NSE and MSEI in the cap-

ital market segment.

In terms of corporate earnings, Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Retail Research, Broking & Distribution, Motilal Oswal Financial Services said: "Companies have largely delivered in line with expectation. Most companies have indicated of recovery in demand as the economy opened up although higher commodity and energy prices have exerted downward pressure on margins."

"Companies have taken price hikes to pass on the impact of commodity costs, and the impact of it on demand remains to be seen. However, valuations are still at a premium and would demand consistent earning delivery going ahead. Thus market might continue to remain under pressure till valuations get reasonable and global cues improve."

Furthermore, companies such as Motherson Sumi Systems, Britannia Industries, Bharat Heavy Electricals, IDFC, Indraprastha Gas, Mahindra & Mahindra, MRF, Power Grid, Coal India, Hero MotoCorp and Hindalco are expected to release their Q2 earning results in the coming week.

Apart from Q2 results, investors will look forward to the macro-economic data of IIP (Index of Industrial



Production) and Consumer Price Index (CPI).

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) is slated to release the macro-economic data points of IIP and CPI on November 12.

According to Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services: "On a near to medium basis, investors should focus on defensive sectors in anticipation of higher market volatility."

"Sectors such as tourism, capital goods & infra due to the fiscal push and power (renewables) and manufacturing sectors that are bound to benefit from the full-reopening of the

economy should be under the investors' radar."

In addition, Santosh Meena, Head of Research, Swastika Investmart said: "FIIs' behaviour along with inflation numbers from the US and China will remain key factors for the next week."

"After an extended weekend, Indian markets are likely to start a fresh week with a positive note on the global backdrop, however there is a risk of selling pressure at higher levels as we are underperforming the global peers where the near term texture has changed to 'sell on rise' from 'buy on dip'."

IndiGo to start 12 new flights in Nov

FIANS ■ NEW DELHI

Airline major IndiGo said on Saturday that it will commence 12 new flights in November 2021. The airline, which commenced flight service between Ahmedabad and Jodhpur from November 1 and in the Bengaluru-Rajkot, Kolkata-Coimbatore, Delhi-Trivandrum and Dibrugarh-Dimapur routes from November 2, will launch service between Ahmedabad and Ranchi from November 10.

The airline said these flights are designed to cater to business and leisure travellers, who are constantly on the lookout for new and affordable flying options. Sanjay Kumar, Chief Strategy and Revenue Officer at IndiGo, said: "These routes will enhance connectivity between northern, eastern, northeastern, western, and southern regions, promoting trade and commerce. We will continue to offer new routes as per the travel demand across various sectors." At present, IndiGo has a fleet of more than 275 aircraft and operates over 1,400 daily flights, connecting 71 domestic and 24 international destinations.

BUILDING & MISCELLANEOUS WORKS IN CONNECTION WITH TOY TRAIN PROJECT

E-Tender Notice No.: 37-ENGG-RNY-2021-22. **Dated:** 03-11-2021. E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work: **Brief Description of Work:** Construction of station building, P.P. Shed, Pathway Water supply system, N.F. Railway camp cum control office and miscellaneous works in connection with Toy Train Project (NG-610mm) at PTSO Lake, Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh (approx. 2500m length). **Tender Value:** ₹ 2,26,03,776.71. **Earnest Money:** ₹ 2,63,100/- **Date & Time of Closing of Tender at 13:00 hrs on 24-11-2021. Date & Time of Opening of Tender at 15:00 hrs. on 24-11-2021.** For details please visit in website www.ireps.gov.in

DRM(W), Rangiya
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers With A Smile

MEYER APPAREL LIMITED
CIN: L1810HR1993PLC032010
Regd. Office: No.3 & 4, Mustil No.19, Killa No.-5 Opposite Tata Consultancy N.H-8, Village Narsinghpur, Gurugram- 122004 Haryana, India
NOTICE

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Regulation 29 read with Regulation 47 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 that meeting of Board of Directors of Meyer Apparel Limited to be held on Thursday, 11th November 2021 at 1:30 PM at Regd. Office (Virtual Place of Meeting), arrangement will also be made for participation of Board Members electronically through video conferencing facility, inter-alia to consider and approve, the Un-Audited Financial Results for the quarter/half yearly ended September 30, 2021 and amongst other items.

This notice is also available on the website of the company <https://www.meyerapparel.com> and on the website of BSE Ltd <https://www.bseindia.com>, where the company's shares are listed.

For Meyer Apparel Limited
Sd/-
Vijay Garg
Place: Gurugram
Date: November 05, 2021 Company Secretary

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the Public at large that Smt. Poonam Kapoor D/o. Sh. Sushil Kumar Anand & W/o. Sh. Ashok Kumar Mehta is the 'Title Holder' in possession of 'Society Built Up Freehold Flat No. A-13, Hilansh CGHS Ltd., Plot No. 1, Sector-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-75', hereinafter referred to as 'Schedule Property' vide Conveyance Deed dated 19.05.2009, registered as Regn. No. 7191, Addl. Book 1, Vol. No. 3378, pg. 111-112 on 19.05.2009 in the Office of Sub Registrar-VII, New Delhi. That the Schedule Property was allotted by Hilansh CGHS Ltd. to Ms. Poonam Kapoor and Conveyance Deed is also executed in the name of Smt. Poonam Kapoor, however, the sale of the Schedule Property is presently intended to be undertaken in the name of Smt. Poonam Kapoor alias Smt. Poonam Mehta (surname taken upon second marriage vide Certificate of Marriage dated 07.02.2002, issued by New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, USA) through her Special Power of Attorney Sh. Sushil Kumar Anand vide Special Power of Attorney dated 27.09.2021 apostille by the Consulate General of India at New York, USA on 12.10.2021. Thus, this notice is to declare that Smt. Poonam Anand D/o. Sh. Sushil Kumar Anand, Smt. Poonam Kapoor W/o. Sh. Ajay Kapoor (Previous Marriage), Smt. Poonam Mehta W/o. Sh. Ashok Kumar Mehta (Current Marriage) and Smt. Poonam (as seen attesting her signature on Schedule Property Documents) are all one and the same Person. This notice is issued to Public at Large, i.e. to any Person(s), Company(ies), Authority(ies), Society(ies), Organisation(s), Financial Institution(s), Bank(s), HUFs etc., having any objection to the alias of names of the 'Title Holder' of the Schedule Property or having any claim, right, title, interest, possession in the Schedule Property, by way of Ownership, Succession, Inheritance, Sale, Mortgage, Exchange, Charge, Lien, Gift, Trust, Encumbrance etc., or objection to the sale of the Schedule Property, may come forward with supporting documents, to be delivered to the undersigned within 15 days from the date of this Publication, post expiration of which, any claim(s) or objection(s), if raised or received, shall be treated as null & void and such claims or objection shall be treated as waived, and the 'Title Holder' shall proceed to sell the Schedule Property as presently intended.

Nisheet Khurana
On Behalf of Poonam Mehta
Advocate- 1211/2013
Flat No. 62, Sunview Apartment Sector-11, Pocket-4, Dwarka, New Delhi-110075
Mob: 9911112997

India ready to move into next orbit of growth: SBI chief

PTI ■ DUBAI

India is ready to move into the next orbit of growth with the hugely successful implementation of the Covid-19 vaccination program, State Bank of India (SBI) Chairman Dinesh Kumar Khara said on Saturday.

The kind of vaccine drive the country has seen makes all the Indians proud, especially because the domestically produced vaccine is being used in a big way, Khara said at the India Pavilion at EXPO2020 Dubai.

"Actually, it (rapid vaccination) has enhanced the confidence level of the common man as well as the economy," he said.

India recently achieved a major milestone in its vaccination programme against



Covid-19 as the cumulative vaccine doses administered in the country surpassed the 100-crore mark.

"The country has lived through one of the most challenging times and has come out of it in a very successful manner that gives the confidence that going forward, the journey should be rather easy, and we should be having a huge opportunity for growth... Which I am sure will go a long way in terms of meeting the common man's

aspirations," he said.

The credit growth in the economy was quite muted for almost two years, he said, expressing hope that the capacity utilisation will improve, and help revive investment demand in the corporate sector.

"The government has done a wonderful job by continuing its focus on infrastructure investment, which has gone a long way in terms of giving a push to the core sectors of the economy. And with private corporate sectors coming with the investment, the economy will certainly move to the next orbit of development," he added. On the India Pavilion, Khara said it is presenting the real India, which is full of opportunities, to the whole world in an impressive manner.

Iran says reserves of 60% enriched uranium hit 25 kg

FIANS ■ TEHRAN

The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) said Iran's reserves of 60 per cent enriched uranium have reached 25 kg, Tasnim News Agency has reported.

"Iran is among the few countries that are able to produce it (60 per cent enriched uranium)," AEOI's Spokesman, Behrouz Kamalvandi was quoted as saying.

Iran's "stockpile of 20 per cent enriched uranium has surpassed 210 kg," he added.

According to a law passed by the Iranian parliament in December 2020, the AEOI was required to produce at least 120 kg of 20 per cent enriched uranium by the end of 2021.

Under the 2015 Iranian nuclear agreement, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action



(JCPOA), Iran was obliged to limit its uranium enrichment to a 3.67 per cent purity and to stockpile no more than 300 kg of the material, Xinhua news agency reported. Iranian authorities have said the boost in uranium enrichment, along

with other measures to reduce some commitments under the JCPOA, is a reaction to the US unilateral withdrawal from the nuclear deal and the failure of European signatories to protect Iran's interests amid US energy and banking sanctions.

After six rounds of negotiations aimed at reviving the JCPOA in Austria's capital Vienna between April and June, Iran and the European Union on Wednesday agreed to continue the talks from November 29.

Rajib Kumar Mishra given charge as PTC India's CMD

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

PTC India has said Rajib Kumar Mishra has been given the charge of the company's chairman and managing director, effective Saturday.

"Rajib Kumar Mishra, director (marketing and business development) shall exercise the power of chairman and managing director of PTC India Ltd with effect from November 6, 2021, subsequent to relieving of Deepak Amitabh," the company said in a statement.

Earlier this month, the company stated in a BSE filing, "This is in continuation to our letter dated October 13, 2021, informing about the resignation of Deepak Amitabh as CMD of PTC India from November 5, 2021."

PTC India's board in its meeting held on November 1 decided that till regular CMD/MD is appointed, Mishra, the current whole-time director, will also exercise the powers of CMD from November 6, according to the BSE filing.

I-T searches carried out at Maharashtra based Urban Credit Cooperative Bank

FIANS ■ MUMBAI

The Centre on Saturday said that Income Tax (I-T) Department recently carried out search and seizure operations at locations associated with an Urban Credit Cooperative Bank located in Maharashtra.

According to the Ministry of Finance, the operation was carried out on October 27 at the bank's Headquarter and one of the branches.

Besides, the residence of the bank's Chairman and one of its directors were also covered.

"The analysis of bank data on 'Core Banking Solutions' (CBS) and the state-

ments of key persons recorded during the search action has revealed the glaring irregularities in opening the bank accounts."

"More than 1,200 new bank accounts were opened in the said branch without PAN. The investigations have revealed that these bank accounts were opened without following KYC norms and all account opening forms are filled in by the bank staff and they have put their signature or thumb impressions."

As per the statement, in all these accounts, multiple cash deposits each of exact denomination of Rs 1.9 lakh, were made totalling to ₹53.72 crore.

Indusind Bank says whistleblower claims baseless

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Terming whistleblower allegations on loan evergreening as "grossly inaccurate and baseless", Indusind Bank on Saturday admitted to have disbursed 84,000 loans without customer consent in May owing to a "technical glitch".

Lending without the consent was reported by the field staff in two days, and the glitch was also rectified expeditiously, the private sec-

tor lender said in a clarification.

On Friday, there was a media report about anonymous whistleblowers writing to the bank management and the RBI about BFL, the microlending-focused subsidiary of the bank, allegedly resorting to evergreening of loans, where-in existing borrowers unable to pay dues were given new loans to present the books as clean.

"The bank strongly denies the allegations of 'evergreening'. All

the loans originated and managed by BFL, including during the Covid period which saw the first and second waves ravaging the countryside, are fully compliant with the regulatory guidelines," an official statement said.

"Due to a technical glitch in May 2021, nearly 84,000 loans were disbursed without the customer consent getting recorded at the time of loan disbursement," it added.

"Operational issues" due to the

pandemic's second wave like lockdowns, containment zones, and restrictions at the village/panchayat level had necessitated disbursement of some loans in cash, it said.

At the end of September, 26,073 of these 84,000 customers were active with the loan outstanding at Rs 34 crore, which is 0.12 per cent of the September-end portfolio, the bank said, adding that it carries necessary provisions against the loans.

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that a girl namely **Bharati Rawat**, D/o **Sh. Ram Rawat**, R/o: **Kilkari Rainbow Home Chabi Ganj, Kashmere, Delhi** has been reported missing/kidnapped since 28.01.2019 from **ISBT Kashmere Gate, Delhi**. In this regard **FIR No. 33/19 dated 28.01.2019 u/s 363 IPC** has been registered at **P.S. Kashmere Gate, Delhi**. The description of missing/kidnapped girl is as under:

Name: Bharati Rawat, **Age:** About 15 Years, **Height:** 5', **Face:** Oval, **Complexion:** Shallow, **Built:** Thin, **Wearing:** Black Colour Sweater & Black Jeans.

If anyone have any information about this missing/kidnapped girl please inform P.S. Kashmere Gate, Delhi.

Web: <http://cbi.nic.in>, **Email:** cic@cbi.gov.in
Ph.: 011-24368638/24368641, **Fax:** 011-24368639

Police Station Kashmere Gate, Delhi
Ph: 011-23967889, 8750870123

DP/1639/N/2021

450 square feet office in prime Mumbai for six officials only!

FIANS ■ CHENNAI

Which financial sector regulator in India has the luxury of having 7,450 square feet office in high rent city Mumbai for just six officials?

Well, the answer is the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) that runs on policyholders' money, a senior official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told IANS.

One can play 'catch me if you can' there, the official added.

"It is IRDAI's 'kala pani' (the Cellular Jail or the colonial-era prison

in Andaman during the British rule - where inconvenient officials to the powers that be are transferred out of Hyderabad)," the official said.

Sources told IANS, the IRDAI had taken on lease an office space of 7,450 square feet in Churchgate, Nariman Point, Mumbai in 2014, got it renovated at a cost of more than Rs 1 crore, and opened its Mumbai Regional office (MRO) in October 2015.

Since 2015, at any point of time, not more than 10 officers have been posted in the MRO - a luxurious 740 square feet per official.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
Office of the Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti PHE, Ground Water Division, Sgr.

Gist of e-Tender.
NIT No: - e-PHE/GWDS 56 of 11/2021, Dated: -11-2021

For and on behalf of Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir e-tenders are invited in 02 Cover System for Construction of tube wells at below mentioned site from registered water well drillers/contractors as per the details given in tender document.

S.No 1. Name of work :- Construction of Production Tube Well at WSS Shungli Nasserpora Hard Suresh.
Est. Cost Rs. in Lacs :- Rs. 36.80 Lacs, Cost of Tender Document :- Rs. 1000/-
Time of completion :- 45 Days, Class of Contract :- Registered for Construction of Gravel Packed Production Tube Wells, Prog :- Languishing (LUP 1110), AAANo: Accorded

Critical Dates / Information.

- 1. Publishing Date :- 05-11-2021 (11.00 A.M)**
- 2. Period of Downloading of Bids :- 05-11-2021 (11:00 A.M) to 12-11-2021 (02:00 P.M)**
- 3. Period of Submission of bids :- 05-11-2021 (11:00 A.M) to 12-11-2021 (02:00 P.M)**
- 4. Date of opening of Tender. :- 13-11-2021 at (02:00 P.M)**
- 5. Tender Receiving Authority:** Executive Engineer, (Jal Shakti) PHE Ground Water Srinagar Kashmir- 190011.
- 6. Document Cost : Non-Refundable** in the shape of Treasury Challan/receipt deposited to **Account Head 0215** in favour of Executive Engineer (Jal Shakti) PHE Ground Water Division Srinagar (at Saddar Treasury Srinagar) *(The firm shall specify the name of work for which apply)*
- 7. Bid Validity Period: 180 Days**
- The bids can be downloaded or uploaded on **www.Jktenders.gov.in**
- Instead of EMD the firm has to furnish **"Bid Security Declaration"**, format of the declaration is mentioned in the Bid Document

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Jal Shakti PHE Ground Water Division, Srinagar.

No. DIPK-12014/21 Dated: 06-11-2021

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
Directorate of Sheep Husbandry Department Kashmir
Lal-Mandi, Srinagar 190008
Tel. No: 09194-2310604, Fax No: 0194-2311063, Email id: kashmirmirino.sheep@gmail.com

E-Nit No:- DSHK/ACCTTS/21-22/ 11421-33 Dated:- 05-11-2021

Subject: E-Procurement Notice for the supply of Drugs/Medicine.

Reference :- (i) Administrative Department Letter No.:- ASHF-Acct/52/2021-03 ANIMAL SHEEP HUSBANDRY AND FISHERIES DEPARTMENT dated:- 03-11-2021.
(ii) Director Sheep Husbandry's Order No.:- 149 dated:- 05-11-2021

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, Union Territory of India, e-Tenders in two bid system (Technical-1 and Financial bid-2) through Chairman State Level Purchase committee, Sheep Husbandry Department, J&K, Kashmir (Directorate of Sheep Husbandry Department, Kashmir) are invited from manufacturers/ companies of national repute of Drugs and Medicines for fixing the rate contract for supply of various Drugs/Medicines.

- The bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility, criteria, specifications, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), set of terms and conditions of supply/contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the e-procurement website **www.jktenders.gov.in** as per schedule of dates given below.
- 1. Date of Issue of Tender Notice :- 05-11-2021**
- 2. Period of downloading of bidding documents :- 06-11-2021 to 15-11-2021**
- 3. Bid submission start date :- 06-11-2021**
- 4. Bid submission end date :- 15-11-2021 (4:00 P.M)**
- 5. Date and time of opening of technical bids (online) :- 16-11-2021 (2:00 P.M)**
- Instructions for bidders regarding e-tendering process:-
i. Bidders are advised to download bids submission manual from the "Downloads option as well as from Bidders Manual kit" on the website **www.jktenders.gov.in** to acquaint themselves with bid submission process.
- To participate in bidding process bidder has to get a Digital Signature Certificate (DSC), as per Information Technology ACT-2008. Bidders can get Digital Certificate from an approved vendor.
- The bidder has to submit their bids online in electronic format with the Digital S. gnature. No bidding will be accepted in physical form.
- Bids will be opened online as per the schedule mentioned at Para-1.
- Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with the technical bid.
- The department will not be responsible for delay in online submission due to any reason.
(Note: Scan all the documents on 100dpi with Black and White option.)

Sd/- Chairman State Level Purchase Committee
Sheep Husbandry Department Jammu & Kashmir

DIPK-11997/21 Dated: 06.11.2021



CHAMPIONS OF ENVIRONMENT

A special virtual edition of TEDx Gateway Countdown 2021 was hosted as a global initiative to address and accelerate solutions to the climate crisis and turning ideas into action. SHALINI SAKSENA chats up a few action-takers

‘Biofuel is the future’

SHRIKUMAR SURYANARAYAN (RESEARCHER & INNOVATOR)

He has a list of accomplishments and not a name to be trifled with when it comes to development of technology for off-shore biomass production and conversion to a variety of bio-products including agricultural bio-stimulants, renewable fuels and chemicals. The words are heavy and so is his work. Meet Shrikumar Suryanarayanthe MD-co-founder of Sea6 Energy, Bangalore.

The company was founded in 2010 in Chennai by several alumni of IIT-Madras. Shrikumar, formerly the President of Research and Development and Chief Scientific Advisor at Biocon Limited, Bangalore the largest life-science company in India for over 25 years has served as the CEO for the Translational Health Sciences Institute at the Delhi-NCR Biosciences Cluster.

He has BTech in Chemical Engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras and a Masters in Biotechnology from the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi. Shrikumar was conferred the Distinguished Alumnus Award of the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras in 2009 and was chosen as Entrepreneur of the Year by Bio Spectrum in 2012. If this was not enough to add to his credentials, he is also the present President of the Association of Biotechnology Led Enterprises of India.

Explaining what his company does, Shrikumar tells you that at present his company is involved in production of all things that are biological.

“Let’s take an example of biological matter — plant matter. Biological matter can be derived from plants or animals. From this we can get protein and take it further and get energy from it. In other words, you can get energy from plant matter. If we take a step back, we can make all kinds of bio-products — from simple to complex bio-products. One such product is ethanol — a bio-fuel. Once you make this, one can make several petro-chemical products from this. There are several technologies that can do this,” Shrikumar tells you.

What this translates into is that if you have an unlimited source of plant matter, you



TO SATISFY INDIA’S DEMAND FOR CRUDE OIL, WE NEED 100,000 SQ KM OF CULTIVATION. WE ONLY NEED SEA SPACE THE SIZE THAT IS LESS THAN THE AREA TAMIL NADU OR PUNJAB. INDIA IS LUCKY WE GET SO MUCH SUNLIGHT ALL THE YEAR AROUND. WE CAN PRODUCE ENOUGH BIOFUEL TO MEET THE COUNTRY’S DEMAND

can make a whole variety of products. However, there is a catch here.

“You need to have a large unlimited supply of plant matter. So why should we go out in the sea and make plant matter? The answer is simple. Let’s make a calculation. India imported a little over 198 million tonnes of crude in 2020-21. When this is burnt carbon dioxide is released leading to global warming. A good solution is to switch to bio-fuels. But to make this shift we will need four times the plant matter — for every kg of crude oil, we will need 4 kg of biomass,” Shrikumar says.

The country will need one billion tonnes of plant matter to make the substitute from crude oil to biofuel. One can use agricultural waste. But the entire output of agriculture in India stands at less than one billion tonnes a year.

and hardening of cement, she realized that a combination of conventional Portland cement with calcined clay and limestone could lead to substantial CO2 reductions. For the past seven years, with the support of the Swiss government, she has been working with the industry to bring this product into practice. DR PARAG KHANNA (GEOPOLITICAL EXPERT) He is a leading global strategy advisor, world traveler, and best-selling author.

He is founder and managing partner of FutureMap, a data and scenario based strategic advisory firm. His latest book MOVE: The Forces Uprooting Us was preceded by The Future is Asian: Commerce, Conflict & Culture in the 21st Century (2019). He is author of a trilogy of books on the future of world order beginning with The Second World: Empires and Influence in the New Global Order (2008), followed by How to Run the World: Charting a Course to the Next Renaissance (2011), and

concluding with Connectography: Mapping the Future of Global Civilization (2016). He was named one of Esquire’s 75 Most Influential People of the 21st Century, and featured in WIRED magazine’s Smart List. He holds a PhD from the London School of Economics, and Bachelors and Masters degrees from the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University. He has traveled to nearly 150 countries and is a Young Global Leader of the World Economic Forum.

VIDYUT MOHAN (INNOVATOR)

What if it was possible to convert waste crop residue into value-added chemicals like activated carbon on-site? Vidyut Mohan, co-founder of Takachar has created technology that turns waste crop residue which can mitigate smoke emissions. At the same time it creates extra income for marginalised farmers. His company is a social enterprise enabling farmers to prevent open burning of their waste farm residues.

Passionate about energy access and supporting rural livelihood, Vidyut became interested in biomass-based energy/chemical development due to its untapped potential and close association with farmers.

After completing his master’s thesis at TU Delft, he came back to India to work with village communities in the Himalayas. This work led him to discover a way to scale farm residue utilisation through technology, as well as to support farm-based livelihood which in turn led to the formation of Takachar.

He tells you that the mission of his company is to drastically scale the utilisation of agricultural and forest waste to reduce air pollution, create livelihood and mitigate and prevent carbon emissions.

“We have developed small low-cost equipment that can be used in a decentralised way to process this waste into useful products and fertilisers. Our team has developed these equipment that were lab designed by my co-founder and myself,” Vidyut says.

He did his masters in sustainable energy technology and specialise in biomass technol-



ogy and sustainable entrepreneurship. He was also named an Unleash Energy Talent in 2017 and is a fellow at the School for Social Entrepreneurs India. Vidyut is also a 2019 Echoing Green Fellow.

His interest to convert agricultural and forest waste came when he did a pilot project in the Himalayas — to convert pine needle waste into a marketable charcoal-based product.

“The success from this project is what motivated me to venture into this field and continue to do so. The people in the region managed to earn a livelihood — managed to double their income — from the waste and also prevented forest fires during the pilot. The pine needles were used to make charcoal using our equipment,” Vidyut tells you.

The idea to convert pine needles came while he was pursuing his masters.

“I was deeply interested in biomass because I thought it had a lot of potential. It was an interesting research question for me to explore. India is a great space for exploring this as there is a lot of biomass generated when it comes to agriculture

THE MISSION OF HIS COMPANY IS TO DRASTICALLY SCALE THE UTILISATION OF AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST WASTE TO REDUCE AIR POLLUTION, CREATE LIVELIHOOD AND MITIGATE AND PREVENT CARBON EMISSIONS

and forest waste. I focused on technical development but I didn’t want to limit my thesis to this alone. We worked with an organisation in Uttarakhand who hosted us. They were using pine needles to generate electricity in the region. That’s how we ended up making charcoal,” Vidyut recounts.

The reason to come back to India and work here was easy enough for him. Though he had a one-year visa and he could always go back to Europe, he just found a field that had him

hook, line and sinker.

“I just found a field where I loved working in. The whole idea of also exploring my venture and working on the pilot was exciting. I feel that what I studied is something that can be applied in developing countries. The challenges are so much more here. We need to grow and economically bring people out of poverty and at the same time, fight climate change,” Vidyut tells you.

This year, his company was among five winners of the first-ever Earthshot Prizes instituted by Prince William to reward innovators with £1 million each for developing groundbreaking solutions to the world’s greatest environmental challenges.

“Basically, we take any type of agricultural waste and put it into a machine. It undergoes a roasting process. It heats the waste between 200-350°C in a controlled amount of air. This, after a certain process, can be used to make fuels, fertilisers and even speciality chemicals like activated carbon. For example rice waste can be used to make fertiliser,” Vidyut says.

OTHER CHANGE CRUSADERS

KAREN SCRIVENER (MATERIAL CHEMIST)

She began her career as an academic at Imperial College in London. After 15 years, she moved into industry in Lafarge, France to discover what the real world was like. After six years, she returned to academia at EPFL in Switzerland. She created the research consortium Nanocem to develop a link between academic research and industrial needs. By understanding the chemical processes behind the setting

ANDREAS BINKERT (SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPER)

He studied at the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH), Zurich, Master of Science. He spent his foreign years in the US, where he worked for, among others, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill and later as a lecturer at SClarc and the University of Colorado. In Switzerland he founded the architectural office ARCHIPART. Today he is a partner in real estate developer Nüesch Development and teaches at the Lucerne

University of Applied Sciences. As a partner at Nüesch Development, he was responsible for the Greencity Zurich project - the largest carbon free real estate development project in Switzerland. RA MASHELKAR (SCIENTIST) He is an Indian Chemical Engineer, Mashelkar studied at University of Bombay’s University Department of Chemical Technology (now the Institute of Chemical Technology, Mumbai) where he obtained BE degree in

chemical engineering in 1966, and PhD degree in 1969. He, at present, serves as chancellor of the institute. He was a member of the Scientific Advisory Council to the Prime Minister and also of the Scientific Advisory Committee to the Cabinet. He has chaired 12 high powered committees set up to look into diverse issues ranging from national auto fuel policy to overhauling the Indian drug regulatory system and dealing with the menace of spurious drugs.

— DAVID WARNER

She was dismissed in the last ball of the innings, caught by Courtney Suppel off Nicola Hancock's bowling.

MANCHESTER DERBY ON TAP

AP ■ LONDON

Defending Premier League champion Manchester City visits Old Trafford and hopes to contain Cristiano Ronaldo. United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer says "we've moved on" from the 5-0 defeat to Liverpool that called his leadership into question.

Since then, United has a win over Tottenham and a draw at Atalanta in the Champions League. A derby victory heading into the international break would take pressure off Solskjaer as well as put the team level on points with third-place City.

Current league leader Chelsea hosts always-stubborn Burnley and again is without injured striker Romelu Lukaku. Crystal Palace is coming off an upset of City and faces a Wolverhampton team that is unbeaten in its past five games.

The league's last two winless clubs are in action: Norwich is at Brentford; and Newcastle visits Brighton.

Barcelona visits Celta Vigo in its last game under caretaker coach Sergi Barjuan. The Catalan club has secured the return of former player Xavi Hernández as its new full-time coach, but he won't arrive until Monday.

Barcelona is mid-table and needs to win to not fall further behind in the Spanish league standings. Real Madrid hosts crosstown rival Rayo Vallecano, one of the surprises of the campaign.

Madrid can overtake leader Real Sociedad, which plays on Sunday. Rayo



has the best home record in the competition but has only one once on the road. Espanyol seeks its first win in four rounds when it hosts Granada, while Levante, the league's only winless side, visits Alavés after 12 games without a victory.

Perfect in the Champions League, Juventus continues to struggle in Serie

A. The Bianconeri are coming off consecutive defeats in the Italian league entering a match against visiting Fiorentina.

"In order to play with a lot of attacking players you need offensive players who pay attention to the defensive phase," said Juventus coach Massimiliano Allegri, who has had a rough start to his second term in Turin.

"Otherwise you become vulnerable and you win one, you draw one and you lose one."

Fiorentina is in seventh place, three points ahead of ninth-place Juventus. Also, fifth-place Atalanta visits last-place Cagliari coming off a draw with Manchester United in the Champions League; and relegation-threatened Spezia hosts Torino.

Lionel Messi must wait even longer for his first league goal for Paris Saint-Germain. The six-time Ballon d'Or winner will miss the away game against Bordeaux because he is nursing minor knee and hamstring injuries.

Messi then travels to meet up with Argentina for World Cup qualifiers. The Nov. 20 home game against Nantes will be his next chance to net his first league goal after drawing a blank in five games since joining from Barcelona, although he has netted three times in the Champions League. In the other match defending champion Lille looks to move away from midtable with a home win against eighth-place Angers.



Xavi Hernandez return to Barcelona as head coach

PTI ■ BARCELONA

Xavi Hernandez's return to Barcelona was confirmed on Saturday, with the former club captain replacing Ronald Koeman as head coach on a three-year contract.

The 41-year-old was given permission to rejoin Barcelona after the Catalan giants agreed to meet the release clause in his contract with Qatari side Al Sadd on Friday.

Xavi Hernandez, who played 779 games for Barcelona and won 25 trophies, is expected to be unveiled at Camp Nou on Monday.

The former Spain international had left Barca in 2015 to finish his playing career at Al Sadd before taking over as head coach.

Verstappen shows dominant speed in practice for Mexican GP

AP ■ MEXICO CITY

The early laps in the dust of Mexico City belonged to Mercedes. By late afternoon, Red Bull was off and running again.

Formula One season championship leader Max Verstappen posted the fastest time of Friday's second practice at the Mexican Grand Prix. His Red Bull was more than half a second ahead of title rival Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes.

Hamilton even trailed Mercedes teammate Valtteri Bottas, who was more than 0.4 seconds behind Verstappen in the high altitude and thin air of Mexico City's Autodromo Hermanos Rodriguez.

Verstappen's teammate Sergio Perez was on Hamilton's rear wheel in fourth after recovering from a crash in Friday's first practice.

Verstappen leads Hamilton by 12 points heading into the final five races. The 24-year-old Dutchman is trying to



win his first title. Hamilton, 36, is chasing a record-breaking eighth.

Red Bull found the speed to make a resounding recovery after Bottas and Hamilton were quickest in first practice, a session marked by clouds of dust on a track that hasn't been used in two years. The tricky conditions made

track. Verstappen won in Mexico City in 2017 and 2018. He was dominant through practice and qualifying again in 2019, but a starting grid penalty and a second lap tire puncture ruined his race and Hamilton won.

"The margins are going to be very close in qualifying to the Mercedes but hopefully we can lock out that front row," Perez said. "I don't think it has been a representative day in terms of predicting qualifying, tomorrow everything will be even closer."

Hamilton has conceded it will be very difficult for Mercedes to match Red Bull's race speed on Sunday. Unlike the previous race at the U.S. Grand Prix when Verstappen flipped Hamilton the middle finger and called him a "stupid idiot" after their cars nearly touched in practice, the drivers steered clear of each other in Mexico City. Red Bull Team Principal Christian Horner refused to rule out a potential team owner for Perez to forfeit a win to Verstappen.

India's Harika beats Kashlinskaya to grab joint second spot

PTI ■ RIGA (LATVIA)

India's Dronavalli Harika wore down Russia's Alina Kashlinskaya with black pieces in the ninth round of the FIDE Women's Grand Swiss chess tournament to share the joint second spot with four other players.

Harika opted for the Slav Defence against the Russian opponent and obtained an overwhelming advantage in a rook endgame and smoothly converted it. Kashlinskaya resigned on move 83.

Harika now has six points after nine rounds.

With eight points, Lei Tingjie of China has a two-point lead over the rest of the field and is almost certain to take the top spot in the



Women's section.

In the Open section, Indian GM K Sasikiran defeated Pavel Eljanov in the ninth round to take his tally to 6 points and is in joint third place with nine

others.

Sasikiran faces talented Russian Andrey Espineko in the 10th round.

Leader Alireza Firouzja was joined at the top by No.1 seed Fabiano Caruana (USA) and David Howell (England) on 6.5 points after a loss to Caruana in 54 moves.

Young GM Raunak Sadhwani (5 points) was the only other Indian to post a win in the Open section, while P Harikrishna (5.5 points) and Nihal Sarin (5.5) settled for draws against Samuel Sevian (USA) and Deac Bogdan-Daniel (Romania) respectively.

The others including R Praggnanandhaa, Surya Shekhar Ganguly and B Adhiban lost to their respective opponents.

Lakshya enters semifinals of Hylo Open

PTI ■ SAARBRUCKEN (GERMANY)

Young Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen dished out a gritty performance to outwit Thailand's Kunlavut Vitidsarn in a thrilling three-game contest and progressed to the semifinals of the Hylo Open Super 500 here.

Lakshya, ranked world number 21, prevailed in a seesaw battle to notch up a 21-18 12-21 21-19 win over three-time junior World Champion Vitidsarn on Friday night.

He joined fellow Indian Kidambi Srikanth in the semifinals, who had beaten Hong Kong's NG Ka Long Angus.

Lakshya, a 2019 champion, will face Singapore's Loh Kean Yew in the semifinals.

The 20-year-old, who had claimed five titles in 2019, had a decent outing at the Denmark



Open and French Open with second round and quarterfinal finishes respectively.

The shuttler from Almora was forced to pull out of the event last year after his father and coach DK Sen had tested positive for COVID-19.

Lakshya came into the match with a 2-3 head-to-head record and battled for an hour and 18 minutes against Vitidsarn, who is ranked

24th in the world.

The Indian ran up a lead of 8-3 in a jiffy and led 11-8 at the break. The Thai shuttler tried to turn the tables but Lakshya was always ahead and comfortably pocketed the first game.

Lakshya also made a good start to the second game, leading 8-5 but Vitidsarn managed to grab a two-point advantage at the interval and kept his nose ahead to make a roaring comeback.

The decider was a closely fought battle with the duo fighting tooth and nail. If Lakshya was up 9-6, Vitidsarn caught up at 11-11 after the break and stayed close till 13-14.

The Indian soon grabbed five match points but Vitidsarn made things difficult for Lakshya, reeling off four straight points. Lakshya, however, kept his cool to end on the winning side.

HI names 24 players for WC preparatory camp

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Hockey India on Saturday named 24 players in the core probable group for a preparatory camp ahead of the men's junior World Cup scheduled to be held in Bhubaneswar from November 24.

The camp will begin from Sunday at the venue for the mega event.

"The players will report to Chief Coach Graham Reid and Coach BJ Kariappa on 7 November for the preparatory camp ahead of the prestigious quadrennial event where 16 teams from across the world will vie for top honours," HI said in a release.



The junior players were preparing for the showpiece in the camp which was being held in SAI, Bengaluru in a bio bubble over the past few months.

But now with less than three weeks left for the FIH event, "the Core

Probable Group will be vying to get used to the pitch at the Kalinga Hockey Stadium and get acclimatised ahead of the tournament."

Hosts and defending Champions India are grouped in pool B along with Canada, France and

Poland. The other teams in the fray include Belgium, Malaysia, South Africa and Chile in pool A while Netherlands, Spain, Korea and United States have been grouped in pool C. Germany, Argentina, Pakistan and Egypt form Pool D.

Watanabe re-elected as international gymnastics president

AP ■ ANTALYA

Morinari Watanabe was re-elected to a new three-year term as president of the International Gymnastics Federation on Saturday after seeing off a challenger.

Watanabe, from Japan, won the vote 81 to 47 against Farid Gayibov of Azerbaijan at a conference in Turkey, the federation said.

Watanabe has a background in business and was first elected FIG president in 2016 for a four-year term. That was extended by one year when the coronavirus pandemic caused the Tokyo Olympics to be postponed. His new term is three years so the next elections coincide with the 2024 Olympics in Paris.

No 1. Djokovic reach Paris Masters semis

AP ■ PARIS

Top-ranked Novak Djokovic beat unseeded American Taylor Fritz 6-4, 6-3 to reach the Paris Masters semifinals and remain on course for a record-extending sixth title at the tournament.

Djokovic is also vying for a record 37th Masters title. He is tied on 36 with fellow 20-time Grand Slam winner Rafael Nadal.

Djokovic, who next faces seventh-seeded Hubert Hurkacz of Poland, is playing in his first tournament since losing the U.S. Open final in straight sets to Daniil Medvedev in September.

"I felt good, considering that it was only second match back on the tour from almost two months of not playing a competitive match," said Djokovic, who had a walkover in the third round after Gael Monfils pulled out injured.

"I have to be satisfied, but also there are things that need to improve, and I know that."

He could face Medvedev, the defending Paris Masters champion, career meetings, although



in the final again this Sunday. The second-seeded Russian saved three set points at 5-4 and 0-40 in the first set before beating French qualifier Hugo Gaston 7-6 (7), 6-4.

He next plays fourth-seeded Alexander Zverev, whom he beat in last year's final. Zverev was largely untroubled in a 7-5, 6-4 win against No. 6 Casper Ruud of Norway.

Zverev leads Medvedev 5-4 in career meetings, although

Medvedev won the past three contests.

A double break of serve put Medvedev 4-0 up in the second set against Gaston.

But Gaston, who won seven straight games from 5-0 down in the second set against Spanish teen Carlos Alcaraz in the third round, rallied to 4-3.

Medvedev's 12th and 13th aces made it 5-3.

As they did against Alcaraz, the

home crowd at times cheered Medvedev's errors on serve and they roared in delight when he double-faulted on his first match point. They were silenced when he clinched victory on his next attempt.

"It was a tough match, I have to say, in front of a very difficult crowd. ... Hugo played very well, he's very good," Medvedev said.

"He's able to put spin on the ball and to also have drop shots on the same ball. You never know what he's about to do, so it's not easy for your footwork."

Earlier, Hurkacz beat Australian James Duckworth 6-2, 6-7 (4), 7-5 to secure the last spot for the season-ending ATP Finals.

Following him onto court, Djokovic secured an early break for 2-0 but Fritz broke the Serb at love in the next game.

Djokovic had a love break of his own in the eighth game but slipped to 0-40 when serving for the first set after Fritz won a 26-shot rally, and then won the next point to pull back to 5-4.

Vaughan dropped from BBC show after allegations of racism

PTI ■ LONDON

Former England skipper Michael Vaughan has been dropped from a BBC show after allegations of racism were levelled against him by two players.

Vaughan has been working as an analyst on Test Match Special for 12 years on the BBC 5 Live's 'The Tuffers and Vaughan Cricket Show'.

But he will not appear in the show on Monday following allegations of racism by Azeem Rafiq, who claimed that Vaughan had made racist comments towards him and other players before a Yorkshire match in 2009.

In a column for 'Daily Telegraph', Vaughan admitted that he was the former player implicated in the investigation into Rafiq's allegations of institutional racism at Yorkshire but "completely and categorically" denied the charges and vowed to "fight" to clear his name.

Vaughan, who represented the county from 1991 until his retirement




in 2009, apparently, told a group of Asian players, including Rafiq, "Too many of you lot, we need to do something about it."

The alleged incident occurred as Yorkshire were taking the field during a match against Nottinghamshire in 2009, Rafiq's maiden season as a professional.

"I completely and categorically

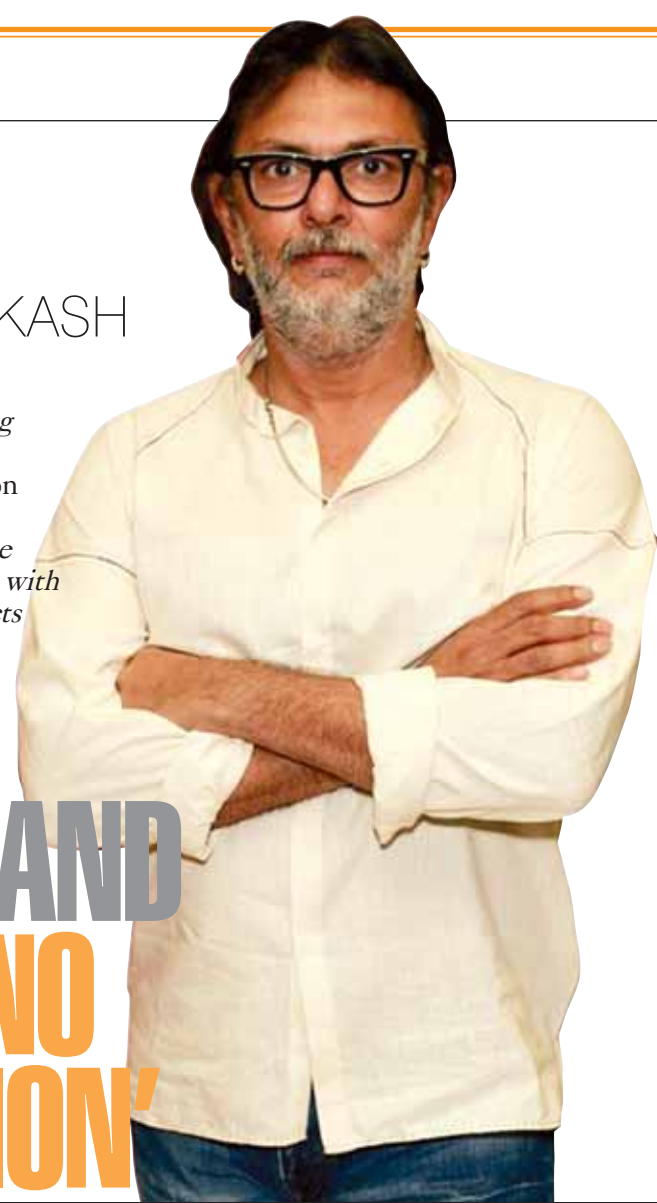
deny that I ever said those words. I have nothing to hide. The 'you lot' comment never happened," the 2005 Ashes winning captain wrote in the column. "Anyone trying to recollect words said 10 years ago will be fallible but I am adamant those words were not used. If Rafiq believes something was said at the time to upset him then that is what he believes."

talktime

RAKEYSH OMPRAKASH MEHRA

Best known for writing and directing Bhaag Milkha Bhaag and Rang De Basanti, Mehra’s Toofan was aired on Zee Cinema and he speaks with Supriya Ramesh about why he chose boxing as a backdrop, his chemistry with Farhan Akhtar, his upcoming projects among other things

‘LIFE IS A JOURNEY AND THERE IS NO DESTINATION’




■ **What is Toofan about?**
It is a story of a person who has been marginalised by society and at the same time, he is also a victim of not being accepted socially because of his religion as such. There is a very strong girl protagonist on the other side.

■ **How did the idea come up for Toofan?**
When the idea of toofan came around and we discussed it for 20 mins. That's about it. I told Farhan that it is like, the film is speaking to me and I think with the story, we can speak to the audiences at large. Let's do it. The idea was to raise the bar and we tried to do that.


■ **Why pick boxing as a backdrop?**
It lent itself naturally in my head. Boxing is a sport about the last man standing and like the metaphor of life you will be delivered many blows below the chin and even get knocked out but you have to get up and fight again.

■ **Toofan is your second sports/drama movie. Do these genres have a special place in your heart?**
Not just my heart I think sports is something which is a way of life. It is not something like only that is selective. The first thing we learn as kids is to play. Go out and play with friends, whatever the game is.
As we grow we all experience a sport in one way or the other. It is definitely close to my heart but I'm not special, it's close to everyone's heart.

■ **Farhan Akhtar had a lead role in your movie Bhag Milkha Bhag too. How has your chemistry been with him?**
Both I and Farhan collaborated for



I WAS NOT DESTINED TO BE A DIRECTOR, IT WASN'T MY DREAM. I JUST FOLLOWED MY HEART AND ONE THING LED TO ANOTHER. ONE DOT CONNECTED WITH ANOTHER AND I FOUND MYSELF IN A DIRECTOR'S CHAIR



Bhaag Milkha Bhaag. I enjoyed the process, the journey and at the end of the day, there was a lot of love and appreciation from the critics and the audiences.

The film performed well at the box office. It was a super hit and the songs did well. All in all there was this thing of getting together again these days and creating something more which we can all be proud of.

■ **How tough is it to pick a subject/theme and make it into a film?**
For me it's not tough at all. In fact, if you are in touch with your instincts, hear the voice from inside you, the choice is natural. You don't have to think too much about it.

■ **What brought you to directing?**
I was not destined to be a director, It wasn't my dream. I just followed my heart and one thing led to another, one dot connected with another and I found myself in a director's chair.

■ **Your instagram bio says, still searching. Does that have something to tell?**
It says life is a journey and there is no destination. It's a process and you keep finding your purpose. So I'm still searching my purpose. Hopefully we will achieve 10% of it.

■ **Upcoming projects?**
As a director I'm working on three scripts right now. Two of them are ready and I have promised myself to finish the third one by diwali. Post Diwali we will decide which one we will go for. As a producer, four are under production with some amazing directors, Vijay Maurya, Irshad Kamil and Atul Manjrekar.

CookSmart

The pandemic has made of us into good cooks. But we all hate to spend hours toiling over the stove. Fret not. There are a few tricks that one can use that can come to your aid while you are cooking.

If you want to quickly boil pasta, boil it in the frying pan instead of a sauce pot. The pasta cooks faster in the pan. It can save you many minutes. If you have a microwave, use it. Pasta will cook even faster here.

Also, you don't need four to eight cups of water to cook pasta — you just need just enough to cover it. Two cups should be enough to cook spaghetti or farfalle. You may need up to three cups of water for rotini or penne.

What to chop veggies faster? Before you actually get down to chopping, sharpen your knives. Invest in a good knife sharpener.



HomeSweetHome

Come the festive season and we all to spruce up ours homes. If you haven't already done for Diwali, here are a few quick that can spruce up your home this season.

Adding the right window treatment can make all the difference. Go for Roman shades with a fun pattern. Use small patterns together will do wonders for that special nook that you are trying to create around the window.

Want a grand foyer but don't know how to create it? Add a small console table. Go for a traditional table and then hang modern abstract art above it. Put some portraits against the wall below the table to give it a laid look.

Want to spruce up your bedroom on a budget? Throw pillows are the easiest way to freshen up any space — be it a bedroom or living room. Add a new colour, print, or shape. Throw pillows can make the whole space feel new again.



Masterstroke

Festive season has already begun and so does the dry winter season. The nip in the air might be taking away the moisture of your skin but you can't compromise with your look. Start your festive make-up with NOTE Cosmetics' Perfecting Skin Primer. Then apply our NOTE Mineral Foundation evenly on your face. Don't forget to apply it on your neck for an even skin tone throughout. In order to give your eye the most dramatic look NOTE Sculpt Master Mascara, which will add volume to your eye-lashes as well as your eyes. Complete the look with NOTE Mineral Semi Matte Lipstick for those fuller lips. Define your cheekbones, your perfect nose and your jawline with NOTE Perfecting Contour Kit Powder Palette.

— Hanisha Kapoor, COO, ArchiesBeauty



NatureTalk

The Alocasia plant enjoys the warmth. Your Alocasia indoor planting should be well lit with bright, but diffuse light. Direct sunlight will burn the leaves. If you want to keep the plant indoors, ensure that it is warm. Avoid drafts and sudden temperature changes. Feed once a month during the spring and summer with a liquid fertilizer for indoor plants. But remember, Alocasias are mildly toxic to pets and humans.

It thrives in a moist environment and needs plenty of water during active growth. This is a plant that definitely needs a pebble tray beneath it.



It is more than just a picture

From soft, romantic him-and-her shots to quirky photo booths and cheeky posers, wedding photography has evolved significantly over the last ten years. SUPRIYA RAMESH tells you more

For decades, wedding photography mainly consisted of cliched portraits of the bride and the groom, sitting stiffly on gilded chairs, flanked by their family or wedding guests. Recently, however, that has changed and drastically. Wedding photography has reached a whole new level. Gone are the days of shy brides and impassive grooms. It is all about bold and beautiful poses now.

Amitoj Marwah, a photographer based out of Dehradun, who has been in this field for the past 20 years, says, “The modern-day bride has taken an old wedding tradition and given it a update, which allows her to express her own personality without feeling restrained to certain customs. Brides today prize comfort as much as tradition.

Couples no longer posed photos for gilded wedding albums. They want records of every moment of emotion, drama and colour that defines the great Indian wedding. In many ways, wedding photography is now having a cinematic moment.

There is a rise in the popularity of artsy videos. In pursuit of capturing the essence of the moment, there has been a change in wedding styles ranging from gardenia to beachside.

A photoshoot is not just limited to the day of the wedding. There are pre and post-wedding shoot, bridal shoot, couple shoot with various themes and styles and even trailer for the wedding film. Shooting aesthetic wedding videos with realistic storylines just like an impressively shot film is a thing in this day and age.

Kapil Sharma, the co-founder of Delhi-based firm Divine Mantra, which majorly focuses on destination weddings and has covered 35 countries, says that many pre-wedding shoots are story-based now.



Shot of the pilot couple in Iceland

Photo: Divine Mantra

He recalls, for instance, a recent shoot of a pilot couple. It was shot in Iceland, he says, adding that the whole theme was planned, keeping in mind their profession. “They dressed up in their uniforms and were photographed near an abandoned aeroplane,” he says.

Access to global trends and information helps too. Today's customers and photographers are more clued into different sorts of editing the lighting, theme, and other aspects of the wedding video would look like. Wedding blogs, wedding magazines and YouTube videos are a big source of information and inspiration for couples to decide their wedding theme and wedding film storylines.

Weddings aren't season or home-town specific anymore; it is about going beyond the ordinary. Destination wed-

dings have been a trending category in wedding photography for the past several years. Photographers take great delight in shooting in exotic and unexpected locations.

“Shooting at different venues is fun, and you learn about different cultures,” says Sharma, adding that more and more families now prefer to get away from their hometown with a smaller, tight-knit circle of loved ones.

Social media has become an important part of everybody's life. It has also become an essential part of wedding photography. Facebook and Instagram are great resources for finding affordable venues inside or outside India.

Photographers embed the culture and lifestyle of the location into the wedding photographs to make them



Photo: Marwah Studioz

more vibrant.

“We pulled in the concept of Tik-Tok and Instagram reels into wedding videos, and it has helped us reach the masses in huge numbers. Social media helps in spreading different ideas with changing trends too,” Marwah says.

Technology has transformed the landscape as a whole. Thanks to advances in it, once camera-shy people have become posers, who don't hang back when it comes to getting clicked and enjoy every moment of their wedding.

Steadicams and drones have taken the limelight in shooting a wedding. “Earlier photographers had to hire a crane to shoot incredible shots. Now, drones have made things very easy; their size makes it possible for photographers to fly the drones in areas that would never have been possible with a crane,” Sharma says.

Marwah believes in getting on friendly terms with the couple and their family to feel comfortable with him on their wedding day. “Communicating with your couples prior to the shoot is very important and helps you in knowing their vision for photographs,” he says.

The gradual lifestyle change has brought out the importance of wedding culture worldwide, allowing photographers to capture the moments through an innovative lens.

“Wedding stories are the most precious memories that are captured for a lifetime by a photographer. Capturing emotions that you want to preserve is what I have understood from my experience, the emotional moments of the family and friends and tears of joy that are shown with smiles,” says Marwah.

INDRAJIT NATTOJI, who has directed Aafat-e-Ishq, speaks with SHALINI SAKSENA about his latest project, how he chose his character and upcoming work

‘Being a director, is challenging’

❖ **What is Aafat-e-Ishq about?**
It is a human story; about the loneliness and isolation of a reticent orphan woman looking for love. She is an avid reader of romantic pulp novels and is an anomaly in the world of digital social media. Her journey soon becomes fraught with disasters when her suitors meet with mysterious accidental deaths, and she becomes the prime suspect. The story has been treated with elements of magic realism, fantasy and dark humour.

❖ **How did you come across this story?**
The Zee Studio team had acquired the rights for the award-winning Hungarian film *Liza the Fox-Fairy* and discussed the possibility of an adaptation in Hindi. I loved the movie and its quirky black humour, and it connected with some of my favourite storytelling genres that I have always been a fan of- fantasy, film noir and romantic comedies.

❖ **Why choose a dark drama?**

The last two years of the pandemic brought in the sense of doom in all of us. This fear has now become a part of our daily lives. Death, disease, mental illness, isolation, loss are commonplace. I wanted to laugh at all of that. It's therapeutic not to be distressed by the provocations of reality and to insist that one cannot be affected by the traumas of the external world.

❖ **Is the genre tough to direct?**
Being a director, in general, is challenging. You have to trust your vision to a team of sometimes more than 100. Everyone has to share one's vision as they create all the pieces of the storytelling puzzle. As a director, only you have the entire picture in your head. My art helps. I make sketches, paintings and doodles which helps communicate that picture to my team.

❖ **How was the experience of making this remake?**
The challenge was to reinterpret an East-European sensibility and nuance to that of the



small-town Hindi heartland. With my writer Neha Bahuguna, we created a fictional universe for our protagonist Lallo by putting together realistic small-town elements of location, textures, sounds, and characters from different parts of India.

❖ **How true have you been to the original?**
I can safely say that *Aafat-e-Ishq* is now an adaptation and not a remake. It is a reboot of


Liza, with some new twists, eclectic original music, and quirky small-town Indian characters.

❖ **How did you choose star-cast?**
Once we created our characters, we fleshed out their backstories and quirks. I started to assign actors to those characters that we had visualised. Deepak Dobriyal was my Vikram. Amit Sial was my first choice for Prem Gunjan for his irreverence and eclectic stagecraft. Namit for his accomplished singing abilities and performance artistry. Ila Arun for her multi-talented thespian legacy. And Neha Sharma for her versatile beauty and effortless acting chops.

❖ **What next?**
I have completed Visual Design and VFX production for a film released soon on an OTT. I have a web series in development and a film script in pre-production. Meanwhile, I am working on my following art collection.

Sound of.

music



Music is the best medicine. Here are the top 10 songs of the week that will lift up your weekend mood

Bollywood vibes

Saansein (Prateek Kuhad)

Jaane De (Atif Aslam)

Aaj Bhi (Vishal Mishra)

Motorwada (Amit Trivedi, Tochi Raina)

English Vinglish

Happy (Pharrell Williams)

Just The Way You Are (Bruno Mars)

Tik Tok (Kesha)

Dark Horse (Katy Perry)

The Hills (The Weeknd)



Joy of fine speech
Krishna defined four qualities for a fine speech — non-agitating, truthful, pleasing and beneficial

2



4

Astrology knows no bounds
Stars have their place but if you lose your sense of alertness, you become vulnerable to be taken for a ride

I found a place under a bridge in Goa where you could have fresh crab and beer. It was nothing complicated, but delicious
— Gemma Chan



What makes a brand click?

It is not sufficient that you have a good product, market & finance. Brand creation helps. And this requires strategy and execution, write RAJIV GUPTA & ANAND LIMAYE, as they share examples of marketing strategies used by various brands

Indian advertising has come of age. During pandemic, we saw a host of creative ideas, new business models and communication, which gave new dimension to Indian Brands. Some advertisements attracted controversy as well. Advertisements by Sabyasachi, where they showed Indian *Mangalsutra* on a scantily dressed woman; FabIndia showing Indian traditional festival celebration with disregard to religion sentiments; and Dabur India, depicting same sex couple celebration Karva Chauth, have not been received well by the Indian audience in India and globally. All these advertisements have been withdrawn from all media. The ads were well noticed, discussed and the brands were well talked about. But does this have a positive impact on the brand or does it tarnish the brand image?

Concept of brand is central to Marketing. Brands bring sales, brands power companies, brands pay salaries. Consumers buy brands because, they are more than trademarks, they are trust marks. Brands are collective perception of consumer's about an entity. Brands there for exist in consumers mind, where products exists ate the shelf of a retailer.

Strawberry with cream may be your favourite dessert. But when you go fishing, you do not put strawberries there. You put a worm. Something similar happens in marketing. Consumer preference is the most important deciding factor. Consumers often do not buy the highest quality products. They buy the best value proposition depending upon their need and perception.

In the 1990s, Parle products, the confectionery and biscuits major in India, had a brand called, Rol-a-Cola candy. This was launched at the time when cola drinks were hooting up the market. Rol-a-Cola had an attractive price point of ₹2. Over a period of time, the brand was dropped in 2006 for the purpose of product portfolio rationalisation. Although consumers loved it so much that they would mix it with soda and water and make their own cola drink at a low cost. In 2019, a *Twitter* user communicated his desire to have the product and requested a comeback. The rolls segment is about 7,000 tonnes, and Parle has a 50 per cent share with high-power brands like Mazelo Poppins. The brand was relaunched for Gen Z at an attractive price point which would con-

tribute to ₹100 crore revenue for Parle products. The brand today is far more vibrant and caters to the wants of consumers.

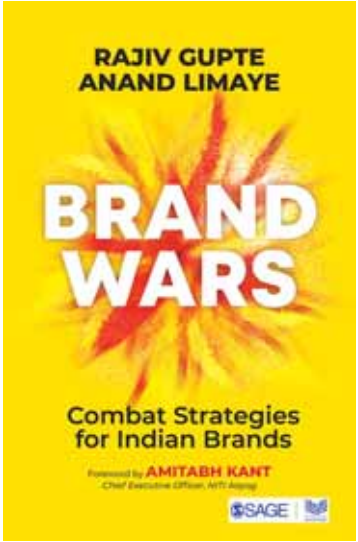
Yet another way is to never have a product proposition very similar to another product. You will have to spend a lot to establish in such a market. If there are two products similar to each other, a lot of promotional money is wasted. If one detergent brand says, 'first use it and then have trust', while another says 'buy with complete trust', both will be unnecessarily using a lot of promotional resources. Have a distinct product proposition, create a distinct identity for your product and serve a unique need of a consumer, at least in a unique manner. Our earlier observation on perceptual maps supports this suggestion. In a crowded market as well, if the products are differentiated, each has a place to exist and grow.

Good brands promise certain quality. The quality could be tangible like comfort, fitting, elegance in case of men shirts, or intangible like prestige, luxury, style. This collective perception about brand is called positioning.

BRAND POSITIONING

By repeated hammering of the message marketers create brand position. Brand position of Lux is beauty soap, Liril is freshness soap, and Lifebuoy is sportsman's soap. The position is created and reinforced by consistent communication like endorsement of film actors (Lux), waterfall and lemon slice (Liril), sports activities (Lifebuoy). Once a position is achieved, it is difficult for the competitors to dislodge it, as long as it is not weakened by the marketer's in consistent communication or over spent by competitors. Lux is essentially a ladies soap. When Shahrukh Khan endorsed the brand, Santoor gained easy entry. Line extensions of Liril and millennial advertising showing family togetherness was inconsistent with earlier position. Cinthol gained an entry for the freshness position. Lifebuoy repositioned the brand as Germi Check and went head on with Dettol. A classic overexerting from positioning point of view.

Titan launched Raga and Fastrack. A good brand portfolio segments the market and targets the consumers and then communicates with them effectively. Historically, no global watch brand has created a product specifically for women. Indian women are



GOOD BRANDS PROMISE CERTAIN QUALITY. THE QUALITY COULD BE TANGIBLE, LIKE COMFORT, FITTING, ELEGANCE, IN CASE OF MEN SHIRTS, OR INTANGIBLE, LIKE PRESTIGE, LUXURY, STYLE. THIS COLLECTIVE PERCEPTION ABOUT BRAND IS CALLED POSITIONING

different from Westerns and, therefore, a distinct consumer group. For Indian women, jewellery is an intimate treasure and possession. Also, the need to be considered sensuous is very high but in an Indian way. Thus, the brand Raga watches looks like jewellery and make a beauty statement. Average ownership of watches by women after Raga was launched jumped to 65 per cent.

Similarly, for Fastrack, the insights were that urban youth were rapidly discovering the excitement of an uncommitted attitude and lifestyle. Also, for Indian college-going youth, style and affordability were key and, thus, came Fastrack. The price was stated upfront and sent a clear signal to the youth of its affordability. The students were told that the brand looked for inspiration on whatever was interesting to youth-denims, hip hop, beachwear, skating, tattoos, etc. Later, the brand was extended to affordable sunglasses and bags.

It is better to create a distinct identity. The positioning of SPINZ fragrance is distinct from that of FOGG, that of India today, Republic TV, WION, and Times Now are all distinct and different. But, creating such identity requires consistent communication. In today's world of over communication, chances are, once message would get missed in a clutter. So what is the most effective way of cutting through clutter and taking a position in consumers mind?

Celebrity endorsements: Yes, It does help. It helps in cutting through the clutter of other messages, gives a distinct image to the brand, and adds prestige. It also has a rub-off effect of the celebrity image on the brand. But not always.

Celebrity clutter: Sometimes, marketers use over exposed celebrities. If the celebrity endorses too many brands, your brand gets lost. How many people remember, which milk additive brand does Sachin Tendulkar endorse? Or, which apparel brand does Amitabh Bachchan endorse?

Positioning fit: Many times Brands are endorsed by celebrity, whose image is not consistent with the message, to be delivered. A few years ago film star Jitendra endorsed a brand called 30+. It was a serious health tonic, which was inconsistent with Jitendra's Jumping Jack

image. It was an elegantly executed advertisement, but the brand failed.

Execution fit: Just a good celebrity and a product, is not good enough to create a brand. The execution has to be good. Cricketer Hanse Kronje endorsed a suiting brand in a badly executed advertisement or Rajesh Khanna for a ceiling fan company. The brand is not even endorsed now.

Credibility fit: Endorser's image gets rubbed up on the brand, mostly positively, but how many of us believe that Amitabh Bachchan uses *Anar dana* or *Navratna Tel?* Such ads do not meet aspirations of consumers.

Celebrity under clout: At times if the endorsing celebrity gets bad publicity due to some reason, the brand suffers. Marketers have to be careful about it, otherwise along with positive image the negative of the endorser's also rub off. When Tiger Woods gained bad publicity due to his promiscuous behaviour, he lost most of his brands. But, I am amazed that today so many ads have come featuring celebrities who have bad publicity, like Shahrukh Khan for BJJUS or Shilpa Shetty for good morning brand. Yes, it will give top of the mind awareness. But, brand image? It will help celebrities, but brands?

Owners Endorsement: Air India was a lagging brand. But with Tata take over, it has gained a new image. Tata's means trust. Air India has suddenly become a trusted brand. The position has changed from a lagging brand to one which can be trusted. Apart from other things, will surely have a positive impact on the image, as well as business. The cash register will start ringing which is visible in the stock market already.

Thus it is important that it is not sufficient that you have a good product, market and finance. Brand creation helps. This requires strategy and execution. Marketing strategies have much in common with war strategies. After all brands create loyalty, brands give price premiums and brands ensure sustainance.

The writers Rajiv Gupta & Anand Limaye are authors. Their latest book, Brand Wars: Combat Strategies for Indian Brands, has been published by SAGE Publications India

In relentless solemn pursuit of good governance

PERSPECTIVE

Task of redefining nationalism in Thailand





THERE IS ALWAYS ONE MOMENT
IN CHILDHOOD WHEN THE DOOR
OPENS AND LETS THE FUTURE IN
— GRAHAM GREENE



**YOUR
WEEK
AHEAD**

MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19

Some negative forces are at play, and you must fight them this week. Seasonal ailments might make you inactive and dull. Proper diet, exercise and rest is the *mantra* to a healthy life. Do not compromise with these basics. The work environment is not favourable and makes you frustrated at times. Don't waste your time and precious energy plotting revenge. Just get on with the next phase of your life. If you're looking for work, a potential position that you'd pinned your hopes on may not come through. On the relationship front, this week you can be the master and a mentor in your relations. You are attracted to people who are very creative and maybe more than usually focused on your career now.

Lucky number 13
Lucky colour Yellow
Lucky day Thursday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

You need to be cautious with regard to your health. You are likely to be under stress from a combination of factors, so it's particularly important to be gentle with yourself. Release your anxiety rather than turn your anger and sorrow on yourself. Professionally, things are not in your favour. Some false allegations, interference from higher authorities, and interrogations might be faced this week. You may need some assistance to find a better approach to work. Don't hesitate to ask. If you're looking for work, this too may show a need to look in a different way or a different field than the one you've been pursuing. Love and marital affairs occupy your mind but you are unable to find a smooth going.

Lucky number 12
Lucky colour Maroon
Lucky day Wednesday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

Your health will require attention as you are prone to illness. A family member's health needs your attention too. You need to let go of past wounds to move forward. Help your loved ones to see the truth. Learn to express yourself; don't suppress your feelings and requirements. This is a good week career-wise. The businessperson will see financial stability and gains in financial ventures. People will respect you more and your popularity will increase. Your social status shall enhance. For those who are in a job, favour from the boss is likely, your works and endeavours are taken into consideration and appreciated. This period may see you restless in your relationship area. You must make sincere efforts to make your partner happy.

Lucky number 11
Lucky colour Silver
Lucky day Monday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

This week confusion will prevail. Issues concerning health might appear this week. There may be some hidden matters to deal with. Issues related to ear or throat may surface too that will make you run to the doctor and consume most of your time. You need to learn to prioritise things. On the career front, you share a good bonding with your colleagues and the people at work. This is the right time for conferences and negotiations. Your compromising attitude will fetch you a good opportunity. This is a good week for building relationships. You will learn a whole lot about how you can take your relationship further. You will be able to make room for new people and new experiences.

Lucky number 20
Lucky colour White
Lucky day Friday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

Your physical well-being depends on your mental well-being. You need to be very conscious of your intuitive urges and reactions and bring them into balance with the greater good and meaning in life. This is not a time to act out in rage or hatred but to look at the situation from a place of love and compassion. Career-wise, pay more attention to what people around you are doing. Be cautious of politics at the workplace. Some negative forces are at play at your workplace to put you down. Avoid making important decisions now. You will have delays and over pending problems in all your works. And this will affect your relationships too. Be practical and bring balance in life that is mandatory currently.

Lucky number 21
Lucky colour Pink
Lucky day Wednesday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

Health is likely to suffer this week. Consider a second diagnosis if you are not sure about the first diagnosis of health. Get another health professional's opinion before you take a final decision. Be open to spiritual healing. Those who are struggling with a serious illness, know that a cure is not always linked with healing. You may require some therapy or surgery. On the career front, the businessperson will make a considerable stand. Hold your head up high and know that you are bringing a lot to the table. Financially too you may do better than you had ever dreamed. You need to be trustworthy and reliable otherwise a rise in mental distress and misunderstanding with the family is indicated during this time. You have to be extra careful to avoid arguments.

Lucky number 19
Lucky colour Purple
Lucky day Tuesday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

This week you will feel renewed energy and charm in your life. The care and attention you have been providing to your body will leave you in high spirits. You will experience a cheerful and happy state of mind. It is also time to rely on divine faith. New direction and protection make you trust now that the divine spirit is working in your best interest. Professionally, you feel a new spark, a new sense of creativity within yourself. You are more confident and aggressive in your approach and decision making now. Recognition, praise from friends and authorities, promotion are likely to take place. On the personal front, limited conditions from the past might have made you detached from the world. You feel cheated and deceived in a relationship.

Lucky number 15
Lucky colour Grey
Lucky day Tuesday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

You are working hard, day and night, to meet the challenges of life. Slow down the speed and look after your health too which is prime of importance at this time. Your enormous efforts give you what you want in life. Overall, your vitality is very strong now and you should have quite a lot of get up and go. This is an excellent time to begin or increase a fitness plan. At work, you are bold and courageous in your undertakings and actions. Your creative energies are high, and you have a good sense of your life direction. You may head a meeting, conference, or just lead a project which requires group activities and handle it with command. Things are not so good on the love front. You may face disappointments and depression.

Lucky number 25
Lucky colour Brown
Lucky day Sunday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

You are mentally strong this week. Your open-mindedness and straightforwardness will help you grow. Add generosity and kindness to your attitude. Showing your authority is important, but gentleness is important as well. On the professional front, you are giving more in terms of your time and energy to the organisation you are working in than your usual routine. A powerful person is likely to support you. Overall, your career front is looking up. On the personal front, you may be a little detached. This week romance and close personal relationships are not likely to shine bright for you. Listen to what your inner voice tells you. Stress levels need to be taken into consideration. This is a temporary phase you will be on the right track soon.

Lucky number 18
Lucky colour Black
Lucky day Saturday



CANCER June 21-July 22

This week you feel fresh, rejuvenated, and inspired to move ahead. The health remains good, and you are in the process of making it even better. Good diet, nutrition, exercise, and living life natural is your new resolution. Spiritually and emotionally, you feel fulfilled. Your enthusiasm and charm will increase, much to the envy of others. On the career front, you find the situations are not favourable at the workplace and make up your mind for a change. You may be holding yourself back because you fear moving into the future. Seek new opportunities, for a better future. On the personal front, you should be flexible and go with the flow right now. Stick to your principles at the same time honour others' intelligence as well.

Lucky number 28
Lucky colour Sky Blue
Lucky day Saturday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

This week you grow even stronger and be ready to face any obstacle in your life. Even when facing serious health challenges, a positive attitude can work wonders. Your firm stand and taking all care about health will be in your favour. On the professional front, the good news is on the card. Your connections with people will increase. You are an expert at fitting things together in new or unusual ways and that makes the work a lot smoother. If you're looking for a job you are about to find the right fit. You are very balanced and organized workwise than you think. On the relationship front, co-operation and harmony will be your major concern this week. Be a good listener, trust your instincts, and connect with your innermost desires.

Lucky number 10
Lucky colour Mustard
Lucky day Tuesday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

This week you are disciplined and know the needs of your body, mind, and spirit. You have a clear vision of your inner sense of values. Your concentration during this time is commendable. Your creativity will make you move constantly. You should use your positive energy in creative works, as an inner sense of satisfaction will give you more confidence. On the career front, other people may not understand or support your new ideas or proposals, but if you know that you're right, go ahead, and try to make them understand what your point of view is. On the personal front, love relation is under question. It is important to give your partner time & space. You need to share your feelings with the one who you trust and find out the possible solution.

Lucky number 30
Lucky colour Peach
Lucky day Saturday

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ASTROTURF

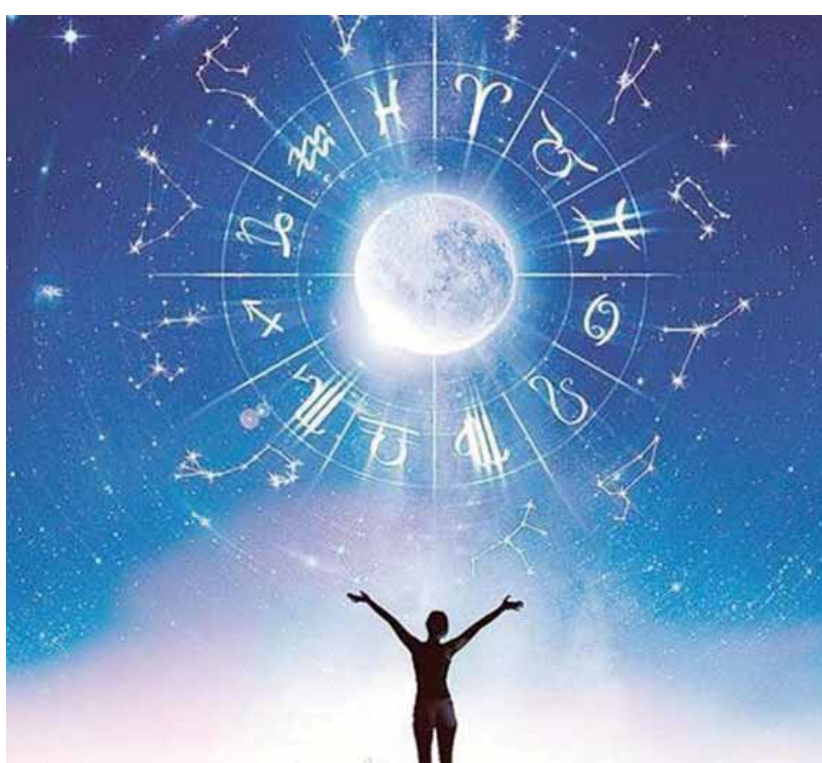
BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

Astrology knows no bounds

A USA citizen faced with a very difficult unforeseen situation came seeking guidance. "I keep coming to Delhi quite often on official business, as our organisation has a branch here in Gurgaon. This time when I landed up here on August 8, I was informed that there was a lookout notice against me. I was taken for questioning by the concerned officials. There I was informed that my father and other two brothers, had swindled the business loan granted by a Bank, and ran away from the country warranting a criminal case. Since I was also a signatory to the documents mortgaging the household property to the Bank, my name also figures in the case. Fact remains that following a family dispute, I had relinquished my share in the said household property through an affidavit as back as 2007. Later, the officials released me, but they refused to withdraw the lookout notice till the case gets settled. Consequently, I am stuck up here for more than two months now. The district court refused to grant any relief. I have now filed an appeal in the High Court which is due for hearing on October 6. Can I expect any relief from the High Court? What is wrong with my

Karma that I have to suffer for no fault of mine?" he shared.

Nothing is expected to happen on the 6th as Mercury, the planet identified with communication is retrograde. Also, Jupiter, the planet identified with judicial outreach, and incidentally the *dasha* lord is retrograde. All the more because Jupiter was retrograde when you were born. But once Jupiter and Mercury, both regain forward motion on October 19, time turns to your advantage where after you can expect favourable verdict. But you may be able to fly back to USA only after November 4. So far your Karma is concerned, there is nothing wrong as such. It is your lack of alertness that has caused your problem. Your mistake is that despite relinquishing your right in the household property, you signed the document under emotional pressure. Remember, if ever you lose your sense of alertness, you become vulnerable to be taken for a ride. "Sir, my brother had informed me through a mail, which was also confirmed by the bank officials that my signature did not involve any personal guarantee, is why I signed," the gentleman inquired. Well, the fact that you were not on even terms



with your family members, and still you did not take pains to go through the documents you signed just on verbal assurance, led to this problem.

"Sir, how sure you are? Some *pundits* told me that I was running Saturn's *dhaiya*, as it was placed 10th to Moon, which makes me vulnerable to be put through agonising time. Also, I was running Saturn's *antardasha*, which is conjunct Rahu in the 10th house identified with honour and dignity. Both factors put together indicated that favourable judgment was not in sight in immediate terms. Also, imprisonment sooner or later was probable. They have suggested some puja to get over my suffering, which may cost me heavily." "Sir, I am worried, not because of the cost involved. But my wife and children have been left unto themselves with no support from me whatsoever. Is there any chance of imprisonment?" Shall I go ahead with the *puja* suggested," asked the man.

Well, the half knowing *pundits* have read the astrological pointers wrong. There is no scope for imprisonment, as 12th sub-lord Mars has no linkage with the 8th house identified with serious dif-

ficulties. Favourable court verdict is expected when either 6th house (identified with success over adversaries) or the 11th house (fulfilment of desires) are signified in the *dasha* sequence operating. Being back home and reunion wife is promised when 2nd, 4th, 7th and 11th houses are simultaneously signified. Incidentally, Jupiter, the lord of 2nd and 4th houses, is tenanted in the 8th house identified with wife's family. Saturn, the *antardasha* lord is posited in the *nakshatra* owned by Venus, the lord of 6th, 7th and 11th cusps, tenanted in the 11th house itself. So, favourable court verdict facilitating being back home and reunion with wife is fully promised. Incidentally Venus *pratyantara* begins on 5th November. So, it happened. He got a favourable verdict on 29th October. But the court being closed because of ongoing holidays, necessary formalities will be possible only after November 5. No belief driven *puja* can invade Judge's mind space to seek favourable result. The result is there to see.

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