

WORLD 7

INDO-BANGLA BORDER KILLINGS
UNFORTUNATE: BANGLADESH MIN

MONEY 8

GOVT PUTS ON SALE
MTNL, BSNL ASSETS

SPORT 10

HOPE TO PLAY MY LAST T20
MATCH IN CHENNAI: DHONI

NEW DELHI, SUNDAY NOVEMBER 21, 2021; PAGES 12+4 ₹4



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Farmers refuse to relent

Stir to go on
till MSP, all
demands
met; SKM
meet today

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The agitating farmer unions have not withdrawn their Lucknow Mahapanchayat, the daily tractor march to Parliament during the upcoming Winter Session beginning from November 29 and other rallies and protests as planned. They said that the protests would continue till all demands of the growers were fulfilled.

A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the repeal of the three controversial farm laws that triggered a year of protests by farmers, the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM), an umbrella body of 40 farm unions, on Saturday held a core committee meeting to discuss the future course of action. During the meeting, the farmer unions have decided to continue with their protests as planned and also urged farmers to gather in large numbers at all protest sites on the first anniversary of movement on November 26.



Farm leader Dr. Darshan Pal and Swaraj India Chief Yogendra Yadav come out after a farmers' meeting at Singhu Border in New Delhi on Saturday PTI

After the core committee meeting, a farmer leader said: "We will celebrate the one year anniversary of our stir and the protests will continue to get all demands of the farmers fulfilled. The main body of the SKM will meet on Sunday to decide the final course of the agitation and the issue of the Minimum Support Price (MSP) will be taken in the meeting. The Mahapanchayat on November 22 in Lucknow, protest on November 26 on the Ghazipur-Singhu border and tractor rally on November 29 will take place as planned. The Prime Minister did a one side conversation."

In a statement, the SKM has welcomed the Prime Minister's decision but said it will wait for the announcement

to take effect through due parliamentary procedures. "The SKM appeals to farmers in various North Indian States to reach the different morcha sites on November 26, 2021, which marks the completion of a full one year of continuous peaceful protests at Delhi's borders," the statement said.

The farmers' body said the first anniversary of the agitation will be marked by parades by tractor and bullock carts in other States. "In various States that are far away from Delhi, the first anniversary on November 26 will be marked by tractor and bullock cart parades in capital cities, along with other protests," the SKM said in the statement.

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Varun asks PM to assure MSP to growers

Urges Modi to take action against Min for Lakhimpur deaths

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Needling his party on the farm issue again, BJP MP Varun Gandhi on Saturday approached Prime Minister Narendra Modi with a request to accept the farmers' long-pending demand for statutory MSP guarantee for their crops and also sought immediate action against Union Minister Ajay Mishra in connection with the deplorable violence that took place in Lakhimpur Kheri.

In a letter to the Prime Minister, the MP from Pilibhit in poll-bound Uttar Pradesh (UP) said that the agitation won't culminate until and unless the farmers' demands are met.



Gandhi's remarks came on Saturday, a day after the Prime Minister in his address to the nation announced repeal of the three farm laws which triggered a year of protests by farmers.

Gandhi thanked Modi for his "large heartedness" in announcing the decision to repeal the three farm laws, but added "more than 700 farmer brothers and sisters have been martyred in this movement, as they peacefully protested in extremely difficult and hostile conditions. If this decision had been taken earlier, innocent lives would not have been lost."

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Aryan's bail order: No proof of conspiracy

NCB can't use confessional statements as a tool: HC Judge

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Ripping apart the claims made by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) against three of the main accused, the Bombay High Court (HC) has rejected outright its allegation that Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan's son Aryan, two other accused Arbaaz Merchant and Munmun Dhamecha were part of the conspiracy in the case and disallowed its effort to use their "confessional statements as a tool" to infer that they had committed offences under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act.

Giving his reasoning for granting bail to Aryan, Arbaaz and Munmun in the mid-sea drug bust case on October 28, a single-member HC Bench of Justice Nitin W Sambre noted in his detailed order released on Saturday: "... there is no material on record to infer that the applicants have hatched a conspiracy to commit the offence. That being so, at this stage, it



is difficult to infer that the applicants are involved in an offence of commercial quantity. As such, parameters laid down under Section 37 of the NDPS Act will hardly be of any consequence while considering the prayer for grant of bail."

The Judge slammed the NCB for not subjecting the accused to medical examination "so as to determine whether at the relevant time, they had consumed drugs" and made mince meat of the investigators' claim that they had found incriminating WhatsApp chat from Aryan's phone, by observing that "nothing objectionable could be noticed to suggest that he and two other accused had hatched a conspiracy."

At the beginning of his summarised order relating to

all the accused, the Judge said that they had no criminal antecedents of similar nature or otherwise. While Aryan and Arbaaz were students, Munmun was working as model. Alluding to the claim to the contrary made by the NCB, the Judge said: "As far as the accused number 1 Aryan is concerned, but for irrelevant WhatsApp chats noticed in his mobile, there is no material evidence to connect all these applicants with other co-accused in the case."

Observing that Aryan was not found in possession of any objectionable substance, the Judge said that Arbaaz and Munmun were found to be in illegal possession of drugs which is covered under the provisions of the NDPS Act.

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CAPSULE

RAHUL ASKS GOVT TO ADMIT TRUTH ON CHINA

New Delhi: Rahul Gandhi targeted the Government, saying the truth of "Chinese occupation" should also be admitted now. P6

SERVICE PROVIDERS CAN NOW CHECK VAX STATUS

New Delhi: The Health Ministry has activated a service on the CoWIN portal that allows anyone to check a person's vaccination status with the person's registered mobile number, name, followed by OTP.

ATTACK ON BIHAR JUDGE: BPA DEMANDS PROBE

Madhubani: The Bihar Police Association (BPA) demanded a probe into the alleged attack on Additional district and sessions Judge of subdivisional court at Jhunjharpur by two policemen inside his chamber.

NEPAL: FOREIGNERS CAN'T TRAVEL TO INDIA BY RAIL

Kathmandu: Nepal will not allow nationals from a third country to travel to India by rail via the recently launched Kurtha-Jayanagar railroad after Indian officials raised a red flag, citing security concerns. P7

ALL RAJ MINS RESIGN AHEAD OF RESHUFFLE

Jaipur: Ahead of the Cabinet reshuffle, all Ministers in Rajasthan resigned during a meeting at CM Ashok Gehlot's residence. P6

CBI charges disciple, 2 others with abetting Mahant's suicide

Giri was found hanging in his ashram in UP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has charged three accused persons, including Anand Giri, with Indian Penal Code (IPC) Sections relating to abetment to suicide and criminal conspiracy in connection with the alleged suicide of Mahant Narendra Giri, the head of the top body of saints, the Akhil Bharatiya Akhada Parishad (ABAP), who was found hanging in his ashram in Prayagraj district of Uttar Pradesh (UP) in September.

Besides Anand, who was Narendra Giri's disciple, the priest of the Bade Hanuman Temple Adya Prasad Tiwari and his son Sandeep Tiwari have also been named in the CBI's chargesheet filed before a special court in Prayagraj.

In his suicide note, Narendra Giri had named the



trio, accusing them of mentally harassing him, following which the police filed an FIR for alleged abetment of suicide.

The three accused are currently undergoing judicial custody. They were arrested barely 24 hours after Narendra Giri's death.

Subsequently, the CBI took over the case on the recommendation of the UP Government, 48 hours after the death of the top seer.

During the probe, the CBI had recovered tapes of conversations between the accused and sought a forensic exami-

nation of the same. The agency has also moved the court to record voice samples from Anand Giri and the other accused for comparing them with the recovered tapes. However, the accused had refused to grant consent for recording of their voice.

In September, the police said Narendra Giri had recorded a video on his mobile phone, an hour before his alleged suicide, in which he said he feared Anand Giri wanted to make a morphed photo of him with a woman, and that his disciple wanted to shame him.

Police said the video allegations match the 13-page suicide note found near his body. Police also said in the note that Narendra Giri accused all three accused of blackmailing him and mentioned that he was depressed.

Anand Giri, was the number two saint in the ashram hierarchy, had been expelled by Narendra Giri earlier this year over allegations of financial fraud and irregularities. However, Anand Giri was later forgiven by his mentor.

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25 dead, 17 missing as flash floods ravage AP after rain

Rescue teams save 64 lives, situation in Tirupati grim

PTI ■ AMARAVATI

Heavy rains under the influence of a low-pressure area in the Bay of Bengal left 25 people, including a member of the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), dead in different districts of Andhra Pradesh since Friday, while 17 people still remained missing, the State Government said on Saturday.

The Indian Air Force (IAF), NDRF, SDRF, police and fire services personnel saved at least 64 people, including a police Inspector, from the massive flash floods in Anantapuramu, Kadapa and Chittoor districts, the Government said in a note.

In all, 17 teams of the NDRF and SDRF were engaged in the rescue and relief operations in the three flood-ravaged districts in Rayalaseema region,



Swollen Palar river after the Kaveripakkam reservoir was opened due to incessant rain, in Vellore on Saturday PTI

along with SPS Nellore in south coastal Andhra.

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy conducted an aerial survey in Kadapa, Anantapuramu and Chittoor districts to assess the damage.

He spoke to Collectors of Kadapa and Chittoor districts and obtained details about the devastation and asked the officials to conduct enumeration of the crop losses as soon as the floodwater receded.

The Government

announced an ex gratia payment of ₹5 lakh each to the kin of those killed.

The intensity of the rainfall reduced on Saturday, but brought little respite to people as several habitations remained marooned because of the flash floods.

While the situation in Tirupati town still remained grim, with many areas inundated, the scene on the holy Tirumala Hills was relatively better, though pouring rain



A person being evacuated from a flooded area at Gudiyatham in Vellore district on Saturday PTI

did inconvenience pilgrims.

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams reopened the ghat roads for vehicular traffic, though the two stairways meant for pilgrims to trek the hills remained closed. Pilgrims who booked tickets online were being allowed for darshan of Lord Venkateswara.

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Indore wins cleanest city tag for 5th time

Surat ranked 2nd cleanest in India, Vijayawada 3rd

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indore has once again bagged the award for being India's cleanest city as President Ram Nath Kovind on Saturday announced the "Swachh Survekshan (SS) 2021" awards. Surat has been named the second-cleanest, while Vijayawada ranked third in the list. This is the fifth time in a row that the city in Madhya Pradesh has won the award in the sixth edition of the event. Chhattisgarh has been adjudged as the cleanest State. Earlier this year, Indore was also declared as the



country's first "water plus" city. Varanasi, which is Prime Minister Narendra Modi's constituency, has won the cleanest Ganga town while Bihar's Munger and Patna have been ranked second and third in the category.

Interestingly, two of three municipal bodies in Delhi have finished in the bottom 10 among 48 cities of the country. North corporation has ranked 45th, East 40th and South 31st in the SS survey.

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Elusive, strange sense of smell post-Covid!

Most regain it months later, some may never: Study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Post-Covid infection, don't panic if you seem to have lost the sense of smell. You are not alone in facing such medical issues.

More than a million people in the US may not have regained their sense of smell months after a Covid-19 infection, a new study has said. The research published in journal JAMA Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery, suggests that most individuals get back their sense of smell ultimately, how-

ever some may by no means regain it.

The study estimated that between 7,00,000 and 1.6 million people in the US who had Covid-19 have lost or had a change in their sense of smell that has lasted for more than six months.

According to the researchers from Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, this is likely an underestimate.

The authors consider this a concern because, by comparison, prior to the pandemic, only 13.3 million adults aged 40 and older had what scientists call olfactory dysfunction (OD) or chronic olfactory dysfunction (COD).

"These data suggest an emerging public health concern of OD and the urgent need for research that focuses on treating Covid-19 COD," the



study said.

A study last year found that 72 per cent of people with Covid-19 recovered their sense of smell after a month, but for some, it is a much slower process. It is also feared that those who have lost their sense

of smell will be now categorised under the new set of disabilities.

Yet another study found that about 95 per cent of people recovered from Covid-related anosmia within six months.

However, the good news is that various studies have suggested that for people whose olfactory perception has been damaged after a viral infection, repeated short-term exposure to smells can help them recover.

Smell loss charities recommend picking four scents that you enjoy or have a connection with, and actively sniffing them twice a day, spending around 20 seconds on each scent. Ideally, you should try and pick scents which represent the four categories of flowery, fruity, spicy and resinous — and you could either use essential oils or the actual substance they derive from.

For instance, if you chose lemon as one of your scents, you could use some grated lemon peel. While sniffing the substance, focus your thoughts on lemon and try to recall what

your experience of lemon was.

It's not an immediate fix, but over time this should help you to recover your lost sense of smell.

Scientists have been intrigued by various outcomes on this medical condition. A team of scientists who tracked the health of 2,428 individuals who claimed to have lost their sense of smell and/or taste as a result of Covid-19, found that 40 per cent of them had completely regained their sense of smell six months later, while only two per cent reported no improvement at all.

Health experts say that some patients with lingering coronavirus symptoms for weeks or months, otherwise known as long Covid, are experiencing debilitating symptoms that are sometimes ignored in what doctors are calling a public health crisis.

‘It is a saas-bahu saga with a pinch of tadka’

KASHISH DUGGAL, who plays Pushpi/Jwala in Azaad TV’s Hari Mirch Lal Mirch, speaks with SHALINI SAKSENA about her role in the show and the challenges that came up

■ What is Hari Mirch Lal Mirch (HMLM) about?

The show—Hari Mirch Lal Mirch-Ek Teekhi Ek Karaari is a drama show that has plenty of comedy. In other words, it is a dramedy—drama with comedy. This is the first of its kind genre on Azaad — a saas-bahu saga with a tadka.

■ How did you come on board for the show?

It wasn’t as easy as it may seem to be. I auditioned for it in February this year during COVID lockdown. I practiced on my own and signed the show in April end. My journey from my self-tests to finally shooting for the show is in itself a story to tell.

■ What attracted you to play Pushpi?

I relate to this character fully. Pushpi is a very loving mother; she is a dotting wife and an adarsh bahu. The kind of bahu that every family would like to have. I personally resonate with Pushpi. Just like for Pushpi, her family is her world, the same holds true to me as well. I am a homebody. I love my family. Once the shoot is over, I love to go back to my family and spend time with them. It is always easy to play roles with whom you identify with even if it comes with a few challenges to begin with.

■ Were there many challenges?

Yes, at the initial stage. Those who are following the show will know that Pushpi lives a dual life. At home, she is an Adarsh bahu but the truth is that she is a cop – ACP Jwala. Nobody in her family knows this, just her husband. In fact, he is the one who encouraged her to follow her dream. Obviously, Jwala and Pushpi are totally opposite to each other. Pushpi has to maintain this façade at home. But at the workplace she is a tough cop. To essay two opposite personalities is fun but comes with riders.

■ How similar/dissimilar are you to Pushpi?

I am totally like Pushpi except for the cultural background. Like I mentioned earlier, I relate to her since we are so similar. What is

I PERSONALLY RESONATE WITH PUSHPI. SHE IS A VERY LOVING MOTHER; SHE IS A DOTTING WIFE AND AN ADARSH BAHU. THE KIND OF BAHU THAT EVERY FAMILY WOULD LIKE TO HAVE. JUST LIKE FOR PUSHPI, HER FAMILY IS HER WORLD, THE SAME HOLDS TRUE TO ME AS WELL. I AM A HOMEBODY. I LOVE MY FAMILY. ONCE THE SHOOT IS OVER, I LOVE TO GO BACK TO MY FAMILY AND SPEND TIME WITH THEM

totally alien to me is to play ACP Jwala. As a cop she has to be tough. I am a softy.

■ How did your acting journey begin?

It all began when I was just 11 years old. It was my destiny that I had to find myself in this industry. It has given me so much. I used to learn dancing. I am told that even as a child I was extremely creative and had an expressive face.

I had not planned to be an actor. But now that I am here, I feel that there is no other job that I could have done but to act. This industry has given me so much – name, fame and money. I am grateful for the limelight that I have got.

■ Is there a character that you loved playing?

Definitely. In fact, there are two of them but both from the same show — Vanshika Banerjee and Kammo. It was a double role in Kissi Ki Nazar Na Lage. It was a daily soap on DD that was produced and directed by Raja Mukherjee. I loved playing them both.

■ What have been the changes in the TV industry you have seen?

Technology is changing every day and so is our industry. There are pros and cons to every situation and change. There’s more scope to work for all with new opportunities on OTT platforms and upcoming channels like Azaad. It gives a chance to more and more talent. One thing that really happened for the good during the pandemic was the self-tests which did not require the actors to doll up to the offices and waste hours and hours in travelling and wasting money on fuel. On the other hand, the casting now depends on the number of followers one has on social platforms, which is the most disheartening. The most deserving and experienced people are left out on this basis.



Plan Your Sunday



DATE: 27TH NOVEMBER 2021
LOCATION: CYBER HUB (GOURICRAM)

BEARD AND MOUSTACHE CHAMPIONSHIP

The Annual Beard & Moustache Championship is Here - 2021. This is Event is hosted by Bharat Beard Club and is the Biggest & Largest Beard & Moustache Competition of the Country. Along side the competition we shall also have games and fun booths to keep the participants entertained.

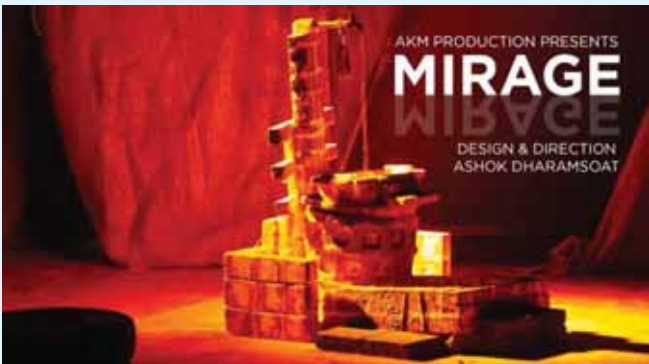
Accepting entries in 7 Different Categories: Longest Beard, Funky Beard, Black & Grey Beard, The Great Indian Moustache, Handle Bar Moustache, Mr Beard 2021 and Mr

Beard and Body.

Shortlisting will be done on Event Date at the Venue from Morning 10 am. Shortlisted Candidates will Screen & Judged by Celebs and Pioneers in the Mens Grooming Industry. Entry ticket includes admission and one BBC T-Shirt per entry only. Multiple entry from same person is allowed.

What: Sports
Where: DLF Cyberhub
When: November 27, 2021
Time: 10 am

MIRAGE THEATRE PLAY



A water station becomes a catalyst for an anthology to unfold, inspired by ‘The Water Station’ by Ota Shogo. Seven stories, seven worlds that bring together fictional characters to the water station that becomes a pit stop for tales of agony, hope, revelation, rebellion and all that makes us human. All stories are connected with a fine thread of loss of a place called home. The actors portray people

crossing over or guarding unseen borders drawn across a fictional planet chasing a mirage or ‘Sara’ called hope. This piece is clearly outlandish and unrealistic because where in this world do you find people ripped of their identity and robbed of dignity.
What: Theatre and Arts
Where: Online
When: November 21, 2021
Time: 4 pm

TELLY TALE

SONU NIGAM PERFORMED HIS GURUS’ GREATEST HITS IN THE UK



Over the years, Sonu Nigam has enthralled, amazed and mesmerised music lovers across the globe and even after three decades he still surprises the audience with his magic. Nigam recently performed in the UK for the first time post the pandemic and if euphoria could be described sans words, the shows in Birmingham and Wembley would give an apt description.

The show, *Rafi Kishore aur Main Sonu Nigam* had Nigam crooning to his gurus Mohd Rafi and Kishore Kumar’s greatest hits and while the expectations were sky high as with most of his shows, this time a new benchmark was set.

It was a spectacle that can only be experienced, adds a source, “Mohd Rafi and Kishore Kumar are iconic, legendary singers and only a singer of Nigam’s stature could do justice to their immortal melodies. The audiences were glued to their seats for the four-hour-long performances. Nigam curated the show with some of the most talented and sought after musicians from across India and also included some musicians who have been a part of the original compositions.” he says.

He further adds, “The audience was under his spell, they were singing and dancing as well as getting misty eyed when Sonu would add his anecdotes during some of the songs.”

‘FESTIVALS ARE IMPORTANT FOR TV SHOWS’

Zindagi Mere Ghar Aana actor Hasan Zaidi thinks festivals are important for TV shows.

“Festivals are always important. I think there is more drama. You can create and bring the family together, the production really goes in and out, plan events and sequences in such a way that it becomes something big on any show. People look forward to the Holi sequences in terms of performing them and people watching them. So yes in our Indian culture, they (festival sequences) are always looked forward to,” he said.

Audiences love to see their favourite characters all dressed up during the festive season.

STARS UNITE FOR A MAHASANGAM EXTRAVAGANZA

While it’s a wrap on the festive season for us, the fervour is yet to get over for the artists at Sony SAB which brings for its fans the most awaited Mahasangam on Saturday 20th November. The viewers can now watch their beloved actors across Sony SAB shows come together as a part of an ultimate eventful episode – The Mahasangam. This unmissable chapter presents the rare opportunity of witnessing the dynamic group of artists and characters come together for the grand Jalsa Fest being hosted at Ziddi Dil Maane Na’s Parakram Academy.

Sony SAB’s Mahasangam blends the current storyline from all its shows and connects the characters as they mingle with each other at the Jalsa Fest. Viewers must brace themselves as they witness *Maddam Sir*’s Haseena (Gulki Joshi) get a call from Batra Saab (Vijay Kashyap) from *Ziddi Dil Maane Na* who invites them to the Jalsa fest. Parallely, Monami (Kaveri Priyam) is on a secret mission to help Koel (Simple Kaul) and her son, Nikhil (Nirbhay Thakur) escape from Koel’s toxic husband, Abhay (Karan Veer Mehra). Our good Samaritan, Rajesh Wagle (Sumet Raghavan) from *Wagle Ki Duniya*, on his way gives a lift to Koel and Nikhil, aiding their escape without his knowledge. However, later, Rajesh unknowingly ends up telling Abhay about Koel’s whereabouts while he is desperately searching for the latter. Koel reaches out to Daljeet (Sayantani Ghosh) from *Tera Yaar Hoon Main* to ensure an escape and seeks comfort and safety in the Bansal household. But will Abhay track Koel at the



Bansals and destroy Koel’s attempt of leaving a toxic past behind?

The upcoming Mahasangam episode promises a nail-biting turn of events which is bound to put the viewers on the edge of their seats. Koel and her son Nikhil are set to make the ultimate escape with the help of Sony SAB’s favorite stars, and it will be interesting

to watch how things unfold this Saturday.

Shaalien Malhotra, essaying the role of Special Agent Karan from *Ziddi Dil- Maane Na*, said, “It’s a thrilling time for us at Sony SAB as all the characters are finally getting to come together. We had a complete blast shooting with all the actors of the Sony SAB cohort. With army officers meeting police officers of Maddam Sir and characters from *Wagle Ki Duniya* coming under the same roof, this amalgamation levels up the entertainment quotient and the excitement manifold. The viewers will get to experience something completely different with the Mahasangam as it will present twists and quirks across multiple shows. I’m looking forward to the audience reaction post the Mahasangam episode on 20th November.”

Sumet Raghavan essaying the role of Rajesh Wagle in *Wagle Ki Duniya* Nayi Peedhi Naye Kissey said, “Shooting for the Mahasangam was absolutely fun as it brought all actors together. We also got to know each other better and understand each other’s characters in more detail. We got to do something different, and it has turned out really well. My character, Rajesh, in his true element, helps Koel from *Ziddi Dil Maane Na* but at the same time, tips off Abhay whom she was escaping from, so it’s going to be interesting to see how the story evolves. The audiences will love witnessing how the characters from different shows interact with each other and what transpires on screen. This was really exciting, and I hope we get to collaborate more often.”

KARAN VEER ENTERS ZIDDI DIL-MAANE NA

Sony SAB’s Ziddi Dil - Maane Na continues to keep the audiences engaged with its adrenaline pumping and romance driven storyline which also focuses on friendships and life of army trainees. The upcoming episodes will leave the audiences with a variety of emotions with the entry of Koel’s (Simple Kaul) suspicious husband Abhay which will be played by immensely talented artist, Karan Veer Mehra.

The show has illustrated a beautiful mother-son relationship between Koel and Nikhil (Nirbhay Thakur), however Koel’s world is about to turn upside-down with the entry of her hot-headed and controlling husband, Abhay. The show brings forth some relevant issues of toxic relationships with the complex yet strikingly familiar portrayal of Abhay’s character.

Karan Veer Mehra, who will be entering the show as Abhay said, “I am always excited to take up new and challenging roles, which is why I am excited to be a part of Ziddi Dil Maane Na. The viewers will witness a lot of new twists and turns, the show has been receiving a lot of love and I hope the latest series of episodes receive the same amount of love and appreciation. I am glad I get to play the part of Abhay as portrayal of such characters is very important and comes with a lot of responsibility.



HARSHAD CHOPDA IN YRKKH

Harshad Chopda as Abhimanyu Birla in the third part of Rajan Shahi’s popular trilogy *Yeh Rishta Kya Kehlata Hai (YRKKH)* has been making the right noise. Happy with the shades of his character and the kind of scope it has in the story, the actor is happy to have taken up the offer.

YRKKH has been one of the longest-running shows on the tube. Harshad shares that the season is a part of it all new and has a different approach. “I was promised a new show. I have been delivered a new show,” he

sounds content.

His character Abhimanyu is a doctor by profession.

YRKKH symbolizes human values and relationships, and Rajan Shahi is known for his crisp storytelling. “Usually what happens is that wherever you work, there are certain rules and regulations. This place has traditions. There are different things which I cannot really explain. All I can say is that apart from all the rules and requirements, this place is about human values and relationships.

HIMANSH KOHLI MISSES AMUSEMENT PARKS

Yaariyan actor Himansh Kohli misses frequently going to amusement parks.

“I miss going to amusement parks. I still visit them once every 2-3 years or less but I wish I could do it more often,” he said.

He has more fond memories when it comes to his childhood. “My favourite memory is munching on anything in the world without worrying about how it is going to affect my body. I had so much trash food in my childhood, I wish I could eat it again, and being born and brought up in a place like Delhi makes you an even more ‘Chatora’,” he said.

He used to also dance to tracks from *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai*. “My house’s personal favourite was *Ajeeb Dastan Hai Ye*, which is a song that we have all relished together for ages,” said the actor, who will be seen in the film *Boondi* Raita.



Capital’s air quality in very poor category

MINIMUM TEMPERATURE 14.5 DEG C

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The national Capital’s air quality was in the ‘very poor’ category on Saturday but is predicted to improve significantly from Sunday owing to relatively strong winds.

Delhi’s air quality index (AQI) at 9 am on Saturday was 377. It was slightly better on Friday when the AQI was 370, according to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data.

The city recorded a minimum temperature of 14.5 degrees Celsius, two notches above the season’s average, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

The AQI in neighbouring Ghaziabad (342), Gurgaon (340) and Noida (363) was also in the ‘very poor’ category.

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’.

According to the authorities concerned, the air quality is likely to improve “significantly” from Sunday owing to relatively strong winds.

To combat pollution, the Delhi government had on Wednesday issued 10 directions, including a ban on the entry of trucks carrying non-

essential items in the city and closure of schools and colleges till further orders.

The maximum temperature in Delhi is likely to settle at 26 degrees Celsius on Saturday. The relative humidity recorded at 8.30 am was 85 per cent. The weather department has predicted a generally cloudy sky for the day with the possibility of very light rain.

DDMA allows standing passengers in Delhi Metro trains, buses to tackle air pollution

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) on Friday allowed standing passengers in Metro trains and buses to augment the carrying capacity of the public transport system to let more people use them instead of private vehicles in view of the prevailing air pollution.

In an order, the DDMA said 30 standing passengers will be allowed in each Metro train coach. In Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) and Cluster buses, the maximum number of passengers allowed to travel in standing position will be 50 per cent of the seating capacity. So far, Metro trains and buses in Delhi were allowed to run with hundred per cent seating capacity only to reduce crowding to check the spread of Covid-19.

The woman, identified as Reena, was stabbed at least 17 times, the police said, adding the three accused, including her husband Gullaiya and contract killers Rahul and Sonu, have been arrested in the case.

Woman stabbed 17 times by contract killers hired by husband, 3 arrested

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Two days after a 33-year-old woman was stabbed 17 times in Delhi’s Malviya Nagar, her husband and two contract killers hired by him were arrested on Saturday in connection with the murder, police said.

Naveen Kumar Gullaiya (36) decided to kill his wife with the help of contract killers after she found out about his affair with another woman which led to constant quarrels between them, according to the police.

The incident took place in Sheikh Sarai area of Malviya Nagar in the police were informed from the hospital that a woman with stab injuries brought there by her husband was declared dead.

The woman, identified as Reena, was stabbed at least 17 times, the police said, adding the three accused, including her husband Gullaiya and contract killers Rahul and Sonu, have been arrested in the case.

When her husband was questioned, he misled the police initially saying he along with his son had gone to see a homeopathic doctor in Defence colony and Reena was alone at



home on Thursday afternoon.

After visiting the doctor and doing some shopping for his son, Gullaiya left him at a barber shop near Shiv Mandir Bandh road and went to his office at Kalkaji, Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Benita Mary Jaiker said.

After some time, Gullaiya called one of his employees to drop him at his house after his haircut. At 4.45 pm, he got a call from his employee informing that his wife Reena was lying in a pool of blood with stab injuries. He quickly rushed to his house and took his wife to a nearby hospital where she was declared dead, the officer said.

According to the police, a case was registered in the matter and during investigation, the police said they found CCTV footage in which two

men were seen entering the victim’s house in daytime and then three persons were seen exiting after some time.

The trail of those three persons from the scene of crime was found out to Pamposh Enclave, Kalkaji.

The husband turned a suspect when his call records were analysed and it was found that he frequently called a woman based in Govindpuri with whom he was in relationship for the last one-and-a-half years, Jaiker said.

The call records also revealed that Gullaiya received a WhatsApp call from Rahul. Also, another mobile phone recovered from Gullaiya’s vehicle showed that he made several calls to Rahul and Rs 50,000 was to be paid to him as part of payment after completion of task, she said.

SWACHH SURVEKSHAN NDMC declared cleanest city in 1-3 L population category

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) has been awarded 1st ranking for being the cleanest city in the country in the category of 1-3 lakh population under Swachh Sarvekshan 2021.

The North Corporation is ranked 45 compared to 43rd position in Swachh Sarvekshan 2020, East Corporation ranked at 40th position, while the South Corporation remained in 31st slot.

The North Corporation got the first position in “India’s Best Mega City in Citizen’s Feedback” in the category of 40 lakh population. North Commissioner Sanjay Goel on behalf of North DMC received the award from Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri.

NDMC has also been adjudged as 5 star garbage free city and water plus certified category defined by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), a senior NDMC official said.

President of India Ram Nath Kovind distributed awards in the presence of Hardeep Singh Puri, Union Minister, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and Chief Ministers, Mayors, dignitaries from various cities across the country.

The award was received from NDMC led by Chairman Dharmendra along with Secretary of NDMC Isha Khosla.

Swachh Sarvekshan is the world’s largest cleanliness survey carried out in India with the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to make Garbage free India under Swachh Bharat Mission.

It started in 2016 where only 73 cities participated and now the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India has declared the result of 6th Swachh Sarvekshan survey, conducted in the year 2021 in which 4320 cities have participated.

PIC TALK



People participate in the ‘Flying Sikh Midnight Run’ (#mainbhiMilkha) on the birth anniversary of late Milkha Singh, in Gurugram on Saturday

PTI

Gang involved in stealing luxury cars busted; 4 held

New Delhi: With the arrest of four men, the Delhi Police on Friday claimed to have busted a gang involved in stealing luxury cars and selling those all over the country, including in Manipur and Indore.

The kingpin of the racket, Sharik Hussain, was running the gang from Dubai. Twenty-one luxury cars worth around ₹5 crore have been recovered, police said.

The accused have been identified as Abid (30), a resident of Amroha district in Uttar Pradesh, Sagolsem Johnson Singh (27), a resident of Imphal in Manipur, Mohammad Asif (33), a resident of Meerut in Uttar Pradesh, and Salman (30), a resident of Indore in Madhya Pradesh, they added.

PTI

Final decision on namaz next week: Gurugram Gurdwara

Gurugram: A day after the Gurdwara Singh Sabha Committee of Gurugram announced that it was opening its doors to Muslims for them to offer Friday Namaz at its premises, Friday prayers by Muslims were not offered at any Gurdwara in the Millennium City.

The gurdwara committee in a statement on Friday stated that due to the Gurupurab celebrations, Muslims them-

selves refused to offer Friday Namaz to avoid any conflict.

A final decision on the same would be taken next week, said the Committee.

Speaking to news agency ANI over the matter, the spokesperson of the gurdwara management committee, Daya Singh said, “Committee had decided to offer space for Nawaz if Muslims were facing problems; will let them offer Namaz here.

ANI

Will bring policy for street vendors: Govt

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Government will introduce a highly progressive policy for street vendors in the city to end all “extortion” and “corruption” after coming to power in municipal corporations, senior AAP leader and Chief Spokesperson Saurabh Bhardwaj said on Saturday.

The AAP has decided to mark vending zones for street vendors to eliminate any inconvenience faced by vendors and customers both, he said.

Bhardwaj alleged that the MCDs and policemen take extra advantage of the current situation and extort large sums of ₹500 to 2000 from street vendors. “The AAP will ensure that street vendors do not pay

anything to MCD and police and that every section of Delhi will benefit from the new policy. Town Vending Committees will survey and identify street vendors by December 7, 2021. The remaining vendors can register themselves by then,” he added.

With the implementation of the policy, street vendors in Delhi will get a place to efficiently conduct business without any disruption to movement in traffic or footpaths or to RWAs, he said.

Introducing the Delhi Government’s plans to tackle this problem, he said “The Delhi Government is working on some highly progressive policies to address the situation and put a stop to this daily extortion by the MCD and the police.

CHHATRASAL STADIUM MURDER CASE

Delhi court grants custody parole to wrestler

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A Delhi court has granted five days custody parole to wrestler Gaurav Loura, one of the accused in the Chhatrasal Stadium murder case involving Olympic medallist wrestler Sushil Kumar, to appear for the school examination.

Additional Sessions Judge Shivaji Anand allowed him to give Class 12 exams at a school in Haryana’s Jhajjar district and asked him to incur the expenses of being escorted by the police to another state.

“The accused is granted custody parole for November 20, November 29, December 1,

December 6, and December 10 from 12 noon to 6 pm for attending his exams on the above mentioned dates,” the judge said. The court, in an order dated November 18, directed the accused to deposit ₹20,000 after the prosecution stated that taking him to another State will cause an unnecessary burden of expenses on the State. “Rest of the expenses shall be borne by the State,” the judge added. The case in which Loura is an accused relates to the alleged murder of former junior national wrestling champion Sagar Dhankar. Sushil Kumar is the main accused in the case.

3 Delhi Police officials held for abducting NGO manager

New Delhi: Three Delhi policemen have been arrested for allegedly abducting the manager of an NGO and demanding ₹5 lakh from his family to release him, officials said on Friday.

According to police, the matter came to the fore on Thursday when the accused conducted a raid on the premises of the non-governmental organisation (NGO), alleging that an illegal call centre was being operated from there. On the pretext of investigation, the police officials then illegally apprehended the manager and demanded ₹5 lakh for releasing him, said a senior police officer.

PTI

PUC CERTIFICATE VIOLATIONS

3,446 challans issued in city

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Amid deteriorated air quality in the city, the Delhi Transport department has intensified the enforcement drive to penalise the vehicle owners without a valid PUC certificate, issuing nearly 3,500 challans worth over ₹3.5 crore from November 1-17.

In October, the enforcement wing teams of the department checked 8,25,681 vehicles and issued 9,522 challans worth more than ₹9.5 crore. Also, over 8 lakh Pollution Under Control (PUC) certificates were issued in the month, official data showed. In accordance with the Motor Vehicle Act, 1933, vehicle owners who fail to get a valid PUC are liable to be challaned under Section



190(2), leading to imprisonment of up to six months or fine up to ₹10,000, or both. The driver could also lose their driving licence for three months.

According to official figures of the Transport department, there were nearly 17.71 lakh vehicles running without valid PUC in the city by mid

October. There are total 1.34 crore registered vehicles in Delhi. Most of the vehicles without PUC certificate included two-wheelers (13 lakh approx) while 4.20 lakh four-wheelers were without the valid certificate according to the Transport department database.

Mega Opportunity for a New Beginning This New Year

DDA ANNOUNCES MEGA E-Auction (14th Phase)

of Prime Commercial, Residential, Institutional, Industrial, Group Housing Plots, Built up Shops and Many More...

40

RESIDENTIAL PLOTS
(Freehold)

109

BUILT UP SHOPS/UNITS
(Freehold)

36

COMMERCIAL PLOTS
(Freehold)

23

KIOSKS
(Licence Fee Basis)

21

MOBILE TOWERS
(Licence Fee Basis)

69

INSTITUTIONAL PLOTS
(Leasehold)

32

INDUSTRIAL PLOTS
(Freehold)

06

GROUP HOUSING PLOTS
(Freehold)

17

EXPANDABLE HOUSING
SCHEME (EHS) PLOTS
(Freehold)

03

CNG SITES
(Licence Fee Basis)

IMPORTANT DATES for e-Auction

24th November 2021: Opening of Help Desk and Commencement of e-Registration

24th December 2021 (6:00 pm): Closing time of e-Registration and Online EMD submission

28th December 2021: Online Bidding for Residential Plots, Institutional Plots, Built up Shops/Units

29th December 2021: Online Bidding for Industrial Plots, Commercial Plots, Group Housing Plots, Kiosks

30th December 2021: Online Bidding for Expandable Housing Scheme (EHS) Plots, Mobile Towers, Function Sites, CNG Sites

For details about Plots/Properties and procedure, kindly visit our e-auction website www.ddaeaauction.co.in Or Click the **e-auction** link available at our site www.dda.gov.in and download the same through “**E-AUCTION OF PROPERTIES**” link available at home page of e-auction portal. Intending bidders may register themselves/their firms online at the above site through “**REGISTER WITH US**” link. Kindly note that digital signature of all the intending bidders are mandatory to participate in e-auction of DDA. A Help Desk has been opened at the Nagrik Suvidha Kendra, Ground Floor, ‘D’ Block, Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi which will start from **24.11.2021** to assist the intending bidders in the ongoing process of e-auction. For obtaining digital signatures and registration/training of prospective bidders and for any other clarification on e-auction process, please contact our Help Desk No. **011-49424365/8800991846/8800378610** from **11:00 am to 5:00 pm** (all working days) or at: ddaauction@etenderwizard.com

Sanjeev Kumar, Commissioner (LD-II)

For further details contact: Commissioner (LD-II), Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi - 110023, Ph.: 011-24622670

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Don't share stage with Ajay Mishra, Priyanka urges PM

In letter addressed to PM before DGPs' conference

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the repeal of the farm laws, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Saturday urged him not to share the stage with Union Minister of State for Home Ajay Mishra during the DGPs conference here keeping in mind farmers' interest.

She also sought the removal of Mishra from his post over the Lakhimpur Kheri violence in which his son is an accused.

Priyanka Gandhi made the appeal to the Prime Minister through a letter that she read out in front of reporters hours before the commencement of the DGPs conference.

"Yesterday, while addressing the countrymen, you had said that with true mind and pious heart and keeping in mind the interests of the farmers, an unprecedented decision to repeal the farm laws was taken. If this is true, then getting justice delivered to the families affected by the Lakhimpur Kheri violence should be your top priority," the Congress gen-



eral secretary said.

"But, Union Minister of State for Home Ajay Mishra 'Teni' still remains a member of your council of ministers. If you share the stage in the (DGPs) conference with the father of the accused (Ashish Mishra), then a clear message will go to the aggrieved families that you are still with those persons, who are giving patronage to the murderers".

She further said, "If today, your intention is really clear about the farmers of the country, then you should not share the stage with the Union Minister of State for Home, and remove him."

The AICC general secretary also urged that cases registered against the farmers in the country for staging protests against the agri laws be withdrawn and financial assistance be given to the families of all those who died during the agitation.

"You are the prime minister and you must be under-

standing well the responsibility towards the farmers of the country. Ensuring justice towards every citizen is not only the duty but also the moral responsibility of the prime minister," she said in the letter written in Hindi.

Referring to Ashish Mishra, the son of Union minister Ajay Mishra, the Congress leader said, "The entire country has been witness to the cruelty that has been meted out to the 'annadatas' (food providers) in Lakhimpur Kheri. You know that the son of the Union minister of state for Home is the main accused in running a vehicle over the farmers.

"Owing to political pressure, the Uttar Pradesh government has from the beginning tried to stifle the voice of justice. The Supreme Court has said that it seems the government is trying to save a special accused person," she said.

Violence had erupted in Lakhimpur Kheri on October 3 when farmers were protesting the visit of Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya's visit to Mishra's place. Four agitating farmers were run over by a vehicle while four others, including a journalist, two BJP workers were also killed in the violence that ensued.

Individual's vaccination status can now be verified by anyone on CoWIN

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Health Ministry has activated a service on the CoWIN portal that allows anyone to check an individual's vaccination status with the person's registered mobile number and name, followed by an OTP for consent.

The service could be utilised by a service provider - private entities such as travel agencies, offices, employers, entertainment agencies or government agencies such as IRCTC -- for whom verifying a person's vaccination status is critical for facilitating a service requested by the citizen, an official said.

The new feature, 'Know Your Vaccination Status', will help to verify and retrieve a citizen's vaccination status and details by an authorised entity, the ministry said in a statement.

Vaccinated people also can share their vaccination status on the social media and inspire other to take the jab.

Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya tweeted, "Now flaunt your vaccine badge! Share your vaccination status

with your friends & family through CoWIN portal with 2 easy steps: Enter name & mobile no; Enter OTP. Inspire people to get vaccinated & defeat COVID-19."

National Health Authority CEO R S Sharma said in a tweet, "Now download the fully / partially vaccinated badge from CoWIN (cowin.Gov.In) & share it with your friends on all your social platforms! Encourage your family and friends to follow you and #FightCovid."

The service is being built to help citizens who may not have the vaccine certificate available in digital or paper form for availing a requested service and can support the service provider to verify the vaccination status/vaccination digital record of the citizen as per the authorised permission of the requesting entity.

The service helps in verifying the vaccination status of individuals. The service can be utilised by travel agencies and help making travel safe for individuals by allowing travel only for vaccinated individuals.

Militant killed in encounter in J&K's Kulgam



PTI ■ SRINAGAR

An unidentified militant was killed in an encounter with security forces in Jammu and Kashmir's Kulgam district on Saturday, police said.

Security forces launched a cordon and search operation in the Ashmuji area of the south Kashmir district following information about the presence of militants there, a police official said.

During the operation, the hiding militants fired at the forces, leading to a gunfight, he said, adding one ultra was killed. The identity and group affiliation of the slain militant is being ascertained, he said.

The operation is going on and further details are awaited, the official said.

Army will stand up to external, internal threats: Vice Chief of Army Staff

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Adversaries with "hegemonic" designs try altering status quo under false pretexes, but the Indian Army must and will stand up to all external and internal threats, Vice Chief of the Army Staff, Lt General Chandi Prasad Mohanty said on Saturday.

After reviewing a passing out parade at the Officers Training Academy (OTA) here, Lt Gen Mohanty also hailed the "increasingly significant role" of women officers in the Indian Army and said they have proved their mettle despite the "trying nature" of the profession.

In his address, Mohanty said "India's comprehensive national power increases and it gets called upon to play an increasingly larger role in global geo-politics."

"Adversaries with hegemonic designs exploit opportunities to try and alter status quo on false pretexes," he said without specifying anyone but the remarks seemed to be an apparent reference to China.

These multi-domain secu-

riety challenges must be overcome in order to achieve peace, prosperity and growth.

"We must and will stand up to all external and internal threats. The Armed forces are the strongest pillar of the country. We cannot afford to let our guard down."

"The country looks upon us to deliver, each and every time. Our responses would be integrated adopting not only a tri-service but a whole of nation approach," Mohanty added.

Referring to the passing out women cadets on Saturday, both from India and Bhutan, he said they reflect the "inclusive nature of our Armed forces."

Noting that women officers in the Indian Army have played increasingly significant role over the last few decades and have proved their mettle despite the trying nature of the profession, Mohanty said, "as a consequence, women are now being enrolled into other ranks as well, to overwhelming response."

Aryan's bail...

From Page 1

If independently considered, drugs seized from Arbaaz and Munmun was a small quantity "which is not a disputed fact."

Tearing into the NCB's allegation that Aryan and two other accused were part of the conspiracy, the Judge said: "For inferring act of hatching conspiracy on the part of Aryan and two other accused, there has to be positive evidence about an agreement to do a unlawful act or to do a lawful act by unlawful means and such agreement must precede meeting of minds... There is hardly any positive evidence to convince this court that all the accused persons with common intention agreed to commit unlawful act."

"So far as the case of conspiracy against the applicants also, there is absence of material on record of them having meeting of minds with other accused who were named in the offence in question," the judge noted.

Referring to the Prosecution's stand that the accused had admitted to having committed an offence under NDPS Act, the maximum punishment prescribed is not more than one year for such offence. "The applicants have already suffered incarceration for almost 25 days. The applicants were not even subjected to medical examination to determine whether at the relevant time, they had consumed drugs," the Judge observed. On the confessional statements of the three accused recorded by the NCB, the Judge said: "Once the confessional statements of applicants/accused cannot bind them of the offence in view of the judgment of the Supreme Court in the matter of Toofan Singh case, the claim put forth by the respondent that the accused persons have accepted their involvement in the crime

is liable to be rejected."

Alluding to the submissions made by Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Anil Singh, who appeared for the NCB in the case, the Judge noted: "It is worth to clarify here that such confessional statements can be considered by the investigating agency only for the investigation purpose and cannot be used as a tool for drawing an inference that applicants have committed an offence under the NDPS act as has been alleged against them."

The Judge also noted that Section 37 of the NDPS act "will not be attracted in the case in hand as this court has already observed that there is no material on record to infer that applicants have hatched conspiracy to commit the offence."

With Aryan and two other accused having already complied with first of the demands i.e. execution of personal bond with one or sureties for the like amount, the other conditions that the Judge has stipulated in his order include: They shall not indulge in any activity similar to the activities on the basis of which the said CR stands registered against them for offences under the NDPS Act; they shall not try to establish communication with co-accused or any other person involved directly or indirectly in similar activities or make any call to any person indulging in similar activities as alleged against them, through any mode of communication.

In other conditions, the court has restrained Aryan and two others from making any attempt to neither influence the witnesses nor tamper with the evidence, which is prejudicial to the proceedings before the Special NDPS court and mandated him to surrender his passport before the Special Court immediately and not leave the country without prior permission from the Special court.

Centre asks Ladakh, Puducherry to take steps as Covid cases rise

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Witnessing a rise in weekly Covid cases, testing and positivity rate, the Union Health Ministry has written to Puducherry and Ladakh urging them to take pre-emptive action to gain control over the situation.

Earlier, the Ministry had asked State Governments of Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir to undertake a review and enhance testing in view of rising cases of Covid-19 and weekly positivity rates.

In a letter to the principal secretary

(Health) of Ladakh this week, Additional Secretary in the Union Health Ministry Arti Ahuja said the Union Territory has reported a 362 per cent increase in weekly new cases from 34 cases in the week ending on October 27 to 157 cases in the week ending on November 17.

It is also worrying to note that the Union Territory has exhibited an increase of more than 156 per cent in weekly positivity from 1.5 per cent in the week ending on October 26 to 3.9 per cent in the week ending on November 16.

Further, worrying trends with regards to weekly cases, testing and positivity rate

have been observed in various districts. Increase in number of weekly new cases: Leh district has exhibited a significant increase of more than 362 per cent in weekly new cases from 35 in the week ending on October 27 to 139 in the week ending on November 17.

This is especially concerning given the geographical expanse of the district," Ahuja said.

Leh has also recorded a 143 per cent increase in weekly positivity rate from 1.98 per cent in the week ending on October 26 to 4.81 per cent in the week ending on November 16.

Indore wins cleanest city tag...

From Page 1

As per the Swachh Survekshan Survey 2021 report, the 10 top-ranked cleanest cities, having a population of more than one lakh, are Indore, Surat, Vijaywada, Navi Mumbai, New Delhi, Ambikapur, Tirupati, Pune, Noida and Ujjain. Lucknow has been ranked the lowest among 25 cities in the same category. The winners were awarded by President Ram Nath Kovind in a ceremony held at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi.

Taking to Twitter, Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri congratulated Indore and its "people, political leadership and municipal corporation," among others. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan also congratulated the people of Indore "for doing wonders" and achieving the feat of India's cleanest for the fifth time successively by posting messages on Twitter as well as Koo.

Bharatiya Janata Party

(BJP) national general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya also took to the micro-blogging sites to congratulate the "Indoris and the cleaning workers" of the city.

The New Delhi Municipal Council's area was ranked the cleanest in the category of cities with 1-3 lakh population. Noida was named the cleanest among medium-sized cities, that is with 3 lakh to 10 lakh population. Among the big cities with population of 10 lakh to 40 lakh, Navi Mumbai was ranked the cleanest and also bagged the first award in the category of "Safaimitra Suraksha Challenge".

Of States with over 100 urban local bodies, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh were ranked second and third respectively.

In the State awards, Chhattisgarh, for the third consecutive year emerged as the "Cleanest State" in the category of "more than 100 Urban Local Bodies" while Jharkhand, for the second time, won the Cleanest State

award in the "less than 100 Urban Local Bodies category". Karnataka and Mizoram became the "Fastest Mover States" in the big (more than 100 ULBs) and small (less than 100 ULBs) state category respectively.

According to the Ministry, Vita city of Maharashtra has been ranked the cleanest city with less than one lakh population, followed by Lonavala and Saswad. Hoshangabad and Tripuri emerged as the "Fastest Mover small city" and "Best Small City in Citizens' Feedback" categories, respectively with a jump of 274 ranks from 361st position in the 2020 rankings to the 87th position this year, thus securing a place among the top 100 cities.

Ahmedabad Cantonment won the title of "India's Cleanest Cantonment", followed by Meerut Cantonment and Delhi Cantonment.

In the State awards, Chhattisgarh, for the third consecutive year emerged as the "Cleanest State" in the category of "more than 100 Urban Local Bodies" while

Jharkhand, for the second time, won the Cleanest State award in the "less than 100 Urban Local Bodies category".

Karnataka and Mizoram became the "Fastest Mover States" in the big (more than 100 ULBs) and small (less than 100 ULBs) state category respectively.

In all, 4,320 urban local bodies were assessed under various parameters. The process was completely digitalised with the data being collected from different platforms, including apps and portals.

The assessment was conducted between March 1-31, 2021, with a maximum of 6,000 marks. While citizens voice carried 30 per cent weightage (1,800 marks), garbage segregation, collection, processing and disposal accounted for 40 per cent or 2,400 marks.

The remaining 1,800 marks were awarded for certification, if any, under which garbage-free rating yielded 1,100 marks and the open-defecation-free parameter earned 700 marks.

Focus should be on reusing, recycling resources: Kovind

New Delhi: President Ram Nath Kovind on Saturday stressed on the concept of "waste to wealth" and said focus should be on to reuse and recycle resources. He also hailed the role of safai mitras and sanitation workers in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, saying they continuously rendered their services.

The Government is committed to ensure that life of no sanitation worker is put at risk due to unsafe cleaning practices, Kovind said at an event where he presented the 'Swachh Survekshan Awards 2021'.

Farmers refuse to relent

From Page 1

It said that the Prime Minister announced the repeal of the three "black" farm laws but he chose to "remain silent" on the other pending demands of the farmers. "More than 670 farmers were martyred in the farmers' movement so far and the Government of India did not even acknowledge their sacrifice. These martyrs' families have to be supported with compensation and employment opportunities. The martyrs also deserve homage to be paid to them in the Parliament session, and a memorial should be erected in their name," the SKM's statement said.

Hundreds of cases in which thousands of farmers have been implicated in Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Delhi, Chandigarh, Madhya Pradesh and elsewhere have to be withdrawn unconditionally, it said. It also indicated that its movement for a statutory guarantee of the MSP and demand for the withdrawal of the Electricity Amendment Bill will continue.



I, Phirdaushi W/o. Meer Tohdees R/o. S-9, Second Floor, Flat No.203, Jogabai Extn., Jamia Nagar, Okhla, New Delhi-110025, have changed my name to Phirdaushi Meer for all future purposes.

PD(9108)A

CBI charges disciple, 2 others with abetting Mahant's suicide

From Page 1

Following the incident, a video that surfaced showed Anand Giri seeking forgiveness from his mentor. But soon accusations of blackmail resurfaced.

Soon after ABAP chief Mahant Narendra Giri's death, reports of his disciple's flashy lifestyle, including skydiving trips to Australia and driving Lamborghini sports cars at a race track, surfaced in the media.

Anand Giri had earlier denied his role in the death of his mentor alleging a conspiracy "by people who used to extort money from Narendra Giri".

In a clear sign of the national stature of the Mahant, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav and a host of other political leaders were among those who tweeted their condolences for Narendra Giri's death.

PUBLIC NOTICE
To be known to all that I, Muri Ram S/o. Late Shri Ram Gopal. Cont. 8802418139. Email: kumarinibh 2033@gmail.com. R/o A-43, Yadav Nagar, Sema Pur Delhi, Allottee/Purchaser of House No. 1391, Block-A, Pocket-1, Sector-30, Rohini Delhi, has applied for the conversion of aforesaid property. The documents like Un-conveyance Deed with covering letter issued by DDA, Original Perpetual Lease Deed, Demand Letter, Possession Letter, Original Site Possession and all other documents of aforesaid property have been lost. An F.I.R. to this effect has been lodged in police station on dated 15/11/2021. Any person(s) claiming any right, having any objection or found in possession of original document may writelcontact with above named person at above address within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice and can personally contact: Deputy Director (LAB/Rohini) C - Block 3rd Floor Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi

25 dead, 17...

From Page 1

The deluge in the Chief Minister's native Kadapa district saw the Annamayya project getting breached and left a trail of destruction in many villages downstream under the Rajampet constituency.

More than 30 people were washed away from three villages along the Cheyyeru river course, where water from the Annamayya medium irrigation project gushed in. At one point on Friday, two lakh cusecs of floodwater flowed out of Annamayya project while its normal capacity was just two tmc ft.

Kadapa, thus, reported the highest toll of 13 so far. In Kadiri town in Anantapuram district, a building under construction collapsed due to incessant rain and fell on an adjoining building, killing at least seven persons, including three children.

Police and revenue authorities rescued seven more persons from the mishap site.

Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan Vice-Chairman Vishnuvardhan Reddy expressed grief over the tragedy and blamed illegal constructions for the inci-

dent. He demanded action against the Kadiri municipal officials responsible for this and Rs 50 lakh each paid to the kin of the deceased.

In Chittoor district, four persons were killed in rain-related incidents, according to the Government.

In SPS Nellore district, a constable placed in the SDRF at Vizianagaram drowned while carrying out a rescue operation in Damaramadugu village in SPS Nellore district.

Police said the SDRF was engaged in the rescue operation to save villagers stranded in the Somasila river flood when tragedy struck its own man.

SPS Nellore district bore the brunt as a record flood discharge of over 3.32 lakh cusecs in Somasila left many villages marooned on Saturday.

A total of 243 relief camps were opened in the four districts where 20,923 persons evacuated from flood-hit areas were lodged.

South Central Railway General Manager Gajanan Mallaya inspected the Nandaluru-Rajampet section where the railway track was washed away under the impact of the flood in Cheyyeru.

The SCR said in a release that track restoration works were going on in full swing.

The General Manager directed the officials to complete the restoration work on a war-footing following all standard safety norms.

Meanwhile, at least 10 Express trains have been cancelled on Saturday and Sunday due to flooding of the railway track in the Nellore-Padugupadu section in Vijayawada division.

The State Government said 1,549 houses, valued at over Rs five crore, were damaged while another 488 houses remained marooned.

Large damage to livestock was also reported as 612 heads of cattle were killed and 3,232 chickens perished. About 1,791 small cattle like sheep and goat were also killed in the deluge, causing a total loss of over Rs 2.31 crore.

Agricultural crops in over 2.33 lakh hectares and horticultural crops in about 20,000 hectares stood damaged, according to government data.

Roads now lay completely battered in these districts. Many culverts, causeways and bridges suffered extensive damage due to the flash floods.

Varun asks PM to assure MSP to growers

From Page 1

In his letter posted on Twitter, Gandhi underscored the need to accept the farmers' demand for legal guarantee of MSP.

"This movement will not end without the resolution of this demand and there will be widespread anger amongst them, which will continue to emerge in one form or the other. Therefore, it is very important for the farmers to get the statutory guarantee of MSP for their crops," he wrote.

The BJP leader said the legal binding on MSP will give a sizeable economic security cover to the farmers and will empower small and marginal farmers.

"My humble request to you is that the Government must immediately accept this demand in the interest of our nation," Gandhi said in his letter to the Prime Minister.

He said MSP should also be based on the C2+50 per cent formula of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices.

Describing the October 3 Lakhimpur Kheri violence, in which four farmers were

among nine people killed, as heartbreaking and a "blemish on our democracy", Gandhi said, "... It is my request to you that appropriately strict action is taken against the Union Minister who has been connected to this incident, so that there is a fair enquiry," Varun Gandhi made the request to the Prime Minister without taking Mishra's name.

He also claimed that the Lakhimpur incident was an outcome of the adversarial atmosphere created against the farmers' movement by provocative statements of many leaders sitting in senior positions.

Gandhi also demanded that Rs 1 crore compensation be given to farmers martyred in this movement against the laws and that all "politically motivated false" FIRs against the protesting farmers be quashed.

Concluding his letter, Gandhi said that farmers expect that their demands will be resolved in a timely and sensitive manner and asserted that democracy runs on constitutionality, discourse and empathy.

The Nation Honours Our Consciousness for Cleanliness

Chhattisgarh Declared India's Cleanest State



“ Receiving this award for the third consecutive year is an honour for the citizens of Chhattisgarh. This feat could not have been achieved in a day, continuous and dedicated efforts have been put in for this accomplishment. Linking this campaign with livelihood provided a rock solid foundation on which we could set forth to win maximum accolades for the state. For this achievement, I would like to congratulate the public representatives, officials and Swachhta Didis of the state ”

- Bhupesh Baghel
Chief Minister, Chhattisgarh



Keeping Clean – Keeping Green



RAJASTHAN

Mins resign ahead of Cabinet reshuffle

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/JAIPUR

There will be a complete rehaul of the Ashok Gehlot-led Congress Government in Rajasthan.

All the Ministers in the Government on Saturday tendered their resignations from the Cabinet and Council during a meeting at the CM's residence in Jaipur. The move was a change from the earlier stance during the day with the probability of a limited reshuffle being effected as only three Ministers had put in their papers to accommodate Sachin Pilot loyalists.

The new Ministers are likely to be sworn in at 4 pm on Sunday. There is no confirmation yet though.

"All Ministers resigned in the meeting," Pratap Singh Khachariyawas, who held the charge of the transport minister, told the media.

"We have been asked to go to the PCC office at 2 pm on Sunday where further instructions will be given by Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, AICC general secretary Ajay Maken and PCC chief Govind Singh Dotasra," Khachariyawas said. AICC general secretary Ajay Maken is already in Jaipur and has been coordinating between the various factions in the party as well the high command.

Earlier, Gehlot and Maken as well as PCC chief Dotasra addressed a Kisan Vijay Diwas gathering. After that, Maken and Gehlot held a meeting at a hotel.



Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot addresses during 'Kisan Vijay Diwas', in Jaipur on Saturday PTI

Rajasthan Government can have a maximum of 30 ministers, including the chief minister. The clamour for Cabinet reshuffle had been growing for the last several months with the Pilot camp demanding to accommodate supporters of the state's former Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot's supporters in the government.

ICC sources said that a maximum number of Pilot camp is likely to be accommodated as per the "agreement"

reached between warring factions Gehlot and Pilot in several rounds of meetings by then with party chief Sonia Gandhi, former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi and general secretary Priyanka Gandhi.

State PCC chief Govind Singh Dotasra, Harish Chaudhary and Raghu Sharma had already offered resignation in writing to Congress president Sonia Gandhi.

While Dotasra is the PCC chief,

Harish Chaudhary and Raghu Sharma are in-charge of the party's affairs in Punjab and Guajrat respectively. Maken expressed that the leaders desired to work for the party.

Apart from the Congress MLAs, independents who support the government and MLAs who defected from the BSP to Congress also have expectations from the reshuffle.

The clamour for a reshuffle had been growing for several months with former Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot's camp demanding that his supporters be accommodated in the government.

Apart from Congress MLAs, independents supporting the government and MLAs who defected from the BSP to Congress also have expectations from the reshuffle.

Last year, Pilot had led a rebellion of 19 Congress MLAs, including himself. While the party removed Pilot as deputy CM and as the Panchayati Raj minister, his loyalist Vishvendra Singh was removed as the Tourism minister and Ramesh Meena was removed as Food and Civil Supplies Minister.

The crisis lasted beyond a month and the party high command had to step in to broker peace between the two factions. After the two shook hands in August 2020 following truce, it was expected that Pilot's loyalists would be adjusted in Gehlot's cabinet. However, Gehlot has been resisting expanding his cabinet till now.

BJP slams Cong over Sidhu's 'bada bhai' address to Imran

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Soon after a video of Punjab Congress president Navjot Singh Sidhu calling Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan his 'elder brother' during a trip to Kartarpur Sahib went viral on Saturday, the BJP hit out at the Congress alleging the Opposition party sees terror groups like IS and Boko Haram in Hindutva while it finds a 'bhai jaan' in Khan.

In the video Sidhu is being welcomed by a Pakistani official on behalf of Khan and the Congress leader is heard saying Khan was like a 'bada bhai' to him and that he loved him a lot.

It is a serious matter of concern for India, BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra said as the ruling party seized on the issue to target the Congress.

He claimed that there was a larger design at work, and Sidhu's comments were linked to a number of Congress leaders, including Rahul Gandhi, criticising Hindutva.

Referring to Congress leader Salman Khurshid's statement in his latest book, Patra said the opposition party sees terror groups such as the ISIS and the Boko Haram in Hindutva while it finds a 'bhai jaan' in Khan.

It is being done for appeasement politics as the Congress still believes that there is a section in India which will be happy with praise for Pakistan. There are no such people in India though, Patra added.

He noted that Sidhu had praised Khan and Pakistan earlier too and had hugged its Army chief Qamar Javed Bajwa during an earlier trip to the neighbouring country.

Noting that Punjab is a border state where Pakistan tries to foment troubles, Patra said it



needs a mature and patriotic leadership.

Sidhu is not right for India and Punjab deserves better than him, he said.

Pakistan's Foreign Minister had recently described Hindutva as a threat to global security, and he had borrowed the term from Rahul Gandhi, the BJP leader alleged.

To a question about Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi writing a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the farmers' issue, Patra shot back and asked if she also considers Khan an elder brother like Sidhu as she had in the past called the Punjab leader her brother.

Sharing the video, BJP IT department head Amit Malviya tweeted, 'Rahul Gandhi's favourite Navjot Singh Sidhu calls Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan his "bada bhai". Last time he had hugged Gen Bajwa, Pakistan Army's Chief, heaped praises. Is it any surprise that the Gandhi siblings chose a Pakistan loving Sidhu over veteran Amarinder Singh?'

India had recently opened the Kartarpur Sahib corridor, and a number of pilgrims from Punjab, including politicians, have visited the place on the occasion of Sikhism founder Guru Nanak's birth anniversary.

Rahul asks Govt to 'admit truth on Chinese occupation'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the decision to repeal the new farm laws, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Saturday targeted the Government, saying the truth of "Chinese occupation" should also be admitted now.

The Congress has been attacking the government over its handling of the border tensions with China, accusing it of compromising India's territorial integrity, a charge denied by the Centre.

The truth of "Chinese occupation" should also be admitted now, Rahul tweeted in Hindi in the backdrop of the Modi government agreeing to the demand of agitating farmers and opposition parties to scrap the three central farm laws enacted last year.

The former Congress president has been questioning the government over the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China, especially



after the standoff in eastern Ladakh.

India and China on Thursday agreed to hold the 14th round of military talks at an early date to achieve the objective of complete disengagement in remaining friction points along

LAC in eastern Ladakh.

The eastern Ladakh border standoff between the Indian and Chinese militaries erupted on May 5 last year following a violent clash in the Pangong lake areas and both sides gradually enhanced their deployment by

India and China on Thursday agreed to hold the 14th round of military talks at an early date to achieve the objective of complete disengagement in remaining friction points along the LAC in eastern Ladakh

rushing in tens of thousands of soldiers as well as heavy weaponry.

The tension escalated following a deadly clash in Galwan Valley on June 15 last year.

As a result of a series of military and diplomatic talks, the two sides completed the disengagement process in the north and south banks of the Pangong Lake in February and in the Gogra area in August.

Each side currently has around 50,000 to 60,000 troops along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the sensitive sector.

BSF organises weapon exhibition programmes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

To commemorate the Golden Jubilee Year of Bangladesh Liberation War, on November 18, 2021, the North Bengal Frontier of BSF organised weapon exhibition programmes in the bordering areas as part of the Bangladesh's Liberation War celebrations being observed by the BSF and its Bangla counterpart Border Guards Bangladesh.

The exhibitions were organised by 195 Battalion at the Border Out Post (BOP) of the BSF Chaulhati (Jalpaiguri, West Bengal) and 15 Battalion BOPs at Dangapara (Murshidabad) and Khalpara (Siliguri). Prominent local leaders, civil dignitaries, local villagers, school teachers and students witnessed the weapon exhibition, the BSF said in a statement.

The program was organised to exhibit the latest defence technologies and equipment used by the BSF to thwart anti national elements. The children were offered to explore the latest defence technologies and equipment through a series of interactive displays and live demonstrations. The children were thrilled beyond their imagination, it said.

This year, Bangladesh is celebrating 50 years of its Independence. On March 26, 1971, Bangladesh was proclaimed as an independent nation by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and this led to Bangladesh Liberation War and a full-fledged war ensued between Pakistan and Bangladesh liberation forces with Indian support.



Border Security Force (BSF) had played a key role in Bangladesh liberation war in training of the "Mukti Vahini" and fighting with enemy forces. To commemorate the 50 years of Bangladesh liberation war, Border Security Force and Border Guard Bangladesh have launched various programmes across India and Bangladesh.

Maoists blow up railway tracks in J'khand, train services disrupted

Latehar/Medininagar/Chaibasa: Suspected members of banned CPI (Maoist) blew up portions of railway tracks in Jharkhand's Latehar and West Singhbhum districts in the early hours of Saturday, disrupting train services on Barkakana-Garhwa and Howrah-Mumbai routes, police said.

A rail track between Sonua and Lotapahar stations in West Singhbhum, under Chakradharpur Division of South Eastern Railway (SER), was damaged past Friday night in a blast that was allegedly triggered by the Maoists.

The banned outfit has called for a nationwide bandh on Saturday to protest against the arrest of its top leader Prashant Bose alias Kishan Da, who was carrying a bounty of Rs 1 crore on his head, by the Jharkhand Police. Bose was the mastermind behind more than 100 incidents of attack and arson in Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra.

Ajay Linda, the district superintendent of police, told PTI that suspected ultras have triggered a low-intensity blast between Sonua and Lotapahar and damaged some sleepers laid underneath the tracks.

Services on main Howrah-Mumbai line were restored via an alternative track from 8 am on Saturday and services returned to normal two hours later, he said. In Latehar, too, a blast took place on the railway tracks between Richughuta and Demu stations around 12.30 am, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Palamu Range, Raj Kumar Lakra, told PTI.

Maoist cadres squad blew up the tracks, bringing trains to a halt on the Barkakana-Garhwa route, under the Dhanbad division of Eastern Central Railway (ECR), Lakra said. PTI

Delta-like SARS-CoV-2 variants most likely to increase pandemic severity

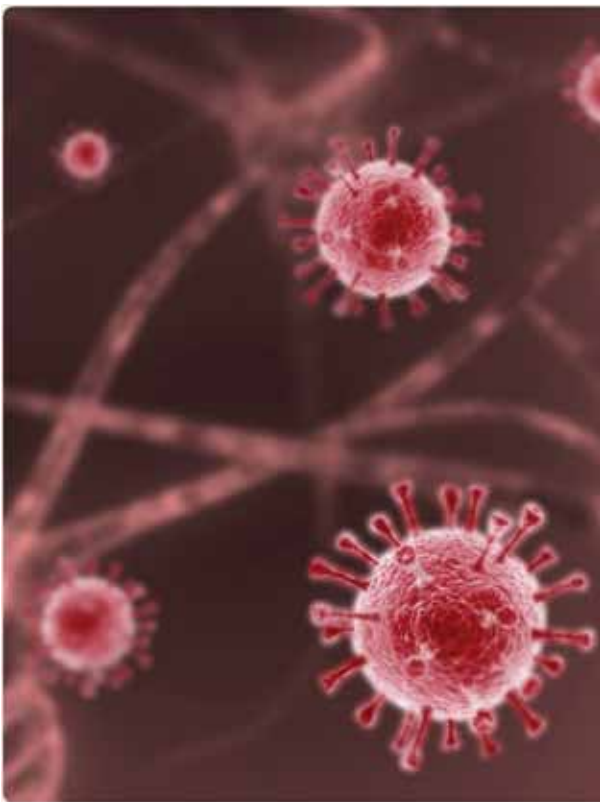
PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A SARS-CoV-2 variant with traits similar to that of the Delta variant might cause a more severe pandemic with more infections and breakthrough infections/reinfections than variants with either trait alone, according to a study published in the journal Cell. In other words, it indicated that a variant with enhanced transmissibility alone would likely be more dangerous than a variant that could partially evade the immune system.

Yet a variant with both traits could cause more infections, reinfections, and breakthrough infections than a variant with either trait alone.

"Thus far, evidence of immune escape -- the ability of a variant to evade the immune system and cause reinfections or breakthrough infections -- has been a red flag," said researcher Mary Bushman from Harvard University.

"Our findings say it's maybe more of a yellow flag -- this is not such a big deal on



its own. But when it's combined with enhanced transmissibility, then it can be a really big deal," Bushman added.

The traits of the Delta variant include enhanced transmissibility and an ability to infect people who had previous infections/vaccination.

The analysis simulated a SARS-CoV-2 pandemic with several different hypothetical variants including combinations of the two traits -- enhanced transmissibility, similar to the Alpha variant; partial immune escape, similar to the Beta variant; enhanced transmissibility with partial immune escape, similar to the Delta variant; and a variant with neither trait.

The analysis also factored in how certain variables, such as masking/physical distancing or vaccinations, would affect the pandemic's trajectory.

For each of the scenarios, the team analysed the total number of infections as well as the number/percentage of infections averted by vaccination.

Tigress kills Maha woman forest guard

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a disturbing incident, a woman Forest Guard was mauled to death by a tigress in the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve (TATR) in Chandrapur district of eastern Maharashtra.

The incident took place when woman forest guard Swati Dumane (31) was conducting tiger count along with three other beat colleagues from Kolara Forest Range of TATR, was conducting a tiger count in the vicinity.

Confirming the "unfortunate" death of Swati Dumane, Dr. Jitendra Ramgaonkar, Chief Conservator of Forests, TATR said that the incident took place when they were carrying

out a sign survey as part of the ongoing All India Tiger Estimation-2022 exercise.

"After trekking nearly 4 kilometers from the Kolara gate till compartment No 97 inside the TATR core area, Dumane and her team saw a tigress sitting on the path ahead of them.

Having waited for almost half an hour for the tigress to move, they took a detour through a thick patch of the forest.

Upon noticing the human movements, the tigress followed them and attacked Dumane from the rear side.



fatally mauled Dumane and dragged her body deep inside the jungle," Dr Ramgaonkar said.

Shortly afterwards, the beat helpers reported the matter to the seniors outside the forest who rushed to the spot and managed to trace out Dumane's body from a thickly wooded area where it was abandoned by the tigress.

Meanwhile, Dumane's

body has been sent for autopsy at the Government Hospital at Chimur.

Following the incident, the TATR suspended the AITE-2022 exercise of sign survey and transect walk on foot till further orders. "We are taking precautions to ensure against recurrence of such incidents," Dr Ramgaonkar said.

Dumane, who hailed from the neighbouring Gadchiroli district, is survived by her husband and a 4-year-old daughter. She joined the Forest Department service in 2011. The TATR foundation has released an ex-gratia of Rs.5-lakh for her family.

Dumane's final rites were performed with full honours on Saturday evening.

CHILDREN'S RIGHT DAY

‘Tobacco-free India’ a right of every child; COTPA amendment should be passed at earliest

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With kids as young as 10 years becoming addicted to tobacco, elected representatives in ensuing Parliament should ensure early passage of the amendments to the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act or COTPA Act to save the youth and next generation, said Priyank Kanoongo, Chairman of the National Commission of Protection of Child's Rights on the Children's Right Day (NCPDR) on Saturday.

"It is hoped that the proposed COTPA Amendments will not only be passed by the MPs in full majority at the earliest but also discussed threadbare in Parliament so that a movement against tobacco is created across the country," Kanoongo said.

He also advised the Member of Parliament (MPs) to hold interaction with the stakeholders in their constituencies on the issue. Also, State Governments should hold a review meetings with police from time to time to ensure that the law is implemented earnestly, he said.

The amendments, proposed to increase in legal age for sale of tobacco products to 21 years, comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising and promotion and ban on sale of single sticks of cigarettes/bidis.

Kanoongo said that, once the COTPA Amendments are passed, it will be at par with the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act which has stringent provisions, ensuring basic rights of children. It is hoped that the Government might introduce the COTPA Amendments Bill



in this session of Parliament."

BJP youth leader from Maharashtra, Shweta Shalini asserted that noose must be tightened around tobacco companies to end the conspiracies targeting these youth. She shared data of the Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) at a webinar titled "How Stronger Tobacco Law Can Save Our Next Generation" organised by the Speakin, an advocacy platform, on the occasion of the Children's Right Day.

The survey says that 38 percent of cigarettes, 47 percent of bidi and 52 percent of young smokeless tobacco users picked up the habit before their 10th birthday.

Shalini equated tobacco companies and their products as demons and said, "We are confronting a demon and we have to unitedly fight against it. We have noted that people who begin smoking at a younger age are more likely to become addicted to nicotine

and have trouble quitting. These tobacco companies know this fact. And hence for their vested interest they do not think twice before targeting these innocent lives."

Slamming the tobacco companies for indulging in various nefarious tactics to hook the kids as young as ten years old for their profits, Kanoongo too held responsible the celebrities engaged in endorsing the harmful products as 'cool' that compromise the health of the kids.

"Once the COTPA Amendments get green signal from the Parliament, those endorsing surrogate advertisements will be behind the jail," he warned.

The NCPDR Chief also called for strict action against advertising companies engaged in high-blitz campaigns and experimental marketing for the tobacco firms to reach out to new customers and lure impressionable minds.

Indo-Bangla border killings unfortunate: B'desh Min

PTI ■ DHAKA

Bangladesh Foreign Minister BAK Abdul Momen on Saturday described the killings on the Indo-Bangla border as “unfortunate” as India’s border forces continue to use lethal arms despite assurance from the top level that they would use non-lethal weapons in frontier management.

Momen’s comments came days after two Bangladeshis were shot dead at the Indo-Bangla border in West Bengal’s Coochbehar district in the early hours of Friday last after they attacked a BSF patrol party that stopped them from smuggling cattle.

According to reports from Kolkata and New Delhi, the district police claimed that three persons had died in the incident, including an Indian. A Border Security Force (BSF) personnel was also injured.

“It is a shame for India and unfortunate for Bangladesh,” Momen told reporters while responding to a question during his visit to the mausoleum

of the country’s founder Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Tungipara in southwestern Bangladesh.

Claiming that the civil society and ordinary people in West Bengal have also expressed their concern on the issue, he said, “The general public, intellectuals, journalists and artists of the state have recently raised a demand to stop any killing at the border.”

“We don’t want to see the killing of anyone on the frontier, be it Bangladeshi or Indian,” the minister said, adding that Dhaka expects that the Indian authorities will ensure “zero killing” at the border.

Momen said he wondered why the decision to not use lethal weapons was not enforced, despite the commitment of India on the issue at the highest level.

He recalled that during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Bangladesh in March, the two sides agreed that any death along the border is a matter of concern and

directed the border guarding forces concerned to enhance people-oriented measures for ensuring border security and bringing down such death of civilians to a zero level.

Following the November 12 incident, BSF Additional Director General Y B Khurania in New Delhi had said that “a group of 60 miscreants assembled on both sides of the border to smuggle cattle. The miscreants tried to smuggle cattle by throwing improvised bamboo cantilevers on the barbed wires. When a BSF patrol party tried to stop them, they started pelting stones at the party and attacked them with iron rods and sticks”.

The BSF troops on duty ahead of the India-Bangladesh border fence asked the miscreants to return, but they did not pay heed. Subsequently, the BSF officials used non-lethal munitions, but that too did not deter them.

“Two BSF constables got surrounded and were badly hurt (by the miscreants). It was then that they opened fire in

self-defence. They fired a few rounds in the air. Later it was found that two persons on that side of the border had died in the firing,” Khurania said. Earlier this week, Indian High Commissioner to Dhaka Vikram Kumar Doraiswami said India is always vigilant to stop the killings on borders with Bangladesh, and such casualty is unexpected for the both countries.

“We do not want border killings in any country,” he told journalists during his visit to Rangpur.

Joint steps should be taken by the two countries to resolve such tragic incidents, he said.

The Indian border guards have been specifically told not to open fire on the borders if there is no threat of attack on them, Doraiswami said.

“(But) illegal activities have been increasing at the borders. Different countries are using the land of Bangladesh as a route for their illegal activities.

If we want to stop border killings, we have to stop smuggling,” the envoy said.

Pakistan judiciary, bar association lock horns

Over interference of security institutions on judicial matters

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan’s judiciary and the Supreme Court Bar Association on Saturday locked horns over allegations of interference in judicial matters by the country’s security institutions, with the Chief Justice of Lahore High Court vehemently saying that the judiciary in the country never takes dictation from other institutions.

Addressing a gathering at the Asma Jahangir Conference in Lahore held on the title Role of Judiciary in Protecting Human Rights and Strengthening Democracy, Justice Gulzar Ahmed said that judiciary was functioning independently and there was no kind of interference.

“I have not taken pressure from any institution or listened to any institution. No one tells me or guides me on how to write my verdict. I have never made any decision that

I did so on someone else’s saying, nor has anyone had the courage to say anything to me,” he said.

He vehemently denied that the judiciary was being influenced by or taking dictation from other institutions.

His statements came as part of his speech during the programme where Pakistan’s Supreme Court Bar Association President Ali Ahmad Kurd without mincing words alleged that security institutions were influencing the top judiciary.

“One general is dominating a country of 220 million people. This same general has sent the judiciary down to number 126 [in rankings],” he said referring to World Justice Project’s Rule of Law Index 2021, on which Pakistan ranks 126th in the category of fundamental rights.

Justice Ahmed said no one interfered with his work and he decided cases on merit.

“I have never listened, seen, understood or felt anyone’s dictation to me,” he said.

“My court gives justice to the people. Come to the court Ali Ahmad Kurd and see what

is happening. Read the court’s decision and see what is happening.

My judges write judgments every day [...] see how our court is working with freedom and following the law and implementing the Constitution,” he said.

Interestingly, speaking ahead of the Chief Justice Ahmed at the same forum, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) Chief Justice Athar Minallah acknowledged that some of Kurd’s criticism was valid, saying that the judgments in cases such as the Nusrat Bhutto case and the Zafar Ali Shah case were part of history.

“These judgments were responsible for the making and enabling of those that have been referred to by Mr Ali Ahmad Kurd,” Justice Minallah noted. Justice Minallah went on to add that the judiciary should not “bury its head in the sand and ignore its mistakes”.

The Supreme Court at different occasions had justified the military takeover of Ziaul Haq of 1977 in the Nusrat Bhutto case and that of Pervez Musharraf of 1999 in the Zafar Ali Shah case.

GLOBE TROTTING

PAK: HINDU BOY SEXUALLY ASSAULTED, MURDERED
Islamabad: An 11-year-old Hindu boy was sexually assaulted and brutally murdered in Pakistan’s Sindh province, according to a media report on Saturday. The boy went missing on Friday evening and his body was later found on Saturday in an abandoned house in Babarfoi town in Khairpur Mir area of the province.

POLAND PM TO HOLD TALKS ON BORDER CRISIS
Warsaw: Poland’s leader plans to hold a series of talks around Europe about the pressure of migrants on the European Union’s border with Belarus, a crisis that he expects will continue. Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki said he was meeting on Sunday with his counterparts from EU members Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, which have also been hit by the migrant pressure from Belarus.

MALAYSIAN PM’S PARTY WINS LANDSLIDE VICTORY
Malacca: Malaysian Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob’s Malay party won a landslide victory in a state election on Saturday, defeating its allies in the ruling coalition as well as the opposition ahead of national polls. The victory in southern Malacca state by Ismail’s United Malays National Organisation was seen as a bellwether that could shape alliances in elections following a period of political turmoil.

Nepal not to allow third country nationals to travel to India via Kurtha-Jayanagar railroad

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Nepal will not allow third country nationals from a third country to travel to India by rail via the recently launched Kurtha-Jayanagar railroad after Indian officials raised a red flag, citing security concerns, a media report said here on Saturday.

“This was agreed while finalising the Standard Operating Procedure (SPA) for cross-border railway operation,” Deepak Kumar Bhattarai, Director General of the Department of Railways, was

quoted as saying by The Kathmandu Post newspaper.

Nepal and India share a porous border, which has been a hotbed for criminals and terrorist activities.

On October 22, India handed over the 34.9km-long cross-border rail link connecting Jaynagar in Bihar to Kurtha in Nepal to the Nepal government. The SPA is a document outlining the procedures to be adopted while operating the railway service between the two countries.

India’s security concern was one of the reasons why it

took so long to finalise the SPA, Bhattarai said. According to the report, Nepal will notify India about passengers boarding the train to ensure seamless security clearance at the border.

“Based on the tickets issued, we will have to send details of the passengers who are travelling to India,” Bhattarai added.

India has been wary about the possibility of a surge in cross-border crimes if third country nationals are allowed to travel via the Kurtha-Jayanagar railroad, the report said.

Prominent Afghan doc kidnapped, killed

AP ■ KABUL

A prominent doctor was kidnapped and killed in northern Afghanistan, his family said on Saturday.

Mohamed Nader Alemi was abducted two months ago in the city of Mazar-i-Sharif, and his kidnappers demanded a ransom for his release, his son Roheen Alemi said. The family eventually paid them \$350,000, after negotiating down their initial demand of more than twice that, he said.

Despite the payment, the kidnappers then killed Alemi, leaving his body in the street,

his son said. They called the family and told them where to find it on Friday, he said.

“My father was badly tortured, there are signs of harm on his body,” Roheen Alemi said.

Alemi, a psychiatrist, worked for the government’s provincial hospital in Mazar-i-Sharif. He also owned a private clinic, said to be the city’s first private psychiatric clinic.

Under the previous, U.S.-backed government, crime swelled, including frequent kidnappings for ransom, which prompted several businessmen to flee Afghanistan.

Protests against virus norms erupt; cops fire in Rotterdam



Hundreds of people take part in a demonstration against the country’s coronavirus restrictions in Vienna, Austria on Saturday

AP

AP ■ VIENNA

Tens of thousands of protesters, many from far-right groups, marched through Vienna on Saturday after the Austrian government announced a nationwide lockdown beginning Monday to contain the country’s skyrocketing coronavirus infections.

Among those protesting were members of far-right and extreme-right parties and

groups, including the far-right Freedom Party, the anti-vaccine MFG Party and the extreme-right Identitarians.

Demonstrations against virus restrictions were also taking place Saturday in Switzerland, Croatia and Italy. On Friday night, Dutch police opened fire on protesters and seven people were injured in rioting that erupted in Rotterdam against COVID-19 restrictions.

Pak says ‘empty’ containers seized at Mundra Port earlier used for shipping fuel from China

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan on Saturday said the containers seized by Indian authorities at Gujarat’s Mundra Port on a Shanghai-bound cargo ship were “empty” but were earlier used for the transportation of fuel from China to Karachi for K-2 and K-3 nuclear power plants.

The Pakistan Foreign Office issued a statement in response to questions from the press about reports in the media on the “seizure of possible radioactive material” by Indian authorities at Mundra Port on a cargo ship from Karachi Port to Shanghai in China.

The Foreign Office said the Karachi Nuclear Power Plant authorities have informed that these were “empty containers” being returned to China, which were earlier used for the transportation of fuel from China to Karachi for K-2 and K-3 nuclear power plants.

“The Containers were ‘EMPTY’ and the cargo was correctly declared as Non-Hazardous in the shipping documents,” the Foreign Office said.

Int’l environment getting complex for BRI: Prez Xi warns officials

PTI ■ BEIJING

The global environment for building projects under China’s BRI is becoming increasingly complex, President Xi Jinping has said, encouraging officials to seize the strategic opportunities and actively respond to challenges facing his multi-billion-dollar pet initiative, which is set to face competition from the US’ B3W plan.

Xi on Friday called for efforts to continue promoting the high-quality development of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) through joint efforts and the initiative should aim for high-standard, sustainable and people-centered progress.

Noting that the international environment for building the BRI is becoming

increasingly complex, Xi, while addressing a high-level symposium on the initiative, asked the Chinese officials to maintain determination, seize strategic opportunities, actively respond to challenges and move forward.

Without any direct reference, Xi called for promoting political consensus into concrete action, and transforming idea recognition into practical results, the official media reported.

He also suggested expanding new areas of cooperation, such as pandemic control, low-carbon development, and e-commerce.

This is the first time Xi spoke about the BRI after US President Joe Biden launched the Build Back Better World (B3W) initiative.

NASA seeks ideas for a nuclear reactor on the moon

AP ■ BOISE

If anyone has a good idea on how to put a nuclear fission power plant on the moon, the U.S. government wants to hear about it.

NASA and the nation’s top federal nuclear research lab on Friday put out a request for proposals for a fission surface power system.

NASA is collaborating with the U.S. Department of Energy’s Idaho National Laboratory to establish a sun-independent power source for missions to the moon by the end of the decade.

“Providing a reliable, high-power system on the moon is a vital next step in human space exploration, and achieving it is within our grasp,” Sebastian Corbisiero, the Fission Surface Power Project lead at the lab, said in a statement.

If successful in supporting a sustained human presence on the moon, the next objective would be Mars. NASA says fission surface power could provide sustained, abundant power no matter the environmental conditions on the moon or Mars.

“I expect fission surface power systems to greatly ben-

efit our plans for power architectures for the moon and Mars and even drive innovation for uses here on Earth,” Jim Reuter, associate administrator for NASA’s Space Technology Mission Directorate, said in a statement.

The reactor would be built on Earth and then sent to the moon.

Submitted plans for the fission surface power system should include a uranium-fueled reactor core, a system to convert the nuclear power into usable energy, a thermal management system to keep the reactor cool.

OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE, CID ASSAM, ULUBARI, GUWAHATI

Notice Inviting Tender

The office of the Additional Director General of Police (CID), Assam, Guwahati invites open tender through e-Tendering process for Supply, Installation, Training (wherever required) and commissioning of Desktop Computers, 2KVA Online UPS, Computer Printers and Computer Scanner under CCTNS Project.

To participate in the tender process through the e-procurement portal, the bidder should have a valid **Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) of Class-II (minimum)** and will have to register in the portal **<https://assamtenders.gov.in> in themselves.**

The bidder who have downloaded the tender schedules containing the tender details, terms and conditions, from the portal shall submit their tender online on the portal **<https://assamtenders.gov.in>** with proof of payment of the non-refundable tender fee of **Rs.2500/- (Rupees Two Thousand Five Hundred)** only through **Net Banking** only. The tender should be submitted online, as per the date and time of submission prescribed in the schedule.

The time frame for bidding activities are as follows :-

Tender Reference Number	NIT No. E/VII/171-21/CID/2242 dtd. 18/11/20211
Published date	18-11-2021
Bid Document Download Start Date	18-11-2021
Clarification Start Date	18-11-2021
through email sp-cid@assampolice.gov.in	
Clarification End Date	25-11-2021 (1700 hrs)
Bid Submission Start Date	30-11-2021
Bid Submission End Date	10-12-2021 (14:00 hrs)
Bid Opening Date	10-12-2021 (15:00 hrs)

Sd/-

Special Superintendent of police, CID, Assam,

Janasanyog/C/8024/21

Ulubari, Guwahati

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL EDUCATION, ASSAM

SIXMILE, KHANAPARA, GUWAHATI-22

Web site : www.assamtenders.gov.in, www.dmeassam.gov.in, email:dme@assam.gov.in, dmeassam@gmail.com.

No. DME/Patho/253/2021/20894

INVITATION FOR E-BID (IFB) NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING

E-Tenders are invited online through e-procurement system i.e. through website www.assamtenders.gov.in from the intending Manufacturer/Accredited Dealers for supply & installation of various equipment related to **Pathology & Blood Bank department** for all Medical College Hospitals of Assam, under the Health & F.W. Department, Govt. of Assam.

The e-Tender is Two-Bid System, to be submitted with affixed Court Fee Stamp Rs.8.25 (Rupees eight point two five paisa) only (for local bidders) or IPO of Rs. 10/- (Rupees Ten) only (in case of bidders from outside of the State of Assam) in favour of “Director of Medical Education, Assam, Sixmile, Khanapara, Guwahati-781022.

Important dates of the e-Tender

Sl. No.	Scheduled	Start Date	Start Time	End Date	End Time
1.	e- Tender Publishing	21-11-2021	12.00 Noon	-	-
2.	e- Tender Download	22-11-2021	02.00 PM	15-12-2021	02.00 PM
3.	Pre-Bid Meeting	02-12-2021	11.00 AM	Venue - Room No. 4C, 2nd Floor, Directorate of Medical Education, Assam, Sixmile, Guwahati- 32	
4.	Bid Submission	03-12-2021	02.00 PM	15-12-2021	02.00 PM
5.	Bid Opening	15-12-2021	03.00 PM		

Brief Schedule					
Sl. No.	Description (Name of the Items)	Bid Security (E.M.D.)	Delivery/ Installation schedule/ Completion period	Tender fees in Rs.	Eligibility
1.	Supply & installation of various equipments related to Pathology & Blood Bank department of Medical College Hospitals of Assam	Rs. 3.00 Lakh	25 days	Rs. 5000/-	Manufacturer/ accredited Dealer

The detailed information of bidding documents are available online through e-procurement system i.e. through website www.assamtenders.gov.in only. The bidders would be required to register in the website for submission of the bids. The bidders are required to have Digital Signature (DSC) from any of the Certifying Authorities. Aspiring bidders who have not obtained the user ID and password for participating in e- procurement may obtain the same by registering in the www.assamtenders.gov.in. The requirements to register with the e-procurement portal are available on the website indicated above. The tender fees is non refundable and payable in favour of the “Director of Medical Education, Assam, Sixmile, Khanapara, Guwahati-781022, at SBI-Dispur (Guwahati) Branch.

Sd/-

Janasanyog/C/8026/21

Director of Medical Education, Assam

‘Eco recovery to gain traction in H2FY22’

■ NEW DELHI

Economic recovery is expected to gain further traction during the second half of FY22, said India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra).

Accordingly, the rating agency expects the economic recovery to gain momentum on the back of fading impact of the Covid-19 pandemic along with favourable financing and external demand conditions.

Consequently, it has maintained an “improving outlook” on domestic corporates for the second half of FY22.

“Entities with a strong market share and healthy balance sheet will continue to show strong earnings, although margin may moderate. However, sectors which consume commodities will face challenges in the complete pass-through of input prices,” the agency said.

Besides, it said that most sectors would continue to witness a surge in demand post the second Covid wave as they were better prepared than during the first wave.



“The fiscal and monetary measures have backed economic activities by maintaining adequate liquidity. The entities have learnt to make quick structural changes after the first Covid wave and are now better poised to face challenges if subsequent Covid waves appear.” Furthermore, the rating agency expects the ‘Production-linked Incentive’ (PLI) scheme in specially steel to lead to large capex announcements by both large and small steel companies.

On volatility in commodity prices, it observed that since the second wave, especially during Q2FY22, the risk appetite in the system has reasonably improved.

“This has largely been driven by the strong corporate performance, buoyant external condition and sustained ultra-loose monetary policy conditions. Ind-Ra expects that the financing condition to remain conducive in H2FY22, backed by the easy money conditions,” it said.

RIL, Saudi Aramco to re-evaluate proposed investment in O2C

■ NEW DELHI

The deal between Reliance Industries (RIL) and Saudi Aramco for a 20 per cent stake acquisition by the Saudi firm in the oil to chemicals (O2C) business of RIL is now on the back burner.

“Due to evolving nature of Reliance’s business portfolio, Reliance and Saudi Aramco have mutually determined that it would be beneficial for both parties to re-evaluate the proposed investment in O2C business in light of the changed context. Consequently, the current application with National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) for segregating the



O2C business from RIL is being withdrawn,” RIL said in a statement on Friday night.

The two had signed a non-binding Letter of Intent in August 2019 for the potential deal. On Friday, RIL said that Jamnagar, which accounts for a major part of the O2C assets, is envisaged to be the centre for Reliance’s new businesses of Renewable Energy and New Materials, supporting the Net-Zero commitment.

RIL said that it has recently unveiled its plans for the New Energy & Materials businesses by announcing the development of Dhirubhai Ambani Green Energy Giga Complex at Jamnagar.



Govt puts on sale MTNL, BSNL assets at base price of ₹970 crore



■ NEW DELHI

The Government has listed for sale real estate assets of state-run telecom firms MTNL and BSNL at a reserve price of around ₹970 crore, according to documents uploaded on the DIPAM website.

BSNL properties located in Hyderabad, Chandigarh, Bhavnagar and Kolkata have been posted for sale at a reserve price of around ₹660 crore.

The Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) website has listed MTNL assets located in Vasari Hill, Goregaon in

MTNL’s 20 flats located in Oshiwara have also been put up for sale as part of the asset monetisation plan of the company

Mumbai for sale at a reserve price of around ₹310 crore.

“This is the first stage of asset monetisation at MTNL and BSNL. Bids have been invited for BSNL assets worth ₹660 crore and MTNL assets worth ₹310 crore. We plan to complete the entire process within one-and-half months,” BSNL Chairman and Managing Director P K Purwar told PTI.

MTNL’s 20 flats located in Oshiwara have also been put up for sale as part of the asset monetisation plan of the company.

The flats include two units

of 1-room set, 17 units of 1 bedroom hall and kitchen (BHK) and one unit of 2 BHK. Their reserve prices range from ₹52.26 lakh to ₹1.59 crore.

The e-auction for MTNL assets will take place on December 14.

The asset monetisation is part of the ₹69,000 crore revival scheme for MTNL and BSNL which was approved by the government in October 2019. Both the public sector firms were to identify and monetise assets worth ₹37,500 crore by 2022. “We will proceed as per market demand for asset monetisation,” Purwar added.

EPFO empowers advisory body FIAC to take call on investment in new instruments like InvITs

■ NEW DELHI

Retirement fund manager REPFO on Saturday decided to empower its advisory body Finance Investment and Audit Committee (FIAC) to take a call on investing in new asset classes like InvITs.

At present, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and Power Grid Corporation (PGCIL) have launched public sector infrastructure investment trusts (InvITs).

The EPFO would also go for public sector bonds.

The decision was taken at the 229th meeting of the Employees’ Provident Fund Organisation’s apex decision making body - Central Board of Trustees (CBT), headed by Union Labour Minister Bhupendra Yadav.

Asked whether the EPFO will invest in private sector InvITs, Yadav told reporters after the meeting here, “At present we have decided to invest in only newly added Government instruments (bonds and InvITs).

There is no percentage for that. It will be decided on case to case basis by FIAC.”

The board decided to empower FIAC to decide upon the investment options, on a case-to-case basis, for investment in all such asset classes which are included in the Pattern of Investment as notified by the Ministry of Finance for provident and pension funds in India, an official statement said.

Explaining the rationale

behind the decision, Labour Secretary Sunil Barthwal told reporters, “If we want to provide high rate of interest then we have to follow guidelines of finance ministry. There are certain instruments (prescribed in norms) where we were not able to invest due to various reasons. Now we would be in a position to invest in those instruments.”

The Government recently added new instruments like InvITs in the Pattern of Investment for pension funds.

“It has been decided in principal that on case-to-case basis, the FIAC will take a decision in this regard. The CBT has authorised the FIAC to do so. FIAC will take a decision like in case of NHAI and Power Grid (InvITs),” he said.

However, he added that at present only public sector bonds and InvITs will be considered.

“We will invest in those InvITs or bonds where we would get security of funds as we are trustees of the employees’ provident fund. We will focus on return maximisation but also keep in mind the security of funds,” he noted.

During the meeting, it was also decided to constitute four sub-committees, comprising members of the board from employees’ and employers’ side as well as representatives of the government.

Two committees on establishment related matters and futuristic implementation of Social Security Code will be headed by the Minister of State Labour and Employment.

China fines tech giants over anti-monopoly violations



Alibaba, the world’s biggest e-commerce company by sales volume, was fined \$2.8 billion in April for practices that regulators said suppressed competition

■ BEIJING

Chinese tech giants including Alibaba Group and Tencent Holdings were fined Saturday for failing to report corporate acquisitions, adding to an anti-monopoly crackdown by the ruling Communist Party.

The companies failed to report 43 acquisitions that occurred up to eight years ago under rules on “operating concentration,” according to the State Administration for Market Regulation. Each violation carried a penalty of 500,000 yuan (\$80,000), it said.

Beijing has launched anti-

monopoly, data security and other crackdowns on tech companies since late 2020. The ruling party worries the companies have too much control over their industries and has warned them not to use their dominance to gouge consumers or block entry to new competitors.

Other companies fined in the latest round of penalties include online retailers JD.Com Inc. And Suning Ltd. And search engine operator Baidu Inc. The acquisitions dating back to 2013 included network technology, mapping and medical technology assets.

The companies “failed to declare illegal implementation of operating concentration,” the regulator said on its website. Alibaba, the world’s biggest e-commerce company by sales volume, was fined \$2.8 billion in April for practices that regulators said suppressed competition. Meituan, a food delivery platform, was fined \$534 million on Oct. 8.

PANDEY TO ARAI

Develop technology to reduce charging time for EVs

■ PUNE

The Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI) should develop technology to reduce the charging time for electric vehicles, Union Minister of Heavy Industries Mahendra Nath Pandey said on Saturday.

He was speaking at a press conference here after an industry interaction meet organised by the Ministry of Heavy Industries in association with ARAI, SIAM and ACMA to share information about the production linked incentive (PLI) scheme for the automotive sector.

“The auto field contributes to about 14-15 per cent of GDP, which can go up to 25-30 per

cent and can support the PM’s vision for making India a USD 5 trillion economy.

“The sale of electric vehicles has increased drastically in the last few months due to the various schemes and subsidies provided by the Government,” Pandey said.

However, he also spoke about the challenges in EV adoption, including the time taken for charging vehicles.

“To overcome one of these problems related to charging, I am going to urge Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI) to develop the technology that reduces the charging time,” the minister said.

Since charging is the main concern when it comes to the

use of EVs, the government has chosen 9 expressways where 6,000 charging stations have been sanctioned and about 3,000 shall be installed soon, he added.

“The Advanced Chemical Cell (ACC), which is the main component of the EV battery, is currently imported. About 30 per cent of the cost of the EV is the cost of battery itself. This can reduce if it is locally produced.

“This is possible because about 70 per cent of the material used in the manufacturing of lithium-ion batteries is already available in India. With these newly introduced PLI schemes, the government is providing support up to ₹362 crore per gigawatt in this sec-

tor of EVs,” Pandey said.

He also highlighted the government’s FAME I and II (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles) scheme, which has now been extended by another two years to March 31, 2024.

“With the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme, it will lead to an investment of ₹42,500 crore and will further accelerate manufacturing of components and batteries in India.

“The government is providing financial support up to 8-13 per cent for auto component manufacturers and up to 13-18 per cent for EV manufacturers through the scheme.



Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman inspects the 4.5 km-long underground utility tunnel at GIFT City in Gandhinagar district

PTI

गाजियाबाद विकास प्राधिकरण
(ISO 9001 : 2015 एवं ISO 14001 : 2015 प्रमाणित संस्था)
विकास पथ गाजियाबाद

पत्रांक: 578 / 4 / पीओ-सी / 2021-22 दिनांक 18.11.2021

ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

उपायक्षक, गाजियाबाद विकास प्राधिकरण की ओर से निविदा नोटिस में उल्लेखित क्रम संख्या-1 से 24 तक अंकित कार्यों की ई-निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा सम्बन्धी समस्त विवरण व शर्तें गाजियाबाद विकास प्राधिकरण की वेबसाइट www.gdaghaziabad.in पर उपलब्ध हैं एवं UPLC की वेबसाइट <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर निविदा विक्रय की तिथि में उपलब्ध होगी। सम्बन्धित निविदाओं को ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना में उनके समुच्च दर्शायी गयी तिथियों पर खोलने व अपलोड किया जा सकता है एवं प्राप्त ई-निविदाओं को उनके समुच्च दर्शायी गयी तिथियों पर खोला जायेगा। निविदा में कोई भी संशोधन/परिमाणन/परिवर्तन व अतिरिक्त सूचनाओं को वेबसाइट पर ही प्रकाशित किया जायेगा।

प्रभारी मुख्य अभियन्ता

ई-मेल : helpinegda@gmail.com, g@gdagzb • g@gdagzb
हेल्पलाइन नं: 0120-3324233, कार्डसुप : 9818988807, वेबसाइट : www.gdaghaziabad.in

एक सुन्दर शहर हमारा संकल्प

BEFORE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL - II, DELHI, 4TH FLOOR, JEEVAN TARA BUILDING, PARLIAMENT STREET, NEW DELHI- 110001
O.A. No. 648/18 DATE: 21.09.2021
CORPORATION BANK, Applicant.
VERSUS NAUSHER KHAN & ORS. Respondent

T. DEFENDANT URS DEFENDANT NO. 182
A. MS. BANO KHAN W/O SH. GULSHER KHAN
B. MS. AVESH KHAN DAUGHTER
C. SH. DANISH SHER KHAN SON
D. SH. ARHAN KHAN DAUGHTER
ALL RESIDENT OF 4195 GALI NO. 5 ZAKIR NAGAR, OKHA, JAMIA NAGAR NEW FRIENDS COLONY, DELHI-110025

Whereas the above named applicant(s) has/have instituted a case for recovery of RS. 29,15,613/- RUPEES TWENTY NINE LAKH FIFTY TWO THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED THIRTEEN ONLY against you and whereas it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in ordinary way.

Therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance in the Tribunal on 23.11.2021 at 10.30 A.M.

Take notice that in case of your failure to appear on the above mentioned day before this Tribunal, the case will be heard and decided in your absence.

Given under my hand and seal of this Tribunal on this 21st day of Sept., 2021

By Order of the Tribunal
Assistant Registrar DRT-II, DELHI

Seal

IRB Infra Developers shareholders pass resolution for ₹5K cr capital inflow

Overall 95% of the votes have been in favour of the resolution

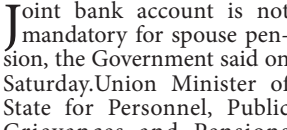
■ NEW DELHI

IRB Infrastructure Developers Ltd Saturday said that its shareholders have passed a resolution which will enable capital inflow of ₹5,347 crore into the company .IRB Infrastructure Developers convened an extra ordinary general meeting of its shareholders online on November 20, 2021, the company said in a statement.

“...This will now enable the company to issue shares to the tune of ₹5,347 crore to the Cintra Global S.E. (a wholly owned subsidiary of Ferrovia S.A) and the Bricklayers Investments Pt. Ltd. (an affiliate of GIC, Singapore Sovereign wealth fund),” it said. The statement said overall 95 per cent of the votes casted have been in favour of the resolution. All the large institutional shareholders of the company not voted in favour of the resolution, it added.

Joint bank account not mandatory for spouse pension: Govt

■ NEW DELHI



A joint bank account with spouse is however desirable and it is to be opened with their spouse in whose favor an authorisation for family pension exists in the Pension Payment Order (PPO), said the statement issued by the Personnel Ministry. Operation in these accounts would be on “former or survivor” or “either or survivor” basis as desired by the pensioner, Singh said.

The reason for opening of joint bank account is to ensure that family pension may be commenced without any delay and the family pensioner is not subjected to any hardships for opening of a new pension bank account, the statement said.

This also ensures minimum documentation for the family pensioner while submitting request for commencement of family pension, it said.

Ola Electric expands test rides of e-scooters pan-India

■ NEW DELHI

Ola Electric on Saturday said it has expanded the customer test rides for its electric scooters across the country.

With this expansion, customers in over 1,000 cities and towns will be able to test ride and experience the Ola S1 electric scooter, a statement said.

The test rides will be initially open only for those who have purchased or reserved the Ola S1 and S1 Pro scooters, it added.

Ola had kicked off test rides in Bengaluru, Delhi, Ahmedabad, and Kolkata on November 10, and then opened up five more cities - Chennai, Hyderabad, Kochi, Mumbai, and Pune on November 19.

The company will now rapidly add more locations to ensure all customers have access to test rides by mid-December, he added.

really thrilled to see their excitement for the revolutionary Ola S1 scooter. Thousands of customers are taking test rides every day and absolutely loving the best in class design, performance, technology and ride quality the Ola S1 delivers,” Ola Electric Chief Business Officer Arun Sirdeshmukh said.

The company will be scaling test rides up rapidly in the coming weeks and will be covering over 1,000 cities and towns across India to ensure every customer has access to test rides by mid-December, he added.

“This is the fastest national scale-up of test rides ever and a revolution in automotive retail made possible by our direct-to-consumer model,” he said. Customer test rides will be rolling out in the next set of cities starting November 27 in cities including Surat, Thiruvananthapuram, Kozhikode, Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada, Coimbatore, Vadodara, Bhubaneswar, Tiruppur, Jaipur, and Nagpur, the statement said.

NORTHERN RAILWAY
E - TENDER NOTICE No. ELS_SRE_T-19 dtd. 20.11.2021

Single tender through E-tendering are invited by Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/TRS, Electric Loco Shed, Khanalpura Yard, Northern Railway, Saharanpur (Ambala Division) for and on behalf of the President of India from the registered tenderer on web site www.ireps.gov.in for the following work upto 11:00 hrs on the date of closing shown against the work and will be opened thereafter:-

Open Tender No.	ELS_SRE_T-19
Name of work	Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract for 180 KVA Static Inverter (SIV) of M/s HIRECT make in Electric Locomotives homed at ESL/LDH, ELS/KJGY/SRE, DSL/LDH, DSL/TKD and DSL/AMV/LKO, for a period of two years.
Date of Closing/ Opening	13.12.2021
Approx. Cost.	60.67,032.13
Earnest Money	NIL
Completion period	2 Year
Validity period	45 days
Cost of tender form	Free of Cost.

- Tenderer(s) should have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate to participate in E-Tendering of Works Tenders.
- Tenderer(s) are required to upload self-attested scanned copies of all related eligibility documents as per conditions.
- Taxes & Charges will be applicable as per extant rule.
- For details, please log on IREPS website www.ireps.gov.in

2698/2021

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that Deepmala is the absolute owner of Property bearing MCF No. 10/10 (Id No. P7005780/102) Land Area Measuring 8 Marla (240 sq. yds.) Part of Kharsa No. 28, Killa No. 8/3(6-14), Mu. No. 28, Killa No. 3/1(4-2), Situated at Waka Siwana Majua Unciah Gaon, Tehsil Ballabgarh with in Hadud Complex, Faridabad vide Transfer Deed dated 21/10/21 (Doc. No. 4770) executed by Om Prakash (he inherited the same vide will dated 04.03.2014 (Doc. No. 147) executed by Kishan Singh (he was the recorded owner vide Inkhano. 12/295)).

All persons having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage(equitable/registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise howsoever, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 7 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.

Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate)
Shop No. 5 & 6, PwE-CSC, Mayur Vihar-II, Delhi-81
011-43052822, 09810083351

SOME MOTHERS DO 'AVE IT



Joining biggest mobilisation ever with parents all over the globe at the 26th United Nations Climate Change conference, Glasgow, Warrior Moms demanded no new fossil fuels to fight against air pollution. SUPRIYA RAMESH brings you a report

‘We stress on strict enforcement of laws that exist to support clean air’

BHAVREEN KANDHARI ■ (DELHI)

Warrior Moms is a Mothers For Clean Air initiative. An ideation and action group that transcends language, demography, and location. They fight against the common enemy— toxic air. A collective of mothers from all over India fighting for children's right to breathe clean air joined hands in September 2020 on the first UN international day of clean air & blue skies. "If one suffers, everyone does. Therefore, It was time to band together and not only be the change, but demand change as well," says Kandhari.

By creating awareness on sources of air pollution and climate change, educating and empowering citizens to take action and engaging with decision-makers to enforce regulations, warrior moms promise to fight the battle for clean air for all children.

With their rallying cry, 'Enough is Enough', the Warrior Moms raise the collective voices to bring back clean air for children. "As mothers, the common pledge that most of us took when our child entered this world was to protect them and provide the best of everything we could afford. The best schools, the best food, the best facilities, and the best healthcare. When the very air we breathe starts choking us and causing various health ailments- it is time to step up, raise our voices for the future of our country and the well-being of our families," she tells us.

Warrior moms empower other mothers to know the laws and complain if they see violations. "It's called 'Know Your Rights!'" Kandhari exclaims. The group is action-based but sure enough, doesn't shy away from advocacy at any point when it's needed.

"We stress on strict enforcement of laws that exist to support clean air. Could be on tree felling, waste burning, crackers, vehicular emissions, construction dust, waste management or thermal power plants," she explains.

Every person above the ordinary has a certain mission that they are called to fulfil. Warrior moms' mission is to ensure implementation of World Health Organisation (WHO) air quality standards all over India by demanding accountability from public and private authorities on air quality abatement plans, engaging with



AS MOTHERS, THE COMMON PLEDGE THAT MOST OF US TOOK WHEN OUR CHILD ENTERED THIS WORLD WAS TO PROTECT THEM AND PROVIDE THE BEST OF EVERYTHING WE CAN AFFORD. WHEN THE VERY AIR WE BREATHE STARTS CHOKING US AND CAUSING VARIOUS HEALTH AILMENTS, IT IS TIME TO STEP UP, RAISE OUR VOICES FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR COUNTRY AND THE WELL-BEING OF OUR FAMILIES

relevant stakeholders on proven cost-effective solutions and growing and building the capacity of more mothers to join the movement and effect change.

According to WHO, 98 per cent of children in India breathe unsafe air. As they grow, they start developing lung-related diseases, suffer acute damage as pollutants accumulate in the lungs—asthma, allergies, bronchitis, pneumonia, lung damage, reduced lung capacity.

"As more studies keep coming in from around the world, we are realising the sheer scale of the damage done to the country," she says.

Alongside this, the tiny particles

(PM2.5) enter the bloodstream and cross into all major organs of the body causing damage that is long-term and irreversible.

"As mothers learning of these health impacts and seeing that India has higher rates than the world in almost all of them, it motivates us not only when and if our children are sick, but also to worry about their future health," Kndhari tells us, adding that the analogy of air pollution to cigarettes is particularly poignant when in some cities it is estimated that children breathe in the equivalent of smoking a pack of cigarettes a day when the smog sets in.

The movement is growing and warrior moms work in four steps:

- ◆Build and nurture inclusive women-led networks across India that are co-mitted to clean air
 - ◆Build capacity and commitment of stakeholders to engage with social, economic and environmental impacts of air pollution and climate change
 - ◆Create and disseminate simple creative communication to improve awareness and knowledge and empower change-makers
 - ◆Hyper-local, regional, narratives and collaborative campaigns on the health impacts of air pollution
- Delhi NCR, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal are the states where they are currently active.

NINA SUBRAMANI ■ (CHENNAI)

During the lockdown months, Subramani has experienced what clean air every day can feel like and wants to see that as a permanent change. She is a documentary filmmaker and teacher, whose films have always focused on our intrinsic links with our environment and as a teacher, she speaks with her students about environmental issues.

"Environment violations in my opinion equal human rights violations," says Subramani.

Air pollution has always been an issue for her as she has grown up being concerned about the environment. Developing asthma as an adult got her thinking about air pollution more and more apart from chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), which were the discussion points back then.

It was during Anil Agarwal's campaign that Subramani got to know more about the effects of leaded fuel and vehicular pollution. "I moved to Delhi to study and it really hit me and since my student days I have been passionate about fighting it," she shares.

When the pandemic first hit India and the country went under lockdown on March 24, 2020, the pleasant chirping sound of birds replaced the loud unpleasant honking of vehicles, air quality improved and sewage and industrial effluents in rivers decreased.

"During the lockdown, the difference in air quality was evident. There was no need to see AQI or read a report. You could see it, smell it and breathe it. It was clear that the environment was doing way better without congested road traffic, among other reasons," says Subramani.

She adds, "It was during this time I became a part of Warrior Moms as I felt it was more important than ever to join forces and talk about air pollution and how it affects us."

With easy access to social media platforms nowadays, information spreads like a rumour. People consume all kinds of news and also fall prey to false knowledge. About the climate crisis, Subramani thinks that the awareness is very low and fake information persists and spreads. She tells us that with the Warrior Moms, every day is a learning experience and she has learnt to be less judgemental of people's



THERE IS STILL A FALSE EQUIVALENCE THAT A GROWING ECONOMY CAN'T CARE ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE OLD TROPE ABOUT DEVELOPMENT VERSUS ENVIRONMENT MUST BE DEMOLISHED

choices. She feels empowered to be part of a group that actually believes in changing children's future.

Being a year old, Warrior Moms is taking a step forward each day with an aim to generate awareness and work towards policy change. "We have already put out a list of complaint numbers and even among our small group, we have started making some inroads in this area," she says.

Subramani is quite determined and now that the warrior moms have come together, she is stern with keeping her promise for fighting climate change. "We'll keep raising our voices, questioning our leader. Whatever happens or not, none of our children will grow up thinking that their mothers did nothing," she tells us.

How do we pick the right fight for children's future?

Subramani says that there's no one fight, there are many. "Climate change encompasses every battle against deforestation, fossil fuels, badly planned urban infrastructure and non-compliance with laws," she explains, adding that so far as a society we have been guilted into thinking that individual action was missing but now we realise that the tide of inaction and complete apathy from Government and corporates must be addressed, must be fought against.

She thinks that there is still a false equivalence that a growing economy cannot care about the environment and the old trope about development versus environment must be demolished.

OTHER WARRIOR MOMS

SIMRAN LEKHI

In an endeavour to provide toxin-free, organic toys and play options to children, she established a unique online platform for organic and made-in-India toys called KIDSTACK. Starting in July 2020, within a short span of time it skyrocketed to becoming the go-to brand for discovering sustainable toys. A mother of two young children and a writer, she started exploring homegrown Toy brands when #boycottchineseproducts started

trending. During the lockdown, she scrutinized several brands and their products and thoroughly investigated the material, quality of paints, toxicity levels, etc used in making toys. She was determined to create awareness amongst fellow parents and educate them on safety in these matters while also curating high-quality Made-In-India toys.

SARIKA PANDA

As a warrior mom, she is working towards improving sustainable transport

in cities. Improving walking, cycling, and public transport will provide mobility to a large section of society and help reduce air pollution and improve road safety in our cities.

SAYRA BANO

She is a 35-year-old waste worker from the Bhalaswa Landfill area in North Delhi. Sayra has engaged in waste handling since an early age and continues to do so with her husband, Luftar. She has been associated with Safai Sena since 2012 and has found

her specialisation in electronic waste. She trained herself in the handling of e-waste and works with authorized dealers in its management.

By her own interest, she became part of the Chintan's Responsible Electronics initiative, which trains informal sector actors to serve as grassroots e-waste collectors and sell to an authorized recycler. Sayra now sells the electronic waste via Chintan, authorized by the Delhi Government to collect e-waste for safe recycling, to an authorized recycler.

JASMINE SINGH

She is an architect and urban planner, passionate about building inclusive cities and sustainability. Working in the field of urban planning, design, housing and infrastructure for more than fifteen years she believes development has to take the environment along for a green and clean future.

ANUJA BALI KARTHIKEYAN

She is an outdoorsy mother of two. She was forced to be over-protective of her little one owing to his wheezing attacks

due to the terrible air quality. When basic health considerations took over simple childhood joys like playing outside with friends, and hospital visits overshadowed important life events like birthdays, holidays, and picnics, Anuja realised the true impact of air pollution on children. This mom is ready to take up the challenge and do whatever it takes to ensure a better environment for the coming generations.

SUNITA KESBHAT

She is a journalist living in New

Bombay. Her son faces a lot of health problems and allergic reactions while travelling due to construction dust. Despite raising her voice on these issues through her journalism work at Lokmat newspaper, no action has been taken. Being worried about the health and future of her children, she wants to work collectively with other Warrior Moms and reach more ears. Continuing the environmental gains of the lockdown, so we can all breathe better, is something she really hopes for.

Hope to play my last T20 match in Chennai: Dhoni

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Chennai Super Kings' skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni on Saturday reiterated that his last T20 game would be played in Chennai but said he does not know "whether it is next year or in five years' time".

Dhoni, who led CSK to their fourth Indian Premier League (IPL) title last month in the UAE, had earlier said made it clear that he would be wearing his favourite yellow jersey for at least one more season and the fans will certainly see him playing a "farewell game" at their beloved Chepauk.

"I have always planned my cricket. The last game I played was in Ranchi. The last home game in ODI was at my hometown in Ranchi. So, hopefully, my last T20 will be in Chennai. Whether it's next year or in 5 years' time, we don't really know," Dhoni said at CSK's IPL victory celebration here on Saturday.

Speaking in the presence of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin, India Cements vice-chairman and Managing Director N Srinivasan, legendary all-rounder Kapil Dev, BCCI secretary Jay Shah and IPL chairman Brijesh Patel, Dhoni said CSK's fan following even during the two years when they missed the IPL had kept the team going.

"Overall, it is the fan following which CSK has got, it goes much beyond Tamil Nadu, it goes beyond the borders of India. Wherever we play -- be it in Bengaluru, Johannesburg or Dubai, we have got the support. Even during the lean patch, we missed two years of IPL and that was the period CSK was most talked about on social media," he added.

Srinivasan was all praise for Dhoni and his leadership.



PTI ■ KOLKATA

Captain Rohit Sharma will not waver from his ruthless approach but might try out a few of his reserve players as India aim for a clean sweep against New Zealand in the third and final T20 International, here on Sunday.

Bilateral T20I series in various parts of the globe is fast losing its context due to too many private leagues but for Indian team, after their World Cup disaster, a series win might help in partially healing the wounds.

For New Zealand, it's more about completing the assignment after a punishing schedule that will see them play five games (since T20 WC semi-final) in less than two weeks.

The inhu-

Ready for clean sweep, Rohit's India may try new combinations



man scheduling means that a 0-3 defeat without services of skipper Kane Williamson will bruise egos but not deflate them as results of bilaterals count very little in the long run.

Having already pocketed the series with a couple of near perfect chases on Jaipur and Ranchi belters, there couldn't have been a better venue than Eden Gardens for skipper Rohit to end the series on perfect note and also try out some of his reserve bench players.

The first series as full-time T20 captain has gone well for Rohit as he won two tosses, his bowlers put a stranglehold on Black Caps batters during end overs and then as a batter he provided great starts to set the platform.

The script has been flawless so

far and before Rohit goes into the break, a 3-0 annihilation of New Zealand in 'City of Joy', where he once scored an epic 264 in an ODI, will be like an icing on the cake.

For coach Rahul Dravid, a dominant performance like this will also help him settle the nerves into the new role before the marquee Test series against the same rivals starting in less than a week's time.

Having already won the series, Rohit and Dravid will now like to maintain a fine balance between winning and also trying out all their available resources to see how each and every individual is placed.

Giving Venkatesh Iyer a go with the ball with the evening breeze from River Hooghly aiding a bit of movement won't be a bad idea but it depends whether Rohit

wants a sixth bowler.

Hence the likes of Ruturaj Gaikwad, Avesh Khan and Ishan Kishan will expect that their skipper consider them for a game in this series.

Gaikwad, who came into the series with an Orange Cap in the IPL, might get a look-in in the top-three where he is the most comfortable batting. But for that to happen, either skipper himself or his deputy KL Rahul might have to take rest for the game, which is more of an academic interest and gives an ideal premise to check the bench strength.

Resting Rahul looks more logical as he is supposed to play a rigorous Test series in four days time and T20 International won't make much of a difference for the stylish right hander.

Similarly, the exciting Avesh Khan could be tried in place of either Deepak Chahar or Bhuvneshwar Kumar while Yuzvendra Chahal wouldn't mind getting a game in place of Axar Patel or Ravichandran Ashwin.

Similarly, Rishabh Pant, who has been playing non-stop since start of the World Test Championship, may be rested and Ishan Kishan can be given a go in the last game. If one looks at the series, the biggest gain has been Ravichandran Ashwin's form in white ball cricket after the previous regime kept him in the cold for four years as they never believed in him.

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Batting mainstay Steve Smith on Saturday emerged as one of the candidates for Australian Test captaincy after the selectors had reportedly approached the country's cricket board with a proposal to hand over the reins to the former skipper.

Though vice-captain Pat Cummins remains the frontrunner for the top job, Smith is also in the reckoning, the country's cricket board said following the resignation of Tim Paine from the top job.

Smith is one of candidates for Test captaincy

Paine stepped down from the post on Friday after being investigated by Cricket Australia (CA) for sending explicit messages to a female co-worker in 2017.

Paine succeeded Smith as captain in 2018 after the batter was banned from international cricket for 12 months and suspended from leadership roles for two years for his role in the Cape Town ball-tampering scandal.

"There are a range of candidates who are available for that role, Steve Smith is one of the candidates that is available for the role," said CA chairman Richard Freudenstein during a virtual press conference following Paine's resignation.

Meanwhile, there are also speculations that the senior national team selectors are in favour of appointing Smith as skipper.

"It's understood the selec-



tors were interested in the idea of Smith being able to captain should an injury or similar occur to Tim Paine, with the proposal given the board's approval," sen.Com.Au ran a story quoting Herald Sun.

The top contender though, remains pace spearhead Cummins.

"However, Smith could be appointed as vice-captain to support Cummins, who would

be the first fast bowler to captain Australia since 1956, when Ray Lindwall held the role for a solitary Test.

"Smith was barred from holding a leadership position within the team for two years after the events of Cape Town, with that ban lapsing over a year ago," sen.Com.Au added on Saturday, a day after the Australian cricket was rocked by the Tim Paine "sexting" scandal.

The messages date back to 2017, months before Paine was recalled to the Test team after a seven-year absence and a joint Cricket Australia and Cricket Tasmania investigation cleared him at the time.

The development came weeks ahead of the five-Test Ashes series against traditional rivals England. The first Test begins in Brisbane on December 8.

Australia's former chairman of selectors Trevor Hohns had said in November that Smith would probably be a contender to succeed Paine.

Pakistan clinches T20 series with 8-wicket win



AP ■ DHAKA

legspinner Aminul Islam (1-30). Zaman brought up his seventh half-century off 40 balls and then finished the game off on his own, as Pakistan got to 109-2.

Shaheen Shah Afridi (2-15) and Shadab Khan (2-22) caused the damage to Bangladesh amid Najmul Hossain's resistance after captain Mahmudullah opted to bat first.

Najmul struck 40 off 34, hitting five fours. Afridi, replacing Hasan Ali, continued his habit to strike in the first over as he trapped Saif Hassan leg-before for duck in the fifth ball.

Naim Sheikh edged Mohammad Wasim's delivery to first slip for 2 in the second over, leaving Bangladesh at 5-2.

Afti Hossain flicked Afridi to six over backward square leg in the first ball he faced. He also cut Wasim past point for a boundary as Bangladesh appeared to be in control.

Najmul Hossain Shanto at the other end recovered from his vulnerable start to dominate bowlers. But Shadab Khan stifled the innings and brought an end to the 46-run partnership when Afif's premeditated reverse paddle cost his wicket for 20.

Najmul chipped in the air to give Shadab, who dived to his left to take an excellent catch, his second wicket. Haris Rauf in between took the wicket of Mahmudullah, edging to wicket-keeper for 12, as the home team was 82-5 in 14th over.

TN against Karnataka in finals

Karnataka's victory over Vidarbha



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Karnataka defeated Vidarbha by four runs in a thrilling semifinal to enter the summit clash of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy national T20 tournament here on Saturday.

Asked to bat at the Arun Jaitley stadium, Karnataka rode on Rohan Kadam's blistering 87 off 56 balls to post a competitive 176 for seven and then restricted the opposition to 172 for six with right-arm pacer Vidyadhar Patil (1/29) holding his nerve in the final over.

Patil had to defend 14 runs and the speedster ensured that his side would face defending champions Tamil Nadu in the summit clash.

Karnataka openers Kadam and skipper Manish Pandey (54 off 42 balls) gave the side an aggressive start as they toyed with the Vidarbha attack.

The duo took on pacers Darshan Nalkande (4/28), Yash Thakur (1/35) and Lalit Yadav (2/36) to stitch 132 runs for the

first wicket. Kadam was the more aggressive one, while Pandey played the second fiddle as they brought up the team's fifty in just 5.1 overs.

Left-arm-orthodox spinner Akshay Karnewar, who has been economical, conceded five runs in his first over even as Karnataka raced to 53/0 after the power play.

While Kadam hammered seven fours and four maximums, Pandey struck two fours and three sixes as they took the Vidarbha attack to cleansers.

However, Lalit Yadav broke the stand after removing Kadam in the 16th over, but by then the damage had already been done.

Lalit struck again, this time removing Pandey, who was caught by Akshay Wakhare.

Karun Nair (5) also fell cheaply but a quick-fire 13-ball-27 by Abhinav Manohar propelled Karnataka past the 170-run mark.

Darshan Nalkande wreaked havoc in the middle-order by taking four wickets in four balls in the final over, but it was too

little and too late

Chasing a formidable 177, Vidarbha openers Atharva Taide (32) and Ganesh Satish (31) added 43 for the first wicket.

But Karnataka pegged back the opposition by dismissing the top four batters to leave Vidarbha tottering at 103 for four.

Medium pacer Darshan MB then sent back Jitesh Sharma (12) as Vidarbha lost half its side for 122.

But some late hitting by Apoorv Wankhede (27 not out off 22 balls) and Karnewar (22 off 12 balls) meant Vidarbha needed 14 off the final over as they took the game deep.

But pacer Patil dashed Vidarbha's hopes, dismissing Karnewar in the first ball of the final over and then held his nerve to see his side home.

TN THRASH HYDERABAD BY 8 WICKETS

Rookie medium pacer P Saravana Kumar starred with a fifer as defending champions Tamil Nadu outplayed Hyderabad by eight wickets to sail into the final of the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy T20 cricket tournament here on Saturday.

The TN bowlers backed skipper Vijay Shankar's decision to field first as they bundled out the hitherto unbeaten Hyderabad for 90 in 18.3 overs with only Tanay Thyagarajan (25 off 24 balls) reached double figures.

Saravana did most of the damage upfront as he accounted for the top order, including rival captain Tanmay Agarwal (1) and the in-form Tilak Varma (8). He finished with the sensational figure of 5 for 21, the second best ever bowling figures for TN behind Rahul Shah's 5 for 12.

Hyderabad was tottering at 30 for 5 in 6.2 overs and it soon became 39 for 6 when Ravi Teja was dismissed by M Mohammed for 9.

Hasan Ali reprimanded for breaching ICC Code of Conduct



PTI ■ DUBAI

Pakistan pacer Hasan Ali was on Saturday reprimanded for breaching Level 1 of the ICC Code of Conduct, while Bangladesh were fined 20 per cent of their match fees for maintaining slow over-rate during the first T20I in Dhaka.

The incident occurred in the 17th over of Bangladesh's innings, when Hasan gave an inappropriate sendoff to batter Nurul Hasan after dismissing him caught behind the wicket.

Hasan was found to have breached Article 2.5 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel,

which relates to "using language, actions or gestures which disparage or which could provoke an aggressive reaction from a batter upon his/her dismissal during an International Match."

"In addition to this, one demerit point has been added to the disciplinary record of Hasan, for whom it was the first offence in a 24-month period," the ICC said in a statement.

Bangladesh players have been fined 20 per cent of their match fees for maintaining slow over-rate in the match as they were ruled to be one over short of the target after time allowances were taken into consideration.

"In accordance with Article 2.22 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to minimum over-rate offences, players are fined 20 per cent of their match fees for every over their side fails to bowl in the allotted time," the ICC said.

Hasan and Bangladesh captain Mahmudullah admitted the offences and accepted the sanctions proposed by Neeayamur Rashid of the Emirates ICC International Panel of Match Referees and ratified by the ICC Cricket Operations department as per the COVID-19 interim playing regulations. There was no need for formal hearing.

Sindhu, Srikanth exit Indonesia Masters

PTI ■ BALI (INDONESIA)

Double Olympic medallist PV Sindhu and Kidambi Srikanth crashed out of the Indonesia Masters Super 750 badminton tournament after suffering straight game defeats in the women's and men's singles semifinals respectively to bring the curtains down on Indian campaign here on Saturday.

Sindhu lost to Japanese top seed Akane Yamaguchi while Srikanth was outplayed by third seed Anders Antonsen of Denmark.

Even though Sindhu had a superior 12-7 head-to-head record against the Japanese shuttler going into the tie, having won both the meet-



ings between the two this year, the Indian was no match for her rival, losing 13-21 9-21 in a one-sided duel that lasted just 32 minutes. Sindhu, seeded third, was not at her usual best and trailed her Japanese opponent from the start in both the games.

In the second game,

Sindhu had a brief lead before Yamaguchi dominated her rival throughout to seal the issue in her favour. The Japanese will now play the winner of the other semifinal between fourth seed An Seyoung and Thailand's Phittayaporn Chaivann.

Srikanth, who had beat-

en compatriot HS Prannoy in the quarterfinals, lost 14-21 9-21 to Antonsen in 41 minutes in the men's singles semifinals. The former world number one Indian was able to hold on Antonsen initially, levelling the scores at 3-3, 4-4, 5-5 before falling behind. Srikanth made another fine recovery in the first game, narrowing down the gap to 12-11 but eventually lost steam.

In the second game also, both were tied at 4-4 but the Dane took eight straight points to zoom to 12-4. The Indian could not recover from there while Antonsen never let his guard down to win the second game and the match.

Australian Open chief to Djokovic: No vaccine proof, no play

AP ■ MELBOURNE

The ball is back in Novak Djokovic's court.

Australian Open chief Craig Tiley confirmed on Saturday that everyone who attends the first Grand Slam tennis tournament of 2022 will need to be fully vaccinated for COVID-19, including all the players. That continues to leave the status of defending and nine-time champion Djokovic in question. Djokovic, who has refused to say if he's vaccinated, would be attempting to win a record 21st Grand Slam singles title.

The tournament is scheduled for Jan. 17-30. The Victorian state government had earlier said only vaccinated persons would be allowed into the site for the tour-

nament, and Tiley reiterated that on Saturday. "Everyone on site, the fans, all the staff, the players, will need to be vaccinated," Tiley said at the tournament's official launch.

"There's been a lot of speculation about Novak's position, he's said it's a private matter. "We would love to see Novak here, but he knows he needs to be vaccinated in order to play. He's always said that the Australian Open is the event that puts the wind in his sails."

The no-vaccine, no-play edict was made by the Victorian state government in late October. It means the Australian Open will become the first Grand Slam tour-

nament to require mandatory COVID-19 vaccines for the players.

Victoria has been the hardest-hit state in Australia, with 1,268 pandemic deaths out of the country's total of 1,922 and 109,000 of 194,000 overall cases as of Saturday.

Melbourne and many other areas of Victoria have been subject to lengthy lockdowns and overnight curfews over the past 18 months. "It's been made very clear, when the premier (Daniel Andrews) announced several



weeks ago that in order to participate at the Australian Open, to come into Victoria, you'll need to be fully vaccinated," Tiley said earlier on a morning television program. "Immediately we communicated that to the playing group, it is the one direction that you take that is going to ensure everyone's safety."

Among the top male players, Tiley, who is the tournament director, said Rafael Nadal and Daniil Medvedev, who beat Djokovic in the final of the U.S. Open, preventing the Serbian player from completing a calendar-year Grand Slam, plan to be in Melbourne in January.

Roger Federer, who continues to recover from right knee surgery, has already said he won't be coming.

Xavi among coaches taking 1st game in charge

AP ■ BARCELONA

A look at what's happening in European soccer on Saturday:

SPAIN

Xavi Hernández makes his coaching debut at Barcelona when it hosts Espanyol in a derby at Camp Nou. Xavi has had little time to work with his full squad since taking over from Ronald Koeman two weeks ago with many players having been away with their national teams. He also has several players injured, including striker Ansu Fati. Espanyol aims to get its first win over its crosstown rival since 2009. The city's more modest club is level on points with Xavi's side entering the round, and Espanyol striker Raúl de Tomás is one of the hottest scorers in the Spanish league. Sevilla also hosts Alavés seeking a win that would make it the overnight league leader. Atlético Madrid hosts Osasuna trying to keep pace with the top three teams, while Villarreal is at Celta Vigo.

ENGLAND Three teams will be under new managers when the Premier League resumes after the international break. But Eddie Howe will be unable to lead Newcastle in person after being forced into isolation on Friday after testing positive for the coronavirus ahead of his first game in charge of the Saudi-owned club at home to Brentford. Former Liverpool midfielder Steven Gerrard should be back on the touchline on his



return to England with Aston Villa and takes on Brighton on his debut. Fired by Villa, Dean Smith made an immediate return to management at Norwich and the last-placed team hosts Southampton. Liverpool hosts Arsenal in the headline match of the 12th round while leader Chelsea is away to Leicester and Manchester United visits Watford. ITALY AC Milan looks to extend its perfect start at a Fiorentina side featuring one of the league's top young strikers in Dusan Vlahovic, who has scored eight goals. A victory for Milan would

put pressure on Serie A leader Napoli, which visits defending champion Inter Milan on Sunday. Napoli and Milan are level on points but Napoli leads on goal difference. Also, first-year Lazio coach Maurizio Sarri faces his former club when struggling Juventus visits the Stadio Olimpico. Atalanta, which is on a five-match unbeaten run, hosts Spezia. GERMANY Borussia Dortmund is still without injured striker Erling Haaland as it hosts Stuttgart in the Bundesliga. Haaland has a hip muscle injury and it's not clear if he'll return to action before the league's winter break

next month. Stuttgart is 15th and winless in its last four league games. Union Berlin takes on Hertha Berlin in a local rivalry. It's the first game with a full crowd at Union's stadium since early last year but comes as infection rates in the German capital rise. Bayer Leverkusen hosts Bochum as it seeks its first win since a crushing 5-1 loss to Bayern Munich last month. Leipzig visits Hoffenheim and Borussia Mönchengladbach plays Greuther Fürth. FRANCE Runaway leader Paris Saint-Germain takes on Nantes looking to get ready for next week's Champions League clash with

Manchester City. Mauricio Pochettino's players have a comfortable 10-point lead at the top of the French league standings ahead of Saturday's game at the Parc des Princes. Lionel Messi, still chasing his first league goal for PSG, could make his return after missing the 3-2 win in Bordeaux with a knee injury before the international break. In the battle for European spots, fifth-place Rennes looks to extend its unbeaten run to 11 games in all competitions against Montpellier. Gaetan Laborde, the top scorer in the league, will lead the attack for Rennes against his former club.

Lewis Hamilton wins pole for inaugural Qatar Grand Prix

AP ■ LOSAIL

Lewis Hamilton and Max Verstappen qualified 1-2 for the inaugural Qatar Grand Prix, setting up a showdown between the Formula One championship contenders at the very start of Sunday's race. Hamilton won the 102nd pole of his career, fourth of the season and first since the Hungarian Grand Prix in August. Hamilton trails Verstappen by 14 points in the championship fight with three races remaining. He beat Verstappen by 0.455 seconds Saturday to win the pole at Losail International Circuit. The seven-time champion said his stomach had been bothering him since he arrived in Qatar, but a good night's sleep helped his recovery. Hamilton said his stomachache made opening day at the new circuit difficult, and he was fourth in both of Friday's practice sessions. "I really struggled throughout first practice and I was just really off," Hamilton said. "I was here 'til midnight working with the engineers, who also always work so late, and found I lot of areas in which I can improve." Mercedes made changes in Saturday's final practice and Hamilton said in qualifying he was aided by smart strategy that sent him on track with little traffic and a strong lap by the driver. "That last lap was beautiful, it was a really sweet lap,"



Hamilton said. "This track is amazing to drive, it is incredibly fast. It felt good." Verstappen said Red Bull was lacking pace and noted that teammate Sergio Perez failed to advance to the final qualifying group. Perez will start 11th. "It's been just a bit more tricky for us in qualifying," Verstappen said. "We are struggling a bit more than normal. We've never done a race here, so there's a lot of unknowns." The race is the first in a 10-year deal between F1 and Qatar. Valtteri Bottas, teammate to Hamilton at Mercedes, qualified third and was followed by Pierre Gasly of AlphaTauri. Gasly has been fast all weekend but a tire puncture near the end of qualifying slowed him.

Fernando Alonso qualified fifth and was followed by Lando Norris and Carlos Sainz. The weekend opened with the Brazil GP still the main topic of discussion as Mercedes contested the FIA decision not to penalize Verstappen for running Hamilton wide off course last week in Sao Paulo. Mercedes requested a review of the decision, which the FIA denied in the middle of a Friday press briefing between the principals of the two warring teams. It was a tense 30-minute session between Mercedes head Toto Wolff and Christian Horner, team principal for Red Bull, and both agreed they have no relationship. But Horner also publicly questioned the legality of the Mercedes.



SC East Bengal, Jamshedpur FC eye three points in campaign opener

PTI ■ VASCO

Coming off a disappointing last season, SC East Bengal and Jamshedpur FC both stressed on the importance of winning the first match as they kick off their campaign in the Indian Super League here on Sunday. East Bengal will be determined to put the demons of last season behind them, having finished in the ninth position after winning only three out of the 20 matches. Jamshedpur FC settled for the sixth position after seven wins and as many losses in the previous season. The Red Miners though missed out on a semi-final spot by a margin of only four points. East Bengal have looked exciting in pre-season under coach Jose Manuel Diaz and will

be keen to replicate that against Jamshedpur when their season begins at the Tilak Maidan. He said SC East Bengal will leave no stone unturned in their effort to bag three points from their opener. "For us, the most important is the first match for gaining confidence," Diaz said on the eve of the game. Asked about the Kolkata Derby against ATK Mohun Bagan being the next match, the former Real Madrid Castilla boss said: "We are not thinking about the derby just yet. After the pre-season, we are hopeful of doing well in the first official match." Diaz, with assistant coach Angel Puebla Garcia translating for him, added that the team is prepared to adapt to any situation.

AP ■ BERLIN

This time, another goal from Robert Lewandowski wasn't enough for Bayern Munich. Augsburg held on to stun the Bundesliga leader with a 2-1 win in their Bavarian derby Friday to climb out of the relegation zone. It was only Augsburg's third win in 21 league games against its powerful southeastern neighbor, which fell to its second defeat of the season. Bayern had won 16 of their previous 20 meetings. "For us, this is of course a bitter setback in how we see ourselves, how we actually want to play the games,"

Thomas Müller said after his 600th competitive game for Bayern. "We need that every match, this confirmation that we're the ones who dictate and dominate the games. And that doesn't mean ball possession, but the way and manner in which you play on an opponent." It was clear that Bayern missed Joshua Kimmich's presence in midfield. The unvaccinated 26-year-old is in quarantine for the second time in as many weeks after coming into contact with someone with COVID-19. Bayern was also without Niklas Süle and Josip Stanišić, who tested positive for COVID-19. Augsburg was



without winger Rubén Vargas for the same reason. It was the first time since the coronavirus pandemic started that Augsburg was allowed play in a full stadium. It was also the last time for at least a few weeks as new restrictions

are coming into place in Bavaria on Tuesday limiting capacity to 25% until Dec. 15. Bavaria is being hit hard by Germany's fourth wave of infections. Augsburg started with intent, playing at pace and not allowing the visitors any time to settle. The home team challenged for every ball and forced Bayern's stars into mistakes. Mads Pedersen got the deserved opener in the 23rd minute when he let fly inside the far corner after Lucas Hernandez could only deflect a cross into his path. The home fans were celebrating again in the 35th, when André Hahn met Iago Amaral Borduchi's cross

with a thumping header past Manuel Neuer after Marcel Sabitzer lost the ball in midfield. But Lewandowski pulled one back almost immediately afterward, set up by Müller. It was the Poland star's 14th goal in 12 league games this season. "The first half was bad, really bad," Müller said. "And in the second, you could see that we really wanted to turn it around. But perhaps we didn't deserve this bit of luck in front of goal due to the first half." Augsburg's intensity dropped somewhat in the second half, when Lewandowski fired a good chance over.

Monaco salvages 2-2 draw with Lille in French league

AP ■ MONACO

Lille striker Jonathan David consolidated his position as the top scorer in the French league by netting twice in a 2-2 draw with Monaco as defending champion Lille stayed in the bottom half of the table. Monaco rallied from a two-goal deficit to salvage a point despite having a player sent off and provisionally moved into seventh place, four points outside the top four spots. "We dropped two points," Lille coach Jocelyn Gourvennec

said. "We miss that grit to finish off the game." David converted a penalty in the fifth minute after Strahinja Pavlovic stomped on Xeka's foot while blocking a shot from the Lille midfielder. He then doubled the lead in the ninth minute by notching his 10th league goal. David chased a ball over the top from Tiago Djalo and held off Ruben Aguilar before beating Alexander Nübel from close range. The Canada striker could



have completed a hat trick after collecting a through ball from Jonathan Ikone in the 39th but was denied by Nübel.

Senegal winger Krepin Diatta pulled one back for the hosts by firing a powerful strike into the bottom corner in

the 41st. Monaco nearly equalized in the 49th after a mix-up between Domagoj Bradaric and Lille goalkeeper Ivo Grbic, but Djalo cleared Kevin Volland's flick off the line. Grbic protected Lille's lead by stopping Volland's header in the 74th and Aurelien Tchouameni's low drive in the 76th. Monaco was down to 10 men in the 78th after Pavlovic received a second yellow card for a stamp on Ikone, but substitute Wissam Ben Yedder

still netted the equalizer with an angled shot in the 83rd. "Our first 20 minutes were not really good, they were even catastrophic," Monaco midfielder Sofiane Diop said. "But we managed to turn around the match in the last 25 minutes and we got a mental edge over them." On Saturday, French league leader Paris Saint-Germain looks to keep its perfect home record intact against Nantes while fifth-place Rennes hosts Montpellier in the battle for European spots.

Rohit-Dravid duo might bring golden era of Indian cricket

DRITI ATRI ■ NEW DELHI



For a team who stood number No. 1 Test team in the world after beating Sri Lanka 2-0 in December 2016, India is suffering debilitate losses. India has slipped down its place in ICC ranking to number 4 in 2021. After 2021 World Cup many important decisions were taken, which changed the gaming strategy of Indian cricket from resigning of India's head coach Ravi Shastri to Virat Kohli stepping down as India's T20 captain following the T20 World Cup. Under Ravi Shastri, India won two back-to-back Test series Down Under and is currently leading a five-match Test series 2-



make a name for themselves, Dravid, who has worked with them since their U19 days, can grill them to get the best of the budding talents. There are so many things one can expect to change in the Indian team after Dravid's appointment to the top job. The Pioneer lists a few: More chances for youngsters Dravid has worked extensively with Indian players even before he took the India head coach job. He was the

India U19 coach for four years before he took up the NCA head role in July 2019. He was in charge of "overseeing all cricket-related activities at the NCA and was involved in mentoring, coaching, training, and motivating players, coaches, and support staff at the NCA." He was widely praised as NCA's head for developing a steady supply of talent for the senior team and overhauling player fitness and rehabilitation regimens. He has worked with play-

ers like Rishabh Pant, Shreyas Iyer, Sanju Samson, Washington Sundar, Prithvi Shaw, and Shubman Gill during his time with India U19, Delhi Daredevils, and Rajasthan Royals and has played a big role in what these youngsters are today. With the Indian team expected to go through a transition phase in the coming years, Dravid is expected to invest in these youngsters to make them ready for the future.

Longer run time for players In the last few years, a lot of players made their Indian debut after getting selected on the back of strong IPL shows, and in fact, did well with the national side as well, but couldn't prolong their international career because they weren't given a longer run. Players like Khaleel Ahmed, Vijay Shankar, Navdeep Saini, and Shivam Dube are examples of that. It is understood that there is cut-throat competition in India, but the players deserve enough chances to express themselves. And under Dravid's time, players are expected to get many opportunities to deliver and it will be a good learning experience. Strong bench strength India won the historic Test series against Australia earlier this year by beating the hosts Down Under. The highlight of that win was India's bench strength and how, despite suffering from continuous player injuries, the Indian team beat all odds to do the unthinkable. Even though Dravid was not there in Australia at that time, it was

his plan that helped India achieve the milestone. It was Dravid's master plan to allow "A" teams to go on exposure tours overseas and get familiar with the conditions there in order to get match-ready so that when the situation arrives, they don't feel alien to those conditions. India lost as many as ten main team players during the Test series, but the replacement players never let anyone feel that way and delivered in India's historic triumph. Better communication with players Dravid has been associated with Indian cricket for more than two decades now and has seen Indian cricket in and out. As a player, captain, senior player, mentor, U19 coach, and now head coach of the Indian team, he has been through a process and understands every aspect of the game. And good communication is the key to getting results. The players should feel free to talk and discuss with the senior pros about the game, and that's what Dravid can do the best. He is easily

approachable and there's no one better than him to guide players through their game. Rohit an asset for India Rohit Sharma has proved his abilities as a captain in the Indian Premier League, where he has won five IPL titles for the Mumbai Indians in nine years. What makes him special is his ability to remain calm and get the best out of his players. His leadership style is very similar to that of former Indian captain MS Dhoni, as both of them remain cool on the field no matter how complex the situation is. One of the highlights of Rohit's captaincy is that he likes to make minimal changes and trusts his players to win matches. In the IPL, one of the big reasons for Mumbai Indians' success was the consistency in team selection and how they used to give proper run to trusted players to express themselves. With the next T20 World Cup set to kick off in less than 11 months, one would expect Rohit Sharma to have the same success with the Indian team as well as he had with the Mumbai Indians.

The singer, who made his debut with superhit album Naujawan, speaks with Supriya Ramesh about his latest track Tanha Dil Tanha Safar, importance of mental health awareness and his journey among other things

**'MY JOURNEY
AS A SINGER
HAS BEEN VERY
ENJOYABLE AND
A LOT OF FUN'**

The fact that I made this song after 20 years is probably because you have to live your life that much to understand what

THE THOUGHT OF
CREATING A SONG
ABOUT MENTAL
HEALTH HAS BEEN ON
MY MIND FOR 2-3
YEARS NOW.
I THINK IN THIS TIME
AND AGE AWARENESS
IS EXTREMELY
IMPORTANT

Yes, I started as a television host many years ago. Since 1996 I have been hosting a lot of shows almost till 2010. It used to be a lot of fun but very strenuous. It would take a toll on my throat too so I had to ease off from hosting. Sometimes I do hosting as it's something I really enjoy doing.

Among upcoming projects, there will be more songs coming up in my Shaan music label. I'm in talks to be part of more television shows. Looking to explore new avenues like acting and composing more for film projects. It's good and I'm happy to be excited about it.

CookSmart

Keep your bananas yellow longer by pulling them apart into single-banana units and covering each stem in plastic wrap or foil.

HomeSweetHome

Most people ignore the ceiling but remember it is the fifth wall in a room. You don't want to lie in bed and stare at a blank white ceiling. Add a subtle pattern or soft colour. Paint the ceiling a slightly lighter version of the wall color. This will help to visually lower the ceiling and give the space a feeling of comfort and intimacy.

MasterStroke

NatureTalk

This creeper survives in a variety of soil conditions and needs regular watering. Avoid fertilisers since the plant is high in nitrogen; they will only encourage foliage growth and not flower set. Keep the weeds away to make sure that the foliage growth is healthy.

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

The present pandemic has changed a lot of things in our lives — how we shop and how we study. The latest to join the list is an app that will help you get a tailor-made clothing without having to leave the comfort of your home. SHALINI SAKSENA tells you more

⁸Usually when you go to e-commerce sites to buy ready-made clothing, if you like the pattern you buy it even if you are not enamoured with the neckline or the sleeve design or even the back

Dash says that there are thousands of permutation combinations that are available to the customer. He can choose the design from the app; he can give his own design; he can choose the material of a particular designer and a neckline by another designer; he can even give his own material.



"This is the best part of the app. The customer is king here. He is spoiled for choice. He can pick and choose what he wants. But to give this kind of choice took time; seven years to be precise. I had worked in different industries and therefore I could design the 3D design customisation for the app. I have done so much R&D. I have even joined the material manufacturer with designers. Now, the designer doesn't have to hold 500 rolls of different material. He just needs to place his demand with the manufacturer. As soon as there is a demand the manufacturer ships the material. This benefits both — the designer who doesn't have to invest lakhs in

There are thousands of options available to the customer. He can choose design from the app; he can give his own design; he can choose the material of a particular designer and a neckline by another designer; he can even give his own material

Munda tells you that there are many people who don't have the time to run around buying material and then go to a tailor and give him a design. The app makes it easy for him. Within a few minutes he is connected to a designer. He has hundreds of material to choose from as well as any design that he wants. This makes things easy for all," Munda says.

BISHAKH JYOTI, who recently received the National Award for Krantikari Guruji-The Times Ahead as Best Music Director, speaks with **SHALINI SAKSENA** about his journey

The journey was not at all smooth. As I came from a very small town in West Bengal where people hardly get this kind of platform and exposure. So coming from such a background and to become a runners up in the Competition is always very special to me. I have learned a lot from all my mentors and the judges like Vishal ji, Sajid-Wajid ji and it was a wonderful learning experience to me..

your performance sitting back at home. Digital concerts has been a solution to entertainment during the tough pandemic time.

❖ **What made you say yes to be part of the great grand jury on SRGMP?**

If you see that in a platform from where you started your musical journey and have got recognised and at the same stage after 10 years you got an opportunity to become a great grand jury I think very few people will

'Music is part of every film in India'



Music inspires me a lot. Md Rafi Sahab, Kishore Kumar, Mukesh *Ji* inspires me a lot. I have learnt a lot of things from many great music composers like SD Burma and RD Burma.

❖ **What next?**
Many projects like Lucknow Times an Aasma will be getting released soon. Other than these there are few other films as well on which I am working on.

Sound of. music

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

Sunshine (OneRepublic)

No (Little Mix)

the pioneer agenda

FROM THE INSIDE

Power of kindness

Part of our spiritual development is to grow a kind spirit. To do this, we need to understand others

2



4

Can destiny be defined?

Every being is born unique & each manifesting individualistic desire trend and mind trait, leads a being through the journey of life

If women just got into it a little more, then the world would be happier. Instead of stabbing each other behind the back, just get into a fight, and then everything is out in the open
— Odette Annable



MAPPING THE INDIAN TRAVEL TREND

The new normal has drastically impacted traveller behaviour; people have started appreciating the importance of spending quality time with loved ones, writes RAJEEV KALE, as he maps the travel trends in the coming year

The pandemic has changed the way we travel and changed our perception of priorities. Throughout the lockdown, people have travelled the world virtually and built on their bucket lists. Lockdown fatigue had resulted in strong pent-up demand which is fuelling unique trends in travel. Upon easing of restrictions, travellers have started to rekindle their travel plans through weekend getaways, staycations and drivecations, and similar convenient getaways from the challenging life of work-from-home schedules.

The extended lockdown urged travellers to move out of the confines of their homes and pursue workations from scenic destinations — right from hills to beaches — which enabled them to strike a healthy work-life balance. The new normal has drastically impacted traveller behaviour; people have started appreciating the importance of spending quality time with loved ones.

RISE OF DOMESTIC TRAVEL

With the easing restrictions on domestic travel and highly limited option for international trips, domestic has come under the spotlight like never before.

Festive travel is of great importance in India especially during Diwali and Christmas, clubbing weekends and extended weekend phenomenon are driving domestic travel. Travellers book domestic trips for various reasons like family bonding, celebrate special occasions and milestones/weddings in India. Millennials as well as elders enjoy these vacations and look forward to these drivable breaks and air-inclusive travel plans.

Besides the all-time favourite — Goa, the pandemic has inspired Indians to explore their country which has created strong demand for destinations like Leh-Ladakh, Kashmir and the North East. People want to explore India in depth and visit the unique destinations our country has to offer.

HEALTH AND SAFETY WILL CONTINUE TO BE A TOP PRIORITY

According to the survey primordial Hygiene & Safety, 77% of Indians need the reassurance of travelling/staying with brands that provide clear cut health and safety policies. Hotels, airports, airlines are investing in comprehensive safety protocols as travellers are

putting health and safety first. Some of the first movers in the space were top brands like SG Clean, Vistara Clean, Marriott Cleanliness Council etc.

EXPERIENCE-BASED TRAVEL

Travel is now all about special and unique experiences — based on each travellers interests/passions or to help them to reconnect with their loved ones. Travel experiences which offer true discovery/exploration of local cultures, heritage and communities and create memories that money cannot buy.

Indians are hungry for hidden gems such as the living root bridges or canoeing on the Dawki Lake — a clear lake in Meghalaya. They are also interested in outdoor adventure — such as biking trips, hiking, camping, jungle safaris and extra-ordinary experiences like picnic lunch in the middle of an apple orchard, swimming with the sharks, living in a glass igloo, stay in tree house in the middle of a jungle, experience as well as curate different kinds of cuisines with the help of local chefs. People want to dare to dream and tick off options from their bucket list such as bungee jumping and other adrenaline rushing experiences. These experiences are for a lifetime and cannot be bought with money.

SLOW TRAVEL

People want to live in the moment and enjoy an unhurried life which is why they wish to explore slow and immersive travel options. Mono-destinations are in demand as people want to exclusively experience a particular place and learn of its culture, heritage and people. Travellers are attracted towards fuller and richer experiences that allow them to connect, explore and unwind through self-driven and planned trips. They prefer travel at a languid pace affording them the time to explore more without rushing into covering places within a limited span of time. They want to travel to the interiors and places which is closer to nature to refresh themselves from a prolonged indoor lifestyle during the lockdown.

LUXURIOUS VACATIONS

Travellers are ready to tick off their travel bucket list instead of spending on materialistic commodities. They are opting for higher category hotels, premium home stays, independent villas and properties which promise the com-

TRAVEL IS NOW ALL ABOUT SPECIAL AND UNIQUE EXPERIENCES - BASED ON EACH TRAVELLERS INTERESTS/PASSIONS OR TO HELP THEM TO RECONNECT WITH THEIR LOVED ONES. TRAVEL EXPERIENCES WHICH OFFER TRUE DISCOVERY/EXPLORATION OF LOCAL CULTURES, HERITAGE AND COMMUNITIES AND CREATE MEMORIES THAT MONEY CANNOT BUY

fort of a vacation while meeting additional requirements of hygiene and safety. They prefer staying in unique accommodations when they travel and explore extra-ordinary options such as heritage homes, havelis and villas. Heritage homes include colonial stays in places like Goa, Bengal and Rajasthan with the provision of timelessness that allows people to have a relaxing stay with anytime dining options. Travellers now prefer villas over hotels and restaurants with more spaces including private villas with personal chef and concierge services, villas with a backyard, pool with a deck and more for relaxation.

Resorts and Vacation Rentals have witnessed a strong demand as travellers emerged from the pandemic with the intension to explore options for staycations or a change of scenery in a safe and sanitised manner, seeking larger spaces that are better equipped for longer leisure stays and social isolation, suburban destinations, resorts and vacation rentals have continued to witness strong demand, outpacing hotels on the pandemic recovery front.

Safety and hygiene are also important factors which are driving people for luxury travel as travellers are looking for more safety precautions during their journeys.

The number of people opting for premium stays has been increasing as safety and hygiene have emerged as the new comfort in travel. The traditional checklist has now made way for adequate social distancing, demand for a private kitchen, additional room for help or support staff, etc. Travellers are now looking at meaningful experiences to foster meaningful connections with the local people along with their own families and friends and may prioritise this over mass tourism formats focused on cities.

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

The new generation travellers are environment conscious and seem to be interested in environment friendly tourism which in turn promoted sustainable travel options in 2021. Sustainable travel choices are mostly closer to remote villages and they not only provide a boost to these communities, but are accessible and affordable and are a transformative choice contributing to unique and individual travel experiences. They also help in raising funds for conserving nature in these areas. This trend has definitely accelerated over the past year

and it is expected to grow further in 2022.

DIGITAL REVOLUTION AND CONTACTLESS TRAVEL

During the pandemic, the travel and hospitality industry has made significant efforts to boost confidence among travellers by making services contactless for their convenience as far as possible. These include contactless check-ins at airports and hotels to order food and beverages, concierge services at hotels online. Basically, contactless offerings are becoming the much needed norm for this current situation more than an exception.

Travellers are warming up and getting comfortable with the idea of using contactless services and building appreciation for tech-rich experiences that promise travel safety, upfront.

Digital experience has definitely emerged as a key game-changer for the travel and hospitality segment. Before the pandemic, travellers or guests interacted with a hotel brand primarily through the physical experience and the service experience but in the present situation, there is the digital experience and hotels have equipped themselves in this short span of time to capitalise on the digital experience which ensures that all guest needs are met virtually — before, during as well as after their stay. Across the country's travel and hospitality segment, the digital shift has been completely transformational and a boom for leisure and business travellers and the industry as a whole.

WHAT LIES AHEAD FOR THE INDUSTRY

Even though Covid numbers have declined in the past few months in the country, but the travel and hospitality industry needs to take responsibility to follow Covid-related protocols till the time the situation completely gets back to normalcy as our safety is in our hands.

These new travel trends will spark a new beginning in 2022. With these new offerings, travellers can prioritise and opt for what suits them best while adhering to the safety protocols and social distancing norms. The travel and hospitality industry has come a long way since being harshly impacted by the pandemic. The industry has developed and evolved for a better tomorrow and will hopefully cover up the losses sooner than expected.

The writer is President & Country Head — Holidays, MICE, Visa, Thomas Cook

Belarus vs Poland: Migrants heading nowhere

Europe is once again facing the heat of a new migration crisis. This time two East European (EU) nations — Belarus and Poland — are on the verge of fighting on their borders. The reason is that over thousands of migrants that are camping on the Belarus-Poland frontier are trying to cross over to Poland. And the Polish border guards are simply not allowing them to get into their country. These hapless migrants are also trying to cross over to other European nations such as Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. It seems to be a hybrid attack by Minsk, especially over Warsaw, Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius. For poor and helpless migrants from most of the conflict zones of the world, including Africa, this arduous journey could be a passport to the greener pasture of Europe. But what seems to be emerging from the ground is that it is soon sliding into a major humanitarian crisis, with the death of more than 10 migrants by now.

It is worth exploring the origin of the current imbroglio on the Belarus-Poland border. Belarus was rocked by massive opposition protests following the presidential election in the month of August 2020. That election gave Alexander Lukashenko more opportunity to tighten his grip over Byelorussia (historically called), the Republic of Belarus. However, the Opposition, the European Union (EU) and the West openly declared the election and its result as sham. The Belarusian authorities responded to the demonstrations with fierce force followed by jailing of prominent activists and opposition leaders. The US and the EU subsequently imposed sanctions over Belarus. These restrictions over the Government of Lukashenko were toughened when after an incident in May when a passenger jet flying from Greece to Lithuania was diverted by Belarus to Minsk simply to detain dissident journalist Roman Pratasevich. The EU later termed this incident as 'Air Piracy' and barred Belarusian State airlines from its sky. Besides, the group also drastically cut the import of top commodities from the country.



A local Muslim community buries an unidentified migrant in Bohoniki, Poland, on Thursday. The person is one of about a dozen people from the WANA region and elsewhere who have died in a area of forests and bogs along the Poland-Belarus border amid a standoff involving migrants between the two countries AP/File

like petroleum products and potash. The authorities in Minsk hit back at Brussels and refused to abide by an agreement to prevent illegal migration to the EU. It also opined that the severe EU sanctions deprived the Government of much needed funds to stem the flow of migration across its borders. Thus, gradually the massive flow of migrants hailing from Syria and other conflict zones around the world started arriving in Belarus and they all moved towards the borders of Latvia and Lithuania in the North-West and Poland in the West. Today the opposition in Belarus is accusing Lukashenko of using the Government tourist agencies to offer free visa facilities to all these migrants so that they could go to the bordering nations like Poland, Latvia and Lithuania. And finally, they could easily enter different parts of the EU.

The centre point of the migration crisis is President Lukashenko. Leaders in the EU think that he is creating the illegal passage of migrants from most of the war-torn and poverty-ridden countries to neighbouring Poland and other rich nations of the EU. These migrants are mostly from war-ravaged nations such as Syria, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, Afghanistan, and even from Communist land of Cuba. Most of the EU leaders say that Lukashenko's trouble-making is fundamentally connected to the strict sanctions imposed by the bloc over Belarus. These sanctions have been in place since late 2020 because of the controversial presidential election in this landlocked East European country that saw the return of Lukashenko for the consecutive sixth term to power. And most importantly, massive human rights violations and his brutal treatment

of all his opponents, including the main contestant for presidency, 37-year-old Svetlana Tikhanovskaya who is currently in exile in Lithuania.

Today, Lukashenko is probably the last surviving dictator of Europe. He took over power in the year 1994 immediately after the breakdown of the mighty Soviet Union. Many say that he has been maintaining the glory and elements of bygone era Soviet style of communism. Almost each sector of the economy of this former Soviet Republic is under the absolute control of the State. The secret police that maintain strict surveillance over all powerful and anti-Government forces in the country is still known as the KGB.

Lukashenko, the mercurial leader, is known for his West-battering. He has a long history of defying the West. His immediate relief directly flows from no other than the Russian

strongman Vladimir Putin, who makes no secret of his sheer disavowal of colour revolutions in his neighbourhood, especially one that has been troubling Belarus since last year. And now comes the migration crisis, wherein the EU leaders are all up in arms against his longstanding ally Lukashenko. Putin blames the West for the migration crisis at the Belarus-Poland border. To him, the root of the current migration problem lies in the chaos created by the West in Iraq and in Afghanistan; and Belarus can nowhere be blamed for the same. Referring to conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, Putin highlighted that Iraqi Kurds and Afghans were among the migrants at the Belarussian border. His comments came as the Polish police recovered the body of a young Syrian man near the border town of Wólka Terechowska in the north-eastern Poland close

to Poland-Belarus border.

More than Belarus and Lukashenko, now Putin has become more anxious about the migration crisis. Meanwhile, Russia and Belarus have conducted snap paratrooper drills just 20 miles away from the border where migrants are gathered. It was intended to test the readiness of their troops. Around the same time, Washington has also warned that Putin could be preparing for an attack on Eastern Ukraine. It is learnt that Russia is massing thousands of troops, artillery and tanks on the border posts. This all shows Moscow's full preparation to support Minsk in case a crisis occurs from the other side of the border in Warsaw.

The EU has threatened that it will slap new sanctions on Belarus targeting everyone involved (people, airlines, travel agencies, etc.) in facilitating the migration crisis. Amid the escalating crisis, EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen warned the EU will expand sanctions on Belarus and will target airlines which support "human trafficking." Meanwhile, some carriers have already declared they won't be undertaking services to Belarus, including the Turkish Airlines. Jens Stoltenberg, the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), warned Moscow against potential aggressive actions amid a large concentration of Russian troops on Ukraine's borders. Kamala Harris, the US Vice President, has commented that Lukashenko is engaged in very troubling activity and world is watching what is happening there. In fact, Putin's sudden movement of armed forces may indicate the potential for a wider geopolitical crisis in the region. Currently, Ukraine is not a member of the EU or the NATO, but both the organisations are deeply concerned about Russia's quick military build-up on its border. The Baltic nations like Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania accused the Lukashenko regime of instrumentalising migration for political purposes. Again, Poland, Lithuania and Latvia are thinking of invoking Article 4 of the NATO. This Article

calls for consultation when "the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the parties is threatened." Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki is already talking to his counterparts in Latvia and Lithuania for all possible assistance from the NATO. Now it needs to be seen whether such an emergency has occurred or not. With Lukashenko dialling up Angela Merkel, known popularly as the de facto leader of the EU, a solution to the migration crisis is expected.

Finally, without speculating one can say that Russia has always demonstrated its fire-power either to showcase its strength or simply to warn the West and the EU not to step into its traditional areas of influence like Belarus. Lukashenko, a man who has already survived many setbacks and crises in recent years, knows his limits and is well aware about the impact of severe sanctions. Unless a big colour revolution comes with the full support of the elite of Belarus, Lukashenko will ever remain strong in Minsk. At the moment, the EU and the other Western powers are mounting pressures on Lukashenko, including further sanctions. At the same time, together they are targeting Russia whereas the centre of the problem lies in Belarus-Poland border. Brussels and other major western powers must see to it that the migrant crisis does not turn into a broader regional conflict. Instead of raising concerns about Russia's hidden intentions, the international community must clinch a deal with Lukashenko for an immediate solution to settle thousands of migrants stranded on the no-man's-land on Belarus-Poland border before the cold waves sweep them away.

(Dr Makhan Saikia has taught political science and international relations for over a decade in institutions of national and international repute after specialisation in globalisation and governance from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. He is the chief editor of the Journal of Global Studies, an international research journal)

Leaders in the EU think that Belarusian President Lukashenko is creating the illegal passage for migrants from most of the war-torn and poverty-ridden countries to neighbouring Poland and other rich nations of the EU. Brussels and other major western powers must see to it that the migrant crisis does not turn into a broader regional conflict. Instead of raising concerns about Russia's hidden intentions, the international community must clinch a deal with Lukashenko for an immediate solution to settle thousands of migrants stranded on the no-man's-land on Belarus-Poland border before the cold waves sweep them away



MAKHAN SAIKIA

PERSPECTIVE

FW De KLERK: END OF AN ERA

The last leader of the notorious apartheid era of South Africa, FW de Klerk, died on November 11 at 85 at his home in Fresnaye (a largely affluent white dominated locality of Cape Town situated between Signal Hill and Sea Point) after suffering from Mesothelioma, a type of cancer that is associated especially with the exposure to asbestos.

He won the Nobel Peace Prize along with Nelson Mandela for ending apartheid in 1993. He presided over a brutal regime that killed men, women and children to safeguard one of the most anti-human political systems that ever existed in world history. Its centrality lied in dehumanising people of colour and destroying the very spirit of humanity. It simply exemplified segregation of the white minority from the Africans and the rest of the colored people of the country, backed by an institutionalised system purely presided over by the Whites.

The Doctrine of Apartheid was made law in South Africa in 1948 when the Afrikaner Nationalist Party came to power. The word "apartheid" is originated from the Afrikaans language meaning "apartness", or "separateness". This apartheid called for separate development of different racial groups in South Africa.

The infamous apartheid regime in South Africa came to an end with a series of discussions and dialogues between 1990 and 1993. This was the result of unilateral steps initiated by the de Klerk Government. These negotiations took place between the governing national party, the African National Congress (ANC) and a host

of other civil rights groups belonging to different parts of South Africa.

In retrospect, it seems that various punitive measures invoked from different quarters of the globe, accompanied by the efforts made by the ANC, forced de Klerk's Government to abandon the apartheid system.

Many of these international initiatives were not to pressurise the leading parties in South Africa to engage in a process of negotiations but simply to end the apartheid era. Subsequently the proponents of constructive engagement and most notably the Conservative British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher were able to convince de Klerk to talk to the ANC.

Besides, by late 1980s, the Soviet Union and many other African Governments encouraged the ANC to negotiate a political solution to the apartheid.

He left a troubled legacy behind. He was a key political figure in the long journey of South Africa's transition from deadly apartheid regime to a modern democracy. He came to power in 1989 and continued till 1994 as the head of the South African State. And the iconic figure of the anti-apartheid era, Nelson Mandela came to power after him and scripted a new history by being the first ever black President of the country.

Interestingly, following his death, the FW de Klerk Foundation released a unique video worldwide—dubbed “final message”, in which he frankly spoke about the horrors of apartheid system of the yesteryear. In



South African President FW de Klerk poses outside his office in Cape Town, South Africa March 18, 1992, while displaying a copy of a local newspaper with a banner headline declaring a "Yes" result in a referendum vote to end apartheid and share power with the black majority for the first time

the message, he said, "Let me today, in the last message repeat: I without qualification, apologise for the pain and the hurt, and the indignity, and the damage, to black, brown and Indians in South Africa." On his death, the fifth black president of the country Cyril Ramaphosa said de Klerk's death should inspire all of us to reflect on the birth of our democracy. Indeed, it is the moment of reckoning for all the coloured people of South Africa who had to undergo all sorts of harassment and insult under the successive white Governments in the country.

Klerk brought the brutality to an inconceivable level. Apartheid practised in his country was widely recognised as a crime against humanity. Probably, de Klerk must have realised the sins committed by the white regimes in South Africa and read the writing on the wall very cautiously. He described himself as a "convert" in an interview in 2012. He said, "We should have gone much earlier with the flow when the winds of change blew across Africa."

It simply indicates his sincere realisation of the evil effects of the racial discrimination prevailed during his presidency.

On record, de Klerk had been a firm believer in the system of racial segregation of people in South Africa. Therefore, even after his retirement from active politics, he remained a divided figure in public square. He was very much reluctant to condemn the apartheid system unequivocally. Though he was a staunch conservative politician, within his five-year rule from 1989-94, he gradually realised the futility and the deep divide in the system of apartheid. Thus, he became an unlikely agent of change in his conservative clan and heralded the new light of multi-racial democracy in that country.

Although the relationship between de Klerk and Mandela was quite often characterised by sharp disagreements, the new president always described the last white President as someone of great integrity. That indeed showed how Mandela wanted to bridge the gap between the powerful white minority and the rest of the coloured people of his country, by recognising the uphill task of rebuilding a multi-racial nation.

On February 1992, he came to Parliament of South Africa with a historic declaration — Nelson Mandela would be released from prison after a 27 years sentence, legalisation of anti-apartheid groups, end of a national state of emergency and finally, the beginning of negotiation to end racial inequality in South Africa. The announcement electrified the whole nation that for decades had been scorned and sanctioned by many nations and international organisations. Apart from

these, South Africa witnessed severe isolation from the international community. With South Africa's isolation deepening and its once robust economy deteriorating, the de Klerk Government was forced to lift the longstanding ban on the ANC and other anti-apartheid groups.

He remained truthful and strong till the end of his life. His was an era of divisive politics. But he oversaw the transition of South Africa from a pariah state to one of a multi-racial democracy. Of course, his was a troubled time. Even after his announcement of the end of apartheid, many conservative lawmakers in his country brand him as a traitor, as racial tensions and the possibility of a civil war were looming large.

However, he survived all and came ready to serve as the deputy of Mandela, once his *bete noire*. Though many would still love to harm him, millions would see in him a harbinger of a new age, with deep realisation of the atrocities of racial segregation. Surely, he was not sole factor in bringing an end to the apartheid. Therefore, once he spoke, "When I talk about the end of apartheid, I prefer not to claim the honour that I have ended it." Today all of us must be grateful to him as he recognised the moment of change and had tenacity to take the South Africans to a new dawn. Nonetheless, he left a complicated legacy, while in power, after retirement and in his final journey.

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ANJANA HAZARIKA



LET COME WHAT COMES,
LET GO WHAT GOES. SEE
WHAT REMAINS
— RAMANA MAHARSHI



**YOUR
WEEK
AHEAD**

MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19

This week your passion for creative pursuits or hobbies will consume your time and energy. You spend your time fruitfully. You are inspired and productive in your pursuits. A positive environment surrounds you, helping you to enjoy good health. On the career front, there is a wake-up call for you, to change yourself for the better, to get the realisation, to get over the period of confusion or misunderstanding. Do not stress over them and stop thinking too much and start letting things simply be. Wait for the good times. On the personal front, you must be presentable, witty, enthusiastic, and ready to win the heart of your loved one. There could be challenges, accusations and your spouse may be demanding.

Lucky number 12
Lucky colour Peach
Lucky day Tuesday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

This week your generosity, kindness, concern, and care for others are appreciated. Health remains good and you devote time looking after your ailing parents, relative or a friend. You are likely to follow meditation, Yoga and Pranayama. You will be relaxed, calm, and in tune with your body, mind, and soul. At work, expect a good period. New venues for money earning could be opened for you. The new job opportunity with better prospects will excite you, and those who are unemployed will be getting an opening for themselves too. Old connections and associations will be helpful. On the personal front, prestige, glory, and status in society shall enhance. Relatives will appreciate your endeavours.

Lucky number 15
Lucky colour Sky Blue
Lucky day Thursday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

This week your determination and willpower are very strong. It will help you to face health challenges and put you in the right direction for a disciplined life. Alcohol, junk, and spicy food should be avoided. Routine exercises, morning walks and a planned diet create wonders for you. Stick on it, and timely medical care will cure you in your existing diseases. Professionally, you will establish your strength. This is a rewarding week in terms of your profession and job. People will listen to you and respect your views. Those who are in a job may have the reason to feel pride after the accomplishment of an important project. On the personal front, you feel blessed, looked after, and share cherishable moments with your loved ones.

Lucky number 18
Lucky colour Silver
Lucky day Wednesday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

This will be a very hectic week for you. Do not get physically violent; otherwise, you could hurt yourself. You are highly perceptive and intuitive. You need to control your emotions and ambitions. Avoid aggression and any kind of arguments with the people around you. On the professional front, there may be serious problems in your workplace. This doesn't have to be the end of the world or the end of your job but ignoring these problems will not make them go away. You have reached the point where you can now see what is best for you. Take some quiet time to decide what your next moves are. On the personal front, this is a very good week for you. Warmth and affection with the near and dear ones will increase.

Lucky number 14
Lucky colour Green
Lucky day Thursday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

This week you are sentimental and emotional and may worry over small issues. Physically you remain sound and healthy, but mental tension and anxiety could make you a diseased person. At times you may turn moody. You may wish to be alone. Spiritualism, meditation, and other Yogic practices may be helpful. On the work front, you must put your best foot forward. Whether it is your energy, time, or money investment, you have worked with full dedication and now waiting for the dividends. A good message which could enhance your career is on the card. On the personal front, relationships are smooth and easy-going. People around you feel relaxed. Romance, love, and new excitement are in the air too.

Lucky number 19
Lucky colour White
Lucky day Tuesday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

This week you are filled with enthusiasm. You may experience a change of perspective. Negativity is replaced by optimism. New possibilities can be foreseen. This is also a time to utilise your creative energies. On the work front, you will find great success. Promotion or hike in status is likely. You are self-disciplined, energetic, exerting dynamic control over life. You are the motivator, an inspiration to your colleagues. This is the time when your intelligence, wisdom and experience will pay you rich dividends. On the personal front, your dynamic personality exudes charm and impression on others. You are romantic, love is in the air, you admire, appreciate your spouse with sweet words that will rejuvenate your relationship.

Lucky number 8
Lucky colour Magenta
Lucky day Friday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

This week you will experience new energy, stamina with good health. You are a very positive and grounded. Put your energy into creative pursuits. This is the time when you can put your best. You will enjoy yourself. On the career front, some old acquaintances may prove beneficial for your professional life. If you are looking for a job, old connections, associations will bring a smile to your face. Recommendation and favour will work well for you giving you an upper hand. Open your eyes, be alert, and remember lost opportunities are never regained. On the personal front, relationships may be troubling, and you will feel frustrated. The unhealthy mind of your near and dear ones may hurt your feelings.

Lucky number 20
Lucky colour Mauve
Lucky day Monday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

You are healthy, smart and reflect a good personality. You prefer to stay active and are constantly attempting to make things happen. You know how to utilise your skills to create the world you want. Your skill in smooth-talking and adaptability to any situation is heightened, making you a comfortable and eased person. On the work front, if you find stagnation, almost no chance of growth in the present organisation you are working with then plan to switch over your job, this is the right time. Just fill your resume and send it to other companies. You are a creative and logical person, you could be an asset to any company, just realize your potentials. On the relationship front, you will enjoy an entertaining and rewarding week. You will spend quality time with your loved ones.

Lucky number 11
Lucky colour Beige
Lucky day Sunday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

This week water-borne disease may trouble you. Keep yourself safe from any kind of infection. A company of diseased person could alarm for you. Alcohol, unsafe water, injuries should be avoided. If you feel physically low take timely action. It is not advisable to ignore your health. On the career front, a recent period of confusion could be the reason for your current conflict. You feel indecisive, under-confident person. You need to come out of illusion and false intuitions. There may have been misdoings, but they will eventually be revealed. There are internal conflicts that need to be resolved soon. On the personal front, you will feel optimistic, upbeat, and hopeful about your relationships. Committed relationships may rise to new and better heights soon.

Lucky number 2
Lucky colour Pink
Lucky day Sunday



CANCER June 21-July 22

This week health looks promising. This is a great time to try a new preventative health care. Exercise, good diet and good sleep is what you need. Don't hesitate to try a new healer or to seek a second opinion if you need that. On the career front, additional duties and responsibilities may cause tremendous work pressure and make you a workaholic. If you are in such a situation, don't hesitate to ask for help or delegate workloads. This way your efficiency will increase, and the outcome will be decent. On the personal front, you will enjoy unconditional love and affection this week. There is purity in relationships. For those who are looking for love, soul mate in their life this is the time to embrace the opportunity with open arms.

Lucky number 6
Lucky colour Purple
Lucky day Friday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

This week you need a thorough health check-up. Stress may cause health problems. Be sure that you are paying adequate attention to diet, exercise, and sleep. Keep a positive attitude. You may need some time alone. You will find depth and wisdom in solitude. On the career front, you have excellent energy to accomplish tedious work. Financially, you feel secure. The money will come from more than one source. You may think about investing in property at this time. A new project could be assigned to you making you busier and financially benefitted. The week is not very good in terms of a relationship. Troubles may arise in existing relationships. You may tend to find faults in each other. Trust and faith are missing. Work on this aspect.

Lucky number 13
Lucky colour Brown
Lucky day Saturday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

This week you can perform the right action at any given moment. You tend to feel you are the master of your destiny. You have a shining personality and are likely to embark on a new path. By being in tune with the environment and with others you never go wrong with the judgment. Professionally, there is a good chance of realizing your potentials and opportunities. There is a need to be attentive and alert. For some of you, a feeling of stagnation, dissatisfaction is taking a toll on you. Your career is at the stake. There is a need to socialize and reconnect with people. Connections and conversations sometimes prove rewarding. On the personal front, there is a new love interest possible. The existing relations will bloom too.

Lucky number 7
Lucky colour Grey
Lucky day Saturday

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ASTROTURF

BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

Can destiny be defined?

Astrology is believed to be a destiny defining discipline. Going by Ancient Indian Philosophical perception, human life cycle, driven by cause-effect chain, runs in succession. What we acquire during one life, sets the premise on which the next life cycle takes off. We, thus, are all born pre-programmed to carry on the journey of life a particular way. This way, every being is born unique, each manifesting individualistic desire trends and mind traits, which lead a being all through the journey of life. Guided by this perception, one is tempted to visit an astrologer to explore future prospects.

Astrologers, based on the reading of one's horoscope, make future predictions, offering time line of good and bad prospects. The astrologers propagate the belief that what is in store of destiny, can't be changed. But at the same time, they suggest gem stones and belief driven *pooja* as means of appeasing the planetary Gods as remedial measure to secure success and ward off evil. Do the two propositions not sound contraindicative? If the course of destiny can't be changed, how comes destiny can't be changed, how comes remedial measures they suggest would modify them? Are the planets, dis-

passionately available to all in equal proportion, enjoy the discriminatory ability needed to acknowledge and respond to individual prayers? These questions deserve answer.

It will be interesting to note here that the world we live in, is always in motion. In fact, going by scientific perception, even the universe keeps expanding. The field players of the cosmos — the planets and stars, the energy providers playing from the front — are continuously on their run at their own respective speeds. That includes the earth, which itself is moving at a great speed. So, when seen relative to earth, the energy dynamics of nature, keeps varying every moment, having no parallel in the past, which evidently would influence our life cycle. Accordingly, the dynamics of every emerging moment, and thereby its callings, keep varying, many of them can't be foreseen. So, future is full of uncertainties, often confronting us with unforeseen challenges, besides offering fresh opportunities. We have already seen, how with passage of time, fresh opportunities keep arising. Subjects like Computers, Information technology, and Artificial Intelligence were nowhere in sight in ear-



lier days, offering us with enough of employment opportunities. Also, overall environmental condition and societal dynamics keep changing, which influence our life cycle, individually and collectively. What complicates future course of life is our unique character, which creates ground for conflict of interest.

We are all an inseparable part of a unified organism, where no individual has a reality independent of the entirety. In such a framework, any happening at one end, it's echoes will resonate far and wide. We, thus remain vulnerable to be confronted with unforeseen challenges posed by the overall environmental conditions. If the domestic atmosphere or societal condition is not congenial, we can't go unaffected. The most glaring example is that of the ongoing pandemic. It supposedly arose somewhere in China, but it engulfed the whole of world.

Another aspect that common astrologers often tend to ignore is an individual's personality traits. They forget that having potential by itself is not enough. It needs to be realised. That calls for putting into your whole into the act. Often our inherent limitations of mind, do not let us pursue the tasks in hand in

the right earnest, and evidently with obvious consequences. Accordingly, astrological reading calls for a look into three factors — *Desha* (environmental condition), *Kala* (probable destiny projection) and *Patra* (personality traits). Purposely so because destiny indications are subject to the limitations exercised by environmental conditions and personality traits. Unfortunately, most of the practising astrologers ignore these two important factors while reading an astrological chart. And when their predictions do not come through, people get disillusioned, which offer ground for the critiques of astrology to cast aspersion on its efficacy.

With so many unforeseen variables playing their part, adding to the uncertainty of future, it is difficult to digest that one's destiny can be defined in finite terms. The obvious question, therefore, is: What purpose would astrology as a discipline serve in real terms? For answer, let us have a look into the premise on which astrology stands.

To be continued...

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