

OPINION 6

BUILDING DEFENCE
OF PEACE IN MIND

WORLD 8

FRANCE KNEW OF OUR SUB
CONCERNS: MORRISON

SPORT 12

STRUGGLING KKR LOOK TO SCRIPT
TURNAROUND AGAINST RCB

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Cong plays Dalit card in Punjab

Names Channi
as CM to secure
Sikh, Dalit votes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Eying Assembly elections in the crucial States of Punjab, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh (UP) in the next few months, the Congress on Sunday played a "surprise" Dalit card by naming Charanjit Singh Channi as the next Punjab Chief Minister.

Channi, the outgoing Technical Education Minister, is also one of those leaders who had rebelled against the party's old warhorse Captain Amarinder Singh.

Former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi congratulated Channi after he was picked as the next Punjab Chief Minister, and said the party must continue to fulfil the promises made to the people of the State. Rahul said "history had been created by the party after choosing a Dalit face" to head the Congress Government in Punjab.

The entire Congress leadership including party chief Sonia Gandhi, Rahul and his sister Priyanka Gandhi besides seniors like Harish Rawat, Adhir Ranjan Chaudhary, Pawan Bansal, Ajay Maken and Randeep Surjewala, were involved in setting the Punjab unit in order.

Channi, 58, a three-time MLA from Rupnagar's



Punjab Chief Minister-designate Charanjit Singh Channi submits a letter to Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit after being named as the next CM, at the Raj Bhavan in Chandigarh on Sunday

PTI

Chamkaur Sahib will be sworn in as Punjab's first Dalit Chief Minister on Monday. His elevation is significant given the fact that Dalits form around 31 per cent of Punjab's population. The Dalit population is in the same range in neighbouring States of UP and Uttarakhand.

Party sources said Channi's deputies may be from the Sikh and Hindu communities.

"The poll calculus behind the choice of Channi appears simple. The Akali Dal (earlier in power with the BJP) has joined hands with Mayawati's BSP to tap the Dalit vote, hence the Congress anticipated that

Channi, who is a Dalit as well as a Sikh, will counter all other political combinations brewing in the State," they said.

Political leaders, however, said that the Congress' choice for Chief Minister may trigger criticism, given that Channi was accused of sexual harassment by a woman IAS officer. Channi allegedly sent an inappropriate text in 2018, but the officer never filed a complaint.

The claim resurfaced in May after the State's Women's Commission sent a notice asking for the State Government's response.

Hurt by events of last 5 mths: Capt tells Sonia

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Hours before he formally submitted his resignation to the Punjab Governor, Captain Amarinder Singh had on Saturday written to the Congress president Sonia Gandhi, apprising her of his decision, while expressing anguish at the political events of the last about five months, which he said were clearly "not based on full understanding of the national imperatives of Punjab and its key concerns."

In his letter, Amarinder also listed his achievements as the Chief Minister since March 2017 while claiming that 89.2 per cent of the poll promises were fulfilled.

"Notwithstanding my personal anguish, I hope this will not cause any damage to the hard-earned peace and development in the State, and that the efforts I have been focusing during the last few years, would continue unabated, ensuring justice to one and all," Amarinder wrote, indicating his apprehensions of instabili-



ty in Punjab as a result of the political developments in the State unit of the Congress.

Amarinder also expressed his personal satisfaction at having done his best for the people as Chief Minister of Punjab, which, as a border State, "has many geopolitical and other internal security concerns, which I tried to handle effectively without any compromise."

He said that he was happy that the State remained fully peaceful, and there was complete communal harmony with no ill-will towards anyone.

Afghan boys stand up for girls' right to study

Won't attend classes till schools for girls reopen

AGENCIES ■ KABUL

In a country that has seen the human rights of women being trampled ever since the Taliban came to power in Afghanistan, there is a sliver of hope that there is still some resistance left in the people of the embattled country. This resistance to the regressive ways of the Taliban has come from a group of Afghan boys who have refrained from going to school in solidarity with the girls of the country who have not yet been recalled to school.

This startling development comes at a time when women employees in the Kabul city Government have been told to stay home, with work only allowed for those who cannot be replaced by men. This announcement detailing the latest restrictions on women by the new Taliban rulers, was made by the interim Mayor of Afghanistan's capital on Sunday.

While most of the boys went to school, some boys



stayed home to express solidarity with the girls and said that they wouldn't show up until the schools for girls were opened.

"Women make up half of society ... I won't show up at school until the girls' school opens," Rohullah, an 18-year-old student in class 12, reportedly told the *Wall Street Journal*.

The Taliban Ministry of Education had on Friday ordered the reopening of secondary school for boys while the reopening of girls' schools was still a mystery. "All male teachers and students should attend an educational institution," said a statement released late on Friday.

Taliban spokesman

Zabihullah Mujahid told the local Bakhtar News Agency on Saturday that an arrangement was underway to reopen girls' secondary school, but he did not give a date.

Meanwhile, the United Nations has stated that it is "deeply concerned" about the future of girls' school education in Afghanistan. "It is important that all girls, including older girls, be able to resume education without further delay. To do so, female teachers need to resume education," he said.

The Taliban said it would not implement fundamentalist policies like the last rule, but the future of women's rights and freedoms in Afghanistan remains questionable.

CAPSULE

'BJP RAKING UP OUTSIDER CARD WITH EYE ON POLLS'

Mumbai: Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut on Sunday hit out at the BJP for opposing Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's directive to State police to keep a record of migrants coming here from other States, claiming the BJP was raking up the 'outsider' card with an eye on the Uttar Pradesh Assembly and Mumbai civic elections due next year.

DELHI-MUMBAI E-WAY TO FETCH ₹1.5K CR/MTH: MIN

New Delhi: The Centre will get toll revenues worth ₹1,000 to ₹1,500 crore every month once the much-awaited Delhi-Mumbai Expressway becomes operational in 2023, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said on Sunday and described State-owned NHAI as a "gold mine" for generating income.

TRAILBLAZING TOURIST TRIP TO ORBIT ENDS

Cape Canaveral: Four space tourists safely ended their trailblazing trip to orbit on Saturday with a splashdown in the Atlantic off the Florida coast. Their SpaceX capsule parachuted into the ocean just before sunset, not far from where their chartered flight began three days earlier.

Aao hamare desh, India to tell tourists

5L visitors to get free visas in bid to help tourism, aviation sectors

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid a decline in Covid cases in the country, India may soon reopen its doors for foreign tourists for the first time in one-and-a-half year. The first five lakh foreign tourists will be issued visas free of cost in an attempt to revive the tourism, hospitality, and aviation sectors hit by the pandemic since March 2020, when a nationwide lockdown was announced.

Senior Home Ministry officials are in talks with the stakeholders to decide the expected date and modalities for reopening of the borders for foreign tourists. A formal announcement is expected to come within the next ten days. The decision is due to the declining Covid-19 cases in the country.

The officials said free visa to the tourists will be issued till March 31, 2022 or the issuance of five lakh visa, whichever is

earlier. The total financial implication for this would be ₹100 crore. "The free visa move is expected to incentivise short-term tourists visiting India," officials said.

"The cost for a month-long e-tourist visa is country-specific but is around \$25. A year-long multiple entry e-tourists visa charge is around \$40," it further reported. The e-tourists visa remained suspended from March 2020 due to the Covid pandemic.

The Home Ministry officials also said the tourists will be allowed with certain conditions — like those vaccinated will be allowed to enter the borders. The reopening will take place in a phased manner to understand the response and implications of the move, another official said. India is among many countries that have started opening up for tourists.

Scheduled international



Tourists walk on the premises of Taj Mahal during the rain in Agra

File photo

passenger services have been suspended in India since March 23, 2020, due to the pandemic.

But special international flights have been operating under the Vande Bharat Mission since May 2020 and

under bilateral "air bubble" arrangements with select countries since July 2020.

India has formed air-bubble pacts with around 28 countries, including the US, the UK, the UAE, Kenya, Bhutan, and France. The Union External

Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Sunday urged his Saudi Arabian counterpart Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud to resume direct flights between India and Saudi Arabia, which remains suspended owing to the pandemic.

₹9K cr heroin from Af seized at port in Guj

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In one of the biggest drug hauls in the country, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has reportedly seized two shipping containers with heroin worth an estimated ₹9,000 crore from Mundra Port in Gujarat's Kutch district.

The contraband originated from Afghanistan and the cargo was camouflaged between bags of talcum powder in the two containers that landed at Mundra Port in Gujarat on Tuesday.

The containers were imported from Afghanistan to Mundra Port allegedly by Vijaywada-based Ashi Trading Firm.

Sources said the Indian firm had reportedly declared the consignment as "talcum powder". The exporting firm has been identified as Hassan Hussain Ltd., based in



Kandahar, Afghanistan.

The valuation of the seized contraband has been arrived at by the DRI and customs that were undertaking the checks of the suspicious consignment.

The drug haul was made from two containers that landed at Mundra Port on Tuesday. These containers were carrying heroin in 38 bags.

The DRI officials engaged in the checks segregated the talcum powder bags from those containing heroin after a preliminary inquiry revealed the presence of a narcotic substance in the two shipping containers.

Jaishankar, Saudi Foreign Min discuss ties, developments in Afghanistan

Saud to meet Modi today in first visit since virus outbreak

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India and Saudi Arabia on Sunday reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral ties and the current situation in Afghanistan during External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's talks with his Saudi counterpart Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud.

The two leaders also took stock of the situation in the Gulf and the Indo-Pacific during the extensive talks besides India urging early resumption of flights to Saudi Arabia, the External Affairs Ministry (MEA) said later.

The visiting dignitary will



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar welcomes Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud during his visit to India

PTI

meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday before ending his three-day visit to New Delhi. Al Saud arrived here on

Saturday evening. It is the first ministerial visit from Saudi Arabia to India since the outbreak of the pandemic.

Given the strong ties between the two countries, the two Foreign Ministers, meanwhile, also explored ways to further expand bilateral ties in areas of Defence and security, trade, investment and energy. Incidentally, Army chief General MM Naravane became the first Indian Army head ever to visit Saudi Arabia last year, thereby signifying the growing relations between the nations.

On the talks between Jaishankar and Al Saud, sources said the former called for further relaxing restrictions on travel from India to the Gulf nation while appreciating the country for the support provided to the Indian community during the pandemic.

The MEA said both Ministers discussed issues related to their bilateral relationship and regional and international issues of mutual interest.



A woman whispers in the ear of an idol of Lord Ganesha before the immersion at Upper Lake on the occasion of Anant Chaturdashi festival in Bhopal on Sunday

Pioneer photo

Guv: People should take inspiration from Sainiks

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Governor Mangubhai Patel has said Sainiks are the pride of the nation. People should take inspiration from them to serve and commit themselves to the nation. He said that Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav should be celebrated as a Jan Utsav.

He said the border forces should popularise the tales of unknown heroes, heroines who laid down their lives for the freedom of the country among the different parts of the country, languages, class and communities.

Patel was addressing the launching program of the cycle rally of Sashastra Seema Bal at Shaurya Smarak on Sunday. The cycle rally starting from Shaurya Memorial Bhopal will end at Rajghat, Delhi.

Governor said our country was a symbol of knowledge and prosperity. Here we had centres



Madhya Pradesh Governor Mangubhai Patel flags off Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) jawans' cycle rally from Bhopal to New Delhi, under Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsava celebration at Shaurya Smarak in Bhopal on Sunday

of knowledge like Nalanda and Takshashila from where people from all over the world used to come to acquire knowledge. It was so rich that rivers of milk and curd would flow.

There were such brave fighters here whose example was given in the world of valor. The British, who came to trade, took advantage of the mutual

jealousy, division and discrimination among the people and grabbed power by dividing them. He said we have attained freedom after much struggle. The young generation should be acquainted with the sacrifices made for this Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. He lauded the military forces engaged in the security and service of the

HE SAID THE BORDER FORCES SHOULD POPULARISE THE TALES OF UNKNOWN HEROES, HEROINES WHO LAID DOWN THEIR LIVES FOR THE FREEDOM OF THE COUNTRY AMONG THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE COUNTRY, LANGUAGES, CLASS AND COMMUNITIES

nation for organizing the Independence Festival programmes.

Director of Sashastra Seema Bal Academy, Rajinder Kumar Bhumla told in his welcome address the cycle rally will be completed on October 2 at Rajghat after traveling about 865 kms. He gave information regarding the formation of Sashastra Seema Bal. He said that training is imparted to the officers from Assistant Commandant to Deputy Inspector General level by the Training Academy located at Bhopal. Patel flagged off the cycle rally. On arrival at the Shaurya Memorial, the Governor was given a salute by the Guard of Honor of the Sashastra Seema Bal. A memento was presented by Sashastra Seema Bal. Inspector General of Indo-Tibetan-Border Police Sanjeev Raina, officers of Sashastra Seema Bal, their family members were also present.

Swarnim Vijay Varsh Mashaal enters Central Command AOR

PNS ■ MHOW

The Swarnim Vijay Varsh Mashaal entered the Central Command Area of Responsibility (AOR) and reached Mhow from Nagpur on September 18.

The "Victory Flame" - commemorating India's victory over Pakistan in the 1971 war - was received on behalf of Lt Gen Y Dimri, General officer commanding in Chief, Central Command with full military honours.

Army personnel and children of various schools welcomed the Victory Flame at DSOI Square and led the entourage along the Mall Road to a grand reception at the Infantry Memorial. The entire stretch was decorated with flowers, banners and bunting. Service personnel and their families, NCC cadets, civilians and school children proudly cheered the Victory Flame with 'Bharat Mata ki Jai' and waved the Tri colour flags to welcome the Flame.

The flame was given a splendid reception at the Infantry Memorial and placed



on a decorated pedestal. It was presented with a Guard of Honour and Station Commander Mhow laid a wreath on behalf of the Mhow

Cantonment.

Later, the Flame was kept at the memorial for everyone to pay their respects while the military band played various

patriotic tunes. The public at large, schoolchildren and NCC cadets were all seen busy taking pictures and savoring the historic moment.

CM attends tribute meeting of late Dr NP Mishra

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan attended the tribute meeting of late Dr NP Mishra at Manas Bhawan this evening.

On this occasion, he garlanded the photo of late Dr NP Mishra and said Dr Mishra was the ideal and inspirational personality of the medical world. We will always be indebted to him. Madhya Pradesh will also remember his contribution. Chouhan said the road in front of Dr Mishra's residence at Civil Lines would be named as Dr NP Mishra Marg.

The Chief Minister said that Dr Mishra has always given the message of service in the medical world while teaching and explaining the nuances to the junior doctors. Without him this field would be incomplete. He was a studious person.

Reading books, assimilating them and then telling junior doctors, was his speciality.

He has disciples abroad as well. Dr. Mishra fulfilled the responsibility of treatment very well even in adverse circumstances. When there was no room for even a thousand patients in the hospitals, he provided better treatment to ten thousand patients without panicking. Be it the circumstances after the Gas Tragedy or the Corona period, he always guided the medical world. He has prepared many doctors, who are doing the work of treating various diseases efficiently.

Chouhan said for the last one and a half years, he used to have discussions with Dr. Mishra on various aspects related to Corona. Important suggestions were received from him. Dr. Mishra was always engrossed in his work while being the Head

of the Department, Dean etc. in the Medical College. Even after retirement, he used to take the work of treating patients very seriously. He also had the ability to convince the relatives of the patients. Used to encourage new doctors. He was amazing, he did the work of treating patients till the last stage of his life. The last day also he saw the patients who had come. He was full of confidence. There was a look of confidence in his eyes. Sometimes he used to humor and joke too.

Chouhan also met Dr. Mishra's sons Manoj, Sunil and Vishal in the tribute meeting and spoke about the memories associated with their father. Medical Education Minister V i s h w a s Sarang, many doctors and citizens of the city were present in the tribute meeting. Dr NP Mishra passed away on September 5 last.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan calls on Governor Mangubhai Patel at Raj Bhawan in Bhopal on Sunday

Pioneer photo

Bank of Maharashtra receives Rajbhasha Kirti Puraskar

New Delhi: Bank of Maharashtra received "Rajbhasha Kirti Puraskar" for better implementation of Rajbhasha Hindi. AS Rajeev, Managing Director & CEO, Bank of Maharashtra received this prestigious award at the hands of Nisith Pramanik, Ministers of State for Home Affairs in a grand function arranged at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi on September 14.

Chief Guest of the programme was Union Home Minister Amit Shah. Ministers of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai, Ajay Kumar Mishra and other dignitaries were also present on the occasion. Executive Director of Bank of Maharashtra Hemant Tamta, General Manager of Delhi Zone Chitra Datar, General Manager (HRM and Rajbhasha) Radhey Shyam Bansal, Assistant General Manager Rajendra Shrivastava were also present in the function.

Eco friendly Ganesha Chaturthi celebrated

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Eco friendly Ganesha Chaturthi was celebrated in city on Sunday. Ganesh Utsav was celebrated on eco friendly theme with making bottle bricks by children, youngsters and women of Shalimar Sterling Complex and its surroundings.

Plastic does the work of spoiling the health of this earth the most. Every day lakhs of tonnes of plastic waste is generated in the city, whose proper disposal is a big challenge. The work of saving and making the earth useful from this plastic waste was done by children and women through Swachhata brand ambassador and environmental organisation Helpbox Foundation.

It is to be noted that these bottle bricks are made from plastic waste which will be used for making plant beds, beautiful partitions and wall hangings.

During the ten-day Ganesh festival, eco-friendly clay Ganesha was installed in the premises and the residents put out various types of plastic waste in their homes, filled in unusable pet bottles and gave them for recycling and reuse. Composted manure was made by the residents from the flowers that came out after worship in Ganesh Utsav and Maha Aarti was performed by decorating eco-friendly plate.

Swachhata Brand Ambassador and environmental organization Helpbox's Kavita Awakarkar taught children the method of making useful items from bottle bricks and waste plastic with the Reuse-Reuse-Recycle concept. During this, the disadvantages of plastic and various ways to prevent them were told.

All the participants were awarded by the Helpbox as Environment Warrior (Environment Warrior) and the certificate was presented by the Society president R Singh.

Survivor stories of Indian army men showcased through film I Will Live

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The movie I Will Live tells the survivor tales of soldiers posted in deserts and mountains

The survivor stories of Indian army men were showcased through the film "I Will Live". The film was screened on Sunday at Shaurya Smarak

The film is produced by SNS Shastrri and is directed by Shirish Vaid. It is to be noted that every day movies based on the bravery of the Indian army, air force, navy and police are being screened at Shaurya Smarak. The regular film screening is being organised as a tribute to their contributions and their sacrifices.

The movie I Will Live tells the survivor tales of soldiers posted in deserts and mountains. Surviving in high altitudes is not a cakewalk and civilians do not really understand how difficult it is for army men to survive in high altitudes and low temperatures.

To survive in such locations the indian soldiers have to make arrangements for living and eating food. The soldiers have to wear different clothes when posted in such locations. The diet plan has to be followed strictly other than the daily workout. All this entire routine of indian soldiers were shown in the movie I Will Live.

It is truly saga of courage, valour, commitment of a soldier to safety and security of India and its countrymen, as described by a senior Army officer posted in such locations.

Development possible only when tribals of State join mainstream of society: CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said development of Madhya Pradesh is possible only when the tribals of the State join the mainstream of society.

The State Government has geared up to protect the education, health, livelihood development and constitutional rights of the tribals.

The tribals have the first right on the Government treasury and we are determined to open the treasury of both money and opportunity to them.

Chouhan said the budget has been raised from time to time for the overall development of the tribals.

In the year 2003-04, the budget of the Tribal Affairs Department was Rs 746.60 crores, which was increased to Rs 8085.99 crores in the year 2020-21.

In this way the budget of this category was increased by 948 percent.

Chouhan said Madhya Pradesh has the largest tribal population in the country. Here tribes comprise one fifth of the

total population. For the all-round development of tribal brethren, educational, economic, social and employment related schemes are being run by the state government for the people of different age groups.

The Chief Minister said that we will bring revolution in tribal education and will leave no stone unturned in providing the benefits of new education policy given by the Prime Minister to the tribal children and youth.

Decision has been taken to initiate online smart classes from Class VIII and IX for students to improve the foundation of NEET and JEE.

We will also make the curriculum as per present day requirement.

At least 4 people from each gram panchayat will be trained as rural engineers on various subjects like agricultural equipment skills, IT services, building related skills, organic farming for economic advancement through skill development.

Ashrams, hostels, schools, girls education complexes are being run all over the state. Akanksha and Civil Services Promotion Scheme is being

operated for the training of competitive examinations. Along with reservation in self-employment schemes, centers are being run for skill development.

Chouhan said that Eklavya Adarsh Residential School, Gurukulam Vidyalaya, Special Backward Tribe Residential Schools along with girls campuses with minimum literacy are being run for the educational development of tribal students.

Residential schools are being run in Guna, Jabalpur and Sheopur to educate students of 3 special backward tribes of the state including Baiga, Bharia and Sahariya.

A food grant of Rs one thousand per month is also being given to the women heads of these special backward tribe families to save them from malnutrition.

There is UPSC coaching for tribal students in which a maximum amount of Rs 4 lakh 40,000 per student is being given for 18 months. Scholarships are also given by the government to tribal students to pursue education abroad.

ISSUE OF ORIGINAL DRIVING LICENCES BASED ON FAKE MARKSHEET UNKNOWN ACCUSED STILL ABSCONDING

Indore: Unknown accused against whom the FIR is registered in the Tejajai nagar police station in the case related to the issue of hundreds of original driving licences based on the fake marksheet from Indore RTO office is still absconding.

The heavy driving licences were issued on the fake marksheets came in light two years back. TI Tejajainagar RD Kanwa told The Pioneer that the named accused were arrested but police is still searching the unknown accused who were involved in issuing the

original driving licenses from the Indore RTO office.

Locals said the hundreds of agents and middleman are active in Indore RTO office campus who have direct approach to Indore RTO officials and without their consent no work is done in the RTO office whether it is the fitness of vehicles, transfer of vehicles, registration of old and new vehicles, issue of transport and loading permit for long and short duration.

Indore RTO Jitendra Singh Raghuvanshi during whose tenure

the driving licenses were issued on the fake marksheet is posted in Indore for 5 years and why the State Government didn't transfer him is also becoming a talk of the town and whenever any question is asked to him, he don't reply and talks rudely.

Sources said the Indore RTO department has not done any efforts to recover the driving licences which were issued on the basis of fake marksheet and the incapable drivers are still driving on the basis of those licences.

Cyber security startup Safehack Me looking for expansion

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

In a recent statement 'Safehack Me' co founder Mukundsinh Solanki said the newly cyber security startup is looking for funding to expand the company's sales and delivery teams and further develop its technology.

Founded in 2020, Safehack Me - an acronym for "proactive web application security" - offers

a manual penetration testing that's designed to assess and reduce cybersecurity risks. Pentesting, as it's usually known, involves testing information technology networks through a series of simulated attacks to identify vulnerabilities.

It's a commonly offered form of cybersecurity practice. But 'Safehack Me' claims that a regular pentesting using humans is far better as compare

to artificial intelligence that could not cover all.

The company's manual pentesting team, scan and ethically attack the enterprise network with the latest hacking techniques, identifying security weaknesses. The company says the safe team also enables cost-effective remediation by focusing on vulnerabilities in a proven "kill-chain" to provide visibility to more serious risks.



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Outsourced contract staff to hold indefinite stir

PNS ■ GWALIOR

Over 35,000 outsourced contract employees of the State will organise an indefinite agitation from September 27 in all 52 districts of the State said MP Provincial Convener of Electricity Outsourced Employees Organisation Manoj Bhargava and Co-convener Rahul Malviya announced after discussion with outsourced employees in Bhopal.

Bhargava said in a meeting of about one and a half hours with the Energy Minister in Bhopal on August 23, 2021 at Prakash Complex, the Energy Minister gave 2-3 of the 19-point demands, including the merger of the power outsourced contract employees in the power companies.

Meeting in the round was assured to solve them, but after this promise, no order has been issued from the Government and com-

pany level till now and no meeting has been held with outsourced representatives at the Government level whereas electricity outsourced employees without financial burden from the government and without any expense on the basis of seniority and merit, they want to merge in power companies by forming small cadres on the salary they are getting at present without spending. By doing this where MP 300 crore per annum to the Government.

At the same time, there will also be relief from the evading to payment of salary and evasion of EPF amount by the contractors, but MP. The Government wants to run these power companies on the lines of Gujarat State, not under regularisation system, but 100 per cent through outsourcing system, against which the power outsourced workers are being forced to organise an indefinite agitation from September 27.

14-year-old boy commits suicide

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A 14-year-old Class 9 boy committed suicide by hanging with the ceiling at his residence at Bheem Nagar under Arera Hills police station area on Saturday.

Police said the deceased boy was identified as Arun Ahirwar was found hanging with the ceiling and rushed to a nearby hospital where he was declared dead.

In the initial investigation it was found that at the time of incident Arun was alone at home. Her two brothers were out of home while parents were at work.

Late in the evening family found Arun hanging and informed police. After preliminary investigation the body was sent for the post mortem and a case under section 174 of CrPC was registered. Police have not found any suicide note and in the initial investigation, it was also found that deceased had a fight at the house with the family and used to remain depressed over the issue.

Meanwhile, a 16-year-old youth committed suicide by hanging with the ceiling at Borda Pathar under Kolar police station area on Saturday. According to police, Poornima Raikwar was found hanging when her mother and brother returned home for lunch.

In the initial investigation it was found that girl committed suicide due to relationship which family was not in approval. After the preliminary investigation, the police have registered a case under section 174 of the CrPC and started investigation.

Two held for illegal LPG cylinders sale

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The Berasia police have arrested two accused involved in selling LPG cylinders illegally and recovered 36 LPG cylinders worth 94,000; arrest was made after complaint was lodged by Food and Civil officer.

Based on the complaint by Food and Civil Officer Mayank Dwivedi Berasia police have arrested two accused identified as Mohan Singh Rajput and Rajendra Singh Thakur. The victim lodged a complaint after he received information regarding illegal selling of LPG cylinders.

After the complaint was lodged police raided the place and seized 19 commercial LPG cylinders, 13 empty commercial LPG cylinders, 2 commercial Indian LPG cylinders, 1 domestic LPG cylinder and one 5 kg LPG cylinder worth Rs 94000. The accused was booked under Essential

Commodities Act and started further investigation.

Meanwhile, a 56-year-old auto-rickshaw driver was attacked at Arjun Nagar by two miscreants by sharp edged weapons ; T T Nagar police have started search for accused.

The victim identified as Dinesh Bansal was attacked by Puspendra and Sumit while he was near his house in the night on Saturday.

Police said that that Dinesh was near his house after parking vehicle the miscreants came and threatened him. The miscreants exchanged verbal spate and attacked with a sharp edged weapon.

The injured was rushed to hospital where his condition is reportedly critical. Based on the complaint after the preliminary investigation, the police have registered a case under section 324 and 34 of the IPC. Search has been intensified for the absconding accused who are still at large.

Valuables worth lakhs burgled in Anand Nagar

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Valuables worth lakhs of rupees were burgled from Anand Nagar area under Piplani police station on Sunday; family had gone to attend event at the time of burglary.

Police said that the victim Anil Sahu had gone to attend event and when he returned house on Sunday valuables were found burgled. The victim in his complaint stated that he along with his family had gone to attend a event and on Sunday when he returned locks were found broken and house was ransacked.

Victim approached police and lodged a complaint. Based on the complaint after the preliminary investigation the police have registered a case under sections 457 and 380 of the IPC and have started further investigation.

After checking the valuables victim found that gold and silver jewelry were burgled and some cash was also burgled in the burglary. Police suspects that the burglars were aware regarding the whereabouts of the family and committed the burglary when the family was away.

Meanwhile burglars targeted a grocery shop near Bhoari Bangal Mandir area on Saturday and decamped with grocery goods worth Rs 45000 ; Khajuri Sadak police have started investigation. According to the police, the victim, Brijesh Singrauli was informed that shutter of his shop was broken in the early morning hours on Sunday

A complaint was lodged by the victim with the Khajuri Sadak police and in his complaint he left shop after closing the night and in the morning his neighbor shopkeeper informed regarding burglary in the shop and on the receipt he rushed to the shop where he found that grocery goods worth Rs 45000 which was kept at shop were burgled .

The police have registered a case under sections 457 and 380 of the IPC and have started further investigation.



BJP State President VD Sharma addresses a press conference at BJP State headquarters in Bhopal on Sunday

Pioneer photo

Farmers' interest should never be mixed with politics: Vice-Prez

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Amid the ongoing farmers' protest against three central farm laws, Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu on Sunday said that there should be continuous dialogue between the government and the farmers.

"Farmers' interest should never be mixed with politics and to improve the condition of the farmer, the country will have to be transformed into a 'one food zone'. The government is taking effective steps in the interest of farmers because agriculture in India is not just a business, it is the basis of Indian culture," Naidu said while addressing a gathering after releasing five volumes of 'Sir Chhotu Ram: Writings and Speeches' brought out by the Haryana Academy of History and Culture in

Gurugram.

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, former Chief Minister Om Prakash Chautala, former Uttarakhand CM Vijay Bahuguna, former Union Minister Birender Singh were among those who attended the event.

The Vice President said there should be an open market system to stop the exploitation of the farmers, which means the farmers of the country can go anywhere and sell their crop. This is in the interest of the country and also in the interest of the farmers, he said.

Naidu said that his own life has also been related to agriculture and even today he visits different parts of the country to know the condition of the farmers.

He also lauded farmers for not letting the country down

during the Covid-19 pandemic, and called for an integrated approach towards rural economy to ensure income security for them.

"Our objective should be the overall well-being of the rural society. We need to develop an integrated approach towards the rural economy to ensure income security of our farmers," he said.

Naidu praised the contributions of Sir Chhotu Ram for the cause of nation building. He suggested that copies of the publication should be available in public libraries and Panchayat Ghar so that the people could read and learn about the life and work of the great leader. He also reiterated the need to modernise agriculture and adopt best practices to make it more sustainable and remunerative. "Building on our

past experiences, we must regularly revisit and renew our strategies on agriculture and rural development, and introduce new technologies as part of our efforts to build a self-reliant India," he said.

Agriculture is the backbone of the Indian economy, and the country cannot progress if villages remain underdeveloped and backward, Naidu said.

He further said that many of our freedom fighters did not get the recognition they deserved, and called for efforts to spread awareness about their life and work.

Observing that the Independence movement was not just a political movement, he said, it had a deep social and economic reformist agenda as well. Mentioning that Sir Chhotu Ram was the first person to visualise the Bhakra

Nangal dam on Sutlej river, the Vice President said he was a farmer's son and had deep understating of farmers' problems. He also praised the legendary leader for his bold initiatives in the field of social reform and education.

Naidu recalled Sir Chhotu Ram's strong opposition to the partition of the country, saying he was a true nationalist who dreamt of a united and strong India. Sir Chhotu Ram was a man of renaissance, and he ushered in new ideas in polity, society and rural economy, he said. Younger generations should take inspiration from great personalities like Chhotu Ram, Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, Ram Manohar Lohia and Chaudhary Charan Singh and strive to build an "Atmanirbhar Bharat", he added.

KNOW CHARANJIT SINGH CHANNI



MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH

BRUSH WITH CONTROVERSY

2017 Few days after he was inducted into the State Cabinet, Channi, on the advice of an astrologer to have east facing entry to his house for political gains, illegally constructed a road from a park outside his official residence in Sector 2, Chandigarh. Within hours, the road was razed by the Chandigarh Administration

2017 In October 2017, Channi, who took an entrance test to pursue PhD on the Indian National Congress, failed to clear it. Later, Panjab University authorities allegedly relaxed norms and slashed passing marks for SC/ST students, just to accommodate the Minister

2018 In another case, he was accused of sending lewd messages to a female IAS officer under the #MeToo movement. The complaint was never filed, and the Chief Minister claimed that the issue was amicably resolved. The case resurfaced three years with the Punjab

Women's Commission sending a notice to the State Government, asking for a response to this allegation

2018 Caught on camera flipping a coin to decide between two candidates for the post of lecturer. The incident brought much embarrassment to the Congress Government when the video clip went viral on social media. Channi, Technical Education Minister, argued that his intention was only to make a choice in a "transparent" manner

2018 AAP had accused Channi of alleged involvement in illegal sand mining through his nephew. Channi had categorically denied the allegations

2018 As the Technical Education Minister, Channi remained at loggerheads with officials working with him and he was accused of recommending transfer of one of the IAS officers whom he didn't like

pled with a combination of Sikh and a Dalit leader, that worked in his favour for his elevation to the top job.

A law graduate and also an MBA, Channi is currently holding the charge of Technical Education and Industrial Training, Tourism and Cultural Affairs departments.

In nothing short of a real life story of a rise from rags to riches, Channi rose up to become the Chief Minister of

the border-state after starting as a grassroots-level leader.

He won the local bodies polls on a Congress ticket from Kharar in the early 2000s. Being a Municipal Councilor for three terms and then becoming the president of Kharar Municipal Council for two terms, Channi was elected to the Punjab Vidhan Sabha for the first time in 2007 but as an independent.

He rebelled after the

Congress denied him the party ticket in 2007, and contested the polls against the party nominee, and won as an independent. He then became an associate member of the Shiromani Akali Dal in the Assembly, which was in power at that time.

In 2010, Channi returned to the Congress with Capt Amarinder's help. In 2012 and then again in 2017, Channi was elected MLA from Chakaur

immediately taken to Roshra sub-divisional hospital. Her condition is said to be serious and she is unable to give a statement.

"As soon as the victim narrated the incident, we constituted a team to raid the accused persons' houses. Some of the accused are identified now. We have detained four persons and the case has been transferred to the women police station," Vibhutipur SHO Rajiv Lal Pandit said.

Rosera SDPO S. Akhtar said: "The victim has not given a statement yet. We have detained 4 persons in this connection. Appropriate action will be taken once the victim recovers from her current position and identifies the accused."



made the video clip of the gang rape and circulated on social media platforms.

When the accused left the victim early on Sunday, the two

minors reached the Vibhutipur police station and narrated their ordeal.

The gang rape victim was profusely bleeding and was

Sahib. He was the Leader of the Opposition in the Punjab Vidhan Sabha from 2015 to 2016, after the Dalit factor worked in his favour and he was elected the Congress Legislative Party leader, replacing Sunil Jakhar. He was appointed a Minister in Capt Amarinder Singh's Cabinet on March 16, 2017.

Channi completed his law graduation while being a member of the legislative assembly. He has also vociferously lent

voice to the Dalits' cause while being in opposition and also in power.

Despite being a member of the Cabinet, Channi has often criticised the style of functioning of the government on various issues.

He has been an open critic of the government on the issues concerning the Dalits and has accused the government of neglecting the community in the government appointments.

Landslides in 20 spots affect traffic movement on key Arunachal road

Itanaga: Two days of heavy monsoon rain led to massive landslides at more than 20 locations along the vital Balipara-Charduar-Tawang (BCT) Road in western Arunachal Pradesh, severely affecting movement of vehicular traffic, a Border Roads Organisation (BRO) official said on Sunday.

No casualty was

reported due to the landslides which occurred in West Kameng district following heavy rain on Friday and Saturday.

A vast stretch of the road between Sessa and Nechipur areas was damaged by the landslide, due to which a large number of commuters were stranded on both ends, the BRO official said. **PTI**



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बैंक ऑफ बड़ौदा
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E-AUCTION NOTICE

Zonal Stressed Asset Recovery Branch, Prayagraj
19-A, Dwarka Bhawan, 1st Floor, Tagore Town, Prayagraj-211002

NOTICE FOR SALE OF MOVABLE & IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES
"APPENDIX- IV-A [See proviso to Rule 6 (2) & 8 (6)]
E- Auction sale notice for sale of movable & immovable assets under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso of rule 6(2), 8(6) & 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the borrower(s) and guarantor(s) that the below described movable & immovable properties mortgaged/charged to the secured creditor, the Symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Bank of Baroda secured creditor, will be sold on **"As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is"** basis for recovery of below mentioned account/s The details of Borrower/s/ Guarantor/s/Secured Assets/s/Dues/Reserve Price/E-auction date & Time, EMD and Bid Increase Amount are mentioned below.
Date & Time of Auction: 22.10.2021, 02:00 PM to 6:00 PM
Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) shall be paid online through i.e. NEFT/Transfer (After generation of Challan from (https://www.mstcecommerce.com) in bidders Global EMD Wallet. Global Wallet must contain sufficient fund equivalent to EMD amount before the scheduled auction date

S1. No.	Name & Address of the Borrowers /Guarantors	Description of Property	Property Inspection date & Time	Reserve Price /EMD/ Bid Increase Amount
1.	Borrowers- M/s Sushma Agency through its Partner- Smt Sushma Gupta and Mrs Soni Gupta Regd Office At: 2/4/2C, Phaphamau by Pass, Allahabad -211013 Godown Address: A R M Rice Mill, Gram Bhagautipur urf Khatunaha, Block Holagarh, Opp RBS cold Storage, Tehsil Soraoon, Distt: Allahabad-212502 Branch Office: Shop No G 3, Prabhu Bramha Apartment, Nelco Society Trimurti Nagar, Nagpur 440022. Partners- 1. Smt Sushma Gupta W/o Pawan Kumar Gupta Regd Office At: 2/4/2C, Phaphamau by Pass, Allahabad-211013 2. Smt Soni Gupta W/o Gopesh Kumar Gupta Regd Office At: 2/4/2C, Phaphamau by Pass, Allahabad-211013 Guarantors 1. Smt Sushma Gupta W/o Pawan Kumar Gupta Regd Office At: 2/4/2C, Phaphamau by Pass, Allahabad-211013 2. Smt Soni Gupta W/o Gopesh Kumar Gupta Regd Office At: 2/4/2C, Phaphamau by Pass, Allahabad-211013 3. Mr. Mahendra Kesarwani S/o Shri Badri Prasad Kesharwani R/O 14, Purani Gali, Phaphamau , Allahabad-211013 4. Mr. Gopesh Gupta S/o Pawan Gupta R/O 534, Chak Raghunath Naini, Allahabad-211008 5. Mr. Pawan Kumar Gupta S/o Late Sunder Lal Gupta R/o 534 A, Chak Raghunath Naini, Allahabad-211008	1. All the Part and parcel of land situated on Arazi No 329/1, village Khusrwah , PH Katira 46, Tehsil jalsingh Nagar, Distt Shahdol, Madhya Pradesh admeasuring area 2.023 Hec. Bounded by as under- North- Land of Gopika South- Land of Malhesh Pratap Singh East- Road West- Land of Ramdhani Kol and Gopika	From 20.09.2021 to 21.10.2021 from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM.	<div>₹ 2,64,56,000/- (RP)</div> <div>₹ 26,45,600/- (E.M.D.)</div> <div>₹ 1,00,000/- (Bid Increase Amount)</div>
Amount of Debts- ₹ 8,20,96,233.66 + interest and other charges w.e.f. 01.10.2019 less amount deposited after the date 01.10.2019 if any,				
Status of Possession - Symbolic/Physical				
Note: Notice for sub statutory 30 days sale notice under Rule 6 (2) & 8 (6) of the SARFAESI act. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Bank of Baroda secured website i.e., www.bankofbaroda.in/e-auction.htm & https://ibapi.in . Also, prospective bidders may contact the authorized officer on Mobile No. 9554951670, 7984127855.				
Date : 18.09.2021 Place: Prayagraj			Authorized Officer, Bank of Baroda	

Minor gang-raped in Bihar's Samastipur, 4 held

IAN S ■ PATNA

A minor girl in Bihar's Samastipur district was abducted and gang-raped by around half a dozen people, who also filmed the crime and shared it on social media, police said on Sunday.

The class 10 victim was returning with her friend on a bicycle from a bank in Rosera town on Saturday evening when they were intercepted by 6 to 7 goons near Singhia Ghat, and taken to an isolated spot on knife point.

The goons tied her friend, a minor boy, to a tree before raping her one by one.

The victims were abducted around 6 p.m. and brutalised till 3 a.m. on Sunday morning. The accused also

India becoming destination for healthy food items

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India is becoming the destination country for healthy food items like millets and the Government is promoting bio-fortified varieties to address malnutrition. Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Sunday made this point as he participated in the G-20 agriculture meeting virtually.

Tomar said the United Nations (UN) has accepted India's proposal and declared 2023 as the International Year of Millets and urged the G-20 nations to support the celebration of the millet year to promote nutrition and sustainable agriculture.

The G20 Agriculture Ministers' Meeting is one of the Ministerial meetings organised as part of the G20 Leaders Summit 2021 to be hosted by Italy in October. "The Government of India has emphasised on re-introducing traditional food items including millet, other nutritious cereals, fruits and vegetables, fish, dairy and organic products in the diet of the people. Their production has been phenomenal in India in recent years and India is becoming a destination coun-



try for healthy food items," an official statement quoted Tomar having said in his virtual address.

Tomar said biofortified-varieties, which are the source of staple diet rich in micro-nutrients, are being promoted to remove malnutrition. About 17 such varieties of different crops have been developed and released for cultivation.

The Government has also taken steps to increase the optimal use of water resources, create infrastructure for irrigation, conserve soil fertility with balanced use of fertilizers, and provide connectivity from farms to markets, he added.

The minister was addressing a session on "Working

together to achieve the Zero Hunger goal: successful projects implemented by the Ministries of Agriculture". Stating that Indian agriculture has achieved great success after the country's independence, Tomar said, "The Indian agriculture sector remained unaffected even during the COVID pandemic.

Highlighting measures taken towards sustainable agriculture, the minister said the 'Per Drop-More Crop' scheme for irrigation and 'Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana' for organic farming is being successfully implemented. Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana is being implemented to provide insurance cover for the

Govt promoting biofortified varieties to address malnutrition

farmers.

To address the malnutrition problem, India is running the world's largest food-based safety net programme, which includes the Public Distribution System and the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, he added.

The government is also providing an annual income support of Rs 6,000 under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana. So far, Rs 1.58 lakh crore has been deposited in the bank accounts of more than 11.37 crore farmers under this scheme. Further, Tomar assured that India will share best practices and build capacities of other developing countries.

BJP questions choice of Channi as Punjab CM

Recalls 'MeToo' charges against him

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Sunday lost no time to fish in the troubled 'Congress waters' in the border State of Punjab and sought to gleefully muddy it further by questioning the credentials of the party's new pick as State Chief Minister, Charanjit Channi, who, it said, was facing a "MeToo case" and the trustworthiness of an "anti-national" State Congress president Navjot Singh Sidhu.

BJP's IT cell head Amit Malviya came on Twitter and sought to report an alleged past case of misappropriate behaviour of the new Punjab CM against a lady IAS officer.

"Congress's CM pick Charanjit Channi faces action in a 3-year-old #MeToo case. He had allegedly sent an inappropriate text to a woman IAS officer in 2018. It was covered up but the case resurfaced when Punjab Women's Commission sent notice. Well done, Rahul", Malviya tweeted.

He also picked up th Sidhu issue on his Twitter account saying, "Punjab, a border state, which sees regular infiltration, smuggling of illegal arms and narcotics from Pakistan, can't be trust with Navjot Singh Sidhu, who has ties with Pak PM and Army Chief, says Capt



Punjab CM-designate Charanjit Singh Channi along with Navjot Singh Sidhu and other Congress leaders outside the Governor's residence in Chandigarh on Sunday.

Amarinder Singh, an Army veteran. But then why are the Gandhis pushing Sidhu?"

Earlier, senior BJP leader Prakash Javadekar also the Congress top leaders Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi to explain their stand on former Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh calling Congress State President Navjot Singh Sidhu an "anti-national".

Addressing a press conference here, Javadekar questioned the Congress on the party's "silence" over "very serious allegations" against Sidhu made by Amarinder Singh.

"Captain Amarinder Singh has levelled very serious allegations against Navjot Singh Sidhu. He has called him anti-national. Navjot Singh Sidhu had visited Pakistan and greet-

ed (Pakistan Army Chief) Bajwa after Pakistan had attacked us. The country knew this, but yesterday Amarinder Singh Sidhu has highlighted this," said

"Our (BJP) question to Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, and Priyanka Gandhi is why are they silent? This is a huge allegation. This is why we demand Congress should speak out and clear their stand."

"Will Congress take stock of these allegations and initiate an inquiry on Navjot Singh Sidhu," he asked.

After resigning from the post of the Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh said he would oppose Sidhu if nominated as Punjab CM and described him as irresponsible and dangerous.

"I will never allow that

man to come. He is an anti-national element. I will not allow him. He is too mixed up with Pakistan," Captain Amarinder Singh said.

The former CM pointed out Sidhu's speech at Kartarpur where he praised Pakistan Prime minister Imran Khan as well as his controversial hug to Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff, Qamar Javed Bajwa. Sidhu had then defended his actions

The former CM has said he would decide his future course of action in consultations with his supporters. Amarinder dismissed speculations of him cosying-up to the BJP saying his earlier meetings with Prime Minister Modi and Union Minister Amit Shah were linked to the important issues including those pertaining to the internal security.

Ration card-related assistance now available at common services centres

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution has tied up with common services centres' (CSCs) e-Governance Services India Ltd, a special purpose vehicle under the Ministry of Electronics & IT, to streamline ration deliveries and strengthen public distribution system (PDS) in semi-urban and rural areas across the country, according to a statement by CSC.

In other words, services related to ration cards, such as applying for a new card, updating details and seeding with Aadhaar, will now be available at over 3.7 lakh common services centres (CSC) across the country. The move is expected to benefit 23.64 crore ration card holders across the country.

According to officials, a memorandum of understanding has been signed between the food & public distribution department and CSC, to enable ration card services through 3.7 lakh CSCs across the country. The partnership is expected to benefit over 23.64 crore ration card holders across the country who can now visit their nearest CSC and update their card details, do Aadhaar seeding, get a duplicate print of their card, check the status of avail-



ability of ration and register their grievance, it said.

Apart from the existing ration card holders, citizens who want to apply for a new ration card can also now visit their nearest CSC to put in the request application.

CSC e-Governance Services India Managing Director Dinesh Tyagi said, "Following our partnership with the department of food and public distribution, our village-level entrepreneurs (VLEs) who run CSCs will be able to reach out to those without

ration cards and help them get access to the public distribution system and various government schemes for free ration."

Moreover, the online services of CSC will also be made available at fair price shops that include PM welfare schemes, G2C services, education and skilling courses, financial services, health care and utility bill payments services. For this, CSC will undertake training and capacity building of fair price shop dealers on providing these services, Tyagi added.

India logs 30,773 new Covid cases, 309 fatalities



PTI ■ JAIPUR

India has reported 30,773 new Covid-19 cases, 13.7 per cent lower than Saturday and 309 deaths in a span of 24 hours, the Union Health Ministry said on Sunday. The current recovery rate is 97.68 per cent, it added.

With a decline of 8,481 active cases, the country's active case load stands at 3,32,158, the ministry data showed. Active cases currently account for 0.99 per cent of the total cases in India.

The death toll has further climbed to 4,448,38 with 309 daily fatalities, while active caseload declines to 3.32 lakh

Meanwhile, 38,945 more people were discharged in the last 24 hours, taking the total

recoveries in the country to 32,671,167.

Also, 15,59,895 tests were conducted on Saturday, taking the total cumulative tests conducted so far to 55,23,40,168 the government said. The daily positivity rate has been recorded at 1.97 per cent. It has been less than 3 per cent for the last 20 days, according to the ministry data.

The weekly positivity rate has been recorded at 2.04 per cent. It has been below 3 per cent for the last 86 days, the ministry said.

A total of 80,33,75,147 vaccine doses have been administered so far, said the Union health ministry in an official statement released on Saturday. It further stated that out of these 80 crore, the last 10 crore Covid-19 vaccine doses were

administered in just 11 days.

More than 77.25 lakh (77,25,076) vaccine doses were administered till 7 pm on Saturday. From these, 40,87,704 were inoculated as first dose and 36,37,372 were administered as second dose to eligible beneficiaries.

India's Covid-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7 last year, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5 and 50 lakh on September 16. It went past 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11, crossed 80 lakh on October 29, 90 lakh on November 20 and surpassed the one-crore mark on December 19 last year.

India recorded two crore cases on May 4 and three crore cases on June 23.

Rajasthan CM's OSD resigns after tweet sparks row

PTI ■ JAIPUR

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot's OSD Lokesh Sharma submitted his resignation on Saturday night, hours after he posted a tweet which was seen as an indirect criticism of the Congress over the change of leadership in Punjab.

The tweet appeared to refer to a strong person being made helpless and a mediocre person being elevated.

The officer on special duty to the Rajasthan Chief Minister submitted his resignation on Saturday night, seeking an apology for his tweet.

Sharma has been associated with Gehlot for over a decade now and he has been looking after his social media. He was made the OSD after Gehlot came to power in December 2018.

"Majboot ko majboor, mamuli ko magroor kiya jaye... baad hi khet ko khaay, uss fasal ko kaun bachaye!" Sharma had tweeted after Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh resigned on Saturday.

In the resignation letter, the OSD said he has been active on Twitter since 2010 and has not tweeted beyond party lines.



Sharma said he never posted any political tweet after being given the responsibility of OSD by Gehlot.

However, he sought an apology if his tweet hurt the party high command and the state government in any way.

The Delhi police had registered a case against Sharma in March on Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat's complaint.

During the political crisis in Rajasthan due to rebellion by deputy chief minister Sachin Pilot and 18 other MLAs last year, purported audio clips of conversations between Shekhawat, BJP leader Sanjay Jain and Congress MLAs Bhanwarlal and Vishvendra Singh were leaked. They were allegedly discussing a plan to topple the Congress government in the state.

It was alleged that Sharma had circulated the audio clips, a charge denied by him.

Deferments by courts causing unnecessary burden on us: SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has observed deferments by courts cause unnecessary burden on it as it granted interim protection from arrest to a man whose anticipatory bail application is pending before the Allahabad High Court for the past seven months.

A Bench of justices S K Kaul and M M Sundresh granted the relief while noting that the Allahabad high court has not taken any view on the anticipatory bail application pending before it.

"We do believe that such deferments are only causing unnecessary burden on this Court rather than being dealt with at the appropriate level."

"The petitioner was never arrested during the investigation, however, he joined and cooperated with the investigation. In such a scenario, on the charge-sheet being filed, there is no need to arrest the petitioner and produce him before the Court in view of the legal position now enunciated by us," the bench said.

The top court made the observation while hearing a plea by an accused seeking anticipatory bail in a criminal

case. In pursuance to cognisance taken by the Special CBI Court Ghaziabad against the petitioner, a summons was issued against him.

On receiving the summons, the petitioner applied for anticipatory bail on January 16, 2021 which was declined on January 28.

The petitioner then filed an application for anticipatory bail before the High Court on February 3, 2021.

The top court noted that the order-sheet shows that various proceedings have been held before the High Court, counter filed by the CBI, yet no view has been taken by the Court on the anticipatory bail application necessitating the petitioner to approach the highest court.

"We, thus, grant interim protection to the petitioner against arrest till the next date of hearing before the Trial Court and stay the operation of the Order dated August 3, 2021 directing process under Section 82 (Proclamation for person absconding) of the CrPC on the petitioner appearing before the Trial Court he will be dealt with in accordance with law," the bench said.

Govt yet to take call on 68 names sent by SC collegium for appointment as HC judges

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government is yet to take a call on the recommendations made by the Supreme Court collegium on appointing a total of 68 judicial officers and advocates as judges of various High Courts, sources aware of the procedure for appointment to the higher judiciary have said.

Between August 8 and September 1 this year, the apex court collegium had processed over 100 names recommended by various high courts and had finally sent 68 names to the government for appointment as judges to 12 High Courts.

The Government is yet to take a call on the names recommended by the SC collegium headed by Chief Justice of India N V Ramana, the sources said.

Out of the 68 names, two from Karnataka and one from Jammu and Kashmir have been sent for a third time, while 10 others have been recommended for a second time. The rest are fresh recommendations.

Prior to these recommendations, in a historic decision on August 17, the SC collegium had sent nine names, including three women, for elevation as judges of the Supreme Court.

The names were cleared



with significant pace by the government leading to their swearing-in as apex court judges on August 31.

On Friday, the Supreme Court collegium is learnt to have recommended eight names of judges, including acting chief justice of Calcutta High Court Justice Rajesh Bindal, for their elevation as chief justices of different high courts.

Besides, the marathon col-

legium meetings on Thursday and Friday have led to recommendations of transfer of five high court chief justices, including Tripura High Court Chief Justice Akil Kureshi, and 28 other high courts judges.

The combined sanctioned strength of the 25 high courts of the country is 1,098 judges. As of September 1, there were 465 vacancies, according to data put in the public domain by the Law Ministry.

Govt to launch telemedicine project at AIIMS, Raipur



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With Covid-19 pandemic accelerating the adoption of digital health technologies, the Government will on Monday launch a telemedicine project at AIIMS, Raipur in Chhattisgarh to ensure safe access and deliver specialized medical services right at the doorsteps of the members of the fisheries cooperatives in the State.

Union Minister for Fisheries, Parshottam Rupala, will inaugurate the telemedicine facilities to be implemented under the central sector flagship program Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) through the National Cooperatives Development Corporation (NCDC), for members of the

fisheries cooperatives in the Northern State.

Proposed as a startup activity by AIIMS, Raipur for next three years, the project which is a joint effort of the Centre, the State, NCDC and AIIMS Raipur, is being launched in a pilot mode from five centres - PHC Patan (Durg district), PHC Saja (Bemetara), PHC Ratanpur (Bilaspur), PHC Dhantari (Chamtari) and AIIMS Raipur (Raipur). Later, it will cover more districts.

NCDC MD Sundeeep Nayak said that in the pandemic, it's a difficult time for the people particularly poor who are not able to access healthcare. However, "the use of telemedicine has emerged as a critical tool to improve the provision of health services.

With the launch of the facilities, the Government aims to bridge health disparities among fishermen and fisherwomen communities associated with their respective cooperatives in the State," he said.

The decision to launch the telemedicine facility was taken after it was found that many members from the cooperatives were shying away from availing medical services either because of living in far off areas, poverty or due to Covid fears.

Dr Nitin Nagarkar said that AIIMS, Raipur had already been conducting teleconsultation services for the benefit of the public, mainly residing in the tribal regions of the State. This activity was also further enhanced during this ongoing Covid pandemic.

‘BJP will cross 350 seats in UP polls’

Yogi says UP has seen complete transformation under BJP rule

Lucknow: Asserting that Uttar Pradesh has undergone a complete transformation under his Government, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said on Sunday that there have been no riots since 2017, strict action has been taken against the mafia and the State is in the frontline of implementing welfare schemes, ensuring the ease of doing business and fighting the Covid-19 pandemic.

Making public his Government's report card months before facing the assembly polls, the chief minister also hit out at the opposition, saying they were busy building their houses when they were in power, indulged in corruption and nepotism, caused suffering to the sugarcane farmers and used to see centres of faith like Ayodhya from a communal point of view.

"In the 2022 Assembly elections, BJP will cross 350 seats (out of 403 seats), and



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath releases a book on completing 4.5 years of his Government at Lok Bhawan in Lucknow on Sunday

PTI

there should be no doubt on this," the chief minister said at a press conference and stressed that his Government has fulfilled every promise mentioned in the Lok Kalyan Sankalp Patra in 2017.

"The Opposition should read it. Had the opposition attended our training camps, they would have learnt some-

thing, and would have got wisdom," he remarked.

Uttar Pradesh is now number one in implementing 44 central schemes be it the PM Awas Yojna or construction of toilets in the households and its image is no longer liked with riots and lawlessness due to effective and transparent governance,

Adityanath said.

"Unlike them (previous governments), we did not make luxurious houses for ourselves. Our government focused on building houses for the poor," he said, taking a veiled dig at his predecessor Akhilesh Yadav.

"Government bungalows were demolished, and there was a competition to build houses for themselves as well as huge 'havelis' (mansions). But the four-and-half years were dedicated to good governance. And we did not build houses for ourselves, but for 42 lakh poor people of the state," he said. He said criminals were firmly dealt with irrespective of their caste, religion and social status to provide a safe and secure environment in the state.

"UP remained free from any riots during four-and-half years unlike in the past when there used to be communal clashes every 3-4 days," the Chief Minister said. **PTI**

1.20 L deaths due to negligence in road mishaps in 2020: NCRB

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India recorded 1.20 lakh cases of "deaths due to negligence relating to road accidents" in 2020 -- 328 people losing their lives every day on an average -- despite Covid-19 lockdowns, according to Government data.

As many as 3.92 lakh lives have been lost in three years in deaths due to negligence related to road accidents, the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) revealed in its annual 'Crime India' report for 2020.

While 1.20 lakh such deaths were recorded in 2020, the figures stood at 1.36 lakh in 2019 and 1.35 lakh in 2018, the data showed.

The country also logged 1.35 lakh cases of "hit and run" since 2018, the report of the NCRB, which functions under the Union Home Ministry, showed.

In 2020 alone, there were 41,196 cases of "hit and run"

while there were 47,504 such cases in 2019 and 47,028 in 2018, the report showed.

On an average, there were 112 cases of "hit and run" reported across the country every day in the past year, according to the data.

The cases of causing "hurt" by rash or negligent driving on public way stood at 1.30 lakh in 2020, 1.60 lakh in 2019 and 1.66 lakh in 2018, while the cases of "grievous hurt" stood at 85,920, 1.12 lakh and 1.08 lakh, respectively, the data showed.

Meanwhile, 52 cases of deaths due to negligence relating to rail accidents were recorded across the country in 2020, from 55 in 2019 and 35 in 2018, the report showed.

During 2020, India also logged 133 cases of "deaths due to medical negligence", up from 201 in 2019 and 218 in 2018, the NCRB data showed.

There were 51 cases of "deaths due to negligence of

civic bodies" in 2020 while there were 147 cases in 2019 and 40 in 2018, according to the report.

Another 6,367 cases of "deaths due to other negligence" were reported across the country in 2020, up from 7,912 in 2019 and 8,687 in 2018, it showed.

The NCRB stated in the report that the country remained under complete lockdown from March 25, 2020 till May 31, 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic during which the movement in public space was "very limited".

"The cases registered under crimes against women, children and senior citizens, theft, burglary, robbery and dacoity have therefore declined, whereas Covid-related enforcement has resulted in increase of cases registered under 'disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant' (Section 188 IPC), under 'Other IPC Crimes' and under 'Other State Local Acts'," it noted.

Security forces to use pump action guns to kill low-flying drones

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Security forces that guard vital installations, airports and even their own camps have been directed to use rubber bullets bearing pump action guns to neutralise low-flying drones till an appropriate technology is found to thwart such aerial attacks, official sources said.

Also, forces like the Border Security Force (BSF) have recently installed an improvised iron pole mounted light machine gun (LMG) observation post at some of its border deployments against Pakistan to take a 360 degrees aim and shoot down drones or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) flying at a high altitude, they said.

A latest blueprint prepared by central security agencies to counter the emerging drone threat has been reviewed by PTI and it directs security forces to use PAGs (pump action guns) that are already available in their armoury for "neutralising any

low-flying UAV".

Following the directive, the central forces deployed for internal security have begun allocating PAGs to their units vulnerable to drone threats, including those deployed for anti-Naxal operations.

"Till a complete technology solution is found for effectively checking and neutralising a drone attack, the security forces have been asked to use what is available with them, like the PAGs.

Those who do not have adequate numbers of these non-lethal weapons have been asked to procure them," a senior Union home ministry officer said.

He said the security units deployed for counter-terrorist duties in Kashmir and those guarding airport boundaries have also been asked to provide these arms to their sentries deployed for observation and protection of the campus.

Mamata a national leader, to lead Opp in its fight against BJP, says Supriyo

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Clearing linking his displeasure at being dropped from the Union Ministry and his joining the Trinamool Congress on Saturday former BJP leader and Union Minister Babul Supriyo on Sunday said that he was not used to sit in the reserved benches and had always preferred playing in the playing eleven which explained his joining the Bengal ruling outfit.

"I have been an ardent supporter of Mohun Bagan but tomorrow if I am reduced to playing for a junior team then I will obviously have to look towards some other team ... Maybe the rival East Bengal ... this is because I have never wanted to sit in the reserve benches ... that is not my style of doing it ... I had always preferred being in the playing eleven and hence I am here," Supriyo a two-time MP from Asansol said.

Saying that Mamata Banerjee had offered her the opportunity to be a part of the playing eleven Supriyo — who earlier got "inspired" by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to join the BJP before a similar inspirational pull from the Bengal Chief Minister sucked him into the Trinamool Congress on Saturday — said, "the life had become a kind of retired hurt for me ... Mamata didi has changed it ... she has given me an opportunity..."

He said, "I was talking to Derek ... I had a long discussion with Abhishek ... I felt a lot of love and support for a party with which I have had an

association. I have responded to a huge opportunity. I am grateful to Mamata ji for she thought about me. I am thankful she felt I was leaving some unfinished work in politics"

On Banejee's ability to lead the nation Supriyo said a national leader as she had transformed into Mamata Banerjee was destined to lead the opposition forces in its fight against the BJP. "Surely she is a national leader now and she is definitely ahead in the leadership race as she has proved her mettle ... her credibility has gone up ... and I think she is India's hope in 2024."

Supriyo was likely to go to Delhi to tender his resignation to Speaker Om Birla. "I am likely to go to Delhi on Wednesday ... there if the honourable Speaker gives me time then I will tender my resignation to him"

On BJP leader Suwendu Adhikari's claim that as "Babul Supriyo is not a mass leader ... his leaving the party will not affect its fortunes," the singer-turned-politician said "if that was it ... if I have no mass base then why I was used for maximum number of campaigns by the BJP ... In fact I broke the record of Shehnaawaz Hussein in that respect"

On campaigning for Mamata Banerjee against BJP candidate Priyanka Tibrewal he said "I think Mamata didi will not put me in an embarrassing situation as Priyanka has been like my sister and she had handled all my cases in the High Court ... I know her family very well."

‘Instal statue of Ezhuthachan, father of modern Malayalam, in his native village’

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

An on-line conclave on Sunday attended by nearly 200 literary and cultural icons drawn out from all over the country passed a unanimous resolution asking the Government of Kerala to install a larger-than-life size statue of Thunchath Ramanujan Ezhuthachan, the Father of Modern Malayalam, in his native village of Thunchath in Malappuram district.

Thunchath Ezhuthachan, believed to have lived during the 16th century was the spiritual scholar who gave Malayalam language its current form. Till his entry into the literary landscape of Kerala, Malayalam was more of a mixture of Sanskrit and Tamil and was known as Mani Pravalam.

Ezhuthachan not only perfected the Malayalam language to its present position but also translated some of the all-time epics like Adhyatma Ramayana into Malayalam. Hindus in Kerala observe the month of Karkkadaka (Shravan) as Ramayana month with the entire households reverberating with the lyrics from the Indian epic.

Political parties controlling the local

self-bodies in Malappuram cited religious sentiments and dismissed the pleas seeking permission to set up the statue. Prof P G Haridas, the newly elected president of Tapasya, the State's oldest socio-cultural movement, said that the resolution demanding the setting up of Thunchath Ezhuthachan's statue was sent to Kerala Government for necessary action. "It is injustice of the highest order to deny the Father of Malayalam language his due recognition. Political leaders belonging to various parties have their giant statues installed in all districts. Isn't the scholar who moulded Malayalam language is worthy of having his statue in his birthplace?" asked Prof Haridas.

Religious zealots in Kerala's northern districts have declared their opposition to instal statutes because they term it as idolatry. "The demand for installing Thunchath Acharya's statue is not going to be forgotten with the submission of this memorandum. The month of July saw a group of religious workers staging demonstrations all over Malappuram district demanding the carving out of a separate district as part of their long term agenda.

BSY cautions party workers against taking Opposition lightly

Davangere (K'taka): Former Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa on Sunday cautioned his party colleagues against taking the Opposition lightly in the upcoming elections.

"I have a suggestion to all of you. None of you should take the opposition lightly. They have their own calculation and strengths," Yediyurappa said at the BJP Core Committee meeting here.The Lingayat strongman claimed that a few Congress leaders are in touch with some BJP leaders.

"You need to tread with confidence without giving chance to such incidents (defection). We have to make a sincere effort for the BJP to come back to power with 140 seats in the next Assembly elections," Yediyurappa, who stepped down as the Chief Minister on July 26, said here.He said the party can be strengthened by inducting into the BJP leaders from SC/ST and OBC communities.

Further, he asked to include a team of 20 to 25 women and the BJP youth wing leaders at the booth level organisation.

Yediyurappa also appealed to the party functionaries to make the welfare programmes of the Centre and the State Government reach every household.He also told the gathering that he would take up a state-wide tour shortly to strengthen the party base.

Yediyurappa reminded the core committee members that the BJP has to win both Hanagal and Sindagi assembly bypolls because its failure will send the wrong signals.No one here should assume that Hanagal and Sindagi are easy turfs," Yediyurappa said. Speaking about the demolition of temple in Nanjangud in Mysuru recently, which drew widespread criticism, Yediyurappa said a decision has been taken not to allow destruction of any temples anywhere. **PTI**

Centre seeks report from AP on ₹960 cr loans from foreign agencies

Amaravati: The Centre has sought a report from the Andhra Pradesh Government on ₹960 crore received as loans from foreign agencies for various Externally- Aided Projects (EAPs) remaining unutilised.

The departments that are supposed to get these funds for executing the projects have drawn a blank, while payments running into hundreds of crores of Rupees are yet to be made to contractors on works done so far.

The EAPs now remain derailed because the state is unable to draw further loan amounts from the external agencies due to poor progress of the works and non-clearance of payment (dues).

The Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) under the Union Finance Ministry has taken a strong view and written a letter last week seekingan explanation from the state Finance Department on the issue.

"The overall position of utilisation of advances extended by various authorities is not so encouraging as a very heavy amount of advance is lying in the accounts of Government of Andhra Pradesh.

As on September 7, the amount released as advance is USD 124.65 million, roughly equivalent to ₹ 960 crore," the DEA pointed out in its letter to the Principal Finance Secretary.

The DEA also noted that utilisation of the loan amount "is not so high", which indicated a "situation wherein the interest cost is increasing but the project execution is at a slow pace".

Also, officials of the DEA personally called up top officials of different state departments and "gave us an earful" over the sorry state of affairs, a senior bureaucrat said.

"We are being bombarded with queries on the status of works and utilisation of funds (advanced by foreign agen-

cies), but our report card is filled with only blanks. They gave us money but we can't tell them we actually don't have it," the bureaucrat observed.

On the one hand, the state government has been scampering for loans but, on the other, the loans secured were obviously not being spent for the intended purpose, he told PTI.

Efforts to contact the Principal Finance Secretary for clarification on the subject did not bear fruit. There are 14 EAPs in execution in AP now, with loans from foreign lenders like World Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, International Fund for Agriculture Development, Asian Development Bank, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Japan International Cooperation Agency, New Development Bank and KfW of Germany. **PTI**

Indian industry to produce 2 more entire rockets: DoS

Bengaluru: The Department of Space (DoS) plans to realise entirely-built rockets — GSLV-Mk III and SSLV— from Indian industry partners, in addition to PSLV, according to a top official of its commercial arm NSIL.

NSIL (NewSpace India Limited) has received three bids -- HAL-L&T, BEL-Adani-BEML, and BHEL, in response to the request for proposal (RFP) floated by it for end-to-end production of PSLV (Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle).

"We are now going through the techno-commercial evaluation (in respect of the three bids)", NSIL Chairman and Managing Director, Radhakrishnan D, told PTI here. He said the process will be completed within the next two months with one of the

bidders bagging the contract. The selected bidder will be responsible for realisation of five numbers of PSLV. Immediately after selection of the bidder to produce the entire

PSLV, NSIL will release Expression of Interest (EOI) for end-to-end production of another operational rocket -- GSLV-Mk

III (Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle)-- in a similar fashion, Radhakrishnan said.

"I am targeting before the end of this year (to release EOI for GSLV-Mk III)", he said.

NSIL also has plans to realise SSLV (Small Satellite Launch Vehicle), being developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) with the first development flight expected by this year-end, through Indian industry part-

ners. "We are waiting for the first mission (of SSLV) to happen successfully", Radhakrishnan said. "This (SSLV) will be an ideal candidate for industry production".

SSLV is a three-stage all solid vehicle and has a capability to launch up to 500 kg satellite mass into 500 km low earth orbit (LEO) and 300 kg to Sun Synchronous Orbit (SSO).

The new generation compact rocket has been designed to meet "launch on demand" requirements in a cost-effective manner for small satellites in a dedicated and rideshare mode, according to officials of Bengaluru-headquartered ISRO.

Industrialisation of space activities is gaining momentum in India.

About 40 space startups and industries are in consultation with ISRO for support related to various domains of space activity such as development of satellites, launch vehicles, develop applications and provide space-based services.

India's Foreign Direct Investment policy in the space sector is also getting revised which, the ISRO Chairman and DoS Secretary K Sivan believe, will open up huge avenues for foreign companies to invest in the country.

Earlier this month, the DoS entered into a Framework MoU with two spacetech startups -- Skyroot Aerospace and Agnikul Cosmos -- for access to ISRO facilities and expertise towards the development and testing of subsystems/systems of space launch vehicles. **PTI**



Immersion of an idol of Lord Ganesha on the last day of the Ganesh Chaturthi festival, in Mumbai on Sunday

PTI

UP now allows 100 people gathering in non-containment zones

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh Government has relaxed the COVID-19 lockdown norms from Sunday by allowing a maximum of 100 people to gather at a place outside COVID-19 containment zones.

In a letter addressed to police and administration officials in the state, Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Awanish Awasthi said, "In closed and at open places, a maximum of 100 persons have been allowed to gather at a place, while following COVID-19 protocol. Earlier, as per June 19 government order, a maximum of 50 persons were allowed to gather at open and closed places."

A distance of two yards will have to be maintained in seating arrangement for guests.

Toilets should be adequately cleaned and sanitised, the statement said.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Uncertainty

The Chief Ministers in several States are a harried lot, unsure of their longevity in office

Most Chief Ministers in India today are a harried lot. Captain Amarinder Singh, for instance, felt “humiliated” by the way he was told to go. He resigned as the Punjab Chief Minister but is still with the Congress. Now “they can name as CM anyone they want”, he said, betraying his hurt. He is the first Congress Chief Minister in recent years to be sacked in a machination typical of the party. It is *déjà vu* of the 1980s and 1990s when the Chief Ministers in Congress-ruled States called themselves State guests, certain that the “high command” would any day parachute their replacements. The *modus operandi* has not changed. The only difference today is that the Congress is left with very few Chief Ministers to replace. Three, to be precise. Such is the fear of the parachuting business, even the Chief Ministers with the majority of MLAs supporting them are apprehensive. The Punjab example would surely have stirred some fears in Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan. The BJP is not far behind when it comes to playing the replacement game. Vijay Rupani, Trivendra Singh Rawat, Tirath Singh Rawat and BS Yediyurappa were asked to resign in Gujarat, Uttarakhand and Karnataka. In Assam, Sarbananda Sonowal was asked to shift to Delhi, giving the job to Himanta Biswa Sarma after the Assembly elections. After Narendra Modi came to power, as many as 22 Chief Ministers were handpicked and sent to the BJP-ruled States, confirming who the Chief Ministers are beholden to.



A Chief Minister’s post, as these incumbents would have realised by now, is not dependent on their abilities to govern or garner the backing of legislators. It entirely depends on the party leadership’s primary intent of winning elections and, thereafter, tackling dissent. Many of these Chief Ministers share certain characteristics. Not all of them are leaders in their own right or have a mass base or caste-based support the party cannot ignore. Many are novices where party politics is concerned. Nearly all of them are of seasonal utility for their leadership. On the other hand, those who have these abilities make Chief Ministers of a different kind. Two kinds, actually. One, like the late YS Rajasekhara Reddy of Andhra Pradesh, the mass-based leader who was not overawed by the “high command” because he wielded the power to singlehandedly deliver the State to the Congress in two successive elections. He made a satrapy of the party in the State, took care of the party’s national coffers and brooked no interference from Delhi. The other kind is the regional satrap, who branched out from a national party only to wipe its presence from a State, introduced a brand of individualised politics and who is her/his own “high command”. These Chief Ministers, whether in Telangana, West Bengal, Odisha or Tamil Nadu, are in a position to eventually introduce the principle of heredity in their States; thus no less powerful or dynastic than their former “high commands”.

PICTALK



Devotees carry idols of Lord Ganesha to immerse them to mark Ganesh Chaturthi, in Ahmedabad

AP

Jumping ship

Babul Supriyo joining the TMC is likely to boost the party’s prospects rather than his own

It happened rather suddenly, with nobody even in the BJP’s Bengal unit and political pundits knowing about it. The BJP’s star campaigner and once Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s blue-eyed boy joined the Trinamool Congress. He joined the party in the presence of its national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee and sent shockwaves in the Bengal BJP. Though he had withdrawn from “active politics” after being removed from the Environment Ministry, no one anticipated such a move. He had hinted that he would also resign his Parliament seat. This, however, was averted after JP Nadda persuaded him to continue as the Member of Parliament from Asansol. More than anything else, it is going to cause a demoralising effect on the BJP. The TMC hardly gains anything from inducting Babul Supriyo in its ranks. Reason — Babul may have overshot his political expiry. He lost by over 50,000 votes in the recent Bengal elections when he fought on the BJP’s ticket. Nevertheless, the TMC might be thinking of sending him to the Rajya Sabha.



Arpita Ghosh, a Rajya Sabha member of the TMC, has been made to resign by the party. Babul Supriyo might be the new TMC entry into the Rajya Sabha.

After a spectacular victory in the Assembly elections, the TMC’s ambitions are soaring and it is spreading its wings to fly higher. On the one hand, it is trying to make a mark in national politics by courting various national parties and, on the other, it is making inroads into nearby States like Assam and Tripura. Babul Supriyo may not be important for the TMC in the byelections for vote-catching where Mamata Banerjee would be seeking people’s mandate but he can certainly be a trigger for others to leave their party and join the TMC. Four MLAs have already left the BJP and joined the party. It is a huge perception victory and morale booster for the TMC’s workers. It could even boost the party’s prospects in Assam and Tripura, where the TMC wants to fan out. An additional advantage is Babul’s Asansol parliamentary seat which, after his resignation, is going to fall into the lap of the Trinamool Congress. However, this ‘shifting loyalty syndrome’ does no good to the people or the cause of democracy. It shows the leaders in poor light; actually, it is tantamount to cheating and stealing people’s mandate.

Building defence of peace in mind

Several philosophical ideas have deep roots in Indian soil, and stand dynamically enriched by the great tradition of quest for knowledge

The creation of the UN on October 24, 1945, was an outcome of aspirations of anguished humanity that has suffered WWI and WWII, and gone through unprecedented sufferings, devastation and destruction. Humanity needed a healing touch and a forum for civilised discourse and, above all, articulation of creating a value-based society that would strive to give due dignity to every human being, that would emphasise the equality of all human beings irrespective of race, colour, caste, creed, affiliation, religion, or any other diversity. This could be possible only when an empathetic human community is created globally, one that acknowledges the core human values: Truth, peace, nonviolence, righteous conduct and love. The essence was well articulated in Unesco’s emblem: “Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of man that defence of peace must be constructed.” Truth, or the search for truth, is just not possible unless the other four of the five values mentioned above are also accepted and put to practice in daily life.

After over seven decades of the UN’s establishment, the mandate to achieve an attitudinal transformation amongst humanity seems to have been forgotten. It is violence, terrorism, fundamentalism, distrust and a vulgar pursuit of destructive weaponry all around. The human mind has been studied seriously by modern sciences; it has its intuitional comprehensions contained in ancient treatises. Swami Vivekananda was perfectly logical and scientifically accurate when he mentioned: “The true basis of education is the study of the human mind — infant, adolescent and adult. Any system of education founded on theories of academic perfection, which ignores the instrument of study, is more likely to hamper and impair intellectual growth than to produce a perfect and perfectly equipped mind.” Obviously, the damage has been inflicted on generations that have been educated and evaluated on much sought after academic excellence, confined to a curriculum, textbooks and examinations that expect reproduction of the answer as “given in the textbook”. The pragmatic



objectives of education were limited to rote learning and learning for examinations, and marks were the only measure of the level of the learner’s excellence. It has to be replaced by conceptual understanding and critical thinking in a learning environment characterised by nourishing of inherent curiosity and creativity.

The National Education Policy (NEP-2020) in the third decade of the 21st century derives its sustenance from the philosophical ideas that have deep roots in India, and stand dynamically enriched by the great tradition of knowledge quest that evolved in the Gurukul system and led to the creation of institutions like Taxila, Vikramshila and Nalanda. These could set the highest standards of multidisciplinary teaching and research which attracted seekers of knowledge from various countries. Effortlessly, though very clearly and from the beginning, the Indian tradition of education and learning entrenched the importance of man-nature mutuality in the mind of the learner. The rich heritage of ancient and eternal Indian knowledge has been the guiding light for this policy. The pursuit of knowledge (*Jnan*),



THE AIM OF EDUCATION IN ANCIENT INDIA WAS NOT JUST THE ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE AS PREPARATION FOR LIFE IN THIS WORLD, OR LIFE BEYOND SCHOOLING, BUT FOR COMPLETE REALISATION AND LIBERATION OF THE SELF

wisdom (*Pragya*) and truth (*Satya*) was always considered in Indian philosophy as the highest human goal. The aim of education was not just the acquisition of knowledge as preparation for life in this world, or life beyond schooling, but for complete realisation and liberation of the self. The depiction of divinity in nature, a great strength of the Indian tradition and unique to it in several ways, is being viewed with considerable awe by those willing to find solutions to global concerns like pollution, climate change and the impending water crisis. The symphony of the process of education, creation and generation of knowledge and its use were so established that the essence of it reached everybody in society. At the highest level of intellectual effort, the knowledge on trees and plants was created, keeping in view its utility in public welfare. Even today, one can see how people are conscious of such classifications. And all this is found scientifically accurate!

The challenge emerges from the realisation that the traditional knowledge transfer was disturbed for various reasons, coupled with the shameless plundering of natural resources. The globalised world is now

facing its consequences. India accepts the need to relate its education system to homegrown philosophy and practices that, in this specific context, includes “*Aparigraha*”, re-articulated by Mahatma Gandhi as an eternal truth that could save mankind: “Nature has sufficient resources to meet the need of everyone, but not the greed of anyone.”

Wars begin in the minds of human beings; the initiatives for “constructing the defence of peace” must begin in the early years and continue all along. The realisation of this aspect is one of the most outstanding inclusions in NEP-2020. For the first time in contemporary education, the importance of the first eight years in schools beginning from 3+ has been acknowledged, and the entire school system shall be reorganised accordingly. India shall prepare a generation of young persons whose mind “would not be a dustbin to keep anger, hatred and jealousy”. It would be filled with love, nonviolence, empathy, compassion and dharma. That could attract the whole world towards Indian institutions once again.

(The author works in education, social cohesion and religious amity. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

COLD SHOULDER TO AN ALLY

Sir — The recent formation of AUKUS, where Australia is thrilled to get strategic technology transfer from the US and UK, has surprised the world and angered France. The trio of Australia, UK and the US is strategically significant for the Indo-Pacific region. But the disregard of France by Australia on the sidelines of AUKUS may develop a rift in the relationship of like-minded countries. Almost all major powerful nations in the world, especially the western, are worried about China’s growing influence.

Australia’s admission into the AUKUS is questionable in geopolitical relevance. France is also one among the major countries who strictly took actions against terrorism, radical Islamist views, expansionist ideology, and bodies that are against free and open Indo-Pacific. The US must rethink which nations must be included and which must be excluded. In the same way, Australia must also negotiate with France with respect to the economically important deals. The world today needs collaboration, not isolation or backstabbing an ally. It is welcoming that new partnerships are being created for international development, but geopolitical rift must also be avoided for sustainable development for all.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

LURES WORTH FALLING FOR?

Sir — It refers to pre-poll announcements about free electricity upto 300 units, cancellation of all pending electricity bills and free electricity for agriculture in Uttar Pradesh and some other States by the Aam Aadmi Party. But in practice, this results in heavy electricity bills for others out of which the worst sufferer is the mute category of honest middle-income taxpayers because any such heavy dose of electricity bill does not affect the affluent section of society. On the contrary, many take different electricity connections in the name of different members of the family to get free electricity in multiples of 300 units. The Election Commission should take such pre-poll announcements as

Rift within consumes the Captain



It is hard to believe that Captain’s position became untenable because a majority of MLAs have turned against him. More than the infighting, it was the high command’s preference for the maverick cricketer-turned-politician, his elevation as the PCC president and freedom given to him to undercut the Chief Minister’s authority that cost Captain the job. Captain preserved his dignity and reputation; he paled visibly at his forced exit; he had reason to feel wronged and hurt, more so when he per-

formed well, even if not outstandingly and prevented anti-incumbency perceptibly setting in; his grievance that he was ‘humiliated’ might win him public sympathy.

The ouster of the Punjab satrap just four months before the election has created a fluid political situation in Punjab. Sidhu’s popularity in electoral terms remains untested so far. How things will pan out with Sukhinder Randhawa as the next Chief Minister remains to be seen. The BJP has angered farmers by passing the three farm laws so much that it is in no position to take advantage of the present political turmoil. It is hard for the Akali Dal to emerge as a choice for being voted to power when its loss of favour with the electorate is so complete. Perhaps the AAP stands to gain from the turn of events in Punjab; it can now fancy its chances. But then it too is not free from the bane of internal squabbles.

G David Milton | Maruthancode

Indian team win most of the home series. And, his overseas performance improved a lot in recent years. He remains unperturbed during tight situations and played his role as a cool coach. Watching Shastri grow from a lanky left-arm spinner into an allrounder who opened the innings for India in Tests and then crowned as Champion of Champions was a stunning transformation. Ravi Shastri is surely one of the most successful cricketer-cum-coaches who set higher standards for himself and players around him. During Shastri’s tenure, India also recorded T20 series wins in South Africa, New Zealand, Australia and England. In his last assignment in England, his book launch at the time of pandemic and some of his partial acts like dropping Ashwin hastened his exit after a successful stint as a coach.

MR Jayanthi | Mumbai

THE SHASTRI SAGA COMES TO AN END

Sir — Hats off to RJ Shastri for his role as India’s chief cricket coach as he helped improve the attitude and performance of Indian players and turned them into a world-class team. He made the likes of R Ashwin work hard in multiple home series with long bowling spells, which helped the

SOUNDBITE

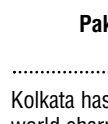
I hope that Captain Amarinder Singh ji will not take any such step which will harm the Congress party.



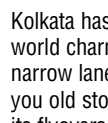
Rajasthan Chief Minister —Ashok Gehlot



I have initiated a dialogue with the Taliban for an inclusive Afghan Govt to include the Tajiks, Hazaras and Uzbeks.



Pakistan Prime Minister —Imran Khan



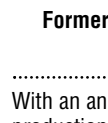
Kolkata has an old-world charm...its narrow lanes tell you old stories, and its flyovers show how modern the city is.



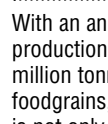
Actor —Yami Gautam



Disappointed waking up to the news of the Pakistan Vs New Zealand series because of security issues.



Former West Indies captain —Darren Sammy



With an annual production of 308 million tonnes of foodgrains, India is not only in the realm of food security, but is also catering to the needs of other countries.

Union Agriculture Minister —Narendra Singh Tomar

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN CONSUMERS EASY PREY TO FOOT THE BILL

A reduction in retail fuel prices is possible if additional excise duties are rolled back



AMIYA KUMAR SAHU

Petrol and diesel prices have remained close to Rs. 100 for about 10 weeks since July 8, 2021. The impact of this has been on fuel inflation (Wholesale Price Index) which averaged at more than 25 percent for the last five months.

The international crude oil price, however, reveals a different picture. Brent crude oil prices fell from \$77.16 to \$65.18 between July 5 and Aug 20, a reduction of over 15 percent. In layman's terms, the price of petrol in India could have been decreased to ₹85.

Back in 2017, the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) were given a free hand to follow dynamic fuel pricing to make their operations more efficient. Why the OMCs have stopped daily price revisions is a mystery. Is it because they are still controlled by the government which has a majority stake in them?



The RBI has also warned that high prices would trigger higher inflation which would affect growth. But it seems the government has decided to continue milking the cash cows — the consumers.

While protection of consumers' interests necessitates government interventions, a reduction of the high prices seems to be far from reality. In May last year, the government imposed additional excise duty on both petrol and diesel, which included road and infrastructure cess - an additional revenue worth ₹1.6 lakh crore. Since the country was forced into a pandemic-induced lockdown, it made commonsense as well as economic sense, then. The fiscal situation was expected to be tight.

However, since May 2020, the total taxes on petrol have crossed ₹50 per litre. It was a paltry ₹9.48 per litre when the BJP government replaced UPA II in 2014. Is the government still expecting the fiscal situation to be similar to last year's? Let's look at the GST data which might give a clue in support of this.

Back in April 2020, when India was under a complete shutdown, the GST revenue collections fell to ₹32,294 crores from ₹97,597 crores. However, from March to August 2021, the GST collected has been ₹6,98,257 crores. This was a jump of more than 50 percent compared to the same period in the previous year.

The USD/INR exchange rate also has been favourable to import bills of crude oil. The exchange rate corrected from a peak of ₹77.10/USD in April 2020 to ₹72.26/USD in March 2021. It now is ranging between ₹73 to ₹75.

A reduction in retail prices is unquestionably possible. All that needs to be done is to roll back additional excise duties. At present, the total excise duty on petrol exceeds ₹37 per litre. The other alternative is to bring the petroleum products under GST.

Since the government has remained stubborn after numerous pleas for a reduction in the petrol and diesel prices, a set of new questions arise: Is the government planning to put up a surplus budget in February 2022? Is it anticipating a severe third wave and lockdown similar to last year? Larger subsidy amounts are likely to be given to the poor?

Let's evaluate another argument. Higher prices would reduce consumption of the fossil fuel and help reduce global warming. But we need to reduce dependency on personal vehicles and move to large-scale adoption of public transport. But mass-rapid transport systems are not effective. If the government wants to promote electric vehicles, then we don't have the technology, capacity to produce in large quantities, and required infrastructure for re-charging battery-run vehicles.

(The writer is Associate Professor, Goa Institute of Management, Goa. The views expressed are personal.)

‘Cabbage tactic’ to seize waters

India should be wary of China using the ‘cabbage tactic’ in the Indian Ocean region the same way it tries to grab islands in the South China Sea



NISHTHA KAUSHIKI

This week will witness Prime Minister Narendra Modi meeting in person with the leaders of Australia and Japan, apart from the US, a move that holds significant importance and may perhaps change India's foreign policy contours. The meeting comes in the backdrop of Australia's alliance with the UK and the US - AUKUS -- which aims to provide nuclear submarines to Canberra.

Quad and AUKUS objectively overlap with India's maritime security interests in the South China Sea (SCS). Almost 50 per cent of India's global trade transits through the SCS region. The governments of Quad focus on the freedom of navigation on high seas as a legitimate right. Beijing has actively adopted a “cabbage tactic”, which is multi-layered, to increase its leverage by capturing the SCS. This vital trade route also happens to be a potential source of natural resources such as hydrocarbons. For this purpose, it builds artificial islands by claiming its “historic rights” and then legislates unusual domestic laws on it to exercise its “sovereignty” over them. The “cabbage tactic” is used to take control of an island by surrounding it in multiple layers of fishing boats, coast guard ships and Chinese naval and military ships to cut off the island from outside support. The more significant motive, of course, is occupying as much space as possible by threatening other countries.

The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) does not have a provision to address the issues regarding construction, maintenance and militarization of artificial islands beyond a state's “territorial waters”. Article 60 (1) of the UNCLOS allow for artificial islands only in the Exclusive Economic Zone. Artificial islands of China beyond its territorial waters are thus farcical.

The International Court of Justice asserted the same in its 2016 arbitration, which Beijing refuted. The Chinese maritime domestic laws conflict with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and sharply violate the maritime rights of the other states. The UNCLOS provides the vital ‘freedom of navigation’ and ‘right to innocent passage’ on the high sea, i.e., area outside internal waters, the territorial sea, the contiguous zone, the exclusive economic zone and the continental shelf of a state to regulate their maritime trade and movement for peaceful purposes such as helping the other states in distress, scientific exploration, etc.

Chinese intentions can be ascertained by examining its 1992 Law of the PRC. Article 14 emphasized the option of using a “hot pursuit” against a foreign ship if it enters its territorial waters or the contiguous zone. Further, Article 15 insists that baseline of its territorial sea would be “established” by itself, a move



CHINA DEFENDS ITS PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION WITH A LAME EXCUSE OF COUNTERING PIRACY IN THE GULF OF ADEN. WHILE IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA, IT EXPLICITLY MAINTAINS THAT ALL THE NAVAL VESSELS OF THE OTHER COUNTRIES MUST SEEK PRIOR PERMISSION BEFORE ENTERING THE WATERS

(The writer is an Assistant Professor at Central University of Punjab, Bathinda. The views expressed are personal.)



hinting towards its future expansionism.

Later, in 2011, China submitted in the UN a Note Verbale on the SCS speaking about its “indisputable sovereignty over the islands in the South China Sea and the adjacent waters”. Nonetheless, the terms “historic rights” and “adjacent waters” do not appear in UNCLOS, and there is no recognition. Further, the use of illegal terms serves the purpose of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) by expanding the scope of its ‘grey zone tactics’ and hence are a distraction to the well-established international norms and principles. China zealously guards the SCS, which was recently evident when China illegally stopped a German warship from entering it.

Accompanied by the regularisation of such words, its mention of phrases like ‘offshore defence’, ‘distant sea defence’ and its ‘interests aboard’ truly reflect its hegemonic behaviour that is set to expand to the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). Its nuclear submarines are regularly sighted in the IOR and the Arabian Sea by the Indian Navy. The presence of Chinese submersibles is a clear-cut violation of Article 20 of UNCLOS, which states that “in the territorial sea, submarines and other underwater vehicles are required to navigate on the surface and show their flag”. China may be collecting critical under-sea hydrological data from the IOR to plan action in case of a limited conflict or a full-blown open war with India. Such moves are a detriment to India's core security objectives. China counters its presence by putting forward a lame excuse with its nuclear submarines to counter the piracy in the Gulf of Aden. One can only wonder how a nuclear submarine can counter piracy.

On the contrary, in the SCS, China explicitly maintains that all the naval vessels of the other countries and research ships seek prior permission before they enter the territorial waters of China. The same duplicity has been evident in its recent amendment to China's Maritime Traffic Safety Law. It now includes five types of vessels- “submersibles, nuclear-powered vessels, ships carrying radioactive materials, ships carrying bulk oil, chemicals, liquefied gas or other toxic substances” that need to report minute details to the Chinese authorities. The cargo ships are thus now questionable and more prone to sabotage through “hot pursuits”.

Further, Article 11 of the same law asserts that “Non-military vessels of foreign nationality may not enter the internal waters”. Additionally, the “military vessels of foreign nationality may not enter the territorial waters”. The pertinent question that arises is what are the limits of its “territorial waters”? As per the UNCLOS, it extends upto 12 nautical miles from the baseline of a coastal state. In the case of Beijing, will it start measuring such limits from the artificial islands that it has built in the SCS? Then in such a case, the Spratly and Paracel Islands represent a “sea grab”, similar to a land grab. Does it not then amount to infringing the freedom of navigation of other states? Such illegal occupation affects the trade routes and supply chain lines. Such dual standards need to be exposed and at various regional and multilateral levels.

China's land reclamation activities in Feydhoo Finolhu Island leased out to Beijing by the Maldives in 2016 are China's emerging footprints in the IOR. This comes in addition to its military intelligence and surveillance activities in the Coco Islands and Greater Coco islands of the Eastern Indian Ocean. The existing geostrategic realities of Chinese hegemonic intentions in the IOR are visible through China's OBOR and its attempts to remould the Asian security order in its favour. China's recent outreach to the Taliban in Afghanistan can increase its tactical manoeuvrability on land. On the other hand, Chinese nuclear submarines, illegal fishing, and surveillance activities in the IOR are set to become a significant threat to Indian security interests.

Suppose China would be successful in having land-sea dominance encircling India, in such a case, it will not only threaten India's immediate and long-term security interests, but it will also adversely affect India's economic and cyber security. China might use the “cabbage tactic” in the Indian Ocean Region in the same way as in the South China Sea. In this direction, the nation should appreciate the establishment of the Andaman Nicobar Command and the re-orientation of the battle commands, which will have joint operability of the Army, Navy and the Air Force. In the present circumstances, India's further shift towards QUAD and AUKUS shouldn't be a surprising development and should be welcomed by the nation.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

SIDHU IS AN INCOMPETENT MAN. HE HAS A CONNECTION WITH PAKISTAN. IT WILL BE A THREAT TO NATIONAL SECURITY.

—FORMER PUNJAB CM CAPTAIN AMARINDER SINGH



SIDHU IS NOT A TRAITOR. IF AMARINDER SINGH CALLS SIDHU A TRAITOR, THEN I WILL OPEN THE WHOLE BOOK.

—ADVISOR TO NAVJOT SIDHU MOHAMMAD MUSTAFA

Why do we need nurses with disabilities?

Misconceptions about the capacity of students with disabilities to function in the clinical components of nursing education deter such applicants

From this year onwards, B.Sc.(Nursing) admissions will be made through NEET, which were conducted last Sunday. I received a panic call from the father of a young girl who was considering nursing admission but she had three missing fingers in her non-dominant hand and a curvature in her spine. The father was concerned about the National Testing Agency's urgent public notice for B.Sc. (Nursing) course aspirants in NEET 2021, which cited an Indian Nursing Council (INC) letter stating that disability reservation is only allowed for physical disabilities of 40-50 per cent and of the lower extremity. It is strange, because how could this be possible after the enactment of the Rights of



SATENDRA SINGH

(The writer teaches at University College of Medical Sciences, Delhi, and is a disability rights activist. The views expressed are personal.)

Persons with Disabilities Act (RPDA), but INC has published a gazette notice announcing this clause as well as revising its nursing curriculum for the first time since 1947. It will be implemented beginning with the new batch.

Unfortunately, the discriminatory National Medical Commission (NMC) standards for applicants with disabilities were framed by a single, non-disabled expert from this subject from a premier institution in India, who decided the ablest requirement of “both hands intact” as a must-have for MBBS admission. The Delhi High Court will be hearing a case of a girl with an amputated arm who passed the NEET exam last year but was denied MBBS admission to Lady Hardinge Medical



College, causing her to lose an academic year. Thankfully, the Supreme Court and the Goa High Court have already granted MBBS admission to girls with an amputated arm in Gujarat and Goa, respectively. The INC does not need to repeat NMC's embarrassing gaffes. The INC's new curriculum mentions the keyword “dignity” six times, whereas NMC's patented competency-based Medical Education Curriculum does not. In the

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which India has ratified, and in the preamble of the RPDA, dignity is a key component.

Learning disability is now a specified disability under the new law, and it is included in the 5 per cent reservation in higher education. But where are the dyslexic doctors and nurses in India? In India, you will only see nurses who are “one-legged” or “both legs disabled.” Yes, this is the vocabulary used by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and the Ministry of Health to identify, stereotype, and ‘otherize’ us in employment.

After my litigation in the Delhi HC, which pushed NMC to allow persons with disabilities of more than 80 per

cent, INC's counterpart has accepted disabilities other than lower limb and surely those above 50 per cent (INC's benchmark).

In a recent SC decision on reasonable accommodation in the instance of a doctor with dysgraphia, Dr Vikash Kumar v. UPSC, the highest court criticised an earlier order that barred blind and deaf candidates with a disability of more than 50 per cent from becoming judges. The statutory Councils are still unaware of this historical judgment on substantive equality in the RPDA era.

Leslie Neal-Boylan who has written multiple books and journal articles on nurses with disabilities has defied the myth that there are patient safety concerns. The same

myth has been refuted in 2014 by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing's white paper which identified outdated admission standards; misconceptions about the capacity of students with disabilities to function effectively in the clinical components of nursing education; and, lack of a comprehensive understanding of issues related to patient safety as barriers that deter applicants with disabilities. The Royal College of Nursing in the UK too also issued a range of employment options for nurses with severe ill health or disabilities in 2020.

We don't need superhuman robots in health care; instead, we need compassionate and caring nurses with disabilities who understand what it is like to live with a chronic

illness or disability. They adapt in unconventional ways, they demonstrate empathy and are brilliant co-workers. We may be rejecting many brilliant applicants who could be outstanding nurses like the renowned Florence Nightingale if we limit our profession to those without disabilities. I hope the INC will look into the representation of health professionals with disabilities which are endorsed by 22 nurses with disabilities from AIIMS New Delhi, Bhopal, Jodhpur, Jhajjar, NIMHANS and Delhi Government hospitals. If INC is serious about implementing the high pedestal ethos of diversity indicated in their new curriculum, they must act and collaborate with nurses with disabilities.

France knew of our sub concerns: Morrison

AP ■ CANBERRA

France would have known Australia had “deep and grave concerns” that a submarine fleet the French were building would not meet Australian needs, Prime Minister Scott Morrison said Sunday after the contract’s cancellation set off a diplomatic crisis.

France accused Australia of concealing its intentions to back out of the 90 billion Australian dollar (USD 66 billion) contract for French majority state-owned Naval Group to build 12 conventional diesel-electric submarines. President Joe Biden revealed last week a new alliance including Australia and Britain that would deliver an Australian fleet of at least eight nuclear-powered submarines.

Morrison blamed the switch on a deteriorating strategic environment in the Indo-Pacific. He has not specifically referred to China’s massive military buildup, which has gained pace in recent years.

“The capability that the Attack class submarines were going to provide was not what Australia needed to protect our sovereign interests,”



Morrison said.

“They would have had every reason to know that we have deep and grave concerns that the capability being delivered by the Attack class submarine was not going to meet our strategic interests and we have made very clear that we would be making a decision based on our strategic national interest,” he added, referring to the French government.

France responded to the contract cancellation, which Morrison has said will cost his government at least USD 1.7 billion, by recalling its ambassadors from Australia and the United States.

French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian on Saturday denounced what he called the

“duplicité, disdain and lies” surrounding the sudden end of the contract and said France was now questioning the strength of the alliance.

China has denounced the sharing of such US and British nuclear technology as irresponsible. France won the contract in 2016 over offers from Germany and Japan. The Shortfin Barracuda was to be a nuclear submarine design adapted to be powered by diesel on the surface and battery underwater.

Japan was particularly disappointed because then-Prime Minister Tony Abbott had promised the close defense ally the contract before he was deposed by his own party in 2015.

‘Explosion targeted Taliban, 2nd in as many days’

KABUL: Witnesses say an explosion targeted a Taliban vehicle in the provincial city of Jalalabad, the second such deadly blast in as many days in an Islamic State stronghold.

The Taliban and IS extremists are enemies, and fought each other even before the Taliban seized control of Afghanistan last month.

Witnesses say Sunday’s blast targeted a vehicle of the border police, which is now run by the Taliban. Initial reports said five people were killed, including two civilians, among them a child. The Taliban were not immediately available for comment about possible casualties among their ranks.

Female employees in the Kabul city government have been told to stay home, with work only allowed for those who cannot be replaced by men, the interim mayor of Afghanistan’s capital said Sunday, detailing the latest restrictions on women by the new Taliban rulers.

The decision to prevent most female city workers from returning to their jobs is another sign that the Taliban, who overran Kabul last month, are enforcing their harsh interpretation of Islam despite initial promises by some that they would be tolerant and inclusive.



In their previous rule in the 1990s, the Taliban had barred girls and women from schools, jobs and public life.

In recent days, the new Taliban government issued several decrees rolling back the rights of girls and women. It told female middle- and high school students that they could not return to school for the time being, while boys in those grades resumed studies this weekend.

Female university students were informed that studies would take place in gender-segregated settings from now on, and that they must abide by a strict Islamic dress code. Under the U.S.-backed government deposed by the Taliban, university studies had been co-ed, for the most part.

Trailblazing tourist trip to orbit ends with splashdown

AP ■ CAPE CANAVERAL

Four space tourists safely ended their trailblazing trip to orbit Saturday with a splashdown in the Atlantic off the Florida coast.

Their SpaceX capsule parachuted into the ocean just before sunset, not far from where their chartered flight began three days earlier.

The all-amateur crew was the first to circle the world without a professional astronaut.

The billionaire who paid undisclosed millions for the trip and his three guests wanted to show that ordinary people could blast into orbit by themselves, and SpaceX founder Elon Musk took them on as the company’s first rocket-riding tourists.

“Your mission has shown the world that space is for all of us,” SpaceX Mission Control radioed.

“It was a heck of a ride for us ... Just getting started,” replied trip sponsor Jared Isaacman, referring to the growing number of private flights on the horizon.

SpaceX’s fully automated Dragon capsule reached an unusually high altitude of 363 miles (585 kilometers) after

Wednesday night’s liftoff. Surpassing the International Space Station by 100 miles (160 kilometers), the passengers savoured views of Earth through a big bubble-shaped window added to the top of the capsule.

The four streaked back through the atmosphere early Saturday evening.

The first space travellers to end their flight in the Atlantic since Apollo 9 in 1969. SpaceX’s two previous crew splashdowns — carrying astronauts for NASA — were in the Gulf of Mexico.

Within a few minutes, a pair of SpaceX boats pulled up alongside the bobbing capsule. When the hatch was opened on the recovery ship, health care worker Hayley Arceneaux was the first one out, flashing a big smile and thumbs up.

All appeared well and happy.

Their families were waiting near the scene of Wednesday night’s launch from NASA’s Kennedy Space Center.

This time, NASA was little more than an encouraging bystander, its only tie being the Kennedy launch pad once used for the Apollo moonshots and shuttle crews, but now leased by SpaceX.

Israeli Army arrests last 2 of 6 Palestinian prison escapees

AP ■ JERUSALEM

The last two of six Palestinian prisoners who escaped a maximum-security Israeli prison two weeks ago were rearrested early on Sunday, the Israeli military said.

The two were captured during an Israeli army raid in their hometown of Jenin in the occupied West Bank, closing an intense, embarrassing pursuit that exposed security flaws after the six tunneled out of their cell on September 6.

Palestinian media reported that clashes erupted in Jenin when Israeli troops entered the city, but a spokesperson for Israeli police said the two escapees, Munadil Nafayat and Iham Kamamji, were arrested without resistance from a house where they had taken refuge and were taken for questioning.

Fouad Kamamji, Iham’s father, told The Associated Press that his son had called him when the Israeli troops surrounded the house and said he will surrender “in order not to endanger the house owners.” The escapes set off a massive pursuit operation that captured the first four inmates in two separate operations in northern Israel. All six inmates come from Jenin.

Five of the prisoners are from the Islamic Jihad militant group, with four of them serving life sentences, and the sixth is a member of the secular Fatah group of President Mahmoud Abbas.

For the Palestinians, the prisoners who dug the tunnel for months and escaped were “heroes”.

For Israel, they were “terrorists” who took part or planned attacks that targeted the Israeli military and civilians.



Haitians on Texas border unfazed by US plans to expel them

AP ■ DEL RIO

Haitian migrants seeking to escape poverty, hunger and a feeling of hopelessness in their home country said they will not be deterred by U.S. plans to speedily send them back, as thousands of people remained encamped on the Texas border Saturday after crossing from Mexico.

Scores of people waded back and forth across the Rio Grande on Saturday afternoon, re-entering Mexico to purchase water, food and diapers in Ciudad Acuña before returning to the Texas encampment under and near a bridge in the border city of Del Rio.

Junior Jean, a 32-year-old man from Haiti, watched as people cautiously carried cases of water or bags of food through the knee-high river water. Jean said he lived on the streets in Chile the past four years, resigned to searching for food in garbage cans.

“We are all looking for a better life,” he said.

Biden Administration Plans Mass Deportation Of Haitian Migrants In Del Rio, Texas

NATIONAL Biden Administration Plans Mass Deportation Of Haitian Migrants In Del Rio, Texas

The Department of Homeland Security said Saturday that it moved about 2,000 of the migrants from the camp to other locations Friday for processing and possible



removal from the U.S. Its statement also said it would have 400 agents and officers in the area by Monday morning and would send more if necessary.

The announcement marked a swift response to the sudden arrival of Haitians in Del Rio, a Texas city of about 35,000 people roughly 145 miles (230 kilometers) west of San Antonio. It sits on a relatively remote stretch of border that lacks capacity to hold and process such large numbers of people.

A U.S. official told The Associated Press on Friday that the U.S. would likely fly the migrants out of the country on five to eight flights a day, starting Sunday, while another official expected no more than two a day and said everyone would be tested for COVID-19. The first official said operational capacity and Haiti’s willingness to accept flights would determine how many flights there would be. Both officials were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke on

the condition of anonymity.

Told of the U.S. plans Saturday, several migrants said they still intended to remain in the encampment and seek asylum. Some spoke of the most recent devastating earthquake in Haiti and the assassination of President Jovenel Moise, saying they were afraid to return to a country that seems more unstable than when they left.

“In Haiti, there is no security,” said Fabricio Jean, a 38-year-old Haitian who arrived with his wife and two daughters. “The country is in a political crisis.”

Haitians have been migrating to the U.S. in large numbers from South America for several years, many having left their Caribbean nation after a devastating 2010 earthquake. After jobs dried up from the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, many made the dangerous trek by foot, bus and car to the U.S. border, including through the infamous Darien Gap, a Panamanian jungle.

Climate change focus of PM Boris at UNGA, says UK

PTI ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson will call upon world leaders to take a “concrete action” on climate change during his meetings at the high-level United Nations General Assembly in New York this week, according to Downing Street on Sunday.

More than 100 Heads of State and Government as well as Foreign Ministers and diplomats will participate in person in the annual General Debate, beginning September 21 through September 27.

Prime Minister Johnson, who will also visit the White House for the first time since Joe Biden became the US President, will be joining

Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the UNGA meeting among the world leaders scheduled to attend the meeting in person.

The visit is seen as an important precursor to the

26th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 26) UN climate summit, to be hosted by the UK in Glasgow in November.

“World leaders have a small window of time left to deliver on their climate commitments ahead of COP26,” Johnson said ahead of the UNGA.

“My message to those I meet this week will be clear: future generations will judge us based on what we achieve in the coming months. We need to continue to make a case for a sustainable recovery from coronavirus rooted in green growth.

“And we have a responsibility to ensure the benefits of that growth extend to all, no matter where they are born,” he said.

According to the UK media reports, Johnson intends to push for an action on coal, climate, cars and trees in particular.



Vladimir Putin’s party set to retain parliamentary majority after polls

AFP ■ MOSCOW

President Vladimir Putin’s party was set to retain a majority in parliament as Russia Sunday concluded a three-day election in which most Kremlin critics were barred from running.

The vote comes in the wake of an unprecedented crackdown on the opposition this year, with Russian authorities jailing Putin’s best-known domestic foe Alexei Navalny and banning his organisations as “extremist”.

In the lead-up to this weekend’s vote, all of his top allies were arrested or had fled the country, with anyone associated with his groups kept from running in the parliamentary and local polls scheduled to close at 8:00 pm Sunday across 11 time zones.

“These essentially aren’t elections. People in effect have no choice,” 43-year-old businessman Vladimir Zakharov told AFP in Russia’s second city Saint Petersburg.

The elections were also marred by claims of censorship



and rampant ballot stuffing.

As voting kicked off Friday, Apple and Google caused an uproar among Russia’s opposition after they removed Navalny’s “Smart Voting” app, which showed supporters which candidate they should back to unseat Kremlin-aligned politicians.

Sources familiar with Google and Apple’s decision told AFP the move was taken under pressure from Russian authorities, including threats to arrest the tech giants’ local staff. By late Friday, the popular Telegram messenger had

also removed Navalny’s “Smart Voting” bot, and by Sunday Google Docs and YouTube videos containing the lists of the recommended candidates had also been blocked.

Navalny’s team, which promptly made new Google Docs and YouTube videos with the lists, said that Google had complied with demands made by Russia’s media regulator Roskomnadzor.

In a final pitch to voters from behind bars on Sunday, Navalny wrote on Instagram: “Today is a day when your voice truly matters.”

Radical Pak cleric booked after Taliban flags hoisted at women’s seminary

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan police have registered a case against a prominent radical cleric and several others after the flags of the Afghan Taliban were found hoisted on the top of a women’s seminary here run by him, according to a media report on Sunday.

The white flags of the Afghan Taliban were spotted on the rooftop of the Jamia Hafsa, a women’s madrasa in the capital, on Saturday, Dawn newspaper reported.

After receiving information, the district administration sent a police contingent, including an anti-riot unit, which cordoned off the seminary. A case was registered against Maulana Abdul Aziz - who is the cleric of the famous Lal Masjid (Red Mosque)--his collaborators as well as seminary students under the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) and different sections of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC), the report said.

Officers of the capital administration said Aziz openly threatened the police, who arrived at the seminary to remove the flags, with dire consequences by using the name of the Afghan Taliban.

Some people affiliated with the seminary, including Aziz, also displayed weapons.

The seminary students and teachers also challenged the police and taunted them with remarks, sparking tension in the area. “Area cleared, flags removed, case registered,” the deputy commissioner Islamabad wrote on his Twitter handle. This was the third time since August 21 the Afghan Taliban flags were hoisted on the seminary. Earlier, at least five white flags were found installed on the rooftop of the seminary. Hoisting of any flag is not a crime, as no law addresses the issue or under which legal action can be taken, the officers said, adding that the cleric took advantage of the legal lacuna.

Policeman escorting polio workers killed in Pakistan

AP ■ PESHAWAR

Unidentified gunmen shot dead a police constable escorting a team of polio workers in northwest Pakistan’s restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on Sunday.

The constable was killed by the gunmen riding a motorcycle while he was joining the polio workers in the tribal district of Dhal Behzadi of Kohat district, about 75 kilometres south of provincial capital Peshawar.

Members of the vaccination party are said to be safe. No group has yet taken responsibility for the attack.

Police teams rushed to the area and started a cordon and search operation for the attackers.

Chief Minister Mehmod Khan condemned the attack and vowed to nab the perpetrators. Such acts of cowardice cannot deter our resolve to wipe out this crippling disease, he said.

Leader of ISIS-linked terror group shot dead in Indonesia’s jungle

AFP ■ PARIGI

The body of Indonesia’s most wanted militant with ties to the Islamic State group and a follower, who were killed in a jungle shootout with security forces, were evacuated early Sunday to a police hospital for further investigation, police said.

The military earlier said the militants killed late Saturday were Ali Kalora, leader of the East Indonesia Mujahideen network that has claimed several killings of police officers and minority Christians, and another suspected extremist, Jaka Ramadan, also known as Ikrima.

The two men were fatally shot by a joint team of military and police officers in Central Sulawesi province’s mountainous Parigi Moutong district. It borders Poso district, considered an extremist hotbed in the province.

Several pictures obtained by The Associated Press from authorities showed an M16 rifle and backpacks laid near their bloodied bodies. The Central Sulawesi Police Chief Rudy Sufahriadi told a news conference on Sunday that security forces also seized two ready-to-use bombs from their backpacks, which also contained food and camping tools.

He said the bodies of Kalora and his follower have been evacuated to a police hospital in Palu, the provincial capital, after the rugged terrain and darkness hampered earlier evacuation efforts from the scene of the shootout in the forested village of Astina.

“We urged the other four wanted terrorists to immediately surrender and dare to take responsibility for their actions before the law,” said Sufahriadi, referring to remaining members of the East Indonesia Mujahideen who are still at large in the jungle on Sulawesi island.

[illegible]



Every summer, Jetun Bibi, who is 70 years-old, and several other people migrate from Kalakote tehsil, Rajouri district of Jammu to the higher altitude pasturelands of Sonamarg, Ganderbal district of Kashmir, which is at 8,960 feet.

“Chettiar and Deghani villages in Kalakote tehsil are home to about 50 families from the Gujjar-Bakarwal community. Every year, in March, we start our trek towards Sonamarg along with our livestock. We carry our belongings and pass through the Pir Panjal range while making several stops en route. Around late October, we start returning to the plains,” Jetun said.

While seasonal migration is the lifestyle of such nomadic tribes, these six months are a difficult time for the community as it affects their development. They live in pasturelands without basic amenities. During the monsoon, they take shelter under trees in the forest or tarpaulins/polythene. They face threats from wild animals. Moreover, staying away from populated regions means that their children will not get any education. They face the challenges of a low literacy rate, lack of livelihood options due to limited skills and knowledge, poor sanitation, vulnerable weather conditions, low social and economic status. The complexities have

WRECKING LIVES

SHAZIYA CHOWDHARY shares how Covid-19 is affecting the nomadic tribes residing in the remote regions of Jammu and Kashmir

increased in the last 19 months due to the pandemic.

Whatever their children could avail from seasonal/ mobile schools is no longer accessible. Without smartphones or access to the internet at higher altitudes, they are unable to attend online classes. According to census-2011, up to 1.5 million Gujjars and Bakarwals live in Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh. Most of them are deprived of basic facilities.

Dwindling livelihood

As these nomadic tribes largely



depend on pastoral farming and small-scale agriculture, they earn by selling leather, wool, meat, and dairy products. However, due to Covid protocols, these communities have been struggling to survive. They hardly manage to sell their animals at a lower price. The

nationwide lockdown has affected their traditional businesses. Now, they are more prone to food deprivation and other essential commodities.

During these dire times, some welfare organisations in the union territory have attempted to assist several

nomadic populations. Poonch-based Sarimastan Tribal Gurjar Welfare Foundation, which works for the welfare of the Gujjar Bakarwal tribe in Jammu and Kashmir, supported them during the lockdown. “We made every effort to provide rations and medicine to these people. Our volunteers travelled several kilometres on foot to reach their camps,” Asad Nomani, the president of the organisation, expressed.

The pandemic has affected each member of the Gujjar and Bakarwal communities equally. According to Asad, the government authorities have extended immense support to provide relief to the people of the community. For those unwilling to visit hospitals or Covid care centres, ‘corona care’ kits were distributed door to door. Although the health department made efforts to conduct tests, distribute Covid relief hampers and create awareness about the virus, they had to face strong resistance from the tribe.

Challenges in establishing vaccine centres

While the vaccination drive has been launched in every nook and corner of the country, reaching out to the nomads residing in the higher altitude of Jammu and Kashmir is difficult. So, conducting tests and establishing vaccination centres is quite challenging. It is also not feasible for them to travel long distances for tests or vaccination at the health centres. On the other hand, vaccine hesitancy among the tribal population has exacerbated the problem.

“For vaccination, when we reached Murrah, a remote area in Surankote tehsil of Poonch, the women started running away. They believed that the vaccine would lead to death within two years or might cause infertility. The unmarried girls feared they would never conceive after the vaccination,” Dr Nusrat Bajad, who is currently serving at a primary health centre in Chandimarih in Poonch, shared.

She shared that the healthcare workers were attacked and intimidated by the locals when they tried to address their concerns. Under such dire circumstances, it gets difficult to persuade young girls and women for vaccination. “All these problems occur due to lack of awareness among tribal people, especially women,” Dr Bajad added.

It is important to safeguard these nomadic tribes from the outbreak of Covid-19. One cannot be sure that they have access to various government programmes such as immunisation drives and other development plans. It is important to make the vaccination centres available to them at higher altitudes. —Charkha Features



Education: A tool for social change

RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJJI elaborates on the one thing that can eliminate all problems from the face of Earth

It has been widely recognised around the world that social services — in areas such as health, education, water and sanitation — can enhance individual well-being and contribute to overall quality of life. Now, no one would deny that providing food, shelter, clothing and health-care to the needy are various kinds of social service and that these are needed to relieve a person from the pain of starvation or some ailment. Similarly, no one can deny that along with this short-term remedy, we also need to find a long-term cure to human sufferings. This was true and is still true but, gradually, public opinion is giving more and more importance to short-term and long-term measures.

It is now being realised that immediate remedies, however necessary, are not enough, for it does not eradicate the problems which ultimately go out of hand or do not abate in occurrence, extent and acuteness. Furthermore, an important development that is now taking place is that opinion-leaders are speaking of how education in values, and for proper diet and behaviour, is the most important and effective — if not the only — ultimate remedy. It would be noticed, in this connection, that in recent past, persons of the stature of the director general of the World Health Organisation, the surgeon general of the United States, as well as the secretary general of the United Nations have made statements which clearly indicate these trends. Statements along the lines of, “Most of the world’s major health problems and premature deaths are preventable through change in human behaviour and at low cost,” clearly show that the problem of disease is not being looked at in this new light and it is now being increasingly realised that education is the main tool to prevent disease and to eliminate them. Top-ranking health-scientists across the globe have been highlighting how most of the world’s major diseases are preventable through changes in human behaviour.

It is a fundamental thing for all to realise that almost all problems that we are experiencing currently, have been created by human action. So, in order to set right the situation, human behaviour will have to be changed. Let us be clear in our mind that all kinds of sufferings are a kind of punishment for our misdeeds, misbehaviour or anti-nature acts. So, the real remedy for the eradication of such problems lies in imparting the right type of education which will result in people changing their ways. If a person continues to have mental and physical lethargy to action or is confused and incompetent to do something which can enable him to earn for his livelihood, how can poverty be removed from the face of the earth? It is in this context that the utmost importance of education — that cultivates values — can be realised. And, finally, that is when the importance of education as a tool of social change and social service can be properly understood.



“How can I say no?”
“What if they feel bad?”
“I cannot say no to my boss...”
“My children need me.”

“I have done it for my spouse for so long; now it feels like a habit.”
While you are stuck with your commitments or someone else’s additional work that you took on unwittingly, do these excuses cross your mind?

Many of us struggle to say ‘no’ in our daily lives. Perhaps, because we are afraid of rejection, anger, or the other person’s reaction to our refusal; and often, we find ourselves taking on more than we can manage. We can get so used to saying yes and pleasing others that we don’t even know what we want or need. This people-pleasing is often rooted in childhood, where we are raised to be good children by helping others. And in the future, we sometimes do so even at the expense of ourselves.

But if your schedule is tightly packed with others’ requests to an extent where you don’t have time for what is important to you — or worse, where your mental and physical wellbeing is at risk — it is time to make some changes.

Why do we say ‘yes’?

There are several reasons why we say yes rather than no. To keep people happy, buy peace in the present (although it will surely come back to bite you in the future) or because we think that saying no makes us look weak. Culture also plays a vital part in saying yes to requests you actually don’t want to. In many cultures, saying no can be considered rude and graceless. Sometimes, people say yes because

Breaking free from the loop

GEETA RAMAKRISHNAN shares why learning to say ‘no’ means saying ‘yes’ to a healthy lifestyle



the one who is asking is a good friend they don’t want to let down, while others are just pleasers by nature who like saying yes all the time, even if they cannot handle it later.

How it becomes a harmful pattern

While fear, temporary peace and avoiding confrontation are reasons why we say yes, we must ask ourselves, “Does it help in the long run? Or will it pull down my confidence level?”

For example, your colleague wants you to finish their work because ‘something else’ that is more important has come up.

And you oblige. Now, you notice that ‘something important’ is coming up more often, but you still can’t say no. You may think, “What if they feel bad?” or, “It is okay. It’s just ten more minutes of my time.” And, “Let me do it one last time.” and then another, and it goes on. Soon, it has become a pattern which you cannot break.

Repercussions

When people say yes, they think they are trying to be kind and accommodating. But this accommodation costs them their time and efficiency. Often, we say yes to people despite our busy schedules or even if we do not wish to take



on others’ work. This reluctance to voice an assertive ‘no’ adds to an already existing stressful workload — neither helping yourself or the person to whom you said yes.

The inability to say no, when it turns into a vicious cycle, comes at a price. You might start complaining and whining, and at that time, nobody wants to listen to you. This pattern of self-sabotage makes one resentful and more stressed, taking a toll on their confidence level and productivity.

How to say ‘no’ assertively

To start reclaiming your time and your wellbeing by saying “no” more, tune into what it is that you

really want. Instead of impulsively saying yes, develop a habit of asking yourself, ‘Am I agreeing to do this for me?’ Start with small things, such as when you are offered a drink or if someone asks you for a trivial favour.

When put on the spot and asked to help with something you don’t have the capacity to and the thought of saying no to their face fills you with dread, buy yourself some more time. Ask people to text or email their requests to you so that you can get back to them. It’s absolutely reasonable for you to say that you need to check your calendar before answering, allowing you to check in with yourself

about what you want. Once you do that, find the right words with which to decline them. You can be polite and say, “I wish I could help you, but I have this bit of work that needs my attention. I am so sorry.” And gracefully navigate your way out.

If a senior at work requests something from you, you can choose a time when they are more relaxed and explain your pressure to them as they might understand. Eventually, people will realise that you are no longer a soft target. Speaking up for yourself might earn you more respect than just doing favours and extra work for others.

When it comes to family, sometimes, you have to say yes whether you like it or not, which is okay. But one has to learn to draw boundaries. Define in your head the extent to which you will stretch yourself to help them, as well as the limit when you will say ‘no’ assertively and nicely. It will help you feel more confident and strong.

Nobody wants to overwork and stress themselves to a point where they have no energy left for themselves nor others. Saying no allows you to say yes to what really matters to you. It lets you be a better person — because when you say yes, it comes from a place of genuine care and not from resentment or fear. Rather than drowning in a busy schedule, it creates more space for you physically and mentally.

Saying ‘no’ more often means saying yes to more self-care, better health and your overall well being.

(The author is an ontological coach and author.)

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The mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be kindled.

—Plutarch

”

BACK TO SCHOOL – GOOD FOR HEALTH

Students returning to their morning school schedule might have an unintended positive lifestyle impact as a new study has found that more teenagers will obtain the recommended amount of sleep as compared to pre-pandemic sleep patterns.

According to the researchers, encouraging better sleeping habits could help reduce teenagers’ stress and improve their ability to cope in times of crisis.

The findings indicated that the elimination of the morning commute, a delayed school start-time and cancellation of extracurricular activities allowed teens to follow their ‘delayed biological rhythm’ or natural tendency to wake up and go to bed later.

“The pandemic has shown that delayed school start times should be implemented by schools interested in supporting the mental health of their students,” said the lead author of the study, Reut Gruber from McGill University.



GREEN TEA AND COCOA TO TACKLE SARCOPENIA

Drinking green tea and taking a cocoa-rich diet may reduce age-related neuromuscular alterations that occur with sarcopenia — the progressive loss of skeletal muscle mass and function — as per a mice study.

Sarcopenia is one of the main reasons for loss of muscle mass. On an average, it is estimated that 5-13 per cent of elderly people aged 60-70 years are affected by sarcopenia. The numbers increase to 11-50 per cent for those aged 80 or above.

“Sarcopenia is considered the main causative factor of the physical performance decline in the elderly. The compromised muscular function associated with sarcopenia has a negative impact on the life quality of older adults and increases the risk for adverse health outcomes including disability, fall-associated injuries, morbidity, and mortality,” said Jordi Caldero from the Universitat de Lleida in Spain.



INDIA PLANS TO ELIMINATE COAL

India is home to seven per cent of the global coal project pipeline, which is 56 per cent of South Asia’s total, a study reveals. The country is slowly moving away from coal at a national level, but considerable progress is being made at the state level.

Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka together account for 13 per cent of the global pre-construction pipeline, states a new report by climate change think tank E3G that assessed the global pipeline of new coal projects.

The report says Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan are showing leadership in cancelling projects and making political statements that they will no longer pursue new coal power.

While, India has not engaged in discussion on moving away from coal for multiple reasons, progress is being made at the sub-national level, with several states considering pivoting away from new coal.



INTERVENTIONS FOR HEALTHCARE WORKERS

Covid caused major changes in the work-life environment of healthcare workers (HCWs) including excessive workload, extended time, erratic timings, separation from family, and inconvenient PPEs which have led to psychological impact on them, and raise the need for interventions at various levels, as per an ICMR study.

The Indian Council of Medical Research study, conducted on 967 participants across 10 sites and covered six broad issues — work, family, societal, and individual related issues, coping mechanism, and suggesting the way forward.

Healthcare personnel experienced the fear of infecting themselves due to the constant exposure to Covid-infected individuals, as per the study. It found that the pandemic has brought out different expressions of the stigma that HCWs face with experiences of verbal and physical abuse reported to a large extent on social and print media platforms..



MICROPLASTICS FOUND IN SAL RIVER

A study reveals that water, sediments and biota (animal and plant life) in the Sal river, a water body in South Goa, are contaminated with microplastics (MPs).

The study states that MPs found in water, sediment and biota from the Sal estuary are dominated by fibres (55.3 per cent, 76.6 per cent and 72.9 per cent, respectively), followed by fragments, films and other plastics. The prominent ubiquity of fibres in all three matrices suggests a variety of sources of MPs, including domestic sewage, effluents from industries and laundry.

The research also found transparent spherical beads in the water of the river along with sediments containing polypropylene, polyamide, polyacrylamide and polymers.

The most commonly found MPs were plastics which were black in colour that may have come due to abrasion of tyres on the road surfaces as regular wear and tear.



CSK SET MI 157-RUN TARGET



Ruturaj Gaikwad of Chennai Super Kings hitting a boundary during match 30 of the Vivo Indian Premier League between Chennai Super Kings and Mumbai Indians held at the Dubai International Stadium in the United Arab Emirates

Gaikwad rescues side with fiery 88

CSK set MI 157-run target as Gaikwad rescues side with fiery 88 Dubai, Sep 19 (PTI) Electing to bat, Chennai Super Kings scored 156 for six against defending champions Mumbai Indians in the first match of the second phase of the Indian Premier League (IPL), here on Sunday. CSK were 44 for 4 at half-way mark after a horrendous start but Ruturaj Gaikwad rescued the side with his blistering unbeaten knock of 88 runs along with Ravindra Jadeja (26) and Dwayne Bravo, who scored 23.

Brief Scores: Chennai Super Kings: 156 for 6 in 20 overs (R Gaikwad 88 not out, R Jadeja 26, D Bravo 23; A Milne 2/21, J Bumrah 2/33, T Boult 2/35). **PTI**

CHENNAI SUPER KINGS:		
Ruturaj Gaikwad	not out	88
Faf du Plessis	c Milne b Boult	0
Moeen Ali	c Tiwary b Milne	0
Ambati Rayudu	retired hurt	0
Suresh Raina	c Chahar b Boult	4
MS Dhoni	c Boult b Milne	3
Ravindra Jadeja	c Pollard b Bumrah	26
Dwayne Bravo	c Pandya b Bumrah	23
Shardul Thakur	not out	1
Extras:	(LB-3, WD-8)	11
Total (For 6 wickets in 20 overs)		156
Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-2, 3-7, 4-24, 5-105, 6-144		
Bowling: Trent Boult 4-1-35-2, Adam Milne 4-0-21-2, Jasprit Bumrah 4-0-33-2, Kieron Pollard 2-0-15-0, Rahul Chahar 4-0-22-0, Krunal Pandya 2-0-27-0. More PTI		



Jasprit Bumrah of Mumbai Indians during match 30 of the Vivo Indian Premier League between Chennai Super Kings and Mumbai Indians held at the Dubai International Stadium in the United Arab Emirates

Struggling KKR look to script turnaround against RCB

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Enduring a forgettable outing in the first half of this year's IPL, two-time former champions Kolkata Knight Riders would look for reversal of fortunes when they resume their campaign against Royal Challengers Bangalore in the second phase of T20 league here on Monday.

While Virat Kohli's RCB is third in the eight-team standings with 10 points from seven games, 2012 and 2014 champions KKR are languishing at the seventh spot with just two wins out of seven ties.

And Eoin Morgan-led KKR would be hoping to make a turnaround, just like 2014 edition when they won nine games in a row to claim the title.

KKR chief mentor David Hussey also exuded optimism about scripting a turnaround, despite a nightmarish first half.

"All we have to do is win this ... We have done it before and so we can do it again... I feel we have the squad to do it also. You qualify for the finals

and whole competition starts again," the Australian said.

But it would be easier said than done for KKR as they face RCB, a formidable outfit, whose captain Kohli would be gunning for success with the bat after announcing his decision to quit as India's T20 skipper following the T20 World Cup which will be held after the IPL in UAE.

Even though KKR leads in head-to-head record against RCB, winning 18 and losing 13 out of 28 fixtures played between the two sides, the 38-run defeat against Kohli's team in the first half of the event in Chennai would be fresh on their players' minds.

KKR's two wins earlier this year came against two under-performing sides — Punjab Kings, who are placed just a rung above them, and bottom-placed Sunrisers Hyderabad.

KKR would be relying heavily on the pair of Subhman Gill and Nitin

Rana to deliver the goods in their batting department, even though the duo did not have the best of outings in the first leg.



While Gill scored just 132 runs, Rana managed 201 runs in the first seven games for KKR in this year's IPL, which was postponed in April following multiple COVID-19 cases inside the bio-bubble in India.

Besides, Morgan will need to let his bat do the talking and lead from the front.

Dinesh Karthik, Andre Russell, Rahul Tripathy and Shakib Al Hasan too need to come good for KKR if the team harbours any hopes of making it to the play-offs.

KKR's bowling department will be on the shoulders of Kiwi Tim Southee, who came in as a replacement for Pat Cummins for the second half.

RCB, on the other hand, are currently placed in a comfortable position and would be hoping for Kohli to play freely and score big runs, especially after taking the big call of relinquishing T20 captaincy.

With Glenn Maxwell (223 runs from 7 games) and AB de Villiers (207 runs from 7) leading the run scorers chart till now for the team, RCB's batting unit looks ominous.

Kohli (198), by his own standards, has been a little disappointing and Devdutt Padikkal (195) too would be looking for a consistent show.

On the bowling front, Mohammed Siraj and Kiwi Kyle Jamieson would lead the attack which also has Harshal Patel, Navdeep Saini and Yuzvendra Chahal, who would be desperate to answer the selectors after being ignored from India's T20 World Cup squad.

The additions of Sri Lanka duo of Wanindu Hasaranga and Dushmantha Chameera, who replaced Adam Zampa and Kane Richardson, will also hold the team in good stead as they have a good

understanding of the UAE conditions.

Teams (from): KKR: Eoin Morgan (capt), Dinesh Karthik, Gurkeerat Singh Mann, Karun Nair, Nitish Rana, Rahul Tripathy, Shubman Gill, Harbhajan Singh, Kamlesh Nagarkoti, Kuldeep Yadav, Lockie Ferguson, Pawan Negi, M Prasad Krishna, Sandeep Warrier, Shivam Dube, Tim Southee, Vaibhav Arora, Varun Chakravarthy, Andre Russel, Ben Cutting, Shakib Al Hasan, Sunil Narine, Venkatesh Iyer, Sheldon Jackson, Tim Seifert.

RCB: Virat Kohli (capt), Navdeep Saini, Glenn Maxwell, Dan Christian, Rajat Patidar, Dushmantha Chameera, Pavan Deshpande, Mohammed Siraj, Harshal Patel, Mohammed Azharuddeen, Sachin Baby, Wanindu Hasaranga, George Garton, Yuzvendra Chahal, Shahbaz Ahmed, Devdutt Padikkal, Kyle Jamieson, Suyash Prabhudessai, KS Bharat, Tim David, Akash Deep, AB de Villiers. Match starts at 7:30PM IST.



Gracia Raina with kid during match 30 of the Vivo Indian Premier League between Chennai Super Kings and Mumbai Indians held at the Dubai International Stadium in the United Arab Emirates





मध्यप्रदेश का जनजातीय समाज चलेगा दुनिया से कदम मिलाकर

जनजातियों की शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य, आजीविका विकास और संवैधानिक अधिकारों की रक्षा के लिए मध्यप्रदेश सरकार तत्परता से निर्णय ले रही है। अपने जनजातीय भाइयों और बहनों के विकास को पूर्ण करके ही चैन की सांस लूंगा।

शिवराज सिंह चौहान (मुख्यमंत्री, मध्यप्रदेश)

मध्यप्रदेश सरकार ने लिये अनुसूचित जनजाति समाज को बराबर के अधिकार सुनिश्चित करने के ऐतिहासिक फैसले

- भगवान बिरसा मुंडा जयंती (15 नवंबर) के दिन जनजातीय गौरव दिवस मनाया जायेगा।
- 1 नवंबर से जनजातीय क्षेत्रों के लिए 'राशन आपके द्वार' योजना चलाएंगे।
- ग्राम सभाओं को सामुदायिक वन प्रबंधन के अधिकार दिए जाएंगे।
- प्रदेश सरकार द्वारा औषधीय पादप बोर्ड का गठन किया जाएगा।
- चरणबद्ध रूप से पेसा एक्ट का क्रियान्वयन किया जाएगा।
- पेसा कानून के तहत ग्राम सभा द्वारा संसाधनों का प्रबंधन होगा।
- जनजातीय भाई-बहनों को साहूकारों के शोषण से मुक्ति दिलाई जाएगी।
- 15 नवंबर से मध्यप्रदेश में सिकल सेल मिशन प्रारंभ किया जाएगा।

- कौशल विकास से आर्थिक उन्नति हेतु हर ग्राम पंचायत में कम से कम 4 लोगों को विभिन्न विषयों पर प्रशिक्षण दिया जाएगा।
- एक वर्ष के भीतर बैकलॉग के पदों की पूर्ति से रोज़गार के नए अवसर।
- मछली पालन, मुर्गी पालन व बकरी पालन के लिए एकीकृत योजना बनाई जाएगी।
- छिंदवाड़ा विश्वविद्यालय का नाम राजा शंकर शाह किया जाएगा।
- देवारण्य योजना के अंतर्गत ग्राम सभा द्वारा सभी वन औषधियों और वनोपज को प्रोसेसिंग करके बेचा जायेगा।
- जनजातीय बच्चों और युवाओं को शिक्षा एवं रोज़गार में आगे लाने के लिए NEET, JEE के फाउंडेशन में सुधार की ऑनलाइन स्मार्ट क्लास तथा विज्ञान, तकनीकी और चिकित्सा में भविष्य बनाने के प्रयास।

जनजातीय अधिकारों के लिए प्रतिबद्ध मध्यप्रदेश सरकार

जनजातीय कार्य विभाग, मध्यप्रदेश शासन

मध्यप्रदेश जनसम्वर्धन विभाग जारी D-11054/21