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WORLD



34 KILLED IN SUICIDE BOMBINGS IN AFGHANISTAN, ARMY BASE A TARGET
PAGE 15

UP law sees first case: Kin of 20-yr-old move against Muslim friend

MANISH SAHU
LUCKNOW, NOVEMBER 29

A DAY after the new anti-conversion law came into force in Uttar Pradesh, the police on Sunday registered its first case under it. Owaisi Ahmed, 24, was booked by the Deoria police in Bareilly for allegedly pressuring a Hindu woman to convert, and threatening her parents when they objected.

The family of the 20-year-old woman lodged the complaint. The police said they had not been able to find Ahmed yet.

Preliminary investigation has indicated the two were in a relationship, and had eloped last year, before they were found and brought back. While Ahmed had been arrested then too, the woman had denied the charges of kidnapping lodged against him by her father. The woman was married off by the family to someone else in April this year.

IG, Bareilly Range, Rajesh
CONTINUED ON PAGE 9



Farmer leaders hold a press conference at Singhu Border on Sunday. *Gajendra Yadav*

WHERE A POSSIBLE BREAKTHROUGH MAY LIE, **EXPLAINED**, PAGE 20

CREATE AWARENESS: PM ON MANN KI BAAT

New laws help farmers, say PM, Shah; key Ministers meet on way forward

Reforms opened door to new possibilities, says Modi; Home Secy tells farmers to go to designated protest site for early talks

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

AS FARMERS from Punjab and Haryana, seeking repeal of the new farm laws, continued to protest at the gates of Delhi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah backed the laws Sunday, saying they were for the benefit of farmers.

Late at night, Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and

Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar met at BJP president JP Nadda's residence.

In his *Mann Ki Baat* address, Modi said demands of farmers, promised at one time or another by every political party, had been met through these laws. He asked the youth, "especially those studying agriculture" to go to villages, and create awareness among farmers about the new laws.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Farmers refuse to move, say will intensify protest

AMIL BHATNAGAR & JIGNASA SINHA
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

REJECTING THE Centre's invitation for conditional talks, farmers camping at the Delhi-Haryana border reiterated their demands on Sunday, and said they would not vacate the arterial GT Karnal highway.

Farmers' groups held discussions at Delhi's northern Singhu

Border — through which the highway to Haryana, Chandigarh, and onward to Himachal Pradesh and Punjab passes — to chalk out their course of action. In the evening, they announced at a press conference that they would blockade five points of entry into Delhi — Sonapat, Rohtak, Jaipur, Ghaziabad-Hapur, and Mathura — in the coming days.

The farmers have been
CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



The 90-ft ecobridge on Kaladhungi-Nainital highway. *Express*

Uttarakhand's unique bridge to help reptiles cross busy jungle road

LALMANI VERMA
DEHRADUN, NOVEMBER 29

THE UTTARAKHAND Forest Department has built a first-of-its-kind ecobridge across a busy highway in Ramnagar forest division of Nainital district so that reptiles trying to cross over are not crushed under traffic.

The 90-foot-long structure of bamboo, jute, and grasses was built across the two-lane Kaladhungi-Nainital highway by local contractors over a period of 10 days at a cost of Rs 2 lakh.

The highway is the main route to Nainital, and is used by a large number of vehicles especially in the tourist season. The jungle is home to monitor

lizards, snakes including pythons, rodent squirrels, and monkeys, and the crushed remains of reptiles are frequently found on the highway.

The 5-foot-wide, 40-foot-high bridge can take the weight of three adult humans, and forest officials said they hoped it would be used by even leopards.

The bridge, which will be put in sight of four camera traps, will be studied as a model by the Forest Department, Ramnagar Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Chandra Shekhar Joshi said.

The bridge has been strung at a point where the road arcs in a wide 'U', and vehicles going downhill often travel at high speed. It is expected that by

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

DELHI RIOTS

Court orders FIR and probe into a riots complaint which Delhi Police had shelved

Rejects police claim that complainant arrested, was trying to save himself

KAUNAIN SHERIFF M
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

A DELHI court has ordered the police to register an FIR and conduct a "fair, independent and impartial" probe into a riots case where the police had closed the inquiry despite the fact that video recordings against the accused were submitted as evidence by the complainant.

The November 23 order, by

Metropolitan Magistrate Fahad Uddin, is related to a case where Saleem, a resident of Yamuna Vihar, alleged that on February 24 this year, his neighbours Subhash Tyagi and Ashok Tyagi opened fire and attacked his house. He also alleged that his neighbour, Nasheer, was shot.

The police told the court that Saleem was himself involved in the riots, was arrested on March 19, and had filed a "false complaint to save himself". Saleem is

out on bail.

After a probe, the police claimed, "no cognizable offence was found to be made out and hence no FIR has been registered in (Saleem's complaint) case," and so the inquiry was closed.

Rejecting this, the court said that after a "perusal of the material placed on record", especially the "video footage of the alleged incident", it was of the view that "a cognizable offence is made out" and that "the offences al-

leged...require to be investigated by the police".

Citing a certificate under The Evidence Act, the court indicated that the electronic evidence was admissible evidence.

"This Court deems fit to direct the SHO PS, Jafraabad to register an FIR at the earliest under the appropriate Sections of law on the basis of the allegations made in the Complaint...and to ensure that a fair, independent
CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

CoBRA officer was to come home for celebration of birthday, a late Diwali

GARGI VERMA & SRINATH RAO
RAIPUR, MUMBAI, NOVEMBER 29

FAMILY, FRIENDS and colleagues described Assistant Commandant Nitin P Bhalerao, killed in a Maoist attack in Sukma, Chhattisgarh, on Saturday night as someone who strove to be the best at whatever he did, and who led from the front. Ten years ago, he ranked first in basic training as a CRPF Sub-Inspector, and repeated the distinction in jungle



Nitin P Bhalerao, 33, died in a Maoist attack in Sukma

warfare training after being inducted into the force's elite CoBRA unit.

While the 33-year-old died of injuries sustained in the IED blast, seven CoBRA personnel were injured and are now out of danger. The attack happened just 6 km from the Burkapal base camp of CoBRA.

The CRPF said Bhalerao had fought on for seven hours despite losing a lot of blood.

The Assistant Commandant's cremation on Sunday evening at Nashik drew friends and locals, apart from family members. Bhalerao is survived by his mother Bharti, wife Rashmi,
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EXPERT EXPLAINS
DR K SRINATH REDDY
From The Indian Express panel of specialists, exclusive insight

ROAD TO MASS VACCINATION
EXPLAINED PAGE 20

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

Q2 DATA: ONWARDS AND UPWARDS
BY SOUMYA KANTI GHOSH
PAGE 12

Amid divestment plans, PSUs lag in market rally, FPIs show little interest

SUNNY VERMA & SANDEEP SINGH
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

AMID THE relentless rally in the stock market, institutional investors seem to have largely voted down government-owned companies. Their stock prices continue to languish, unlike those of leading private sector companies.

The PSUs have shown significant lag in performance despite the broad recovery in the markets since April 2020.

While the BSE Sensex has risen by 50 per cent between March 31 and November 24, the BSE PSU index has risen by only 18.7 per cent. In fact, the BSE mid cap and small cap indices have jumped by 60 per cent and 75.6 per cent respectively in the same period.

With the government looking to raise funds through divestment of stake in some of these PSUs, the issue of low valuation has come up for discussion in the Finance Ministry. Sources said the government has been looking at ways to improve valuations in line with the book value and profitability of the companies.

State-owned banks, which were expected to benefit in terms of market value after a spate of amalgamations and capital infusion, have seen a steady decline in value. The Nifty PSU Bank index, for instance, is down 64 per cent from its peak of 4,327 in 2017.

While many private banks also saw a sharp decline in share

EXPLAINED

A worry for the Ministry

STOCK PRICES OF government-owned companies and banks continue to lag behind private peers, and have been trading sharply below their peak value of recent years. Low valuations are an issue for the government because it has a heavy disinvestment agenda lined up. The Finance Ministry is said to be looking at ways to improve the market value of government companies.

value after the pandemic impacted markets in March 2020, HDFC Bank and Kotak Mahindra Bank have had fresh record highs in recent days and several other private sector banks have done well.

Even the Nifty CPSE index is down almost 46 per cent from its peak of 2,795 recorded in 2018. While state-owned firms have lagged behind their private peers in terms of performance in the past as well, the differential between their market performance has been widening in recent years.

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PSUs LAG IN PERFORMANCE			
	Mar 31	Nov 27	Change
BSE PSU	4,498.12	5294.9	17.7
BSE Sensex	29,468.49	44149	49.8
BSE Mid cap	10,569.93	16914.6	60.0
BSE Small cap	9,608.92	16875.2	75.6

Atmanirbhar push in bullet train: Industry told to build substitute for made-in-China tech

AVISHEK G DASTIDAR
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

AS THE corporation building the country's first bullet train project pushes for Indian firms shouldering three-fourth of the work, Indian industry has been urged to come up with an alternative to the high-tech machines needed to construct viaducts (elevated structures) at the desired pace, which are currently made only in China. Trade with China has been affected by the border tension in eastern Ladakh.

The mega carrier and launcher machines, also known as Transporter, Gantry and Full Spam Launcher machines, are ubiquitous in China's large-scale connectivity projects. Typically, a vehicle carrying a full girder travels on an already launched girder to place the next girder under this technology. The speed is almost seven times that of the girder



Work is on at the Sabarmati hub of the bullet train. *File*

launching mechanism commonly used in India — while one-and-a-half girders are placed in a week with this, the Chinese machines enable two girders a day.

Each machine costs around Rs 70-80 crore. The bullet train project will need up to 30 such machines, Achal Khare, Managing Director of the National High Speed Rail Corporation (NHSRL), said.
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PAGE 1 ANCHOR



'SOON, A VACCINE MADE IN INDIA'
PAGE 14

TORA AGARWALA
GUWAHATI, NOVEMBER 29

"THEY WERE working for us, so why not work for them?" Neeshi Jebisaman remembers thinking in April, a week after the nationwide lockdown was announced. But even at the outset, there were murmurs: "Isn't it risky? What if you get the virus?" Arunachal Pradesh might have had only one case of the coronavirus back then, but panic had begun to set in.

The 25-year-old English teacher was determined though, and one bright morning, she held a meeting with 10 women

at a government school, empty due to the lockdown, located on the edge of her hometown, Bhalukpong. The desks and benches were stowed away, large utensils brought in, and a stove crackled to life. The 10 — homemakers, nurses, teachers — put on their masks, rolled up their sleeves, and got to work.

And just like that, far away from the virus epicentres, Jebisaman and the others had joined the ranks of the countless corona warriors across the country whom *The Indian Express* is celebrating as part of the anniversary of the 26/11 terror attacks on Mumbai — the men and



Homemakers, nurses, teachers came together, ran the kitchen for frontline workers for three months. *Express*



women best epitomising the stories of strength that had helped the city put the killings behind. A show recounting their stories was telecast on Star Plus on Sunday night.

On day one, Jebisaman recalls, they produced a meal for 70, but only 35 showed up. But then slowly, as word got around of the Bhalukpong Women's Langar, the numbers doubled, the simple fare

of rice, dal and boiled vegetables gave way to stews of pork and bamboo shoot, chicken cooked with traditional herbs and, on some days, even feasts of the delicacy *mithun*. The *langar* is still running, now manned by the district administration.

"We never charged for our meals," says Mary Sidisow, the 39-year-old staff nurse at the Community Health Centre (CHC) who first suggested the idea of a community kitchen. "Our objective was simple — to feed the frontline worker, be it a doctor, a nurse, a policeman or even a daily wage labourer."
CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

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WEB EXCLUSIVE

**CYCLONE NIVAR DEALS BLOW TO IRULA TRIBALS STRUGGLING FOR BASIC NEEDS**

The children of this tribe are forced to change schools as the families keep moving from one area to another and this results in dropouts as well. Driven by poverty, most of these Irula tribe members work as contractual labourers in brick kilns, rice mills.

FASHION**KEEPING UP WITH PANDEMIC FASHION**

Staying committed to the wardrobe while at home

EXPERT EXPLAINS**APPLE'S NEW M1 CHIP**

Apple M1 chip could be the start of something big

EXPRESS AUDIO

Why providing a straw and sipper to an under-trial sparked controversy

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

In today's episode we're looking at the controversy over providing a straw and sipper to Father Stan Swamy, who is presently in jail

FROM PAGE ONE

PM, Shah

"New dimensions," he said, were being added to farming and allied industries. "The agriculture reforms in the last few days have opened doors to new possibilities. For years, the demands of farmers, demands which were promised at some time or another by every political party, have been fulfilled. After a lot of discussion, Parliament gave agricultural reforms legal recognition. These reforms have not only removed many restrictions for farmers, but have given them new rights and opportunities," he said.

Shah, meanwhile, said he had never said that the farmer protests were political. "Everyone has that right

(to protest) in a democracy. But I want to say that all the three farm laws are for the benefit of the farmers. And after a long time, the farmer is going to come out of a constricted system... I have never called the protest by farmers as political. I am not saying that now either," he told reporters in Hyderabad.

Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla, writing to farmer unions staging the protest, assured them that all their issues would be addressed in discussions with a high-level committee of Union Ministers at Vigyan Bhavan on December 3. He said this discussion can take place earlier if all unions gather the protesting farmers at the designated ground in Burari on the outskirts of Delhi.

"Some unions have demanded the discussions to be

held earlier than December 3. The moment you shift to the ground in Burari, the very next day a high-level committee of Union Ministers is ready to meet the representatives of farmer unions at Vigyan Bhavan," he said in his letter. Bhalla said because of the protest call given by 30 farmers unions, a large number of farmers from Punjab, Haryana and other parts of the country have gathered near Delhi's borders, disrupting traffic on two key highways between Punjab and Delhi since November 27.

"According to available information, due to severe cold, farmers are facing a lot of problems. In the wake of the Covid pandemic, there is a threat of infection due to such large gatherings," he said in the letter, urging farmers to move to Burari.

The Prime Minister, in his Mann Ki Baat address, spoke of the "new rights" that the new laws had granted farmers. He cited the example of a farmer in Dhule district of Maharashtra whose "full knowledge of the laws has come to his aid".

"Jitendra Bhoiji had done farming of maize, and had decided to sell it at the right price to traders. The price for the crop was decided at Rs 3.32 lakh. Jitendra Bhoi also got Rs 25,000 in advance. It was decided that the rest of the money would be given to him in 15 days. But the circumstances turned out later that he did not get the money. Buy the crop from the farmer, don't pay for months on end. Perhaps people were following the practice followed for many years. In the same way, for four

months, Jitendraji's payment did not happen. In this situation, to his aid came the new farm laws."

"In this law, it has been decided that in three days, the farmer must be given full payment. And if the payment does not happen, then the farmer can register a complaint. The law has another very big thing. In this law, there is a provision that the area's SDM has to address the complaint of the farmer within a month. Now when our farmer brother got the strength from this law, then his problem was resolved. He complained, and in a few days, his dues were paid. In other words, full knowledge of the laws became Jitendraji's strength. Whatever the field, far away from every kind of rumour and misconception, correct information is a big aid for every person," Modi said. He cited two other examples — of Mohammad Aslam of Baran in Rajasthan, CEO of a local farm produce organisation who has created a WhatsApp group of farmers on prevailing mandi rates, and Virendra Yadav of Kaithal who has done business of Rs 2 crore in two years by selling farm stubble to agro-energy plants and paper mills by using straw baler machines.

"I request the youth, and especially the lakhs of students studying agriculture, that they should go to nearby villages and bring awareness among farmers about the recently passed farm reforms. By doing this, you will be partners in the big change that is happening in the country," he said.

Farmers protest

camping outside Delhi since Friday. On Saturday, Union Home Minister Amit Shah had invited farm unions for talks on December 3 on the condition that they move the protest from the highway to the Sant Nirankari Samagam Ground in Burari.

"We have rejected the invitation from the Centre. One of their conditions was that we must go to the Burari Park first. We will never go to Burari Park. We have come to know that it is more an open jail than a park," Surjeet Singh, president of Bhartiya Kisan Union (Krantikari), Punjab, said. "Farmers from Uttarakhand who reached Delhi today were told by Delhi Police that they would be taken to Jantar Mantar, but they were instead held at the Burari Park. The protest at the Singhu Border will continue," Surjeet Singh said.

Delhi Police spokesperson Dr Eish Singhal denied the allegation. "Before their protest, we had appealed to the farmers to not protest in Delhi, and stated that protests at Jantar Mantar were not allowed," he said.

The Burari Park, commonly known as the Nirankari Samagam Ground, belongs to the Delhi Development Authority and is spread over an area of over 20 hectares. It is around 20 km from the Singhu Border.

The farmers are demanding the repeal of three "pro-corporate" farm laws enacted by the Centre, and have vowed not to back down. "We have rations to last us months," Surjeet Singh said.

He also said the farmers would not allow any person affiliated with a political party on their platform. "We demand that the rate of MSP be fixed, and that farmers should not be fined for burning farm stubble. We also demand that the proposed electricity Ordinance should be kept in abeyance," Surjeet Singh said.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal tweeted on Sunday that "The Centre must talk to farmers immediately without any preconditions."

During the day, several leaders of farmers' groups gave speeches from atop tractors on the Haryana side of the Singhu Border as Delhi Police remained stationed behind barriers mounted with barbed wire. More farmers were likely to join the protest, the leaders said.

A group of 80-100 farmers managed to cross into Delhi on Sunday, and protested some 50 metres from the barricade. "We do not have any intentions of moving further. We came from the other side and were allowed in, since police thought we were headed towards the Nirankari Ground," said Sukhdev Singh of Amritsar, one of the farmers camped near the Alipur police post.

There were no more than 200 farmers at the sprawling Nirankari Ground in Burari on Sunday evening. The Delhi government had put up tents and mobile washrooms for them, and organised langars at several places — but the farmers camped on their tractor trolleys.

"Some of us had to come to Nirankari Ground earlier, but that does not mean we have caved in. The protest here is the same as that on the border, and we will stay until we are allowed to protest at the Ramila ground, or our demands are met," Diljeet Singh from Mohali said.

On Friday, police had resorted to lathi charges and tear gas at Singhu Border. On Sunday, more farmers from Punjab and Haryana joined the protesters at Northwest Delhi's Tikri Border. Delhi Police have parked trucks blocking the road on the Delhi side of the border. Tikri Kalan is in the Outer Delhi district, and the border is close to Mundka and Peeragarhi.

The highway to Bahadurgarh and Jhajjar in Haryana passes through Tikri.

"We don't have an estimate of the number of people behind the barricades (on the Haryana side). We told them that they could go to Burari's Nirankari Ground but they want to stay here. There are more than 300-400 trucks and tractors on the road," a senior police officer at the Singhu Border said.

Nishan Singh, a farmer from Punjab, said, "Most of the farmers here are from our state. We are calling our family members and friends to join us. We won't leave Delhi unless they repeal the three farmer laws. Over 50 people from the All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee will join us tomorrow, and we will then decide our next step."

On Sunday morning, farmers beat drums and raised slogans as police made announcements about social distancing and Covid guidelines. With the border sealed, traffic from Haryana was diverted to Jharoda and Rajokri. Police at the pickets recorded the details of commuters before letting them enter Delhi.



Dev Deepawali in Kashi

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by

Narendra Modi

Prime Minister

in the august presence of

Yogi Adityanath

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Main Attractions

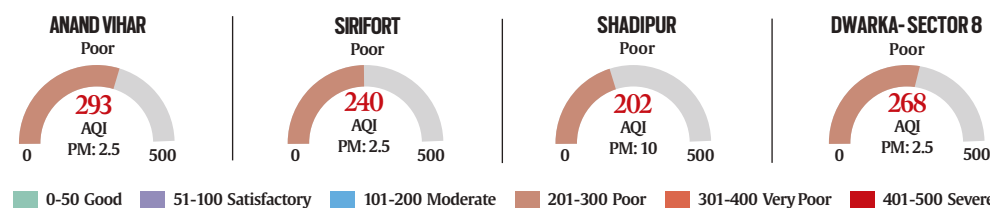
- Lighting of more than **11 lakh** earthen lamps on both sides of the bank and ghats of the holy river Ganga
- **Digital Dev Deepawali** for the first time in Kashi • **Mesmerising Laser Show**
- **Launch of Uttar Pradesh Tourism Department's website 'Pawan Path'** to provide information of prominent religious places in Varanasi • **Cultural programmes** at Rajghat and other main ghats • **Light and Sound show** at Sarnath

Do Gaj Ki Doori, Mask Hai Jaroori



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SKYWATCH
FORECAST
 Mainly clear sky.
 Mist/shallow fog in the morning.

MAX: 26 | **MIN: 7**
 0.4° C above normal | 2.9° C below normal

Cleaning Yamuna remains on paper as '26 of 35 STPs fail to meet norms'



The Yamuna stretch from Wazirabad to Okhla is the most polluted. *Gajendra Yadav*

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
 NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

EFFORTS TO clean the Yamuna largely remain on paper as 26 out of 35 sewage treatment plants (STPs) in Delhi, having a combined treatment capacity of 2,258.72 million litres per day (MLD), are not complying with discharge norms prescribed by the pollution control body.

This has been revealed in a monthly progress report for September 2020, prepared by the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC), which is responsible for framing pollution control norms in Delhi. The report was sent to the Secretary of Union Ministry of Jal Shakti recently.

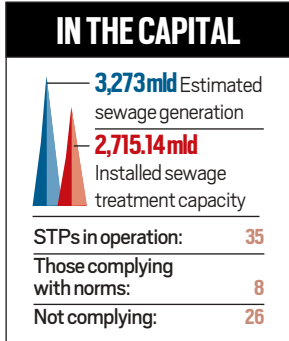
The report shows only eight STPs, with a combined treatment capacity of 433.69 MLD, are complying with norms. The status of one STP is not known as samples were not collected.

Non-compliance of STPs in Delhi is significant as the Yamuna stretch from Wazirabad to Okhla is the most polluted.

The DPCC had prescribed eight types of standards for treated effluent of STPs (old and new) in Delhi. It had communicated the same to the Delhi Jal Board (DJB), responsible for operations and maintenance of STPs, on January 31. Compliance status of the STPs was checked by the pollution body in September.

According to the report, against the estimated 3,273 MLD (720 million gallons per day) sewage generation in Delhi, installed sewage treatment capacity is just about 2,715.14 MLD (597.26 MGD). However, on ground, the actual use of sewage treatment capacity is even lower as capacity utilisation of existing STPs is about 90% (2,432 MLD) of installed capacity.

The issue of sewage treatment plants not complying with discharge norms also came up during the 7th meeting of the



Central Monitoring Committee, which met under the chairmanship of Union Jal Shakti Secretary UP Singh on November 9.

Minutes of the meeting, circulated on November 17, show that the Executive Director (Technology), National Mission for Clean Ganga, raised the issue of non-compliance of STPs. The meeting was also attended by Additional Chief Secretary (Urban Development), Delhi government, and other state government officials, who admitted that some STPs are not meeting the "stringent norms".

"CEO, Delhi Jal Board, informed that 70 MGD of treated water from STPs are achieving discharge norms of BOD-10mg/l, TSS-10 mg/l and COD-50mg/l and remaining operational STPs which are old, and have been designed for old discharge norms, may not be able to achieve the stringent norms," state the minutes.

It added: "Of the 13 Common Effluent Treatment Plants operational in Delhi, only three are complying with norms... Compliance of existing STPs and CETPs and slow progress of ongoing STP projects remains a major issue." CETPs have been established for controlling industrial pollution in the river.

When contacted, a senior DJB official said, "All STPs will comply with the advanced (discharge) standards within three years. A new approach is being tried to upgrade STPs at low cost."

4,906 NEW CASES, 68 DEATHS ON SUNDAY

Hospital beds free up as Covid cases dip

Continue observing precautions, Kejriwal urges Delhiites

EXPRESSNEWS SERVICE
 NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

WITH A drop in the daily number of Covid-19 cases over the last few days, the availability of beds for patients has gone up by 30%. There are 18,691 beds earmarked for Covid-19 patients across 134 hospitals, out of which 10,447 (55.6%) are vacant at the moment.

On Sunday, Delhi saw 4,906 new cases and 68 deaths, taking the total number of cases to 5,66,648 and the death toll to 9,066. The positivity rate was recorded at 7.64%, after the city conducted 64,186 tests in the last 24 hours.

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal acknowledged the dip in the number of daily cases and requested the public to continue following social distancing etiquettes. "Number of cases and deaths go further down — it's going down since November 7. Delhi govt is working very hard. Our doctors, nurses and all other corona warriors are working round the clock. I urge you all to continue to observe all precautions," he tweeted.

As per data on the Delhi Corona app, as of November 11 — when the capital had 42,629 active cases and saw the highest single-day spike of 8,593 cases — there were 16,439 beds dedicated for patients and 7,973 (48%) were vacant. Data also showed 518 of 3,337 ICU beds were vacant — 163 with ventilators and 355 without ventilators. However, as of November 29, the number of vacancies has increased to 1,524.

Health Minister Satyendar Jain in a tweet on Sunday said: "Bed vacancy for Covid patients



Daily cases have dipped significantly since Nov 7. *Amit Mehra*

CORONAVIRUS IN THE CAPITAL

	TOTAL CASES	HOSPITAL BEDS	VENTILATORS	Total	Vacant
				18,691	10,404
	Daily cases	Recoveries	Deaths	Tests	
Nov 28	4,998	6,512	89	69,051	
Nov 29	4,906	6,325	68	64,186	
Total	35,091*	5,22,491	9,066	62,37,395	

*Total active cases

in Delhi hospitals increased to 10,411 from 7,973 since November 11 (more than 55% Covid beds are now vacant). During the same period, ICU bed vacancy increased to 1,524 from 518. Since November 7, Covid severity is coming down."

According to Dr B L Sherwal, medical director, Rajiv Gandhi Super Speciality Hospital, "There has been a slight dip in the daily number of admissions over the last one week. As daily cases are going down, we are expecting that the situation will improve in the coming days. The severity of the

disease will change and then not many people will require hospitalisation." Out of 500 beds at the hospital, 342 are currently vacant.

A senior doctor at Lok Nayak hospital said that of the 2,000 beds, more than 1,500 Covid beds are lying vacant at the hospital: "Till last week, we were getting atleast 80-90 patients on a daily basis but the number has almost reduced to half in this week. But we are prepared to deal with more cases, and if the numbers go up in the coming days, then we will be able to manage the patients."

Man held with 30 kg marijuana

New Delhi: Delhi Police has arrested a 36-year-old man for allegedly posing as a travelling ticket examiner (TTE) and peddling drugs at New Delhi Railway station. Police have recovered 30 kg marijuana, which he had brought to Delhi through Dibrugarh Rajdhani Express, from his possession. DCP

(Railways) Harendra Singh identified the accused as Sukhvinder Singh. "The arrest was made Friday by our patrolling team at New Delhi Railway Station after they noticed a man in a TTE uniform carrying two bags. Sensing something amiss, they checked his bags and found 30 kg marijuana inside," he said. **ENS**

SALUTE THE SOLDIER

5043352 LNK NUN BAHADUR RANA, SM AND 5045078 RfN SHER BAHADUR GT, SM
 29 NOV

On this day 5043352 Lnk Nun Bahadur Rana, SM and 5045078 Rfn Sher Bahadur GT, SM of 5/1 Gorkha Rifles made the supreme sacrifice during 'OP RAKSHAK' Jammu & Kashmir in Nov 1997 in a true act of valour. The brave soldiers will always be remembered for their enthusiasm. To these brave heart we pledge that we shall always be guided by their immortal spirit and make their names proud.

CO AND ALL RANKS, 5/1 GORKHA RIFLES

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Shri Amitabh Bachchan

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Guru Nanak

Apostle of Peace



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Life & journey of the teacher

GURU NANAK was not born to affluent parents. His father Mehta Kalidas was a village patwari, the lowest rung of the revenue hierarchy. Born on April 15, 1469, in the western Punjab village of Talwandi (near Lahore, which is now in Pakistan). Nanak was the only son of his parents. He was born at a time of conflict between Hindus and Muslims. Nanak was deeply interested in philosophy and spirituality right from his childhood. From an early age, he made friends with both Hindu and Muslim children and was very inquisitive about the meaning of life.

Right from childhood, Nanak was a rational thinker. When he was 12, his father gave him twenty rupees and asked him to do a business. Guru Nanak bought food for all the money and distributed among the poor. When his father asked him what he did with the money, he replied that he had done a true business.

As he grew up, he read and studied the tenets of Hinduism as well as Islam. At the age of 13, when it was time for Guru Nanak to be provided with the sacred thread according to the traditional Hindu custom, he refused to accept it from the priest, to the utter shock and disappointment of his family.

Nanak would spend long hours absorbed in meditation and in religious discussions with Muslim and Hindu holy men who lived in the forests surrounding the village. In order to make him interested in worldly affairs, his father decided to make him a family man. Guru Nanak did not object as he felt married life would not conflict with his spiritual pursuits. Thus, Guru Nanak happily married, while he was still in his teens. He loved his wife eventually had two sons — Sri Chand and Lakshmi Chand. However, even a happy and peaceful married life did not divert him of his pre-occupation with matters pertaining to Divine mission. For him, his duty was not confined to serving himself and family. Humanity was his family and serving humanity was his duty.

Now that he had a family of his own Guru



Nanak was persuaded by his parents to take up a job as an accountant in charge of the stores of the then Governor of Sultanpur Daulat Khan Lodi. Guru Nanak agreed and was joined by his family and an old childhood friend Mardana, a musician by profession. He would work during the days, but early in the mornings and late at nights, he would meditate and sing hymns accompanied by Mardana on the rabab (A string instrument).

These sessions attracted a lot of attention and many people started joining the two. Guru Nanak tried to lead a normal life but he could not give up his spiritual pursuits. From the very childhood, his elder sister Bibi Nanki saw in him the Light of God. In fact, she is known as the first disciple of Guru Nanak.

Life long journeys

Guru nanak was thirty years old when he decided to set out for travels to spread the message of God, accompanied by Mardana for company. Guru Nanak undertook long journeys to convey his message to the people in the form of musical hymns. He chose this medium to propagate his message because it was easily understood by the

population of the time. Wherever he travelled he used the local language to convey his message to the people. He travelled throughout the Indian subcontinent and further east, west and north to spread his mission. Wherever he went, he set up local cells called manjis, where his followers could gather to recite hymns and meditate.

There are many interesting anecdotes related to his journeys. According to one story, when Guru Nanak stopped at Haridwar, he found a large gathering of devotees taking ritual bath in the Ganga and offering water to their ancestors by way of throwing water at the sun. Immediately, Guru Nanak started throwing water in the opposite direction. The bewildered pilgrims asked him what he was doing. Guru Nanak replied "I am sending water to my farm which is dry". The pilgrims asked, "How will water reach you crops so far away?" Guru Nanak replied, "If your water can reach your ancestors in the region of the sun, why can't mine reach my fields a short distance away?"

On an eastern journey, Guru Nanak visited Gorakhmata where he discussed the true meaning of asceticism with some yogis. He proclaimed, "Asceticism doesn't lie in ascetic robes, in walking staff, or in the ashes. Asceticism doesn't lie in the earring, in the shaven head, or blowing a conch. Asceticism doesn't lie in wandering about, or in bathing at places of pilgrimage. On the other hand, asceticism lies in remaining pure amidst impurities."

After his first long journey spanning 12 years, Guru Nanak returned home. He then set out on a second journey travelling as far south as Sri Lanka. On his return he founded a settlement known as Kartarpur (Abode of God) on the western banks of Ravi river.

On his Third Journey he travelled north up to Tibet. Wherever Guru Nanak travelled, he always wore a combination of styles worn by Hindu and Muslim holy men. Because of this, wherever he went, he was asked whether he was a Hindu or Muslim.

Saving the environment

ION BEHALF of entire Power Finance Corporation family extend warm wishes to everyone on the auspicious occasion of 551st Prakash purab of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Let us celebrate this day and days to come honouring Guru Sahib's wisdom and vision. He was a teacher, poet and activist whose universal message of justice and equality for all, women empowerment, service to others and devotion to nature & environment was far ahead of his time. Guru Sahib gave us a message that the purpose of human beings is to achieve a blissful state and be in harmony with the earth and all creation. Sri Guru Granth Sahib (Air is the Guru, Water the Father, and the Earth is the Great Mother of all. Day and night are the two nurses, in whose



lap all the world is at play.) The present day world with environmental crisis caused by humanity's exploitation of nature is leading to the depletion of renewable resources, destruction of forests, over-use of land for agriculture and habitation. A new 'environmental ethic' dedicated to conservation and wise use of the resources of the bountiful nature is the need of the hour. May we learn from the great Guru's wisdom, adapt to live in harmony with the beautiful Mother Nature and rededicate ourselves to work towards a sustainable world while ensuring that the air, water, land, forests and biodiversity remain vibrant, living systems for our times and also for future generations.

R.S. Dhillon, CMD, Power Finance Corporation Ltd

The seeker of truth

SRI GURU NANAK DEV JI, the founder of Sikh religion is revered by all, irrespective of caste and creed. His impact on the Indian society has been profound. A seer visionary and preacher, Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji spread the holy message of love and universal brotherhood.

Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji teaches the oneness of God. He expressed the reality that there is one God and many paths and the name of God is Truth, "SATNAM". "There is light in all and that light is He. Through this light everything is illuminated." The unity of God implies the equality of men.

He spread a simple message of "EK OM KAR": we all are one, created by one creator. The entire creation depends on Hukum, i.e. God's will. He aligned with no religion and respected all religions. According to him, egoism is the cause of all human sufferings; it hampers human understanding, separates man from primal reality and



dims the divine spark within him. His followers are Sikhs (seekers of Truth) and he taught to bow only before God and to link themselves to the Guru, the light of Truth who lives always in direct consciousness of God, experiencing no separation. He is a vital link in man's spiritual progress. His influences go beyond the Sikh community and are spread throughout the world. He tried to incorporate the best beliefs of Hinduism and Islam while establishing the new tradition. His teachings inspire to live in harmony with one another and respect all religions.

As we observe his birth anniversary, we must remember not only to reflect upon what he taught us but also to mould our daily life in accordance with his teachings. On this auspicious occasion, I extend my heartiest greetings. Let us all pledge to follow the teachings of the great saint.

S Krishnan, MD & CEO Punjab & Sind Bank

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Healing Hearts Inspired by Guru Nanak’s Teachings

DOCTOR, YOU are among the pioneers of preventive cardiology in India with a brilliant career spanning over 3 decades. How has the Guru’s teaching impacted your contribution to the society as a cardiologist?

My life has been nurtured by the three basic tenets of Sikhism i.e., Pray, Work, Share-“Naam Japo, Kirat Karo, Vando Chhako, which is an important part of Guru Nanak’s teaching. It is from where I draw spiritual strength that has shaped my perspective towards life and profession. I believe that seva (service) through tan (physical), man (heart), dhan (resources), which involves complete commitment, is a result of hard work, selfless service and is a source of contentment. So, work hard for an honest living, always share the fruits of your success with fellow beings. In fact, complete commitment to one’s profession is total surrender to the will of the Almighty. I live by it with humility.

How do you translate Guru Nanak’s preaching, “Man Niva Mat Uchi Mat Pat Da Rakha Ape Wahe Guru,” a part of our daily ardas, which translates as ‘As Sikhs be endowed with humility, high wisdom, and the immortal being Waheguru may protect their wisdom’?

This verse defines the true essence of life i.e., simple living and high thinking inculcates humility and a sense of gratitude for all the blessings one has. Also, one has to shun petty and invested interests to live a worthwhile life in eternal communion with the Almighty. I can say with a sense of pride that SGRH is an outstanding example where in group practise the dilemma of patient management is eased through quick consensus by the collective synergies of 18 cardiologists having expertise in multiple disciplines in heartcare. In our profession ‘Time gained is a life saved’. The quality of treatment is not compromised

on nor is the patient inflicted with additional financial burden bringing solace to their physical, emotional, mental and financial trauma. We are empathic on reiterating our staff to treat and deal with the patient compassionately. Group practice inculcates a healthy team camaraderie, acceptance of varied view-points, enhances experience besides fosters sound professional and interpersonal ties. An enabled profession can serve society the best. We are fortunate to be part of Sir Ganga Ram Hospital which is a Trust-run hospital, where 20% of the patients are treated free of cost and a significant number at treated at affordable price.

Since the Covid-19 outbreak, how has SGRH risen to tackle the crisis while keeping its humanitarian spirit high?

We got to witness incredible spirit of human endurance and resourcefulness rise to its full potential when the unprecedented situation arose because of the Covid-19 pandemic. If you take a closer look, it would reveal that goodness is in every human being and when they come together the collective strength defies any challenge. SGRH is a living example of this spirit of valuing human life. It was amongst the first private hospitals to have dedicated beds and area specified exclusively for Covid patients. Mandatory precautions and strict measures were in place along all line of operations. The medical fraternity and staff relentlessly worked round the clock, while the hospital provided every support needed to the Covid warriors. Many of the Covid patients, who were economically poor, were treated at a nominal fee or free of cost. When Covid was at its peak, SGRH ensured that the junior doctors, paramedical staff, and front-line workers, got full salary despite financial constraints. The senior doctors reduced their salary drastically as an expression of solidarity with the institution



*Inspired by the teachings of Guru Nanak Dev ji, **Dr. J. P. S. Sawhney**, one of India’s leading pioneers in preventive cardiology, has shaped a stellar career for himself by placing ‘duty before self.’ A devout Sikh, the unassuming cardiologist has an enviable portfolio of brilliance and expertise to deservedly become Chairman - Department of Cardiology at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital (SGRH), one of India’s premier hospital based in Delhi. In a gesture of thanks giving on the holy occasion of Guru Purab commemorating Guru Nanak ji’s birth anniversary, Dr Sawhney shares with The Indian Express, the impact and relevance of the Sikh Guru’s teachings on his life enabling him to serve mankind as a divine calling.*

to tide over the fund crunch. As OPD’s were not functional, doctors of SGRH held many virtual consultations free of cost for its patients, whereas webinars kept the medical fraternity and its students informed and connected in the hour of crisis. Having lived with the virus for over a year now, we are more experienced and prepared in handling such cases.

How is SGRH contributing towards quality education of medical students and research?

I feel proud to say that SGRH, besides providing best patient care, is an institution which has strong focus on teaching and research. We have both postgraduate and post doctoral courses, PhD and fellowships in various departments with large number of students form across the country. We train hundreds of doctors every year. In research, we have participated in a large number of global clinical trials and registries, which helped us to develop new drugs for better treatment of patients in different clinical conditions. We have always had good support and appreciation from our senior colleagues and hospital trust.

Kabeer Maanas Janam Dhurlabh Hai Hoe Na Baarai Baar which means, “Kabeer, it is so difficult to obtain this human body; it does not just come over and over again.” What relevance does it bear in your profession?

This simple verse, if one looks into the deeper aspect of its meaning, underlines, that being born as a human being is a blessing in itself and one does not obtain this form so easily, nor does one get the human form again and again in the cycle of rebirth. Even in today’s circumstances the relevance of the teaching stands steady. It means that one should look after one’s health and lead a healthy life. Only when you take care of your

health can you take care of the community. So, look after your health and life and then serve the community. As doctors, we emphasise on this aspect by saying, “prevention is better then cure, so first take care of your health and yourself.”

Could you share about the humanitarian initiatives of the Sikh community during the Covid pandemic?

The Sikh community is acknowledged and felicitated worldwide for their humanitarian services. Since Covid put several nations under lockdown food and finance posed a serious concern for millions of people. Sikhs kept their celebrations low key and langars were stopped to avoid community transfer of the virus. However, the Sikh community ensured that the needy do not sleep on an empty stomach and so prepared food packets at homes and even Gurudwaras, as well as distributed other daily essentials collected by them. We also distributed free masks and provide free medical aid during emergencies. Sharing, caring and daring are intrinsic to the teachings of the Guru Nanak ji, and its strong philosophy make Sikhs stand out during any calamity.

Whom would you like to thank for enriching your life?

I believe that gratitude is the precursor of humility. Most importantly, I feel special and humbled as God has blessed me with all that one could wish for and much more, including the opportunity to work in tandem with my colleagues at SRGH for the betterment of society. I am happy to be a Doctor, a Clinical Cardiologist and a Researcher. I am indebted to my parents, wife, children, colleagues, patients and mentors for their selfless support to help me evolve as an individual and a professional. I pray that peace and wellness prevail with ‘Babaji’s meher’.

*Issued in Public Interest by
Dr. J. P. S. Sawhney*

ਪਵਣੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਪਾਣੀ ਪਿਤਾ ਮਾਤਾ ਧਰਤਿ ਮਹਤੁ ॥

- Guru Nanak

Air is the Guru, Water the Father, and the Earth is the Great Mother of all

Greetings from

Power Finance Corporation

on

Guru Nanak
JAYANTI

Let us follow the Great Guru's wisdom and work towards creating a sustainable world where all elements, flora & fauna remain vibrant today, tomorrow & forever



(A Navratna PSU)

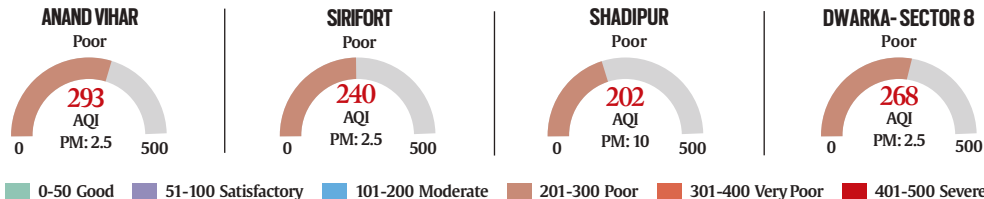
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SKYWATCH

FORECAST
Mainly clear sky. Mist/shallow fog in the morning.

MAX: 26 | **MIN: 7**
0.4°C above normal | 2.9°C below normal

BRIEFLY

City AQI to deteriorate this week

New Delhi: The capital's air quality is expected to deteriorate in the coming days, with wind speed expected to dip. On Sunday, AQI deteriorated to 254 from 231 the previous day. According to the SAFAR forecast, it is expected to deteriorate further to very poor over the coming two days. "Ventilation conditions are likely to slow down further by tomorrow. Stubble fire counts with sufficient potential as estimated from SAFAR-multi-satellite products have increased to around 464. Hence, stubble burning share in PM2.5 in Delhi's air is estimated at around 6% for today. AQI is forecast to marginally deteriorate to the very poor category for the next two days. It is likely to further deteriorate... on December 2," the forecast stated.

6 RWAs to get Swachh awards

New Delhi: In order to encourage participation of residents welfare associations (RWAs) in keeping their surroundings clean, the South Delhi Municipal Corporation has named six RWAs for the Swachh Survekshan Award. The awards will be given to RWA Chander Nagar in Janakpuri, RWA Brotherhood Apartment in Vikas Puri, RWA RED MIG Flat in Rajouri Garden, RWA C-2 Block in Janakpuri, RWA AE-Block in Tagore Garden and RWA Vatika Vihar in Subhash Nagar for securing top positions in the swachh ranking. As many as 37 RWAs from across 29 wards actively took part in the initiative, officials said.

38-year-old arrested for 'raping' niece

New Delhi: Police has arrested a 38-year-old man for allegedly raping his niece in New Delhi range. The arrest was made few days ago after the minor informed her mother that her uncle allegedly raped her when she had gone to his house. On the basis of her complaint, an FIR was registered and the accused was arrested. **ENS**

DRDO raises ICU beds in hospital

New Delhi: The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has increased the number of ICU beds to 500 in Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Covid Hospital at Delhi Cantonment, an official statement said Sunday. The hospital was made operational on July 5 by the DRDO to treat Covid-19 patients from Delhi and other states. It has a total of 1,000 beds. "DRDO has increased the number of ICU beds to 500 in Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Covid Hospital at Delhi Cantonment on the advice of the Union Government in view of rising number of cases in Delhi-NCR. All beds are provided with oxygen support," the statement said.

Block rejig on the cards for Delhi Cong

New Delhi: Organisational restructuring in the Delhi Congress is expected to begin next week at the block level and priority will be given to members who worked hard during Covid relief work, Delhi state president Anil Chaudhary said Sunday. **PTI**



NIGHT SHELTER

Farmers at Nirankari ground in Burari Sunday, where they have been permitted to hold their protest against the farm laws. *Gajendra Yadav*

DAY 2 OF SIT-IN

Under Ghazipur flyover, farmers recollect 2018 protest: 'Met with todphod, lathis'

SUKRITA BARUAH

NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

AS A few hundred farmers from Western Uttar Pradesh spent their second day under the Ghazipur flyover at Delhi's border with Uttar Pradesh on Sunday, it was not the first such experience for many of them — several of these farmers had also held a similar sit-in at the same place two years ago after a kisan rally had been stopped with violent force at the border.

On October 2, 2018, a 10-day long Kisan Kranti Yatra by farmers from various states had made news when they were stopped at the Ghazipur border to Delhi by police with tear gas shells, baton charge and water cannons, leaving at least 14 injured.

Many of the farmers from Western Uttar Pradesh who arrived at the border on Saturday in solidarity with the protesting farmers of Haryana and Punjab



The numbers increased on Sunday as more farmers came in from various villages during the course of the day and gathered under the flyover near the UP-Delhi border. *Prem Nath Pandey*

had been a part of that rally.

"The only thing we received from last time's protest was todphod, water cannons and lathis.

Nothing happened with the demands that we had come forward with. We had asked that the Swaminathan Report be im-

plemented but we didn't see our struggle lead to any favourable consequences for us," said Vikas, a farmer from Meerut district.

Heading to protest, mechanic dies after car catches fire

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI/ JHAJJAR, NOV 29

A 65-YEAR-OLD mechanic, who was on his way to join the farmers' protest at Tikri border, helping repair their vehicles along the way, died after his car caught fire in Bahadurgarh on Saturday night. Police said Janak Raj, who hailed from Punjab's Dhanaula, was sleeping in his vehicle when the incident took place.

Police said they inspected the spot and don't suspect foul play. His family said Raj, who supported the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU), left for Delhi two days ago with his farmer friends.

Superintendent of Police (Jhajjar) Rajesh Duggal said, "His friends told us they stopped at Bahadurgarh at 11.30 pm as one of their tractors needed to be repaired. After some time, Raj went to sleep inside his Swift car. Around 1.30 am, the car caught fire and the man died in his sleep." Raj's friends, Harpreet, Gurpreet and Gurnant, called police and tried to douse the blaze. They broke the car's windows and pulled out Raj but he had died of burn injuries and smoke. His friends said the car was donated by a man from Barnala.

Jhajjar Police tweeted, "There was a short circuit inside the car which led to the fire. We spoke to the farmers, they said they were sleeping in their tractors when the car caught fire..." Raj's family was informed and



Janak Raj (65) was sleeping in the car when the fire broke out

his body was taken to a hospital in Bahadurgarh. His son Sahil told reporters, "We received a call late at night about his death. We were shocked... he said he was going to help his friends in the protest and would be back soon. He had a repair shop, he shut it three days ago to go support the farmers."

Jamail Singh Jawandapindi, a BKU Ugrahan leader, said, "We have demanded Rs 20 lakh compensation from the Centre, a job for a family member, a loan waiver if any. The same demands have been sent across to the Punjab government as well." Raj's wife Urmila Devi and son Sahil also reiterated the demands. "I have done a BA, B.Ed and I am planning to appear for master cadre exams... I am unemployed as of now; we have no source of income."

JIGNASA SINHA & SUKRITA BARUAH

NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

TO SURVIVE the harsh winter, protesting farmers at Delhi borders make daily trips to nearby towns in Haryana to buy food and clothes since local police don't allow them to enter the capital. Help also comes from local groups and gurdwaras in nearby towns in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, which have been bringing them food and essentials.

At Tikri Border, near Mundka, farmers go to Bahadurgarh in Haryana to get food, clothes and quilts.

Manpreet Singh (35), a farmer, said, "There are a few shops here (Delhi) but they shut them when we approach them. Police also don't let us cross the border to buy groceries. They want us to go to the Burari ground but we will wait here. Yesterday, we decided to make trips to Bahadurgarh to get vegetables. We have wheat, oil and rice which will last us a month but we need vegetables."

Singh and four of his friends drove to Bahadurgarh and also bought quilts, potatoes and onions.

On Sunday morning, several farmers set their utensils and groceries on the road and made rotis with aloo sabzi. Some cut vegetables while others were tasked with serving food to farmers and commuters.

With the border sealed, and commuters having to walk a long distance to cross it, farmers



On Sunday morning, several farmers set their utensils and groceries on the road and made rotis with aloo sabzi.

said they helped people coming from Haryana by giving them roti and sabzi.

Nasib (66), another farmer, also went to Bahadurgarh and bought a sweater along with vegetables.

He said, "I knew police would stop us here. My wife sent some food but there are a lot of people here. We get tired after the protest but have to make these trips to get food. Also, there are no barricades in Haryana so we can go there and buy essentials."

Meanwhile, at the Delhi-UP Ghazipur border, farmers were helped by local groups who bought food as a show of solidarity.

Members of Singh Sabha Gurdwara in Delhi bought tea and dal-chawal for the protesting farmers.

"They are farmers, we are dependent on them and they spent the night here. They help us so

On similar force used on farmers at the Delhi-Haryana border, he said, "It really seems that there is no democracy in the country, there is no will to even talk to farmers. There is a very simple demand, that we be given a written assurance on the MSP but what protesting farmers are getting is torture."

Said Ankit Singh (22), from Baghpat district, "We remember everything that had happened last time. The tyres of our tractors had been punctured, elders who were sitting in tractors had been hurt. We were doing a peaceful yatra but that had shaken the government into reacting like that. But two years down the line, we are still struggling with increases in the costs of diesel, electricity, fertilisers and the GST while the price of sugarcane has not changed in four years. We are supposed to be paid by mills for our sugarcane within 14 days of cane delivery but many of us haven't re-

ceived payment for 14 months."

The farmers, affiliated with Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU), had settled under the Ghazipur flyover for the night on Saturday. The numbers increased on Sunday as more farmers came in from various villages during the course of the day.

Participating farmers and BKU national head Rakesh Tikait said that they intend to continue to remain at the border in their protest of solidarity.

"Farmers have thousands of issues and our struggles are never ending. Even during the coronavirus lockdown, even though we too were scared of the virus, we had to organise small sit-ins across villages in our district because sugarcane farmers had not yet received payment for the year 2018-2019. The current issue is a problem with all farmers but this government stifles their voices. They did it in 2018, they are doing it now," said Rajbir Singh, from Ghaziabad district.

City sees coldest Nov in a decade

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

BELOW NORMAL temperatures on most nights this month has pushed this November to be the coldest in at least a decade, data from the India Meteorological Department (IMD) shows.

The average minimum or night time temperature so far for the month until Sunday was 10.3 degrees Celsius — the lowest since at least 2011. This is also lower than the mean minimum temperature for the month, 12.9 degrees Celsius, which is based on data from 1981 to 2010, as per IMD.

Four cold wave days — when minimum temperature dips to 10 degrees Celsius or lower and the departure from normal temperature is 4.5 degrees or less — were recorded this November. Since 2011, Novembers in 2014 and 2013 have recorded only one cold wave each.

Minimum or night time temperature in the capital rapidly fell after November 16 — from 16 degrees Celsius to 6.3 degrees Celsius on November 23.

This was the lowest reading of minimum temperature for the current month since November 29, 2003, when mercury dipped to 6.1 degrees Celsius at night.

Minimum temperatures this month have also remained below normal on all days except on November 16 and 17, when rainfall and cloud cover over the city had helped increase the temperature.

IMD officials said a reason

OVER THE YEARS

Avg min Nov temp (in °C)	
2020	10.3*
2019	15
2018	13.4
2017	12.8
2016	12.8

*Until Nov 29

*Until Nov 29

LOWEST MIN TEMP THIS MONTH
Nov 23 - 6.3°C

Source: IMD

behind the dip in temperatures is the snowfall in high altitude areas north of Delhi in Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttarakhand. Cold westerly winds blowing from these areas towards Delhi have been bringing down the temperature.

Additionally, clear skies over Delhi for most part of the month, which causes higher radiation at night, and the La Niña weather pattern may have helped bring down minimum temperatures.

Kuldeep Srivastava, head of IMD's regional weather forecasting centre in Delhi, said the minimum temperature is expected to be below normal for the rest of winter in the capital.

On Sunday, the minimum temperature recorded at the IMD's Safdarjung observatory, which is representative of Delhi, was 7 degrees Celsius, three degrees below normal. It is forecast to remain seven degrees on Monday as well.

8 EXPRESS NETWORK

BRIEFLY



Babanrao Lonikar

MAHARASHTRA

Former minister 'threatens policeman'

Mumbai: Senior state BJP leader and former minister Babanrao Lonikar has landed in a spot after an audio clip surfaced on social media in which he is purportedly heard threatening a policeman. "Policesaana vidhasabhet ulta tangu (Will hang the police upside down in the Vidhan Sabha)," Lonikar is allegedly heard telling an assistant police inspector from Partur, his constituency. Lonikar was the water supply and sanitation minister in the last government. Lonikar's remarks are said to have been made after a police raid at a trader's house. **ENS**

TAMIL NADU

Gold worth Rs 1.5 cr seized

Chennai: Three kgs of gold worth Rs 1.57 crore was seized at the airport in three incidents, a customs official said Sunday. Three people have been held. In the first incident, Customs officials seized gold sheets concealed in LCD monitors in baggage of three passengers who came from Dubai on Saturday night. The sleuths also found gold sheets and foils hidden in laptops from four passengers who came from the nation Sunday. Gold in plastic pouches was found with a Dubai passenger. **PTI**

CHHATTISGARH

Two policemen die by suicide

Raipur: Two policemen allegedly died by suicide in different districts of Chhattisgarh's insurgency-hit Bastar division, officials said Sunday. Constable Dinesh Verma of the Chhattisgarh Armed Force allegedly shot himself with his service rifle on Sunday at his unit's camp in Sukma district, ASP Sunil Sharma said. In the other incident, police constable Vinod Porte (32) allegedly shot himself with an SLR rifle on Saturday afternoon in Pamed police station of Bijapur district, a local police official said. **PTI**

In Haryana villages, meetings on to send more farmers towards Delhi

SUKHBIR SIWACH

CHANDIGARH, NOVEMBER 29

A DAY after Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar claimed that Haryana farmers have not taken part in the stir against the three agricultural laws, the farmers organised panchayat meetings in many villages across the state to finalise plans to join their Punjab counterparts. Some of the state's farmers moved to the Delhi borders on Sunday itself.

"From our village Samain of Fatehabad district, farmers moved to Delhi in around 20 tractor-trolleys today," said Sube Singh Samain, a khap leader. According to Samain, similar panchayat meetings were held in other neighbouring villages too like Danoda (Jind) and Fatehabad's Bithmada, Bhimawala and Gajuwala.

Ahead of the "Delhi Chalo" call for November 26 and 27, the Haryana Police had arrested several farmer leaders from different parts of the state. Despite that, the farmers from Haryana, especially from the districts of Ambala, Kurukshetra, Yamunanagar and Fatehabad had reached Delhi borders on November 25, 26 and 27. First of all, a considerable number of the farmers from Haryana, led by state BKU president Gurnam Singh Chaduni, had moved to Delhi from Ambala by breaking police barricades on National Highway-44 on November 25.

Now some of Haryana farmer leaders have been released from jails. After release, they have intensified their efforts to mobilise the farmers against the three controversial farm laws. "We have planned to hold a meeting of 19

Farmers protest at Kundli border with Delhi in Haryana's Sonepat district on Sunday. **PTI**

villages of Charkhi Dadri district on December 1 in which programme will be chalked out to move to Delhi in tractor-trolleys," said Jagbir Ghasola, a farmer leader from Charkhi Dadri.

According to Ghasola, a khap panchayat meeting too has been planned in Charkhi Dadri district on November 30.

All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) state secretary Dayanant Poonia said the farmers from Bhiwani district will move to Delhi in tractor-trolleys on December 1. According to Poonia, the farmers are holding meetings in the villages of neighbouring Hisar district too. Keeping in view the "Delhi Chalo" call of farmers, Poonia too was arrested on November 26 and was released a day later.

The farmers in Haryana are also planning to offer tactical help to the farmers at Delhi borders in case they face any force.

Further, the farmers of Rohtak district have started collecting ration to supply to the protesters at borders.

HOODA SLAMS KHATTAR REMARK

Chandigarh: Congress leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda Sunday slammed Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar for his remarks that the state's farmers have not participated in the stir against the new agri laws. He warned that if farmers' problems are not resolved, a "bigger movement" would be launched. Hooda said the state's farmers have been agitating against the laws for a long time. **ENS**

Khattar puts out call data, Amarinder terms it fraud

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, NOVEMBER 29

A FEW hours after Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar made his office's call details public to prove that he called his Punjab counterpart Capt Amarinder Singh to discuss the farmer protests, the latter trashed it as "complete fraud".

In a statement, Amarinder on Sunday said, "Flaunting a page of his own office register cannot condone ML Khattar's lies, and if he really wanted to connect, he could easily have used official channels or called up on the mobile phone."

Khattar has said that he had tried to talk to his Punjab counterpart on many occasions over telephone on the 'Delhi Chalo' march by farmers' protesting the

Central farm reform laws. "Now, when the record has been shown as to how many times I tried to speak to him, he (Amarinder) has no answer," he had said earlier in the day.

"If at all someone from his office called my residence, why were the calls made to an attendant? Why were official channels not used to get in touch with me?" asked Amarinder.

"Top officials of the Punjab government, at principal secretary and DGP levels among others, have been in touch with each other on the farmers' issue for the past several days. Yet none of these officials conveyed Khattar's desire to talk to me at any point in time," Amarinder said, adding that his Haryana counterpart's attempt to "seize a high moral ground" on the farmers' Delhi Chalo march was "pathetic".

No space for talks: Oppn slams PM remarks on new farm laws

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

HOURS AFTER Prime Minister Narendra Modi defended the farm laws passed by his government, the Opposition Sunday hit out at the BJP-led Central government saying the Prime Minister's remarks leave little room for talks with the agitating farmers and said that his stance shows that the government is "drunk with power".

"Prime Minister Modi has in his Mann ki Baat address supported the three anti-farmer black laws. When the head of the country... the prime minister himself, comes out in support of the laws... then how will talks happen and what will be the outcome of such talks..." Congress' communications department head Randeep Surjewala said at a press conference.

The Left, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and the Samajwadi Party (SP) too slammed the Prime



Randeep Surjewala; Akhilesh Yadav

Minister's remarks. "The Prime Minister has justified the laws. Then he should meet the representatives of the farmers and argue with them. The leaders of this agitation are not ignorant people... and where was the Prime Minister when the Bills were passed. Why he didn't speak or intervene in Parliament. He should have communicated to the people through Parliament. Mann Ki Baat cannot replace Parliament," CPI general secretary D Raja said.

"The farmers of the country are angry and agitated over the three farm laws enacted recently by the Central government. It would be better if the Centre re-

considers these laws enacted without forging any consensus with farmers," BSP chief Mayawati said.

SP chief Akhilesh Yadav too attacked the Centre, accusing it of seeking to mortgage the country to the rich.

"Insulting farmers by calling them terrorists is the worst face of the BJP. The BJP, which favours the rich, is conspiring to mortgage farms, farming, small business, trading, roads, transportation and everything else to the rich... If farmers are terrorists for the BJP, the BJP leaders and workers should pledge not to consume the food grown by them," he said.

At the Congress press conference, Surjewala said the Prime Minister's remarks show his "obduracy, arrogance and rigidity" in dealing with "62 crore farmers and farm labourers." He also lashed out at Home Minister Amit Shah for holding road shows in Hyderabad while there was no word on talks with the agitating farmers.

SIJ junks vaccine trial volunteer's claims: 'Will seek damages'

ARUN JANARDHANAN

CHENNAI, NOVEMBER 29

DAYS AFTER a Chennai man, who volunteered to take part in the clinical trials of vaccine candidate Covidshield, sent a legal notice to Serum Institute of India (SII) alleging that the vaccine triggered "severe adverse reaction" in him and sought compensation of Rs 5 crore, the Pune-based firm on Sunday said the allegations were "malicious" and that his medical condition was not linked to the vaccine trial.

The company said it will seek damages in excess of Rs 100 crore. Chennai-based advocates N G R Prasad and R Rajaram sent the legal notice to SII—which is collaborating with AstraZeneca and Oxford University to develop the vaccine—on behalf of the participant on November 21.

The notice said, "Our client states that it is very disappointing and shocking to note that after his discharge from the hospital, there has been no follow-up... Even after a month of the severe adverse reaction to the vaccine, neither have the regulator (Drugs Controller General of India) Data and Safety Monitoring Committee, the sponsors (ICMR and Serum Institute of India) or the collaborators of the sponsors (AstraZeneca and Oxford University) got in touch with him to find out about the severe adverse effect after vaccination and investigate the severe reaction the test vaccine has had on him."

On Sunday, the SII said in a statement: "The allegations in the notice are malicious and misconceived. While the Serum Institute of India is sympathetic

PM to interact with 3 vaccine teams

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will interact with three teams involved in developing Covid-19 vaccine via video conferencing on Monday. "Tomorrow, on 30th November 2020, PM @narendramodi will interact, via video

conferencing, with three teams that are involved in developing a Covid-19 vaccine. The teams he will interact with are from Genovaa Biopharma, Biological E and Dr. Reddy's," the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said in a tweet. **ENS**

with the volunteer's medical condition, there is absolutely no correlation with the vaccine trial and the medical condition of the volunteer. The volunteer is falsely laying the blame for his medical problems on the Covid vaccine trial."

The SII said the claim is malicious "because the volunteer was specifically informed by the medical team that the complications he suffered were independent of the vaccine trial he underwent".

"In spite of specifically being made aware of the same, he still chose to go public and malign the reputation of the company. It is evident that the intention behind the spreading of such malicious information is an oblique pecuniary motive. The Serum Institute of India will seek damages in excess of 100 crore for the same and will defend such malicious claims," the SII said.

The principal investigator of the trial site told *The Indian Express*, "I can confirm that we reported the case to concerned authorities; in this case, it is the ethics committee and the DGLI. All the protocols have been followed."

Tamil Nadu Health Minister C Vijayabaskar said the government will probe the issue. "We have been closely monitoring all

of them and there were no side-effects reported so far... We will probe on this particular case reported now," he said.

According to the legal notice, the participant had "no adverse reaction for the first 10 days after the vaccination". But on October 11, he woke up with severe headache and went back to sleep. "Our client's wife says there was a total behavioural change in her husband – he was not aware of his surroundings, he showed irritation towards light and sound, and was resisting any effort to make him get up from bed," it said.

The notice said the participant was discharged on October 26, with discharge summary stating that he had suffered "Acute Encephalopathy". The notice alleged in the 16 days that he was in hospital, "almost all possible medical tests and investigations were done on him to connect his neurological setback to any of his earlier health condition". But all tests returned negative.

Apart from the SII, the notice was sent to AstraZeneca and Oxford Vaccine Group with copies to WHO. It demanded the vaccine trial, which is currently being tested on about 1,600 volunteers in India, be halted immediately.

WITH ENS, NEW DELHI

TRACKING INDIA'S COVID CURVE

272 DAYS SINCE PANDEMIC BEGAN	CASES:	RECOVERED:
	93,92,919	88,02,267
	TESTS: 13,95,03,803	DOUBLING RATE: 156.44**



KEY STATES TO WATCH	TOTAL CASES	SURGE IN 24 HOURS	7-DAY AVG GROWTH*	DOUBLING TIME**
■ Maharashtra	18,14,515	5,965	0.32%	225.40
■ Kerala	5,93,957	6,249	0.91%	79.07
■ Delhi	5,61,742	4,998	1.02%	70.39
■ West Bengal	4,77,446	3,459	0.76%	94.62
■ Haryana	2,30,713	1,967	1.01%	71.19

* Compounded Daily Growth Rate over last 7 days ** Calculated over 7-day growth

CASE FATALITY RATIO	POSITIVITY RATE	DAILY IN, DAILY OUT
7 DAYS EARLIER: 1.46	7 DAYS EARLIER: 6.90	DETECTED TODAY: 41,810
NOW: 1.46	NOW: 6.73	RECOVERED TODAY: 42,298
Deaths as a ratio of positive cases (in %); indicator of progress in averting deaths	Positives against number tested (in %); indicator of the spread of disease	Becoming sick vs recovering; more recoveries for 14 days may signal the peak

Data as on November 29, released by Union Ministry of Health, ICMR and states. Often daily numbers include data from previous days. As such, trends based on daily numbers are indicative, not definitive

Suvendu says people will have last word on career

ATRI MITRA

MAHISHADAL, NOVEMBER 29

IN HIS first public meeting after quitting as a minister in West Bengal government, Suvendu Adhikari Sunday refrained from making any political announcement and said "people will have the last word" on his political career.

Addressing an event in memory of freedom fighter late Ranjit Kumar Bayal in Purba Medinipur district, Adhikari invoked Bhimrao Ambedkar and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and said he will uphold the Constitution and serve Bengalis and Bengal as "sevak".

"Our country's democratic system is by the people, for the people and of the people. So, people will have the last word. With their support and the responsibility they have bestowed on me, I will serve Bengalis and Bengal as their sevak," he said at the programme organised by Tamralipto Janakalyan Samiti.

Suvendu Adhikari at a rally on Sunday. **Partha Paul**

On Friday, he resigned as Transport, Irrigation and Waterways Minister. He, however, did not quit the party or resign as an MLA. While there is speculation that he will join the BJP in the first week of December, Adhikari is keeping his cards close to his chest.

TMC MP Saugata Roy who has been tasked by the party to hold parleys with Adhikari, said, "Doors are still open for talks. I am hopeful of dialogue between Suvendu and the party leadership."

WITH PTI INPUTS

No BJP leader has courage to attack me by name: Abhishek

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

KOLKATA, NOVEMBER 29

TMC MP Abhishek Banerjee Sunday attacked BJP leaders for their "bhaipo" (nephew) jibe and dared them to take his name.

Addressing party workers in South 24 Parganas district, Banerjee, nephew of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, said, "During the Lok Sabha poll campaign, PM Narendra Modi said *bhatija ka batti gul hone wala hain* (nephew is set to lose the election). Now, all BJP leaders have only one thing to say: bhaipo (nephew). They don't have the guts to take my name. Whenever anyone targeted me, I have taken legal action."

"As a result, they are now resorting to the 'bhaipo' remark... If they have the guts, then they must attack me by taking my name," said Banerjee.

As BJP sounds BMC poll bugle, Sena focus on development and environment

SANDEEP ASHAR

MUMBAI, NOVEMBER 29

MINUTES AFTER Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray announced scrapping of the Metro carshed project at Aarey in October, his son and Maharashtra Environment Minister Aaditya had tweeted, "Aarey Saved!" Championing the cause of preservation of the green, Uddhav said, "Biodiversity in Aarey needs to be conserved and protected. Nowhere is there an 800-acre jungle in an urban setup."

Shiv Sena has also been restrained in its reactions as personal accusations were hurled against the party's first family in connection with the Sushant Singh Rajput's death case and the Kanganra Ranaut fiasco.

Ever since he forged an alliance with Congress and NCP, Thackeray has made a conscious effort of moving his party away from hardline Hindutva, focusing instead on environment and development issues to expand his party's appeal among Mumbai's cosmopolitan middle class.

Uddhav Thackeray and Aaditya Thackeray visit the Coastal Road project site in Mumbai on Sunday. **Ganesh Shirsekar**

The answer to this change in strategy perhaps lies in the mood on a February afternoon in 2017, a day that started with celebrations outside Thackerays' residence Matoshree, but ended on a subdued note. It was the day of BMC poll results. The BJP had notched up its best performance in BMC polls that year, winning 82 seats to Sena's 84. The 2019 state polls, which both contested jointly, further showed how BJP consoli-

dated its hold among the non-Marathi Hindu voters in Mumbai. Outperforming Sena, it won 16 of the 17 seats it contested. Sena won 14 of the 19 it fought. Sena knows the 2022 BMC Elections is likely to be more closely contested. While the party has consistently been in power in BMC since 1997, the BJP is eager to dislodge its former ally.

Although elections are still more than a year away, the BJP has sounded the bugle. Last week, for-

EXPLAINED A battle of high stakes

At 33,441 crore, BMC's budget is bigger than that of several smaller states. It can undertake big ticket development projects on its own. Control over the civic body allows a party to wield more control over economic activities. For the BJP, dislodging the Sena has also become a matter of prestige.

mer CM Devendra Fadnavis launched BJP's Mission Mumbai, where he vowed: "Shiv Sena's bhagwa (saffron flag) will not unfurl atop the BMC headquarters after the 2022 polls." BJP is eyeing Sena's hardline Hindu vote. "Thackeray's decision to align with Congress and NCP has hurt sentiments of their traditional voters," said MLA Atul Bhatkalkar, in charge of

Mission Mumbai.

A day after Fadnavis's declaration, a *Saamana* editorial invoked Marathi pride, likening Sena's bhagwa to the bhagwa of Chhatrapati Shivaji, the Samyukta Maharashtra movement and Marathi mannos. But Sena knows that a campaign on "who's more pro-Hindutva" might not work.

So the Thackerays appear to be working on a new Hindutva template — less confrontational and more cosmopolitan. From the topics Aaditya tweets on to the image Uddhav has tried to build through social media addresses, the aim is to reach out to a larger section of the middle class.

Aaditya, minister-in-charge for Mumbai suburbs, has been pushing development activities in pockets where the Sena hopes to reap benefits. "We have evolved an action plan to push development works over the next year," said former minister Ravindra Waikar.

Amid indications that BJP may inch closer to MNS in run-up to the polls, Sena is believed to be keen on stitching a broad pre-poll pact with NCP and Congress.

MIG-29K CRASH

Navy finds some aircraft debris; search on for second pilot

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI/PANAJI, NOV 29

THE INDIAN Navy has recovered some debris of the MiG-29K aircraft that went missing three days ago in the Arabian Sea off the Goa coast, a spokesperson said on Sunday, adding the search continued with ships and aircraft for missing pilot Commander Nishant Singh.

In addition to nine warships and 14 aircraft engaged in the search efforts, Indian Navy's Fast Interceptor Craft are also deployed to search waters along the coast, a defence release said.

"Indian Navy's search and rescue effort to locate the second pilot of the MiG-29K trainer aircraft which was ditched off Goa on November 26 continues with extensive deployment of naval ships

and aircraft," a defence release said. "Some debris of the aircraft, including landing gear, turbo charger, fuel tank engine and wing engine cowling have been located," it said.

The Marine Police and Coastal Police are on the lookout and nearby fishing villages have been sensitised, the release added.

The Russian-origin jet had taken off from aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya, and went down at around 5 PM on Thursday, officials had said, adding that one pilots of the aircraft had been rescued. The MiG-29K is an all-weather carrier-based multirole fighter aircraft developed by Russian aerospace company Mikoyan (MiG). The Indian Navy had procured a fleet of 45 MiG-29Ks from Russia over a decade back at a cost of around \$2 billion to operate from INS Vikramaditya.



CRPF OFFICER KILLED IN SUKMA CREMATED

Family members and security personnel pay tribute to CRPF officer Nitin P Bhalerao in Nashik on Sunday. Bhalerao was killed in a Maoist attack in Sukma district of Chhattisgarh on Saturday night. Seven CoBRA personnel were injured in the attack. *Express*

Live wire kills elephant, cuts short brothers' journey across 4 states; search on for another

VIVEK DESHPANDE
NAGPUR, NOVEMBER 29



The brothers separated from their herd in 2019. *Express*

BROTHERS RAM and Balram covered at least 2,000 km, probably after getting separated from their herd in Odisha some time in the beginning of 2019. After spending time in forests spread across four states, the elephants reached the Bargi dam area in Jabalpur district of Madhya Pradesh two days ago.

On Friday, one of them was electrocuted when he came in contact with a live wire. The other has now proceeded alone towards Mandla district, the authorities on his tail.

Jabalpur Chief Conservator of Forest R D Mahla said, "One of the two died of electrocution due to a live wire put up by villagers in farms near Bargi dam for killing wild boars. The other elephant has moved towards Mandla and a team is trailing him for a capture operation."

"It started somewhere around February 2019, when the two brothers, Ram aged 20 years and Balram, around 18 years, entered Chhattisgarh's Mahasamund dis-

trict from neighbouring Odisha," said Mansoor Khan, an elephant activist from Bilaspur, who has tracked the two elephants' journey. "From Mahasamund, they went to Kanker and later to Bastar that recorded its first elephant sighting ever."

While officials couldn't confirm if the dead elephant was Ram or Balram, Khan said, "From the photograph, it appears to be the younger Balram."

The brothers did not stop anywhere beyond a few days, said

Khan, who leads a group that raises awareness in Chhattisgarh districts about how to remain safe from elephants.

"They headed for Kawardha district followed by Rajnandgaon around April. Later, they went to Seoni followed by Balaghat district in Madhya Pradesh. For about two days, they had also entered Gadchiroli district," Khan said.

In Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district, the two stayed near a village in Korchi tehsil, where a rush of onlookers led to a commotion

in which a forest guard was injured in June last year.

Later, the elephants again entered Madhya Pradesh and spent several months in the jungles of Seoni and Balaghat, also spending some time in Kawardha district of Chhattisgarh.

"This August, they came to Kanha Tiger Reserve's core area and stayed for about 10-15 days during which they attacked four of our domesticated elephants," said Kanha Field Director S K Singh. "They left the core and settled in the territorial forest for a few months," he added.

"They then headed for Jabalpur in November. On Friday, tragedy struck them and one of them died of electrocution."

Singh said the elephants moved close to several villages and caused a human death in Seoni. Asked what would be the next step after Ram is captured, Mahla said, "That will be decided later." Pench Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh, Field Director Vikram Singh Parihar said, "On Sunday, the other elephant was located near Kutela village in Jabalpur divisional forest, about

30 km from the electrocution spot. Our men are on his trail."

Elephant whisperer Anand Shinde said, "Male elephants do get separated by choice from the herd anytime after attaining 12 years of age to prevent in-breeding. Male elephants have developed a tendency to move together to ensure each other's safety from poachers. They have a genetic memory and know routes walked by their forefathers. So, these two elephants' journey is absolutely normal. The only thing to watch is to not cross the path of the other elephant should he walk back to the place where his brother died. He could then get extremely violent..."

Balram's death also underscores the growing incidence of wildlife deaths by electrocution. Nitin Desai, central India Director of Wildlife Protection Society of India, said, "Poaching of herbivores for bush meat by electrocution is growing alarmingly all over the country and accidental killing of unintended targets like big cats and elephants is a collateral damage that's much bigger loss than the intended animals' deaths..."

12 leopards shifted to private rescue centre in Gujarat

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
RAJKOT, NOVEMBER 29

IN A first-of-its-kind project in the state, the Gujarat forest department has transferred 12 leopards, captured from the wild after the animals came in conflict with humans, to a private rescue and rehabilitation centre in Jamnagar for their maintenance and upkeep as part of a public private partnership (PPP) project between the state government and Reliance Industries Limited (RIL).

State forest department officials said 12 leopards from Sakkar Baug Zoological Park, Junagadh, were transferred to Greens Zoological Rescue and Rehabilitation Kingdom, located near RIL's oil refinery complex in Jamnagar district, a couple of days ago. Twenty-three more leopards, they said, will be transferred to the private facility in future.

Shyamal Tikadar, the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) and Chief Wildlife Warden of Gujarat, said, "...The private rescue and rehabilitation centre will maintain these leopards but their ownership will continue to be vested in the government."

RAJKOT HOSPITAL FIRE

Chairman, 4 others booked for negligence

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
RAJKOT, NOVEMBER 29

TWO DAYS after a fire in the intensive care unit (ICU) of Uday Shivanand Covid Hospital in Rajkot left five patients dead, the police have booked the chairman of the private company that runs the facility, his son and three doctors for causing deaths due to negligence by not adhering to fires safety norms.

Manoharsinh Jadeja, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (zone-II) of Rajkot city, said an offence under IPC Sections 304A (causing deaths by negligence) and 114 (common intent) was registered at Malaviyanagar police station against Gokul Life Care Private Limited (GLCPL) chairman Dr Prakash Modha, son Vishal Modha, and Dr Tejas Karamta, Dr Tejas Motivaras and Dr Digvijaysinh Jadeja, all involved in the operations of Uday Shivanand Covid Hospital.

The chairman of GLCPL, a private firm, runs a chain of hospitals under the brand name Gokul and also manages the Uday Shivanand Covid Hospital near Ananda Bungalow Chowk in Mavdi area of Rajkot. His son, Vishal, was involved in obtaining approval for the Covid hospital from the Rajkot Municipal Corporation.

"The main negligence, which is also mentioned in the FIR, was a blocked emergency exit in the ICU. Due to the blockade, the emergency exit couldn't be used after the fire broke out in the ICU. There was no adequate ventilation system in the unit and, in fact, one of the five patients died due to asphyxiation... The 57-bed hospital has only one entry and exit and that, too, is only one-metre wide against the National Building Code requirement of a two-metre wide gate for ICU. Prima facie it was found that the staff was not trained in firefighting," Jadeja said at a press conference on Sunday.

The DCP added the hospital didn't have any emergency evacuation plan nor did it have an au-



Five people were killed in the fire at Uday Shivanand hospital in Rajkot. *PTI file*

tomatic sprinkler system. "In all, we have found negligence on 10 counts and are questioning all the five accused," Jadeja added.

The DCP said three members of Dr Modha's family are directors in GLCPL.

Jadeja said they had questioned two trustees of Shivanand Mission, an NGO which owns the building out of which the Uday Covid Hospital was functioning, and their role in the incident was not established during the primary investigation. He said the police were still investigating why the fire broke out.

The fire, which started at 12.22 am on Friday, had engulfed the entire ICU within seconds, the officer said, leaving five patients - Nitin Badani (61), a resident of Morbi town, Ramshi Loh (62), a resident of Jasdan town in Rajkot district, Rasiklal Agrawat, a resident of Shapar-Veraval in Rajkot district, Sanjay Rathod (57), a resident of Prahlad plot area of Rajkot city, and Keshubhai Akbari (50) from New Shakti Society, Rajkot -- dead.

Jadeja said post mortem reports have stated that Akbari had died due to asphyxiation while the others had died due to burn injuries.

Rajkot Police Commissioner Manoj Agarwal had set up a special investigation team (SIT) to supervise the probe in the incident. The SIT was headed by the DCP.

Chief Minister Vijay Rupani has also instituted a high-level probe by Additional Chief Secretary AK Rakesh and a judicial enquiry by Justice (retired) KA Puj of Gujarat High Court.

FROM PAGE ONE

UP law

Pandey confirmed that a case had been lodged against Ahmed under the Uttar Pradesh Vidhi Viruddh Dham Samparivartan Pratishedh Adhyadesh, 2020, which was notified on Saturday. The government has said the ordinance is meant to check "forced" and "fraudulent" religious conversions.

According to the police, the woman's father, a farmer, said Ahmed and she became friends while in school together, and he was pressuring her to convert and get married to him. Ahmed, who studied till Class 12, does odd jobs in neighbouring Rampur district and regularly visits Bareilly.

Apart from the ordinance, the police have lodged an FIR against Ahmed under IPC Sections 504 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of peace) and 506 (criminal intimidation), said Station House Officer, Deorania Police Station, Daya Shankar. The officer said they raided Ahmed's house but had not found him.

The woman's elder brother told *The Indian Express*, "Whenever we said anything, Ahmed abused us and threatened to eliminate the entire family."

Ahmed's family runs a shop in Bareilly. Daya Shankar said his parents and sister had left the village after the case was lodged.

The police have come to know that Ahmed and the woman had left the village together in October last year and were traced four days later to Madhya Pradesh. Additional Superintendent of Police, Bareilly (Rural), Sansar Singh said Ahmed was arrested at the time but the woman had denied the prosecution charges in court. "I have yet to check the status of that case," Sansar Singh said.

In April, the woman was married, and moved to Pilibhit. "The family has said that since then, Ahmed had been harassing them. He was pressuring them to call back the woman and allow the two to get married after she converts. He visited the family on

Saturday and they approached the police," the SHO said.

The new UP law provides for a jail term up to 10 years, with all alleged offences cognizable and non-bailable. The ordinance says no person shall attempt to convert another by misrepresentation, force, allurements, any fraudulent means or by marriage. If a person converts back to the religion they most recently belonged to, that is not to be considered as conversion under the ordinance. Any aggrieved person can lodge a complaint, and the burden of proof lies on the accused or the person who has converted.

PSUs

Market experts say this differential in performance is one of the reasons for the weak interest of foreign portfolio investments in state-owned companies.

While FPIs have pumped in a net of over Rs 1.56 lakh crore into Indian equities since April 1, state-owned companies have not benefited. Data sourced from primeinfobase.com show that no state-owned company figured in the list of top 10 companies that received highest FPI investment in the quarter ended September.

Shareholding data available at BSE show that in the case of ONGC, the FPI holding declined from 8.65 per cent in December 2019 to 7.69 in September 2020, while Indian Oil Corporation saw FPI holding fall from 7.64 per cent to 6.07 per cent in the period.

Even in the case of SBI and Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd (PGCIL), which are the two most valuable state-owned companies by market capitalisation, the FPIs have reduced their holdings. While in the case of SBI, they reduced their holding from 10.98 per cent in December 2019 to 7.75 per cent in September 2020, they brought it down from 27.28 per cent to 25.97 per cent in the case of PGCIL in the same period.

Data from primeinfobase.com also show that the percentage holding of government (as promoter) in companies listed on NSE hit an all-time low of 5.05 per cent as on September 30, 2020, down from

6.17 per cent as on June 30, 2020. Over an 11-year period, the holding has been steadily declining from 22.46 per cent on June 30, 2009.

Pranav Haldea, Managing Director of Prime Database, said the decline in the government's holding is due to factors including "Government's divestment programme, not enough new listings and also lacklustre performance of many CPSEs relative to their private peers".

Data show that the value of government holdings in companies promoted by it has declined from Rs 11.67 lakh crore as of December 2019 to 7.62 lakh crore as of September 2020. While the value had fallen sharply to 6.95 lakh crore in March 2020 following the huge fall in markets in March, the recovery of PSU stocks have been relatively very slow.

Low valuations are an issue for the government as it has lined up a heavy disinvestment agenda. The Finance Ministry has set a target of Rs 2.1 lakh crore of receipts through disinvestment.

CoBRA officer

daughter Vedangi (10), and two brothers. Bharti raised the children on her own after losing her husband when they were very young.

Bhalerao's birthday was on December 21, and he was planning to return home around that time. The family had hoped to celebrate a delayed Diwali apart from his birthday with him. Sister-in-law Vrushali Bhalerao said the 33-year-old would come home every year for Diwali. "This year he delayed it because he wanted others in his battalion to go home for the festival," she said. "...We are very proud of his sacrifice."

A friend in Bhalerao's hometown Nashik said, "He always wanted to be at the forefront. I wish he had stopped somewhere."

The injured in Saturday's attack all belong to the 206 CoBRA Battalion, including second-in-command rank officer Dinesh Kumar Singh. Bhalerao had been posted with the battalion in

Chhattisgarh not too long back.

Bastar IG P Sundarraj said the incident occurred in Chintagufa area. "An anti-Maoist operation was being carried out by the CoBRA, STF and DRG (District Reserve Guard) troops from Chintalnar, Burkapal and Chintagufa base camps on Saturday. At around 8.30 pm, an IED blast occurred near the Arbaraj Metta hills," he said.

The site is hardly 8 km from Minpa where 17 DRG personnel lost their lives in a Maoist attack in March, the police said. The Chintagufa Police Station is 9 km away.

Eight of the seriously injured were evacuated in a helicopter to Raipur around midnight. However, Bhalerao could not be saved. Having joined the CRPF in 2010, Bhalerao had served in Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir and Delhi earlier. In 2018, he appeared for the Limited Departmental Competitive Exam and cleared it to be promoted to the rank of Assistant Commandant. During a basic training course at the CRPF's Internal Security Academy in Mount Abu, he was adjudged the best outdoor trainee. He followed that up with three-month training at the CoBRA School of Jungle Warfare and Tactics in Belgium. Once again, he was adjudged the all-round best trainee.

CRPF spokesperson and Deputy Inspector General Moses Dhinakaran said Bhalerao was skilled in planning and executing operations against Maoists, as well as being an excellent motivator and man-manager in difficult surroundings. "He had exceptional leadership qualities. He was disciplined, brave and enthusiastic," Dhinakaran said.

Bhalerao's instructor during basic training, Assistant Commandant Vijay Chaudhary, said he stood out for his "tactical acumen and physical fitness", and that out of the various wings of the CRPF, he had opted for CoBRA.

An undated video posted on Twitter had a junior officer praising Bhalerao and saying he wished every force would get an officer like him. The ceremony to pay homage

to Bhalerao in Raipur was attended by Chhattisgarh Home Minister Tamradhwaj Sahu and CRPF DG A P Maheshwari, who flew in from Delhi. Sahu said: "Our forces are being cautioned to move carefully. But sometimes, inadvertently, lapses happen."

Delhi riots

and impartial investigation is made...and a final report filed...without delay," the court ordered.

It added that Deputy Commissioner of Police, North East - under which Jafrabad falls - should monitor the probe.

Saleem's complaint also names Naresh Tyagi, Uttam Tyagi, and Supreme Maheswari who figure as accused by the Delhi police in the murder of one Parvez (48) during the riots.

The Indian Express had first reported on discrepancies in the police chargesheet in Parvez's murder case: how sections of Arms Act were dropped; CCTV footage of the incident was not found by the police; and that all accused had deleted their mobile phone data from the days of the riots.

Significantly, an office-bearer of VHP, Devesh Mishra, among those questioned by the police in Parvez's case, had lodged a formal complaint that "false cases" were being foisted "on innocent Hindus".

Calling for an FIR in Saleem's case, the court said: "...The equal protection of laws cannot be denied to the complainant merely on account of registration of certain FIRs against him...and on the assumption of the IO (Investigating Officer) that the complaint is false and made to save the complainant and that too without even registering an FIR and conducting an independent and impartial investigation."

In its order, the court also put on record the alleged response of Delhi Police in handling the complaint. "It has been alleged...some anti-social people who are his neighbours...fired gunshots at his house, pelted stones and threw petrol bombs...The complainant asked for help but no police personnel arrived at the spot. The

complainant also made a written complaint on March 1 (2020), with the SHOPS Jafrabad and further to DCP concerned on March 17 but no action has been taken...so far by the police."

Bullet train

"If we are to build 237 km in four years, there is no other way except to use this technique. But these carrier-and-launcher machines are manufactured in China. So this is one of the challenges which we have posed to the industry, including L&T (which is building 325 km of a high-speed viaduct in Gujarat) and the academicians, that why can't we develop them rather than importing them from China?" Khare told a meeting of the industry body. The Indian industry doesn't have any experience of building high-speed rail systems.

Procuring these machines was common earlier. "I guess people here never needed to apply their minds to make them because they were available cheap in China. Now we are telling people to try and design them, let's be self reliant. It's not like Indian engineers cannot make it," Khare told *The Indian Express*.

Khare acknowledged that the machines are "no joke". "They are vehicles capable of carrying loads of 1000 tonnes-plus." Noting that even Japan, which is helping India with the bullet train project, had not designed such machines, Khare said China came up with them over its construction of 25,000 km of high-speed rail.

Similarly, the NHSRL has asked the Ahmedabad Textile Research Institute to work on developing upholstery similar to the fire-retardant one used in Japan's high-speed Shinkansen system. Besides, at the behest of the NHSRL, several IITs are making simulation software for electrical systems etc which are currently the sole domain of foreign consultants. Engineering institutes have also been asked to study ballastless track, to replicate the Shinkansen technology.

In the latest understanding reached with the Japanese side, India is to carry out around 75% of

the construction for the project through Indian firms. Typically, in projects of such a scale, around Rs 80,000-90,000 crore worth of contracts, mostly in civil construction and even track-laying, would go to Indian companies. The bullet train project, without normal inflation factored in from 2015, is estimated at Rs 1.08 lakh crore.

The NHSRL has told Indian contractors to ensure that their staff, from rail-welding technicians to engineers, motor car operators and supervisors, get trained and certified by a reputed Japanese agency. The training sessions can last from a few days to 125 days, and the cost has to be borne by the contractors.

While the Railways insists the bullet train project is still on time for the December 2023 deadline, sources said they are staring at a date of December 2028.

Arunachal town

A free meal for anyone who was hungry."

Sidisow had got the first inkling of how the coronavirus could turn life upside down in their small town, located in West Kameng district. Health workers like them had been roped in for new duties, including screening people at check-posts.

As the entry point to West Kameng, Tawang and East Kameng districts bordering Assam, Bhalukpong sees constant movement of security forces.

Sidisow says she realised that working long hours at the check-posts as well as the hospital, many of them ended up skipping lunch. Most of the 10 who volunteered for the community kitchen were from her extended family.

"Bhalukpong's community-based organisations had collected some money from donations, we pooled in too," says Sidisow. The oldest volunteer was Bajim Sagro, nearly 60. "Everyone knew everyone," says Jebisamam. "Time would just fly as we planned the menu, figured out how we could improve dishes."

Adds Amita Sangcho, 42, one of the volunteers, "Once we stayed till 7 pm, that's how long it took to feed everyone lunch."

Often the lockdown made vegetables hard to source. "We would drive down 10 km to another town," says Sidisow. Several people donated chicken and pigs. "In that sense, it was purely a donation-based, community-run kitchen."

Among hundreds who would walk in for a hot meal every afternoon was Dr Tage Neha, Senior Medical Officer at the CHC. "We have been on Covid duty since March. In the initial days, late night dinner was the only meal I was certain of," he says. "Until these ladies came along - the saviours of Bhalukpong."

In July, as cases spiked, community members advised the women to shut the kitchen till things settled down. They offered to return if needed.

Jebisamam has moved to another town, another Army school, carrying the memory of those days even as she holds online classes now. "We spent three months there, it became a part of our lives, giving us immense joy at a bleak time."

Uttarakhand

reducing the need for sudden braking in front of a crossing animal, the road will become safer for human beings too.

"Elephants, leopards, deer, and blue bulls move in this area. Drivers can see them from some distance and slow down or stop, but they rarely do so for snakes, lizards, monitors, or squirrels," a Forest official said.

To attract small animals, creepers will be grown over the bridge, which will be layered with grass and leaves. "We are experimenting. We want to create suitable conditions for the animals. We want to create a micro-environment for them on the bridge," DFO Joshi said.

Reptiles and other small animals are an important part of the forest food chain and ecosystem, Joshi said. He said boards were being put up to create awareness of the need to protect reptiles. Forest staff would patrol the area to ensure tourists do not try to use the bridge for selfies, he added.

E-TENDERING PRESS NOTICE

The Executive Engineer, CD-I, Irrigation & Flood Control Department, GNCTD Opp. ESI Hospital, Basai Darapur Office Complex New Delhi-110027 invites on behalf of the President of India, online percentage rate tender from approved and eligible contractors for the following works:-

1. **NIT No. EE/CD-/DB/2020-21/39** (ID No. 2020_IFC_196742_1)
H.O.A:- 2217-Plan (MLAAD), **Name of Work:-** Construction of additional first floor on existing Chaupal at NW Chowk near Kabristaan, Vishnu Garden, Khyala, New Delhi in Rajouri Garden Assembly Constituency 27. **E.C. Rs. 1,30,78,704/- Earnest Money Rs. 2,61,574/- period of Completion 90 Days. (Date of submission & opening of bid on 02.12.2020 at 3:00 P.M. & 3:05 P.M respectively.)**

2. **NIT No. EE/CD-/DB/2020-21/40** (ID No. 2020_IFC_196729_1)
H.O.A:- 4711-Plan, **Name of Work:-** Providing and fixing of LED Street Lights from Outer Ring Road RD 40680 M to Raghubir Nagar RD 42890 M. **E.C. Rs. 29,37,601/- Earnest Money Rs. 58,752/- period of Completion 60 Days. (Date of submission & opening of bid on 01.12.2020 at 3:00 P.M. & 3:05 P.M respectively.)**

3. **NIT No. EE/CD-/DB/2020-21/41** (ID No. 2020_IFC_196730_1)
H.O.A:- 4711-Plan, **Name of Work:-** Providing and fixing of LED Street Lights from Ohhawa Bridge RD 17905 M to Dhool Siras Bridge RD 20180 M. **E.C. Rs. 30,15,351/- Earnest Money Rs. 60,307/- period of Completion 60 Days. (Date of submission & opening of bid on 01.12.2020 at 3:00 P.M. & 3:05 P.M respectively.)**

4. **NIT No. EE/CD-/DB/2020-21/42** (ID No. 2020_IFC_196735_1)
H.O.A:- 4711-Plan, **Name of Work:-** Providing and fixing of LED Street Lights from Niloti Aqueduct RD 37283 M to Outer Ring Road RD 40680, **E.C. Rs. 46,61,246/- Earnest Money Rs. 93,225/- period of Completion 60 Days. (Date of submission & opening of bid on 01.12.2020 at 3:00 P.M. & 3:05 P.M respectively.)**

5. **NIT No. EE/CD-/DB/2020-21/43** (ID No. 2020_IFC_196744_1)
H.O.A:- 4225-Plan (SC/ST), **Name of Work:-** Improvement of SC/ST colony New Laxmanpuri Chaupal and drain work at Uttam Nagar Constituency AC-32. **F.C. Rs. 86,92,182/- Earnest Money Rs. 1,73,844/- period of Completion 240 Days. (Date of submission & opening of bid on 02.12.2020 at 3:00 P.M. & 3:05 P.M respectively.)**

6. **NIT No. EE/CD-/DB/2020-21/44** (ID No. 2020_IFC_196765_1)
H.O.A:- 4225-Plan (SC/ST), **Name of Work:-** Demolition & Reconstruction of Chaupal at Bagichi Tulsi Ram Harijan Basti Nangal Raya Hari Nagar Assembly Constituency -28. **E.C. Rs. 90,53,097/- Earnest Money Rs. 1,81,062/- period of Completion 180 Days. (Date of submission & opening of bid on 02.12.2020 at 3:00 P.M. & 3:05 P.M respectively.)**

7. **NIT No. EE/CD-/DB/2020-21/45** (ID No. 2020_IFC_196792_1)
H.O.A:- 2711-Non plan, **Name of Work:-** Watch & ward of N.G. Drain between RD. 40680m (Outer Ring Road) to RD. 45316m (Basaidarapur Bridge) right bank of for preventing any kind of encroachment, dumping of malba, building rubbish and other similar unserviceable material etc. for a period of 180 days round the clock. **E.C. Rs. 9,58,098/- Earnest Money Rs. 19,162/- period of Completion 180 Days. (Date of submission & opening of bid on 02.12.2020 at 3:00 P.M. & 3:05 P.M respectively.)**

8. **NIT No. EE/CD-/DB/2020-21/47** (ID No. 2020_IFC_196793_1)
H.O.A:- 2711-Non Plan, **Name of Work:-** Watch & ward of N.G. Drain between RD. 27180m (Pankha Road drain Outfall) to RD. 40680m (Outer Ring road Bridge) right bank for preventing any kind of encroachment, dumping of malba, building rubbish and other similar unserviceable material etc. for a period of 180 days round the clock. **E.C. Rs. 7,27,285/- Earnest Money Rs. 14,546/- period of Completion 180 Days. (Date of submission & opening of bid on 02.12.2020 at 3:00 P.M. 3:05 P.M respectively.)**

9. **NIT No. EE/CD-/DB/2020-21/48** (ID No. 2020_IFC_196797_1) **H.O.A:-** 2711-Non Plan, **Name of Work:-** Providing of Security Guards for CD-I Office Complex at Basal Darapur Delhi. **E.O. Rs. 14,12,952/- Earnest Money Rs. 28,259/- period of Completion 365 Days. (Date of submission & opening of bid on 02.12.2020 at 3:00 P.M. & 3:05 P.M respectively.)**

10. **NIT No. EE/CD-/DB/2020-21/50** (ID No. 2020_IFC_196844_1)
H.O.A:- 4711-Plan, **Name of Work:-** Providing and fixing of LED Street lights on left bank of N.G. Drain from Dhansa Bund to Chawla Bridge RD Om to RD 17905M. **E.C. Rs. 1,86,55,510/- Earnest Money Rs. 93,225/- period of Completion 90 Days. (Date of submission & opening of bid on 01.12.2020 at 3:00 P.M. & 3:05 P.M respectively.)**

Note:-
) Details of above mentioned works & eligibility criteria can be seen and downloaded from the web site <https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>

2. Amendment(s)/ alteration (s) corrigendum if any, will be available at website only.

Sd/-

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER/CD-I

DIP/Shabdarth/0456/20-21

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क्रमांक 1525/ ग्रंथालय/2020-21

दुर्ग, दिनांक 27/11/2020

पुस्तक प्रदाय हेतु संक्षिप्त निविदा सूचना

शिक्षा सत्र 2020-21 के लिये अथवा नयी द्र लम्प होने तक के लिये विभिन्न म्दो में प्राप्त राशि/राशि प्राप्ति की प्रत्याशा में महाविद्यालय में संचालित विभिन्न विषयों की पाठ्य पुस्तकें/संदर्भ पुस्तकें क्रय करने हेतु प्रतिष्ठित प्रकाशको, वितरकों, तथा फर्मों से खुली निविदा दो लिफाफा पद्धति के आधार पर आमंत्रित की जाती है। महाविद्यालय में संचालित पाठ्यक्रमों की जानकारी एवं निविदा प्रारूप तथा विस्तृत नियमों की जानकारी महाविद्यालय की वेबसाईट से प्राप्त कर सकते है।

संस्था में निविदा जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि : 24/12/2020 सायं 2 बजे तक

निविदा खुलने की तिथि : 24/12/2020 को सायं 3 बजे से

निविदा शुल्क : 1000/- एक हजार रु. मात्र

अनरेस्ट मनी : 10000 दस हजार रु. मात्र

नोट: उक्त निविदा से संबंधित विस्तृत नियमों एवं शर्तों एवं प्रारूपों की जानकारी महाविद्यालय की वेबसाईट www.govtsciencecollegedurg.ac.in से प्राप्त कर सकते है। किसी भी फर्म को निविदा उन्ही नियमों के आधार पर स्वीकृत अथवा अस्वीकृत की जावेगी। फर्म के नियमों को निविदा हेतु आधार नहीं माना जायेगा।

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प्राचार्य

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MPPHSC

MADHYA PRADESH PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES CORPORATION LTD.

Tilhan Sangh Bhawan, 01 Arera Hills Bhopal

URL: www.mpphsc.in, Phone : 0755-2578915

Dated : 28.11.2020

TENDER NOTICE

Tenders for rate contracts of following items/Services shall be floated on websites from today to next 30 working days :

- Online Tender Ref. No. T-127/Non-Contact Thermometer with Compatible Battery for Election Commission Equipment, uploaded on 28-11-2020 (Portal & Website)
- Online Tender Ref. No. T-128/Covid-19 Consumables for Election Commission and Covid-19 Vaccination, uploaded on 28-11-2020 (Portal & Website).
- Online Tender Ref. No. T-129/ for PPE Kit (Covid-19) for Election Commission and Covid-19 Vaccination, uploaded on 28-11-2020 (Portal & Website)
- Tender(s) for Chemohood Equipment.
- Tender(s) for Plant Machinery for Homeopathic Drugs & Manufacturing Unit.
- Tender(s) for Dialysis Services.
- Tender(s) for Indelible Ink Marker Pen.

Prospective bidders are requested to visit www.mptenders.gov.in/www.mpphsc.in for further details. M.P. Madhyam/99072/2020 CGM (Technical)

वो गज की दूरी, मायक है जरूरी।

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

E-Procurement Notice

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

1. The Executive Engineer Electrical Division, HPPWD, Mandi HP on behalf of Governor of H.P. invites the online bids on item rate, in electronic tendering system, in 2 Cover System for the under mentioned works: from the eligible and approved contractors/firms registered with HPPWD (Electrical) Department.

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost Rs.	EMD Rs.	Cost of tender Rs.	Eligible class of Contractor
1	Providing rewiring and replacement of Old Tube Fixture with LED Tube fixture, fancy wall bracket, bed light, ceiling fan, Grayses and other electrical accessories in Rest House at Piddil, Dist. Mandi (H.P.)	Rs. 1665273/-	Rs. 32358/-	Rs. 586/-	Class A or B
2	Construction of SanitaryNadan at Motpur, Dist. Mandi (H.P.) (SHE Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Data Transmission and controlling system thereto)	Rs. 1684937/-	Rs. 32998/-	Rs. 586/-	Approved OEM/Authorized Dealers of approved OEM for executing specialized job of Data Transmission System
3	Construction of PWC Building Level-IV at Chatri, Dist. Mandi (H.P.) (SHE Providing E.I. thereto)	Rs. 866167/-	Rs. 17358/-	Rs. 356/-	Class B or C
4	Est. MCH Building at Sunder Nagar, Dist. Mandi (H.P.) (SHE Providing additional work of E.I. and Yard Lighting thereto)	Rs. 1356988/-	Rs. 27158/-	Rs. 586/-	Class A or B
5	Providing and Using One No. Electric fan, 3 Passenger machine room position Mono space Elevator in Combined Office building at Tharag, Dist. Mandi (H.P.)	Rs. 2947986/-	Rs. 51718/-	Rs. 1500/-	Approved OEM/Authorized Dealers of approved OEM for executing specialized job. The lift Manufacturer (EOM) should be of Category "A" as per categorization of CPWD WORKS MANUAL 2014

2. Availability of Bid Document and mode of submission: The Bid document is available online and bid should be submitted in online mode on website https://hptenders.gov.in . Bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is free of cost. For submission of bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities (CA). "Aspiring bidders who have not obtained the user ID and password for participating in e-tendering in HPPWD may obtain the same from the website: https://hptenders.gov.in . Digital signature is mandatory to participate in the e-tendering. Bidders already possessing the digital signature issued from authorized CAs can use the same in this tender					
3. Key Dates:-					
1.	Date of Online Publication.	11.12.2020 at 10.00 A.M			
2.	Document Download Start and End Date.	11.12.2020 10.00 A.M to 18.12.2020 at 10.00 A.M			
3.	Bid Submission Start and End Date.	11.12.2020 10.00 A.M to 18.12.2020 at 10.00 A.M			
4.	Physical Submission of EMD and Cost of Tender Document	18.12.2020 at 11.00 A.M			
5.	Date of Technical Bid opening followed by Opening of Financial Bid.	18.12.2020 at 11.30 A.M			

4. TENDER DETAILS:
The Tender Documents shall be uploaded online in 2 Cover:
a) **Cover I:** shall contain scanned copies of all "Technical Documents/ Eligibility Information".
b) **Cover 2:** shall contain "BID/Financial Bid", where contractor will quote his offer for each item.
5. SUBMISSION OF ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS:The bidders are required to submit (a) original demand draft towards the cost of bid document and (b) original bid security/Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and other Technical Documents in **(On Executive Engineer Electrical Division, HPPWD Mandi H.P.** as specified in Key dates Sec. No. 4 on Tender Opening Date, failing which the bids will be declared non-responsive.
6. BID OPENING DETAILS: The bids shall be opened on **18.12.2020 at 11.30 A.M** in the office Executive Engineer, Electrical Division HPPWD Mandi H.P. by the authorised officer. In their interest the tenderer are advised to be present along with original documents at the time of opening of tenders. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.
7. The bids for the work shall remain valid for acceptance for a period not less than **120** days after the deadline date for bid submission.
8. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents. The officer inviting tender shall not be held liable for any delays due to system failure beyond its control. Even though the system will attempt to notify the bidders of any bid updates, the Employer shall not be liable for any information not received by the bidder. It is the bidders' responsibility to verify the website for the latest information related to the tender.
9. Corrigendum, if any, will be published online only at the Govt website: www.hptenders.gov.in **Technical Qualification Criteria for work No. 1, 3 and 4:-**

- The bidder shall have successfully completed at least *One similar completed work, costing not less than the amount equal to 40% of the estimated cost* in Govt./ Semi Govt. Departments / P.S.U. / Board from start to finish during the past 5 years preceding *(ending last day of month previous to the one in which tenders are invited)*. The term "Similar Work" shall mean "Electrical Installation"
- Registration with GST and Income Tax is essential
Work No. 2 Details of TOC can be seen in bid document.
Technical Qualification Criteria for work No. 3:-
 - The bidder shall be a Principal manufacturer of lift or the authorised agency / firm of the Principal Manufacturer. The lift Manufacturer shall be of **Category "A"** as per categorization of CPWD WORKS MANUAL 2014.
 - In case authorised agency of OEM quoting on behalf of OEM, an authorization from OEM in name of Executive Engineer, Electrical Division, HPPWD Mandi from the OEM to be attached / uploaded. This must be a case specific authorization failing which the bid is liable to be rejected.
 - Registration with Income Tax, G.S.T and EPF is essential if he has not registered with EPF and in case found to be the lowest bidder he is supposed to register himself on award of work.
 - Average Annual financial Turnover during the last three years ending 31st March of the previous financial year should be at least 30% of the estimated cost of the work.*
 - The bidder shall have successfully completed from start to finish during the past 7 years preceding *(ending last day of month previous to the one in which applications are invited)*
 - Three similar completed works costing not less than the amount equal to 40% of the estimated cost or
 - Two similar completed works costing not less than the amount equal to 50% of the estimated cost or
 - One similar completed works costing not less than the amount equal to 80% of the estimated costThe word "similar work" shall mean "**SITC of Lift and Escalators system**"

Executive Engineer
Electrical Division,
HP-PWD, Mandi HP

4643/HP

India hits out at OIC for Kashmir references

EXPRESSNEWSERVICE
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

INDIA On Sunday hit out at the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) for making factually incorrect and unwarranted references to Jammu and Kashmir in resolutions adopted by the grouping at a meeting in Niger, and asserted that the Union Territory is an integral and inalienable part of the country.

In a strongly-worded state-

ment, India advised the OIC to refrain from making such references in future and said it is regrettable that the grouping continues to allow itself to be used by a certain country "which has an abominable record on religious tolerance, radicalism and persecution of minorities", a clear reference to Pakistan.

The 47th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) of the OIC in its meeting on November 27-29 at Niamey in Niger had made a reference to India over its policies on Jammu and Kashmir.

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

E-Tender Notice No. DRM-C-PA-PwD-01

Date: 27. 11. 2020

E-Tender Notice

Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, North Central Railway, Agra Division for and on behalf of President of India invites open tenders under Single-Packet System under mentioned date and time.

Tender No.	Name of work	Approx. value of work
DRM-C-PA-PwD-01 Date 27.11.2020	Agra Division- Provision of Retroreflective Signage and direction boards	₹ 35,01,120/-

Period of Completion of work: 04 months. **Earnest Money Deposit:** ₹ 70,000/- **Cost of Tender form:** ₹ 00/- (nil). **Validity of offer:** 45 days **E-Tender closing date & time:** 18.12.2020 upto 15:00 Hours. **E-Tender opening date & time:** 18.12.2020 upto 15:30 Hours. For Full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railway Website www.irops.gov.in 1. Tender can be submitted only online on web portal www.irops.gov.in 2. Earnest money shall only be submitted on web portal www.irops.gov.in by net banking. 130220(D)

North central railways @ CPRONCR

GUJARAT URJA VIKAS NIGAM LIMITED

(A wholly-owned undertaking of Government of Gujarat)

Sandar Patel Vidyal Bhavan, Race Course, Vadodara - 390007

PBX: (0265) 2310582-86, Web: www.guvnl.com

CIN U40109GJ2004SGC045195

EXTENSION IN LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION UNDER "POLICY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL SCALE DISTRIBUTED SOLAR PROJECTS -2019"

The last date for submission of applications for setting up small scale solar projects of 0.5 – 4 MW under Government of Gujarat's "Policy for Development of Small Scale Distributed Solar Projects -2019" dated **06-03-2019** is hereby extended up to **02-01-2021**. All other terms and conditions of earlier public notice dated **03-10-2020** shall remain unchanged

For further details like State Government's GRs and Draft PPA, please visit GUVNL's website - <https://www.guvnl.com/notices.html>

Date: 30-11-2020 General Manager (IPP)

ANDHRA PRADESH CENTRAL POWER DISTRIBUTION CORPORATION LIMITED

D. Y.S.R. VENUT SOLIDNA CORPORATE OFFICE, 111 COLLEGE ROAD, KUYAKUNDA - 520005

e-Procurement Notice

Tender notification No. CPMPT-09 & 11/2020-21 of APCPDC/COMP&MM, dt: 30.11.2020

APCPDC invites online bids under e-procurement for obtaining 2500KM o/L T. Aerial Bundled Cables (3X25 - 25Sqrmm) and CT-PT Metering sets - 200nos 105A/Outdoor, 200nos 20.5A/Outdoor, 25nos 405A/Outdoor, 20nos 605A/Outdoor, 20nos 755A/Outdoor, 200nos 105A/Indoor, 50nos 205A/Indoor) - required for the FY 20 21 & 21-22. Tenderers can have further details and download the tender schedules from e-procurement market place from 30-11-2020 to "8-12-2020 i.e., <https://tenderapprecruitment.apcpdc.in> (published by APCPDC) Contact No:- CPM&MM/Chief General Manager /P&MM/ APCPDC, Andhra Pradesh

9440962448 E-mail: cpmmrmp.apcpdc@gmail.com

Government of Tamil Nadu

PUBLIC (ELECTIONS-II) DEPARTMENT

SECRETARIAT, CHENNAI-600 009.

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Tender No.2/2020/5560

Sealed tenders are invited from reputed Companies/Agencies to select as State Level Agency for supply of manpower to maintain ERONET along with associated activities towards conduct of Elections and Annual Maintenance of related hardware equipment in Tamil Nadu for the period of 5 years. The details can be seen in the Tender document which can be downloaded free of cost from the website www.elections.tn.gov.in and www.tenders.tn.gov.in

- Queries from the Companies/Agencies should be sent to the e-mail ID sec2.pelec@tn.gov.in by 05.00 pm on 09.12.2020. The reply of the queries of the Companies/Agencies shall be uploaded by this Department by 05.00 pm on 14.12.2020.
- The last date for submission of tender document - 3.00 pm on 29.12.2020.
- Initial scrutiny of the Bid at 3.30 pm on 29.12.2020.
- Financial Bid - To be communicated later to the technically qualified bidders.
- Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) - Rs.25,00,000/-
For Contact : 044-25665327

DIPR/4406/Tender/2020

Additional Chief Electoral Officer (I.T.) & Additional Secretary to Government

Bharat Nirman through Rural Roads

Chief Engineer (Shimla Zone) HPPWD

Nirman Bhawan Nigam Vihar Shimla H.P., 171002

BIHARAT NIRMAN

UNDER PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJANA (PMGSY)

e-Procurement Notice

The Government of India has received a loan/credit number "Ln 7995-IN-Cr-4848-IN-Cr-4849-IN" from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (International Development Association) towards the cost of Rural Roads Project (Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana) RUP-II. French-I and intends to apply a part of the funds to cover eligible payments under the contracts for construction of works as detailed in the Table below. Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the bidding document.

Sl. No.	Name of the Bid.	Package No.	Name of work	Period of construction in Days	Estimated cost Construction part Rs.	Maintenance part Rs.	Bid Security	Cost of form
1	Kalla	HP06-69	GO Balance work of link road from Harabag to Karshagad Km-0.0 to 14.50 (SHE. Balance work of M/E, side drain and maintenance for five years after completion)	365	₹6,67,781	27,15,922	2,28,000	5000

The Superintending Engineer 11th Circle HPPWD Rampur Dist Shimla on behalf of Governor Himachal Pradesh invites the item rate bids in electronic tendering system for construction of roads under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana in the district of Kalla one number of package with estimated cost totaling to **Rs.113.84 lacs** including their maintenance for five years from the eligible contractors registered with HPPWD/ CPWD&P&T, Railways/ other State Govt./ Central Govt. agencies. On-registered bidders may submit bids; however, the successful bidders must get registered in appropriate class with appropriate authorities before signing the contract.
Date of release of Invitation for Bids through e-procurement: 07th December 2020.
Availability of Bid Documents and mode of submission: The bid document is available online and should be submitted on-line in www.pmgswenders.gov.in. The bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is free of cost. For submission of the bids, the bidder would be to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities. The technical bid shall be opened in the office of Superintending Engineer, 11th Circle, HPPWD, Rampur Bashaah on 28.12.2020. The bidders are required to submit (a) original demand draft towards the cost of bid document and (b) original bid security in approved form and (c) original affidavit regarding correctness of information furnished with bid document as per provisions of Clause 4.4 B (ii) of ITB with Concerned Executive Engineer, HPPWD, on a date not later than two working days after the opening of technical qualification part of the Bid, either by registered post or by hand, failing which the technical bids shall be declared non-responsive.
Last Date/ Time for receipt of bids through e-procurement: Date 26th December 2020 upto 1100 Hours and will be opened on 28th December 2020 at 1130 hours.
The Financial bids shall be opened in the office of Chief Engineer (Shimla Zone) HPPWD Shimla (Date and Time will be intimated).
For further details please log on to <http://www.pmgswenders.gov.in>.

Superintending Engineer
11th Circle HPPWD,
Rampur Bashaah
Dist. Shimla (HP)
Fax: 01782-233167
Tel: 01782-233044

4642/HP

Colder winter in store for north and central India: IMD

ANJALI MARAR
PUNE, NOVEMBER 29

RAJASTHAN, NEW DELHI, Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh and states in north and northwest India are set to experience a colder winter during December to January, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) stated in its season forecast on Sunday.

"During the winter season, below normal minimum temperatures are likely over most sub-divisions in the north, north-west, central and a few subdivisions in east India," it said.

Delhi recorded the decade's coldest November day on Sunday, with the mercury settling at 7 degree Celsius which was 3 degrees below normal.

During the next three months, west and east Rajasthan, J&K and Ladakh, Chhattisgarh, and east Madhya Pradesh subdivisions can expect below normal minimum temperatures.

However, central Maharashtra, Konkan and the southern peninsular region will experience either a normal or warmer winter. It said that most subdivisions, except south India, are likely to experience above normal maximum temperatures.

The last two winters, particularly over north and northwest India, have remained severe.

In 2018, a phenomenon named polar vortex had brought highly cold winds from the North Pole to lower latitudes, including India. Similarly, a severe cold wave gripped Delhi and neighbourhood areas for over three weeks in December last year.

However, this year, the cooler

EXPLAINED

What's behind the forecast

THE IMD has attributed the forecast this year to 'moderate' La Niña conditions, the cold counterpart of El Niño — both are opposite phases part of a natural ocean-atmosphere pattern in the tropical Pacific Ocean that are likely to switch every three to seven years, lasting for nearly 9 to 12 months with an irregular frequency and impacting weather across the globe. La Niña conditions have prevailed since August, with the wind blowing warm surface water and the cooler water rising to the surface. The IMD has said that La Niña conditions would continue till the end of the winter season, likely to bring a longer and colder winter in several parts of India.

winter is linked to moderate La Niña conditions prevailing over the Pacific Ocean.

"During the La Niña years, minimum temperatures tend to remain slightly below normal. In addition, some synoptic conditions could help keep the temperatures below normal," said Dr D Sivanand Pai, head of Climate Research and Services at IMD, Pune.

However, day time could see warmer temperatures during these months over most areas, Pai said.

UP promises job to wife of journalist who died after blaze at house

EXPRESSNEWSERVICE
LUCKNOW, NOVEMBER 29

A DAY after a journalist died under mysterious circumstances in Balrampur district, the UP government on Sunday said it would give a job to the journalist's wife and bear educational expenses of his two children.

SP Dev Ranjan Verma said the district administration gave a cheque of Rs 5 lakh to the journalist's family on Sunday. "The government has also assured that it will reconstruct the damaged part of the house. Police have also provided round-the-clock security to the family of the journalist," Verma added.

Rakesh Singh Nirbhik (37), who used to work with Hindi daily *Rastriya Swaroop*, died of bum injuries caused by a fire at his house in Kalwari village on Friday night. His friend Pintu Sahu (35), who was with him at the time of the incident, died on the spot.

Nirbhik's wife Vibha Singh (34) said that she had seen a video of her husband in which he had alleged that he was killed for doing a news report. "Police have assured me that they will expose those responsible for the death of my husband... I saw the video on social media in which he said that he was going to expose something through a news report. We don't know which report he was talking about."

Verma said that police have taken cognizance of the wife's complaint and will soon reveal the details of the case.

Police officers said four teams have been formed to nab the accused and 17 people have been questioned so far.

NAME CHANGE

I, Keshav Dev, S/o Of Shyam Sunder, R/o House No-545 G.F Sector-7B, Faridabad, Haryana-121006 have changed my name to Keshav Dev Goel.

007072290-1

NAME CHANGE

I, Arif S/o-Mohammad

DSGMC: Serving humanity by following the path of SEWA shown by Guru Sahiban

THE DELHI Sikh Gurudwara Management Committee is a religious body established under Indian Parliament Act 1971. Though its prime objective is to look after all the historical Gurudwara Sahibs of Delhi and Sikh Affairs, it serves humanity in many ways.

Langar in Corona Times: The DSGMC led by its President Mr. Manjinder Singh Sirsa took up responsibility to serve langar to people in Delhi during the lockdown. Langar was prepared in Gurudwara Bangla Sahib kitchen by hundreds of sewadars and was served in different part of Delhi to more than 1 lakh 30 thousand people daily. Even the Delhi government approached the DSGMC for preparing and serving langar to thousands of people who were unable to feed themselves. Sewadars of the DSGMC reached every corner of the Delhi to serve langar to people at their door steps.

It also served langar to farmers in Delhi who had come to stage protests for their demands. Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded the efforts of the DSGMC for serving humanity with langar and other forms of sewa. He said, "Our Gurudwaras have been doing exceptional work in serving people. Their compassion is appreciable."

The Delhi Police paid siren tribute to the DSGMC for its service of humanity. Led by Eish Singhal, the deputy commissioner of police (New Delhi) the cavalcade of 35 police vans and 60 motorcycles did 'parikrama' of Gurudwara Bangla Sahib. Senior police officers also paid obeisance at the gurdwara and did 'sewa' or service by helping in the preparation of langar, a free community kitchen.

Free Ambulance Sewa: The DSGMC launched free Ambulance Sewa for the patients during COVID-19 times. It launched 12 Ambulances to rush patients of Covid and other diseases to hospitals at the earliest. This Ambulance Service was launched in whole Delhi including North, South, East, West and Central Delhi. No money was charged from patients or their families for transporting patients to hospital. This initiative was lauded by people from all walks of life.

Revolutionary steps in health services: The DSGMC has taken revolutionary steps to provide health care services to people of the National capital.

Services to Medical Fraternity: The DSGMC did a splendid sewa during the COVID-19 crisis when medical fraternity in the national capital faced social stigma problems as attitude of people turned hostile towards them. They were upset by such attitude of people and at that time the DSGMC provided all its Sarais (inns) to doctors and para medical staff working in different hospitals of Delhi including AIIMS for living and also served langar to them. This facility enabled the medical fraternity to perform their services without any hindrance.

Highly subsidized Bala Pritam Dawakhana: The DSGMC has opened highly subsidized medical stores namely Bala Pritam Dawakhana at three places in Delhi. First such store was opened in August end at Gurudwara Bangla Sahib complex, followed by another at Gurudwara Nanak Piao and third such store is ready for inauguration at Gurudwara Sahib Pashchim Vihar. These Bala Pritam Dawakhana offer up to 90 percent subsidized medicines as compared to market rates. This is a unique sewa whose basis is no profit no loss. The DSGMC is providing financial support to these medical stores whose aim is to provide cheaper medicines of all the diseases to the people of Delhi. The DSGMC has planned to open such stores in all part of Delhi.

Bala Pritam Hospital: The DSGMC has launched vigorous efforts to start Bala Sahib Hospital. Sewa for this hospital has been handed over to Baba Bachan Singh ji who is supervising work day and night with a mission to start the hospital.

Cheapest Dialysis and MRI: The DSGMC is launching cheapest Dialysis and MRI scan facility for the people of Delhi. Dialysis will be done for only Rs. 600 whereas MRI scan will be done for only Rs. 50. This medical treatment is too costly in market but the DSGMC has made elaborate arrangements to start these services at Bala Sahib hospital at highly affordable rates.

Efforts to promote Sikh youth in Civil Services: The DSGMC has made arrangement to promotes Sikh youth in Union Civil Services and to achieve this purpose it has launched Guru Tegh Bahadur Academy for Civil Services. This academy will provide coaching, training and counseling to sikh minority candidates for preparation of Civil services examinations apart from boarding and lodging facilities.

Helping Afghan refugees: The DSGMC President Mr. Manjinder Singh Sirsa took upon himself the responsibility to bring Afghan Sikh families from Afghanistan to New Delhi. He arranged a chartered flight for them, brought them to Delhi and provided accommodation in Sarais and also served langar to them. These Sikhs were frightened in their

country after they were made selective targets by the militants there. They approached Mr. Sirsa who tied up with Union Government and made arrangements to bring them back.

Implementation of Anand Marriage Act: The DSGMC played a key role in enacting Anand Marriage Act and its implementation in different states of the country. The DSGMC President Mr. Manjinder Singh Sirsa not only took up the issue of implementation of Anand Marriage Act with Chief Ministers of different states but also met many of them personally for speedy implementa-



On this auspicious day of 551st Prakash Purab of Guru Nanak Dev ji We wish heartiest congratulations to everyone

Established in 1971, the Delhi Sikh Gurudwara Management Committee has done tremendous work to alleviate the problems of the poor and the needy during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond



tion of the act. As a result of these effort now Anand Marriage Act has been implemented in most of the states and young Sikh marrying couples are getting their marriages registered under the act.

Legal Battle against guilty of 1984 Sikh genocide and help to victim families: The DSGMC has launched vigorous efforts to get guilty of 1984 Sikh Genocide punished by courts of laws as result of these efforts key conspirator and accused Sajjan Kumar and several others

are now behind the bars. Now the DSGMC is pursuing cases against Jagdish Tytler, Kamal Nath and other accused to ensure that they are put behind bars for their sins. A dedicated legal team of the DSGMC regularly pursues these cases. The DSGMC has also tied up with witnesses in these cases so that they can depose in the courts against the guilty.

Apart from pursuing legal cases against the guilty of the Sikh genocide, the DSGMC has also given financial help



to the families of victims.

Taking up cases like Gurudwara Gurdongmar: The DSGMC has also taken up cases like Gurudwara Gurdongmar where efforts were made to change Gurudwara Sahib's front with local writings. It also took up cases of Gurudwara Gian Godri and others.

Fight for Sikhs in National and International Field: The DSGMC works for betterment of Sikh community in the country as well as for members of the community settled abroad. If any case of harassment of Sikhs comes to its notice, it immediately acts in the matter and ensures that Sikhs are not targeted anywhere in the country and abroad. Recently cases of Sikhs in UP, Maharashtra, Meghalaya or others have been taken care of by the DSGMC. It is also fighting legal battles on behalf of Sikhs in Meghalaya.

Taking up issues of minorities in Pakistan: The DSGMC also took up issue of targeting minority girls of Sikh, Hindu and Christian community by the lo-

cal youth from majority community. Mr. Sirsa contacted such families whose minor daughters were abducted, converted to Islam and then married to youth from majority community. He also released list of such girls and took up the issue with Indian and Pakistan Government apart from taking it with United Nations.

Celebration of 550th Birthday of Guru Nanak Dev ji: The DSGMC celebrated 550th Prakash Purab of Guru Nanak Dev ji at grand scale. Not only religious functions were organized at grand scale in which Union Home and Defence Ministers apart from former PM and

ganised with complete religious fervour at Gurudwara Rakab Ganj, where mortal remains of Guru Teg Bahadur were consigned to flames. An executive committee of 101 members, including Sikh historians, academicians and celebrities, headed by Avtar Singh Hit President, Takht Sri Harimandir, Patna Sahib management committee, has been constituted to finalise the broad contours for celebrations and chalk out programmes including seminars, symposia and lectures to throw light on various facets of life and philosophy of Guru Teg Bahadur. An international seminar on the life



and teachings of Guru Tegh Bahadur would also be organised in Delhi in February 2021.

"A grand 'nagar kirtan' led by the 'Panj Pyaras' will start from Guru Teg Bahadur's birthplace in Amritsar and will reach Rakabganj Gurudwara in Delhi, covering major cities and places associated with the Guru's life, over the course of 15 days.

A mega 'kirtan darbar' at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium would be held in March 2021 in which 1,100 students from Guru Harkishan public schools will simultaneously recite 'shabad' and perform 'kirtan'.

A laser show on the life, teachings and philosophy of Guru Tegh Bahadur would also be held at the event. Other programmes such as tree plantation, 'ardas' based on 'Gurbani', blood donation and medical camps, demonstrations of Sikh martial arts and translation of Guru's teachings in several international languages would be part of the celebration.

Education: The DSGMC manages a number of schools and colleges and institutes which are providing education to thousands of children in the National Capital. These educational institutes are highly successful and have a reputation based on their achievements.

Issued in Public Interest by:



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THE INDIAN EXPRESS, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2020

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

WORDLY WISE
ECONOMIC GROWTH IS NOT ONLY
UNNECESSARY, BUT RUINOUS.

—ALEKSANDR SOLZHENTSYN

The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

GLIMMER & TUNNEL

Economy outpaced expectations in second quarter. But sustainability of rebound in activities remains a concern

AFTER AN UNPRECEDENTED decline of 23.9 per cent in the first quarter of the current financial year, the Indian economy fared better than most expected, with the pace of contraction easing to 7.5 per cent in the second quarter. The performance, better than what economists at the RBI had predicted, reflects in part, a steady improvement in activity levels with the easing of lockdown restrictions during this period, and the ramping up of production to satiate the pent-up and festival season-led demand. In the weeks thereafter, the continuing sequential improvement in leading economic indicators has led to optimism that the economy is likely to rebound stronger than expected in the second half of the year. However, one must advise caution, as the durability of the sharper-than-expected rebound remains a matter of concern.

In part, the continuing healthy performance of the farm sector helped ease the extent of contraction of the economy. Excluding agriculture, value added by rest of the economy contracted by 8.3 per cent in the second quarter. The manufacturing sector grew by 0.6 per cent in the second quarter, after contracting by a staggering 39.3 per cent in the previous one. While volume indicators like the index of industrial production continued to contract during this period, even though the extent of contraction had eased greatly, presumably, value added by the sector has risen on the back of aggressive expenditure pruning as indicated by corporate results. Similarly, the construction sector witnessed a significant uptick with the contraction in activities easing to 8.6 per cent in the second quarter, down from 50.3 per cent in the first quarter. This despite construction activities being muted during the monsoon season. On the services side, while a similar improvement was observed in the trade, hotels, transport and communication sector, surprisingly, the pace of contraction actually worsened in financial, real estate and professional services sector during this period. While private consumption fared better, as household spending perked up with restrictions on economic activities and movements gradually lifted, government spending rather than being counter-cyclical, continued to be pro-cyclical, falling in the second quarter as well, despite the announcement of massive relief packages. Investment activity also improved during this period, presumably on account of work beginning on projects that had been stalled due to the lockdown restrictions, as did the change in stocks, indicating higher inventory accumulation.

The stronger than expected uptick in economic indicators in October, while raise optimism over the state of the economy, must be treated with caution as data for some of these indicators for November signals some moderation in activities, justifying concerns over the sustainability of this upswing. Further, the possibility of the imposition of localised restrictions on activities due to rising COVID-19 cases adversely impacting economic activities going forward also cannot be ruled out

VACCINATOR CHALLENGE

Professionals need to be trained to deliver Covid-19 vaccine.
Government must coordinate with private sector

THE SEARCH FOR a shield against the coronavirus has reached a critical phase in several parts of the world, including India. Though we do not have a firm date on a vaccine for mass use, a consensus seems to be emerging that a preventive will roll out of laboratories months before it was anticipated when the pandemic broke out. The Serum Institute of India, one of the laboratories at the forefront of vaccine development in the country, has reportedly said that it will apply for permission for emergency use of the preventive in a fortnight. Many issues, however, remain to be resolved in what may shape up to be one of the biggest logistical challenges in public health. It is heartening, therefore, that the Centre and states have embarked on this task in the right earnest. Last week, during a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, chief ministers of several states outlined their plans for vaccine deployment. Conversations have begun on ways to bolster the country's cold-chain infrastructure. A cadre of vaccinators will now have to be mobilised to administer the first doses.

The government reportedly plans to vaccinate about one crore healthcare professionals in the first phase, and 30 crore people by September 2021. Experts reckon that the Universal Immunisation Programme's workforce will not be adequate for the purpose. Already there are complaints that diverting health workers for the anti-COVID-19 efforts has disrupted routine inoculation programmes. Doctors, nurses and lab technicians from private healthcare facilities will have to be roped in to meet the current challenge. The National Expert Group on Vaccination Administration for COVID-19 has sought the views of industry bodies such as the FICCI and CII as well as hospital associations on the matter. This is a step in the right direction. But much more needs to be done, especially because government and private agencies will have to work in tandem in diverse realms — monitoring beneficiary databases, human resources training, bracing up cold-chain logistics and ensuring smooth supplies of syringes and medical glass vials. Coordination mechanisms between government officials at different levels and private sector experts will have to be instituted to ensure that the targeted inoculations are delivered in the shortest possible time.

The first lot of the vaccines is not likely to be 100 per cent effective — the Oxford-Astrazeneca vaccine developed by the Serum Institute has so far reported 70 per cent efficacy. Any case, vaccines have side effects. A transparent mechanism to report adverse reactions — and deal with misinformation and fear mongering — will be critical to the inoculation drive. There is no time to lose in mobilising and training a workforce for the purpose.

FREEZE FRAME

E P UNNY



SOUMYA KANTI GHOSH

THE GDP DATA released on November 27 takes us back 50 years when economist and Nobel Laureate Paul Samuelson, on being asked on a television panel about his changing views on inflation, observed, "well when events change, I change my mind. What do you do?" India's GDP data, or for that matter the GDP numbers released globally, lead to a similar predicament. Until now, GDP data for the third quarter of the calendar year 2020 has been released for 49 countries, 44 of whom have contracted in the range of 0-10 per cent. The narrative has changed for the better since the first quarter (financial year) when India's GDP growth declined by 23.9 per cent, and the fall for the full year was expected to be double digits.

So what does the data show? The most remarkable part is the nominal GDP loss narrowing down to Rs 1.98 lakh crore in the second quarter of the financial year from a staggering Rs 11.1 lakh crore in the first quarter (the cumulative loss at Rs 13.1 lakh crore is equivalent to 6.4 per cent of 2019-20 GDP). Manufacturing (and construction) has minimised its losses by 91 per cent from the first quarter. The services sector has reduced its losses by 43 per cent, while the losses incurred by the trade sub-segment have fallen by a staggering 80 per cent. However, the losses of the financial, real estate and professional services and the public administration segments have jumped by 50 per cent. The recovery has been led by manufacturing and also by the largest component of the services sector — trade, hotels, transport and communication. The other good news is that the agriculture sector has already added 0.4 per cent to GDP in both the quarters.

If this trend of loss minimisation continues (at this rate, possible gains in nominal GDP in the third and fourth quarter are a distinct possibility) India's 2020-21 nominal GDP will surprisingly not be lower than 2018-19 levels as was earlier expected. This would mean India has weathered the COVID storm in terms of a loss of output in 2020-21 that could be more than salvaged in 2021-22, though this is contingent on India getting back to business through continued sector-specific reforms.

One worrying data point is the large discrepancies in the second quarter numbers which amount to 1.7 per cent of GDP. Over the last few years, as the economy has under-

With better than expected second-quarter numbers, economy could spring a positive surprise

The disruptions in the labour market, however, could be a risk for future consumption and inequality. There have been more aggressive cuts in employee costs in the case of small companies with a turnover of up to Rs 500 crore. This is also substantiated by the results of NCAER's Business Expectations Survey that shows that firms were more likely to terminate the employment of temporary workers, compared to that of permanent workers, owing to the skill premium of the latter.

gone many structural changes, data revisions in GDP and discrepancies have moved in the same direction (upward revisions in both), specifically in 2016-17 and 2017-18. In 2018-19, even as GDP was revised upwards, discrepancies were revised downwards indicating the process of reconciliation is getting better. But this job will become difficult in 2020-21 as even CSO believes that the data will undergo changes.

What are the possible reasons for the surge in manufacturing gross value added (GVA)? We believe one possible explanation could be the stellar corporate GVA numbers in the second quarter on the back of a massive purge in costs (a recent RBI study also confirms that), particularly on employees. The downside to such cost-cutting could be significant labour market disruptions, increasing inequality and thus a material impact on consumption. The good thing is that COVID-19 has brought about rapid changes in many industries in terms of innovations that will surely outlive the pandemic. For example, the pandemic has accelerated the pace of technology adoption in the banking system in India, with branch footfalls dropping sharply. One notable example of such technology adoption is the credit guarantee scheme for MSMEs that has been a resounding success, with almost all parts of the country benefitting from the scheme. Data consumption in rural India on the network of common service centres, and special purpose vehicles (physical facilities for delivering government of India e-services to rural and remote locations) also jumped by nearly 100 per cent during the lockdown. The thrust on digital financial literacy can now help in rapidly onboarding the digitally-unbanked rural population.

The disruptions in the labour market, however, could be a risk for future consumption and inequality. There have been more aggressive cuts in employee costs in the case of small companies with a turnover of up to Rs 500 crore. This is also substantiated by the results of NCAER's Business Expectations Survey that shows that firms were more likely to terminate the employment of temporary workers, compared to that of permanent workers, owing to the skill premium of the latter.

This raises clear concerns regarding inequality. Globally, data provided by the

OECD on inequality shows that between 1985 and 2013 (the latest available data), the Gini coefficient rose significantly for most high-income countries with the US and UK being amongst the most unequal. The data for India, though quite dated and sporadic, indicates that inequality has increased but not significantly worsened. It is of utmost importance that we continue to reduce inequality through income support or transfers.

It is interesting to see how the incremental capital-output ratio (ICOR) will play out in 2020-21. The ICOR is the amount of capital required to produce one unit of output. The higher the ICOR, the less efficient the use of capital. Delays in the completion of projects, lack of complementary investments in related sectors and the non-availability of critical inputs can all lead to a rise in ICOR. The ICOR in India has increased from 3.8 in 2016-17 to 4.9 in 2018-19 and is expected to further deteriorate to 6.9 in 2019-20.

It would be unfair if we don't talk about the huge role that the RBI had played in this context of arresting the growth slowdown. With government consumption expenditure declining sharply by 18 per cent in the second quarter, it now seems that monetary policy has played the perfect foil even as fiscal policy continues to remain tight-fisted. The RBI has donned many hats and fulfilled many expectations during the crisis. Beginning with a comprehensive solution for providing a liquidity backstop to convincing markets that liquidity problems will not translate into solvency problems and issues of financial stability, to giving explicit forward guidance of rates for an extended period to assuaging battered market sentiments when uncertainty was high and adopting out of box unconventional policies — its proactive approach has been a learning experience for all of us.

So, what next? We now expect the GDP decline for the full year to be in single digits, and possibly even lower than the RBI and markets' forecasts. The third and fourth quarter numbers are likely to spring a positive surprise, though conditional on the absence of another wave of infections.

The writer is group chief economic advisor, State Bank of India. Views are personal

JUSTICE ON TRIAL

Existing bail regime, loaded against poor and underprivileged, needs urgent reform



NITIKA KHAITAN

THE SPEED WITH which Arnab Goswami was recently granted bail has thrown into sharp relief the multitudes for whom such quick access to justice will never exist. According to the latest figures from 2019, an extraordinary 69 per cent of inmates in prison are undertrials — persons who have not yet been declared guilty of any crime. Depriving persons of their liberty without a conviction is meant to serve a narrow purpose: Ensure that they do not abscond or tamper with the evidence or influence witnesses. Under the existing bail regime, however, there is legitimate concern that people are being incarcerated unnecessarily and languishing in jails for far longer than justified.

The problem begins with arrest. For decades, government reports and court decisions have noted the prevalence of unlawful and unnecessary arrests. Recent Supreme Court decisions and changes in criminal law have sought to introduce safeguards—for instance, requiring the police to refrain from arrest in certain cases if the accused appears before the police whenever she is asked. But the difficulty of complaining against police officials and weak internal incentives to discipline officers means there is little accountability for arbitrary arrests.

After 24 hours, the police must produce the arrested in court for magistrates to decide whether remand to further custody is warranted. A catena of judgments emphasises that magistrates cannot merely accept the say-so of the police. But an equally vast jurisprudence

underscores how remand is extended mechanically.

Once arrestees are entangled in the system, their release depends on their access to legal aid, woefully inadequate in India and determined entirely by privilege, which also determines their ability to appeal upwards, if a lower court denies them bail, and their ability to demand rights, such as the right to be released if they are in custody for a certain period without being chargesheeted. It is little surprise that Muslims, Dalits and Adivasis are incarcerated at rates disproportionate to their population.

Some laws make bail even harder. Statutes such as those penalising drug and terror offences impose special restrictions on bail, which effectively condemn arrestees to brutally long custody pending trials. Provisions under ordinary law that mandate release of undertrials if they have spent half of the maximum possible sentence in custody do not apply to prisoners under special laws. The gravity of drugs and terror-related crimes is used to justify such draconian restrictions. But letting the seriousness of the allegation become a primary consideration in bail means that prosecuting agencies can simply trump up charges to ensure years of punishment.

Finally, one major impediment remains even once a court has granted bail. Landmark judicial decisions have long deprecated the practice of courts demanding excessive surety or local sureties. If an arrestee cannot afford her

surety condition, or does not know anyone locally willing to stand as surety for her, she must remain in jail. As reported to the high-powered committee set up to decongest prisons in Delhi during the lockdown earlier this year, hundreds of prisoners were in jail only because they could not meet their surety conditions. The HC passed a one-time order doing away with the surety conditions in light of the pandemic, though the problem will remain long after the pandemic.

One-time orders characterise the court's response to many of these issues. In decisions on the drug-related offences law in 1994 and anti-terror law in 1996, the court recognised that where a speedy trial is not possible, bail restrictions equal unduly long confinement and infringe on Article 21 rights. In both cases, the court passed one-time orders directing certain undertrials to be released, while clarifying that the orders would not affect future cases. In another 1996 decision, the Delhi HC appointed court commissioners to investigate the background of prisoners unable to afford surety and passed one-time directions relaxing their bail conditions.

These orders evidence widespread recognition of fundamental issues with bail, yet refrain from systemic change. In the absence of large-scale reform, however, we will continue with a regime that in its daily reality both horrifies and numbs.

The writer is a lawyer based in Delhi

NOVEMBER 30, 1980, FORTY YEARS AGO

ASSAM PROTEST

A NINE-HOUR FAST by leaders of the Assam movement ended on November 29 with strong speeches by their leaders condemning the government for letting loose a reign of terror against students. Earlier over 1,000 Cotton College Students, many of them women, held protests, demanding that the principal extend protection to boarders. The students also demanded the withdrawal of cases against their 10 counterparts, who are in jail and 66 others who have been released on bonds. They said that CRP jawans had taken away money, wrist watches and other belongings for which they should be paid compensation. They denied keeping lethal arms in hostel. Meanwhile, officials of Oil

India resumed work after 28 days of strike. Life in Gauhati remained crippled, with the CRP patrolling streets and panic-stricken people trying to avoid them. Many important markets also remained closed. The All-Assam Minority Students Union has expressed concern over the protests.

CONGRESS VS CPM

THE RULING CONGRESS in Kerala has made it known its dissatisfaction to the CPM over the communist party's concept of the Left Democratic Front, its approach to its front partners and its handling of the law and order situation in the state. It has warned the CPM that if it wants to try the Bengal formula or even the politics of 1967 in Kerala, it should

be ready to face the consequences. The CPM is alleged to have attacked the offices of the Congress in Kerala. PCC president A K Anthony, who briefed newsmen, said that the CPM is yet to fully understand the basics of the concept of a left democratic front.

INDIRA AND STARS

PRIME MINISTER INDIRA Gandhi has said that she has no faith in astrologers. The PM said that an impression has been created in the Indian and foreign press that she consulted astrologers before taking momentous decisions. "I have never been to astrologers, though people come to me. The only stars I believe in are those of India's bright past, bright present and bright future," she said.

New script in Pakistan

Allegations of corruption, electoral malpractices are nothing new in opposition protests. But criticism of the military in political rallies is unprecedented



FARZANA SHAIKH

FOR A COUNTRY as famously unpredictable as Pakistan, the regularity of its dispiriting pattern of politics can be hard to explain. Periodic waves of popular protest, each riding on the back of ever-higher expectations of democratic change, soon recede to expose an entrenched pattern of power, which has remained broadly constant for more than seven decades.

There is little to suggest that the latest round of opposition protests against Prime Minister Imran Khan will be any different.

The familiar ring is hard to miss. Midway through its term of office, an elected government faces demands to step down from disaffected parties, who accuse it of corruption or electoral malpractice. The memory of Khan's container driven politics, which led to the ousting of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif in 2017, is still fresh.

This time a loose alliance under the banner of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), led by the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Jamiat-ul Ulama i-Islam-Fazlur Rahman (JUI-F), is again seeking the resignation of the government before the end of its term in 2023.

Opposition parties have accused Khan of complicity in rigging the 2018 elections to favour his "selection" as prime minister—accusations that have been amplified by claims of widespread irregularities in recent polls held in Gilgit-Baltistan, where Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) party is set to form the government.

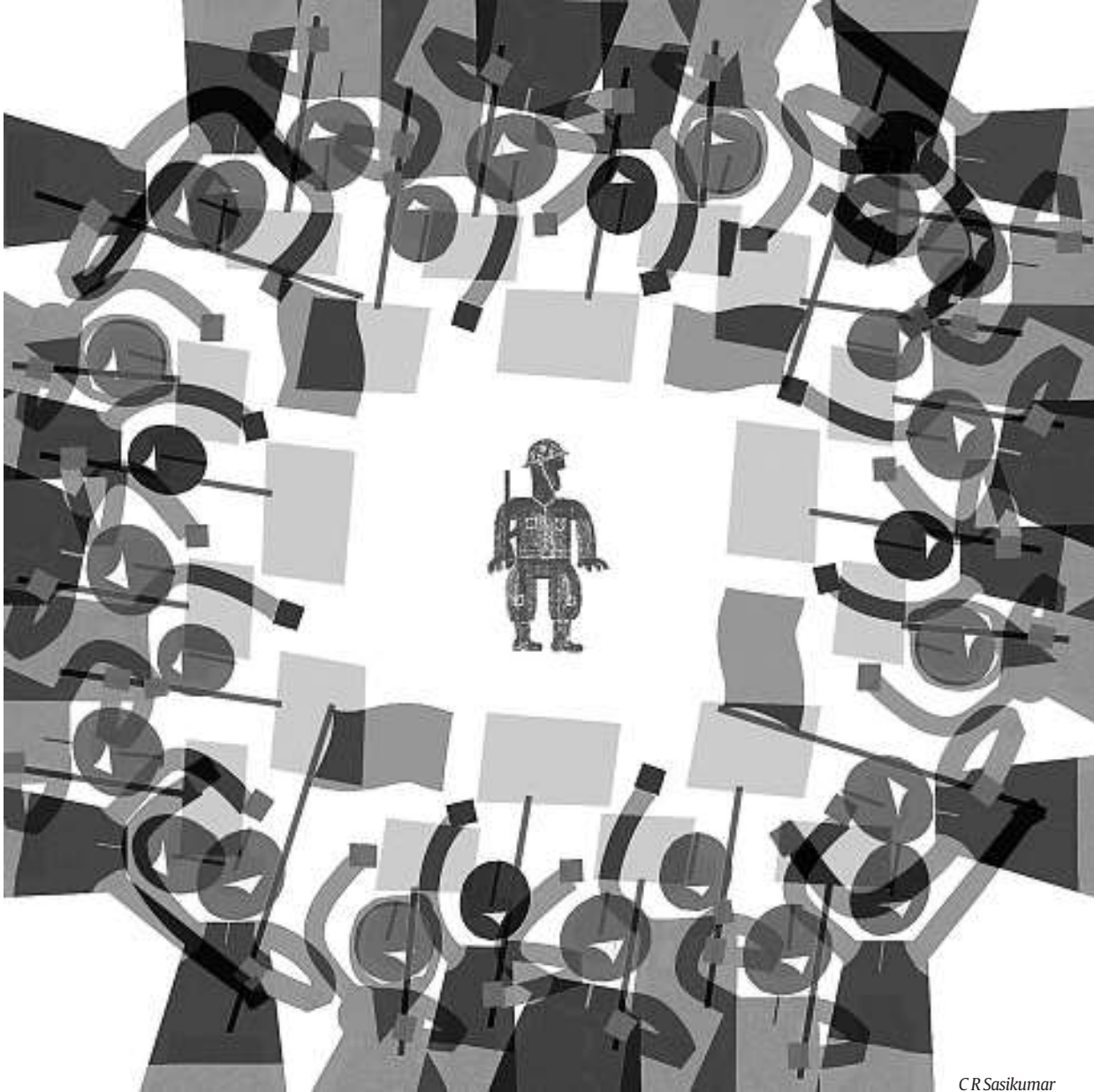
As in the past, the current protests have met with the familiar drumbeat of a military-security establishment, which has warned opposition leaders against acting as agents of "foreign interests" looking to exploit chinks in Pakistan's armour. And as before, these insinuations of treason have been rejected by opposition parties insisting on their right to protest against an illegitimate government and a prime minister they describe as a "puppet".

Other tried and tested methods from the past are also in play. A crackdown on dissent, the harassment of opposition activists, the orchestration of divisions in opposition ranks, and the use of religious parties to diffuse attention or fuel the fire, are all in evidence.

In October, the body responsible for issuing media licences (the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority or Pemra), barred television channels from broadcasting the speeches of "proclaimed offenders". The Opposition dismissed it as a ploy to stifle publicity for Sharif, who is currently in London for medical treatment, and vowed to defy the ban.

In one of the most egregious cases of harassment, security officials also forced Karachi's police chief to sign an arrest warrant for Sharif's son-in-law, Saifdar Awan, who was seized in his hotel room at night after attending an opposition rally in the city in October. The arrest triggered outrage prompting the army chief, General Javed Bajwa, to order an inquiry. However, details of the action taken against the offending officials remain firmly under wraps.

Since then reports have emerged of defections in opposition parties orchestrated by the security forces. In Balochistan, where the pro-military Balochistan Awami Party (BAP)



C R Sasikumar

heads the government, two senior PML-N leaders are said to have broken ranks with Sharif over his "narrative" against the army, which they claim is a call to "mutiny".

Well-worn tactics to use religious parties close to the military-security establishment have also resurfaced. The radical Barelvi group, the Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), which shot to political stardom in 2017 after working with the security establishment to oust former prime minister Sharif, has made a fresh appearance.

In a series of rallies in early November, which served to distract attention from opposition demands, the TLP blocked main routes to the capital, Islamabad, and called for Pakistan to sever relations with France over alleged Islamophobia.

Notwithstanding these familiar patterns, the latest opposition protests do break some new ground. The most significant departure from previous movements has been to call out senior members of the military hierarchy for exceeding their constitutional remit and interfering in politics.

The tone was set by Sharif who, in a dramatic video address from London to a mass rally in Gujranwala which kicked off the movement on October 17, named General Bajwa and the current head of the ISI, General Faiz Hameed, as conspiring to oust him from office. The unprecedented intervention has left the military scrambling to salvage its reputation as a neutral arbiter above party politics.

But Sharif's decision to take the bull by its horns has also opened up cracks in the opposition, which could spell a loss of momentum.

Sharif's decision to take the bull by its horns has also opened up cracks in the Opposition, which could spell a loss of momentum. The first indications appeared on November 6 when, in the course of an interview with the BBC, the co-chairman of the PPP, Bilawal Bhutto, confessed that he had been 'shocked' by Sharif's decision to single out individual members of the military establishment as culprits for bringing Imran Khan to power. 'We don't talk like this in rallies,' he declared. Sharif's daughter, Maryam, de facto head of the PML-N, was quick to respond saying Bilawal had offered his personal opinion.

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These differences reflect each party's differing stakes in the existing dispensation. While the PPP retains control of the provincial government in Sindh, the PML-N is still confined to political wilderness. This may explain Maryam Sharif's recent offer of talks with the military in which she set as a condition for Khan's dismissal but refrained from demanding the resignation of either Bajwa or Faiz Hameed.

But the military's options also seem to be constrained at the moment. While it may be inclined to negotiate with opposition parties, Khan's unwillingness to do so has proved awkward and, arguably, something of an irritant. Yet the military is clearly not ready to impose its will or to alienate Khan for fear he may also "go rogue" like its erstwhile protégé, Sharif.

Khan, however, is far from invulnerable. Nourished by the military and increasingly exposed as inept at governance, his political fortunes can be expected to last only as long as it takes to cobble together a more dependable "King's Party".

The writer is an Associate Fellow at Chatham House London

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

“There is no doubt among Nepalis, and especially the families of the victims, that the insurgency was an extraordinary situation; and that the normative ideas of the criminal justice system do not apply as they are in insurgency-era cases.”
— THE KATHMANDU POST

America's common ground

The US possesses a remarkable sense of independence and community at local level, even when divided at the national level



RAJMOHAN GANDHI

THAT AMERICA IS not a centralised state was proved by the election. The declaration of Biden's victory — the "call", to use the American phrase — did not come from a Washington official or from any election commission (no such body exists in the US). It came from "decision desks" of TV networks.

Firmly separated from the channels' popular and usually partisan anchors, these "decision desks" have remained independent over the decades. This has been true also of Fox, whose principal anchors are openly pro-Trump. When, much ahead of rival channels, the Fox "decision desk" named Biden the projected winner in toss-up Arizona, Trump was furious, as were Republicans across the country, but Fox continued to "call" Arizona for Biden.

America's elections are organised by each county (the equivalent of an Indian district), not by the federal government or, directly, by a state. In each county, volunteering citizens also play a crucial part. In this and other critical areas, the country's course is set by small independent groups and local communities, not by a leviathan. This is America's strength.

After news networks "call" an election, counties certify their tallies, and then a state does. Once a state certifies, its Electoral College delegation is constituted. Due this year on December 14, physical voting by EC delegates in their state (or federal territory) will confirm the president-elect, but Joe Biden will not assume a president's powers until his oath-taking on January 20.

In theory, Electoral College members can be bought, kidnapped, or prevented from voting, though laws exist in many (not all) states to make this hard. However, very few instances of delegates defying their state's verdict have been recorded.

In reality, therefore, what creates change, joy, and grief in America is the news networks' "call", which this year was made on November 7. The rest is always a sequence of formalities, though there is scope for legal challenges, and, Trump being Trump, for some suspense. Losing or dropping many of his challenges, he has earned disgrace by threatening county or state-level officers, who in the US have political affiliations.

"Not a good day for those who've lost," acknowledged Van Jones, CNN's African-American commentator on November 7. A stirred Jones also said that with the announcement of Trump's defeat many like him would once more "breathe freely". Every viewer connected the remark to the dying George Floyd's "I can't breathe" gasp earlier in the year. Now, added Jones on November 7, he can tell his young son, "See! Being good matters".

More than 51 per cent of the US popula-

tion seemed to equate Trump's loss with a return of times when a president did not continually lie and bully. They celebrated the return to decency their votes had produced. But at least 47 per cent mourned the result. Many among them felt that "America" had lost, and "a hostile world" had won.

That Trump was endorsed by nearly half of the American electorate showed, among other things, the success of a drive to inject victimhood in the country's Whites, who form around 61 per cent of the population. Latinos (termed "Hispanics" until recently) make up around 19 per cent, Blacks around 13 per cent, and Asians (possibly the fastest growing segment) around 6 per cent.

That America equals White America is what many Americans, and many non-Americans too, have tended to think. Others have equated diversity with America; they think of the country's steadily altering racial mix. Much before Trump, American "nationalists" of a dozen hues (ranging from the Ku Klux Klan to naive believers) had told their White compatriots that the world was exploiting the US.

Trump saw and seized his moment after globalisation enabled Asian economies with talented but cheaper workforces to capture a growing percentage of world trade. Inside the US, IT or "Tech" was outpacing manufacturing. Hundreds of thousands had lost jobs. Renewable energy was displacing coal. "You're being cheated," Trump told White American masses left behind by globalisation and "Tech". Most lived in small towns in the country's vast hinterland spaces, far from the coasts and the great cities. With Trump at the helm, the forgotten American, the hard-working, flag-waving, family-defending White Man, would take his country back! The message evoked wild enthusiasm.

I was asked, during a conversation about Trump's adoring audiences, "Do they think he cares for them?" Don't they recognise his plain falsehoods? My answer was, "They think he cares for what they care for."

They love the flag, they love the White America that is sailing away, they love America's dominance in the world, they love their traditional jobs. They love it when Trump implies that the flag, the gun, and the cross are three different words for the same thing. They love it when Trump signals that masks are for sissies. Forgetting that they themselves had once gained from a changing America, they resent fresh changes. And when Trump said, "No more endless wars in distant places!" he touched an old isolationist strain in the American psyche, a sentiment strengthened by continuing PTSD in soldiers who had served in Afghanistan and Iraq. And when Trump claimed that he was for stimulus money reaching unemployed Americans and those on the verge of eviction, he showed a populism which is the very opposite of the fiscal conservatism that Republicans used to stand for.

At the local level, as the election process proved, America possesses a remarkable sense of independence and also of community, even when the US is deeply and sharply divided at the national level.

The writer teaches at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DIEGO'S PARADOX

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Ball loses foot' (IE, November 27). Diego Maradona, the legendary Argentine footballer, was a strange blend of the divine and the profane — his skills with a football were magical, but his indifference to his own wellbeing, his abuse of his squat, strong body, was baffling. Going purely by his football skills, world football is the poorer in his passing.

SS Paul, Nadia

POLARISED POLL

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Battle for a City' (IE, November 27). The high-voltage campaign being undertaken by the BJP in Hyderabad has definitely put high stakes on a municipal poll. But that is nothing new for the BJP. Similarly, it had used heavy weights in Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore, with even the PM Modi holding rallies in these cities. But the GHMC polls are different — a win for the BJP, or even a runners-up position will upstage the Congress, and give the party a launching pad in Telangana, where it has been a low key player. The polarising of voters, and voicing the communal agenda of Bangladeshis and Rohingyas, will be counter-productive. BJP needs to show restraint.

Rajiv Boolchand Jain, Zirakpur

BEYOND TECH

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Tech re-



RASHMI DAS

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA WILL give JNU its nationalist spine. In his lecture on "Six Lessons on Raja Yoga," he said: "Take care of the spine, everything happens along the spine." Vivekananda was a spiritual generalissimo. In his lifetime, his visage and work evoked awe and reverence from university bigwigs, industry captains, top opera artists and an array of intellectuals. To an enslaved nation facing an imperial world order, he gave us our manliness.

It is therefore fitting that a Vivekananda statue in JNU has been installed at the entrance of the administrative block. As Swamiji had instructed, this statue will inspire to "tell the truth boldly, whether it hurts or not. Never pander to weakness. If the truth is too much for intelligent people and it sweeps them away, let them go; the sooner the better."

Many in the JNU faculty could benefit from Vivekananda's lectures on karma yoga. They are in dire need of it. Performance culture, tenacious hard work, selflessness, honesty, the emotional experience that is India — they are brief of such realisations. Having converted their centres and schools into left-

Who's afraid of Vivekananda?

JNU needs his spirit, teachings to help it scale new heights

ist swamps, they have survived on past re-gurgitations of stale theories. Many of them have routinely shirked their teaching responsibilities during the pandemic. Their indolent excuses citing capacity constraints would make the communications industry of India squirm. These faculty members have said that they teach big classes and are not able to accommodate the number of students. Truth be told, the university has conducted over a dozen webinars to teach faculty members how to use the latest online tools so that any number of students can be taught — not only for JNU faculty, the university has trained 5,000 teachers across the country in the use of online learning and evaluation methods.

The participation of the left-leaning faculty in such webinars has been extremely poor. Many are unaware that such webinars are held, despite the university posting these details regularly. The culture of non-performance in these left swamps is another contagion that the university has to grapple with. These faculty members hawk around in the name of the student community but in reality, they are the most malevolent anti-

student force and relentlessly cause damage to the university system.

This behaviour was evident in the run up to the conduct of the JNU Entrance Exam (JNU EE) 2020-21. While many faculty members of different Schools and Centres went to the office of National Testing Agency (it conducts all important educational entrance tests like JEE-Mains, NEET, UGC-NET), to set the questions papers for JNU EE, some deans and chairpersons played saboteurs and refused to cooperate. The Academic Council in its latest meeting, 155 (B), took "serious note" and referred this to the Executive Council of JNU, (the highest decision-making body of the university) for suitable action.

The 290th Executive Council (EC) meeting held on November 25, has classified this as a grave misconduct of service rules. The EC has constituted a fact-finding committee to identify the recalcitrant faculty members so that suitable penalties may be meted out to them. The fact-finding committee is headed by Rajneesh Shukla, the Visitor's nominee to the EC; deans of two schools who will be named shortly, will also be part

of this committee.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while unveiling the Vivekananda statue narrated an episode from Swamiji's life. During his travels to the West, Vivekananda was often ridiculed for his saffron robes. On one such occasion, an Englishman chided him and said, "why don't you dress up as a gentleman?". With his characteristic mirth, Swamiji responded, "in your culture, tailor maketh a gentleman, in ours character makes one a gentleman".

The relevance of this message should be high priority for JNU.

Some self-styled intellectuals of the left-over variety are harried by the Vivekananda statue, more so by "tattered orange cloth" with which it was covered prior to his unveiling. Even when showered with global praise and a legion of renowned followers, the monk loved his tattered orange cloth. He taught us kingly values. These will permeate JNU now and make it grand.

The writer is member, Executive Council, Jawaharlal Nehru University and editor, TelecomLive & InfraLive

In conversation with superstar Amitabh Bachchan and *The Indian Express* Executive Director Anant Goenka, at a 26/11 special event showcasing corona warriors who epitomise the stories of strength that mark Mumbai – which was telecast on Star Plus on Sunday night – Guest of Honour Dr Harsh Vardhan talks about Prime Minister Modi's efforts and the role of India's immunisation programme in fighting Covid. Excerpts:



Union minister Harsh Vardhan, Amitabh Bachchan in the course of the virtual interaction during the show

The capacity and capability of India in production of vaccines is well-known. We provide 60 per cent of the vaccines needed by developing countries, and about one-fourth the world's requirement. Roughly, more than 100 candidates for Covid vaccine are under various stages of development round the world, and 30 of them in India. Of these 30, five are in various stages of clinical trial, two in an advanced stage, two in the preclinical trial stage... As per the internal reports available with us, the talks that are on, I am fully hopeful of a vaccine being available in the beginning of 2021, a safe vaccine with good efficacy. Regarding its availability to the public, there is no denying that we can't inoculate 135 crore people all at once. However, as per our planning, by June-July, almost 30 crore people will get the vaccine, among whom we will prioritise first,

As I said earlier, it is not the first time that India is working in the field of research and development of a vaccine. We have seen research on rotavirus, typhoid, Japanese encephalitis, malaria. Normally such research takes years, however our scientists have achieved a miracle given the Covid emergency, not just in India but across the world, ensuring a vaccine within a year... We have been working for the past three months now on ensuring that the vaccine reaches all the corners of our large country, the remote villages, Adivasi areas, mountains, jungles...figuring out how many more vaccine carriers and health workers would we need, the number of extra refrigerators and refrigerated vans required, the amount of syringes needed, the training that would have to be organised... In fact, our COVIN platform's technology can help other countries too in working out their logistics. It foresees all situations that might arise, even adverse reactions. Our advisory group of experts has secretaries of all departments, officers from the Indian Academy of Paediatrics, AIIMS doctors, state governments. The experience we have due to our polio eradication and Universal Immunisation Programme will help us. We are lucky that the Prime Minister is himself monitoring this, going into the

I have read about the Spanish Flu, but the fact is our actions from the start have been keeping the worst in mind. We saw our first Covid case on January 30; it was in January (first week) that China had informed the WHO about this new virus causing pneumonia-like symptoms. Within 24-48 hours, we had our first meetings on Covid in the Health Ministry, by 17th, detailed advisories had gone out across the country, surveillance had started at all entry points, airports, ports, borders. We also started community surveillance. The point I am trying to make is

Delhi, met so many people, maybe sometimes without adequate distancing, that 'social vaccine' has protected me, it has protected countless people... I want to urge people that the message that we are giving, please follow it closely and truthfully. Avoid crowded places, or going unnecessarily to markets and social gatherings. It is perhaps the most important thing one can do in the fight against Covid.. I request you too, to spread the message via your *Kaun Banega Crorepati* programme.

We are very lucky that to keep our morale up, inspire us consistently, we have such a big and ideal leader as Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Since the first day, he has been there for us, not just for us but for the entire country, with his various messages, meetings at several levels, the planning... Initially doctors had to face such stigma, insults when they went home, doctors were attacked when they went for

What can people do....? I think what they can do best is give Covid warriors the respect they deserve, to the best of their ability in their own spheres, whether it is government or non-government. Schemes can be started for Covid warriors, for their wards, particularly their mothers and families. So many mothers have lost their children in these 10 months to the Covid fight. The Covid warriors are tired, but they never say it. And in this country of 135 crore, I don't know a single case of a mother, a brother, a sister, telling a Covid warrior that it's enough, don't report at a Covid ward any more.... And when I talk of Covid warriors, it is not just health workers, it is all frontline workers, including journalists, who are on the ground, creating awareness... some of them have died. Throughout history, the contribution of these Covid warriors will continue to inspire. The whole country is aware of their contribution.

(TV news partner ABP News will have a special show today at 10.30 pm)



TOPOF THE WORLD



Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam

HONG KONG

Carrie Lam says can't open bank account after US sanctions

HONG KONG leader Carrie Lam says she has to pile up cash at home as she has been unable to open a bank account in the global financial centre since the US sanctioned her shortly after Beijing imposed a national security law on the city. "Sitting in front of you is a chief executive of the Hong Kong SAR (Special Administrative Region) who has no banking services made available to her," Lam told a news channel in the city. "I'm using cash for all the things," she said. "I have piles of cash at home, the government is paying me cash for my salary because I don't have a bank account." **REUTERS**

BRITAIN

Brexit talks in 'reasonable position': Raab

BREXIT TRADE negotiations with the European Union are in a reasonable position, with some progress on competition issues but significant differences outstanding on fishing, British foreign minister Dominic Raab said on Sunday. "I do think we're in a reasonable position, there's a deal to be done," Raab told Sky News. Asked about a final deadline for talks, he said negotiations were into the "last week or so" but said the EU had previously moved the goalposts on a final deadline. **REUTERS**

AUSTRALIA

Severe fire danger as temperatures smash records

PARTS OF Australia, including Sydney, sweltered through the hottest November night on record with temperatures likely to stay high on Sunday, prompting authorities to issue a total fire ban. Sydney surpassed 40 degrees Celsius on Saturday while swathes of western New South Wales, South Australia and northern Victoria baked through even higher temperatures nearing 45 degrees. The country has seen unusually prolonged and intense bushfires that last season burned nearly 12 million hectares, killed 33 people and an estimated 1 billion animals. **REUTERS**



General Wei Fenghe

China's defence minister visits Nepal, seeks to resume military cooperation

SHIRISH B PRADHAN
KATHMANDU, NOVEMBER 29

CHINA'S DEFENCE Minister General Wei Fenghe on Sunday met Nepal Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli and exchanged views on matters of mutual interest and held talks with Nepal Army chief General Purna Chandra Thapa on ways to resume military cooperation and training, which has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Gen Wei held bilateral talks with the Nepal Army chief at the Army headquarters in Kathmandu during his day-long "working visit" to Nepal, said a statement issued by the Nepal Army. "The two held a cordial discussion on various issues of bilateral interest," it said.

"Bilateral discussions were then held at the delegation level mainly on issues pertaining to resumption of training and student exchange programme and follow up on defence assistance that have been impacted due to the Covid-19 pandemic," the statement said. The Chinese defence minister, who was leading a 21-member delegation, viewed both the proposals "positively and affirmed that the bilateral cooperation should resume as soon as possible, including exchange of high level visits," it said.

He also pledged to provide additional assistance to the Nepal Army in fighting the Covid-19 pandemic, the statement said.

The statement expressed confidence "the visit will help in further strengthening and expanding the cordial military-to-military relations between the two countries". **PTI**



US SCHOOLS FACE MANY CHALLENGES AS THEY REOPEN

Students wearing masks and face shields take their seats at classrooms remodelled to adhere to social distancing on the first day of in-person kindergarten in Baltimore. Like other school districts across the country, Baltimore City Public Schools are slowly trying to get students back in the classroom. It has not been easy, but neither has remote learning. Educators looking to get back in front of students have had to navigate conflicting guidance from politicians and public health officials. Some teachers' unions have refused to return to buildings until the virus abates, ostracizing colleagues who dare break with them. On the other hand, the country's most vulnerable children have sustained severe academic and social harm from the remote-learning experiment. Parents, navigating their own economic and work struggles, are increasingly desperate. **NYT**

Daily coronavirus deaths keep rising amid changing US crisis

A far smaller percentage of people who catch Covid are dying, but record rise in cases keeps daily death toll high

CAMPBELL ROBERTSON,
NIETU MCDONNELL
Nieto del Rio, Joseph Goldstein & Mitch Smith
NOVEMBER 29

A FAR smaller proportion of people who catch the coronavirus are dying from it than were in the spring, experts say. Yet the sheer breadth of the current outbreak means that the cost in lives lost every day is still climbing.

More than 170,000 Americans are now testing positive for the virus on an average day, straining hospitals across much of the country, including in many states that had seemed to avoid the worst of the pandemic. More than 1.1 million people tested positive in the

past week alone.

At the peak of the spring wave, about 31,000 new cases were announced each day, though that was a vast undercount because testing capacity was extremely limited. On April 15, the United States reached a grim nadir: 2,752 people were reported to have died from Covid-19, more than on any day before or since.

Still, the toll of the virus was an abstraction for many Americans because deaths were concentrated in a handful of states like New York, New Jersey and Louisiana.

Now the deaths are scattered widely across the entire nation, and there is hardly a community that has not been affected. On Wednesday, when 2,300 deaths

were reported nationwide — the highest toll since May — only three counties reported a toll of more than 20.

Forty-four states have set weekly case records, and 25 states have set weekly death records in November, as the nation's death toll has surpassed 264,000 and officials worry that Thanksgiving gatherings may cause infections to spread still more widely in the coming days.

The country reached a peak seven-day average of 176,000 reported cases on Wednesday, and there is reason to fear the worst is still coming. Daily case counts around New York City have begun ticking up again, with an average of 6,600 each day in the metro area, a fivefold increase from the start of October. **NYT**

Singaporean gives birth to baby with Covid antibodies: report

REUTERS
SINGAPORE, NOVEMBER 29

A SINGAPOREAN woman, who was infected with the novel coronavirus in March when she was pregnant, has given birth to a baby with antibodies against the virus, offering a new clue as to whether the infection can be transferred from mother to child.

The baby was born this month without Covid-19 but with the virus antibodies, the *Straits Times* newspaper reported on Sunday, citing the mother.

The World Health Organisation says it is not yet known whether a pregnant woman with Covid-19 can pass the virus to her foetus or baby during pregnancy or delivery.

To date, the active virus has not been found in samples of fluid around the baby in the womb or in breast milk.

2 bomb blasts in Afghanistan kill 34: officials

Car bombs hit Ghazni, Zabul provinces

RAHMATULLAH NEKZAD
& TAMEEM AKHGAR
GHAZNI, NOVEMBER 29

AT LEAST 34 people were killed on Sunday in two separate suicide bombings in Afghanistan that targeted a military base and a provincial chief, officials said.

There were no immediate claims of responsibility for the attacks, which took place as Afghan government representatives and the Taliban hold face-to-face talks in Qatar for the first time to end the country's decades-long war.

In eastern Ghazni province, 31 soldiers were killed and 24 others wounded when the attacker drove a military humvee full of explosives onto an army commando base before detonating the car bomb, according to an official in Afghanistan's National Security Council, who spoke anonymously because he was not permitted to speak directly to the media.

Ghazni's provincial health department chief, Zahir Shah Nikmal, also confirmed the death toll from the attack.

Afghanistan's Defence Ministry released a statement claiming 10 soldiers were killed and nine wounded. The ministry also offered a different account of what happened than the official at the National Security Council, saying the vehicle exploded near

There were no immediate claims of responsibility for the attacks, which took place as the Afghan govt and the Taliban hold peace talks in Qatar

the army base after security forces opened fire on the car. It was not immediately clear why there was a discrepancy.

Interior Ministry spokesman Tariq Arian said a suicide bombing took place, though he did not provide further details.

In southern Afghanistan, another suicide car bomber targeted the convoy of a provincial council chief in Zabul province, killing at least three people and wounding 21 others, including children, according to provincial spokesman Gul Islam Sial.

The council chief, Attajan Haqbayat, survived Sunday's attack with minor injuries, although one of his bodyguards was among those killed, said provincial police spokesman Hikmatullah Kochai.

There has been a sharp rise in violence this year and a surge of attacks by the Taliban against Afghanistan's beleaguered security forces since the start of peace talks in September. **AP**



Afghan soldiers arrive at the site of the suicide bombing in Ghazni province on Sunday. **AP**

Ethiopia claims victory in Tigray conflict after assault

SIMON MARKS
ADDIS ABABA, NOVEMBER 29

ETHIOPIA CLAIMED victory in its conflict with the restive region of Tigray on Saturday, after a day-long series of artillery strikes against the regional capital, a city of half a million people.

With communications shut off, there was no way to confirm the government's claim.

The shelling of the city, Mekelle, came two days after Ethiopia's prime minister, Abiy Ahmed, had ordered the start of what he called the third and final phase of an operation aimed at removing the northern state's ruling Tigray People's Liberation Front, until recently the dominant power in the national government.

On Saturday evening, Ethiopia's state broadcaster reported Mekelle was now "under

Fighting likely to continue

EVEN IF the Ethiopian government's forces have taken control of the Tigrayan regional capital, fighting in this war is likely to continue for a lot longer, experts have warned. The Tigray People's

EXPLAINED

Liberation Front has said the group has no intention of surrendering. They have a large armed militia, which is likely to engage the Ethiopian military in guerrilla warfare that could go on for a long time.

control" of the central government and that federal forces in the city are "searching all suspected areas the junta might be hiding", referring to the TPLF.

"I am pleased to share that we have completed and ceased the military operations in the Tigray region," Abiy posted to Twitter Saturday night. "Our focus now will be on rebuilding the region and providing humanitarian as-

sistance while federal police apprehend the TPLF clique."

Earlier on Saturday, the leadership of the TPLF, whose decadeslong political and economic clout has waned considerably since Abiy took office in 2018, vowed not to surrender and called on local citizens to resist the army.

Many Mekelle residents fled to rural areas, fearing they could be caught in the crossfire. **NYT**

Dave Prowse, the actor who played Darth Vader, dies at 85

JILL LAWLESS
LONDON, NOVEMBER 29

DAVE PROWSE, the British weightlifter-turned-actor who was the body, though not the voice, of arch-villain Darth Vader in the original *Star Wars* trilogy, has died. He was 85.

Prowse died Saturday after a short illness, his agent Thomas Bowington said Sunday.

Born in Bristol, southwest England, in 1935, Prowse was a three-time British weightlifting champion and represented England in weightlifting at the 1962 Commonwealth Games before breaking into movies with roles that emphasised his commanding size, including Frankenstein's monster in a pair of Hammer Studios horror films.

Director George Lucas saw Prowse in a small part in *A*



Prowse signs autographs in Los Angeles in 2007. **Reuters**

Clockwork Orange and asked the 6-foot-6-inch actor to audition for the villainous Vader or the Wookiee Chewbacca in *Star Wars*.

Prowse later told the BBC he chose Darth Vader because "you always remember the bad guys."

Physically, Prowse was perfect for the part. His lilting English West Country accent was considered less ideal, and his lines were

dubbed by James Earl Jones.

Prowse donned Darth Vader's black armour and helmet for *Star Wars* (1977), *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) and *Return of the Jedi* (1983).

He expressed some regret that, thanks to Vader's mask, "I can walk around with complete anonymity."

"All actors crave recognition and I'd like to have some like Luke Skywalker and Han Solo," he told The Associated Press in 1980. "Fortune tends to follow fame."

Prowse also worked as a trainer for other actors, helping Christopher Reeve prepare to be the Man of Steel in hit 1978 film *Superman*.

Prowse was also known to a generation of British children as the Green Cross Code Man, a superhero in a series of road safety advertisements during the 1970s and 1980s. **AP**



A metal object was found in the remote Utah desert last week by state workers

That mysterious monolith in the Utah desert? It's gone, officials say

BRYAN PIETSCH
NOVEMBER 29

AS MYSTERIOUSLY as it arrived, a metal monolith that was discovered this month by Utah public safety workers is now gone, officials said Saturday.

The three-sided metal structure was removed Friday evening "by an unknown party" from the public land it was found on, the federal Bureau of Land Management's Utah office said in a statement.

The bureau said it had not removed the monolith, which it considers private property.

The Utah Department of Public Safety said Monday that it had found the object while surveying for bighorn sheep.

"IT'S GONE!" the Department of Public Safety said, reacting to the news in an Instagram post. "Almost as quickly as it appeared it has now disappeared," the department said, adding, "I can only speculate" that aliens took back, using the emoji for extraterrestrials.

It was a mystery how the monolith had been installed in the first place. Officials said that the structure was most likely a work of art and that its installation on public land was illegal. It was unclear who had put it there — and when — but the art world quickly speculated it was the work of John McCracken, a sculptor fond of science fiction. He died in 2011. **NYT**

THE ELEPHANT HAD LANGUISHED ALONE FOR YEARS IN A PAKISTANI ZOO

'World's loneliest elephant' Kaavan starts trip to Cambodia

KATHY GANNON
ISLAMABAD, NOVEMBER 29

KAAVAN, DUBBED the "world's loneliest elephant" after languishing alone for years in a Pakistani zoo, was readied Sunday for his flight to a sanctuary in Cambodia and the much-needed company of other elephants.

The mammoth task of getting him into an elephant-sized metal box for transport took several hours, and was perhaps the most crucial step in rescuing him from the dire conditions he's lived in for 35 years.

Had Kaavan been spooked and refused to enter the cage or

bolted, his departure could have been delayed for months while the rescue team sought to restore calm and trust before trying again, explained Martin Bauer, a spokesman for Four Paws International. The global animal welfare group has led the charge to save Kaavan since 2016.

Iconic American singer and actress Cher also arrived in Islamabad last week, the culmination of her longstanding efforts to raise awareness about rescuing Kaavan from the zoo. Conditions there were so bad that a court in the Pakistani capital ordered the zoo closed in August.

Dr Amir Khalil, a veterinarian with Four Paws who's been



Dr Amir Khalil, a veterinarian who has been treating Kaavan's many wounds and ailments over the past three months, feeds the elephant after he was loaded into a crate to transport him to a sanctuary in Cambodia. **Reuters**

treating Kaavan's many wounds and ailments over the past three

months, said he was hopeful about the next chapter of the ele-

phant's life. "In the sanctuary in Cambodia... waiting for him is three ladies, three Asian female elephants," he said. "Now Kaavan might have a new partner, and share a new life with a partner."

Khalil described how on Sunday he slowly and gently coaxed Kaavan to walk backwards into a steel crate, as nearly a dozen men carefully guided him inside using chains around his tree-trunk sized legs.

Kaavan is set to leave aboard a Russian cargo plane for the 25,000-acre sanctuary early Monday morning.

The plight of the male Asian elephant, who's been alone since the death of his partner

Saheli in 2012, has captured worldwide attention.

Cher's animal welfare group Free the Wild has worked with Four Paws and the American syndicated columnist and philanthropist, Eric Margolis, to relocate Kaavan — a mission that's cost about \$400,000. She's also making a documentary film about the process.

Kaavan was diagnosed earlier this year as being dangerously overweight, owing to his unsuitable diet of around 250 kilograms of sugar cane each day.

With Khalil's help, Kaavan lost 450 kg over the past three months, and was down to a slimmer, more agile over 4,000 kg

when he left the zoo Sunday.

Kaavan's wounds are emotional as well as physical. He would spend his days throwing his head from side to side, a stereotypical sign of boredom and misery in an elephant, Bauer said, and something the Four Paws team has been working to treat.

The loss of his mate Saheli in 2012 took a toll on Kaavan's mental health. Elephants are social animals that thrive on the company of other elephants, Bauer explained. For Kaavan, the last eight years have been akin to living in quarantine — something the world has come to understand all too well amid the coronavirus pandemic, he said. **AP**

16 ECONOMY

INDUSTRY WARY OF EMPOWERING WATCHDOG TO APPOINT DIRECTOR GENERAL

Competition Bill: Options for faster case disposal, CCI to name probe arm chief

KARUNJIT SINGH
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

THE CENTRAL government is set to introduce the Competition Amendment Bill before Parliament during the Winter session, according to government officials. Key changes in the Bill include vesting the power of the appointment of the head of the investigative arm of the CCI, the Director-General (DG), is currently appointed by the Centre. Industry bodies and experts had opposed the proposal to give this authority to the competition watchdog, noting that such a move may compromise the independence of the DG.

"We are hopeful that we will be able to place the Bill before Parliament in the winter session," said a government official. The official added that the amendment to transfer the power to appoint the DG would be retained in the final Bill, noting that the investigative arm of competition regulators in other jurisdictions was also overseen by the regulator.

Experts noted that their primary concern was the maintenance of the functional autonomy of the DG. "As the power of appointment is currently with the central government, this gives the DG functional autonomy. I hope that by giving the power of appointment to the CCI the functional autonomy presently enjoyed by the DG office is not diluted," said MM Sharma, head of competition law practice at Vaish Associates.

An expert, who requested to remain anonymous, said that the

CONCERNS ON 'AUTONOMY'

■ Industry bodies and experts had opposed the proposal to give the authority to appoint the Director General of the investigative arm of the Competition Commission of India to the watchdog itself, noting that such a move may compromise the autonomy of the Director General

comparison of the CCI with other jurisdictions was not appropriate as while the investigative arms of jurisdictions such as the European Union do operate under the regulator, they have been seen to be "fiercely independent" which is

not the case with the DG of CCI.

"It seems that even now the investigations by the DG are influenced by the prima facie view taken by the CCI" said the expert, adding that an investigative arm like the DG should be separate from an adjudicatory arm such as the Competition Commission.

The Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) had also said in comments on the draft Bill that "the suggested power for the Competition Commission of India to appoint the Director General under the proposed Bill risks undermining the set rules ensuring fair and independent investigation under the Competition Act, 2002".

Another key amendment in the proposed Bill is the inclusion of the settlement and commitment mechanism for quicker disposal of cases. The settlement mechanism would allow a firm which may have engaged in anti-

competitive conduct to reach an agreement with the CCI to dispose of a case after the DG submits a report indicating competition law violations. The company would be required to cease anti-competitive conduct and may be required to pay a fine decided by the CCI.

Under the commitment mechanism, parties accused of anti-competitive conduct may seek to settle a case before the DG of the CCI begins investigation by committing to cease anti-competitive conduct and paying a fine decided by the CCI.

The move is expected to speed up the disposal of cases. Notably, cases resolved under these mechanisms will not be open to appeals. The CCI may, however, revoke orders of settlement or commitment if it concludes that parties have not made adequate disclosures at the time of the agreement or if there are material changes to the facts of the case.

Higher inflows by tech cos make US biggest FDI source in H1FY21

The US has replaced Mauritius as the second biggest source of foreign direct investment (FDI) during the first half of FY21, data from the Commerce and Industry Ministry showed



\$8.30 BILLION: FOREIGN INFLOWS RECEIVED FROM SINGAPORE IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2020-21

15% Rise in foreign inflows into India during the first half of current fiscal, reaching \$30 billion; in August, the country had attracted \$17.5 billion worth of foreign investments

\$2 billion: FDI from Mauritius, which slipped to fourth position, in first half of this financial year

US, Mauritius trade positions: As per data from the DPIIT (Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade), Mauritius was the second biggest FDI source during April-September 2019, while the US was the fourth biggest investor during that period

\$7.12 BILLION: FDI ATTRACTED FROM THE UNITED STATES DURING APRIL-SEPTEMBER 2020

FDI received from the remaining seven nations in the top 10:
■ \$2.1 billion: Cayman Islands
■ \$1.5 billion: The Netherlands
■ \$1.35 billion: United Kingdom
■ \$1.13 billion: France
■ \$653 billion: Japan
■ \$2020 million: Germany
■ \$48 million: Cyprus

Why is it important: According to experts, increasing FDI from the United States reflects the further strengthening of economic ties between the two countries. The US was also India's top trading partner in 2019-20

Source: DPIIT/PTI

Govt invites proposals for designing, manufacturing of GPS chips

PRESSTRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

THE GOVERNMENT has invited proposals for design, manufacturing, supply and maintenance of 10 lakh integrated NavIC (Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System) and GPS receivers.

"MeitY (Ministry of Electronics and IT) seeks proposals from bidder to design, manufacture, supply and maintain Integrated NavIC and GPS chips and ensure deployment of Integrated NavIC and GPS receivers," the request for proposal document said.

BRIEFLY CII urges industry not to lower guard

New Delhi: Industry body CII has urged its member companies in north India to not lower guard against Covid-19 and ensure that the prescribed norms of wearing masks, maintaining physical distance of at least 6 feet and avoiding large gatherings are followed. The pandemic continues to pose hardship for the entire country, the chamber said on Sunday.

Can improve DHFL offer: Adani group

New Delhi: Gautam Adani's roads-to-mining group, in an email written to the administrator of DHFL, has indicated that it can improve on its Rs 33,000 crore takeover offer for the collapsed housing lender and has sought forfeiture of deposits of bidders seeking to vitiate auction by questioning maximum recovery of public money.

Violation of FDI norms: CAIT writes to PM

New Delhi: Traders' body CAIT on Sunday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking "strong action" against e-commerce firms for alleged violation of FDI policy by them. It also sought setting up of an empowered regulatory authority to regulate and monitor the e-commerce business in India. The Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) also claimed that various government authorities have failed to protect "the sanctity of the policy and law of the government." PTI

Six shut schemes get ₹11,576 cr so far: Franklin Templeton

ENSE ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, NOVEMBER 29

THE SIX schemes that Franklin Templeton had shut since April this year have received total cash flows of Rs 11,576 crore till November 27 from maturities, pre-payments and coupon payments, out of which Rs 2,836 crore was received in November.

According to Franklin Templeton, over the latest fortnight (November 14-27), these schemes received Rs 1,895 crore, most of which (Rs 1,664 crore) was as pre-payments. The cash available as of November 27,

2020 stands at Rs 7,226 crore for the four cash positive schemes, subject to fund running expenses.

Individually, Franklin India Low Duration Fund, Franklin India Ultra Short Bond Fund, Franklin India Dynamic Accrual Fund and Franklin India Credit Risk Fund have 48 per cent, 46 per cent, 33 per cent and 14 per cent of their respective AUM in cash, respectively.

"Post the judgement of the High Court of Karnataka, we considered all possible options over the last few weeks to start returning money to unitholders in the shortest possible time in an or-

derly manner," the fundhouse said in a letter to unitholders.

This included the option of seeking unitholder consent according to the judgment of the High Court, it added.

"However, after detailed deliberations, we determined that it will be necessary to seek judicial intervention from the Supreme Court to ensure an appropriate implementation of the law in the best interest of unitholders," it said. It remains the earnest desire and endeavour of the Trustee to ensure equitable distribution of scheme assets to unitholders at the earliest possible time, Templeton said.

Verification of certain deemed GST registrations sought

PRESSTRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

THE CBIC has asked field offices to carry out physical verification of premises of businesses which have been granted deemed GST registration between August 21 and November 16 to ascertain that they have genuine business or intend to carry out so.

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has also asked taxmen not to grant GST registration on deemed basis in cases where the applicant has not opted for Aadhaar authentication or the authentication has failed. Current provision under Goods and Services Tax law allows for deemed registration upon completion of 21 days of application if the proper officer has not issued any notice within the said 21 days.

The CBIC, in its instruction to field offices, said that data suggests that during the period from August 21, 2020 to November 16, 2020 deemed registrations have been granted in many cases where Aadhaar authentication

The CBIC said data suggests that from August 21 to November 16, deemed registrations were granted in many cases where Aadhaar authentication has not been opted for or has failed. "These registrations granted on deemed basis require verifications to ascertain that they have genuine business or intends to carry out so," the CBIC said while issuing standard operating procedure to carry out physical verification of persons granted deemed registration.

During physical verification, the officer, among other things, would verify that if the applicant intends to carry out manufacturing activity, the capital goods, if required for the said manufacturing activity, have been installed.

PRANAV MUKUL
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

THE MINISTRY of Road Transport and Highways has issued the Motor Vehicle Aggregator Guidelines, meant to regulate the hitherto unregulated cab aggregator segment, mainly controlled by two players – the US-based Uber and Bengaluru-based Ola Cabs. In the guidelines, the Centre has laid down various procedures pertaining to conditions for grant of licence to an aggregator, compliance with regard to vehicles, regulation of fares, etc.

Why have these guidelines been issued?

As part of the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019, the government provided that an aggregator will need to be issued a licence to operate by the respective state government and that the states will follow the guidelines issued by the Centre.

What changes for drivers?

The aggregator has been asked to ensure that every driver is provided with a health insurance integrated with the aggregator for

BUDGET FY22: CENTRE CONSIDERING SEVERAL PROPOSALS

Plan to boost fund infusion for infra projects

BANIKINKAR PATTANAYAK
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

THE GOVERNMENT is weighing a raft of proposals, including relaxing rules to enable insurance firms and pension funds to put in long-term capital in infrastructure projects, as it seeks to spur job creation and bring the Covid-hit economy back on track fast.

Extant regulatory norms effectively bar these investors, that bring in patient capital, from funding private-sector special purpose vehicles (SPVs), while most infrastructure firms are set up as SPVs. These long-term investors are also required to invest primarily in highly safe instruments.



The Budget may also unveil a development financial institution to finance large rural infrastructure projects. Express file

These instruments, such as government and public-sector bonds, often fetch meagre returns. Similarly, various institutional investors face restrictions in funding infrastructure projects that are not rated AA or above, even though most of these projects rarely have ratings of BBB or above.

"These anomalies between the reality and regulatory requirements are being addressed. While we certainly need more long-term capital, the government also wants to ensure any such step doesn't pose risks to the broader financial system. Consultations with regulators and others are on

minimum of three months and maximum of 24 months from the date on which such data was generated. This data will also have to be made available to the state government, as per due process of law but the norms stipulate that any data related to customers shall not be disclosed without their written consent.

What changes for customers?

The aggregators have been allowed to provide pooling facilities to customers, whose details and KYC information is available. Further, for women passengers seeking to avail ride-pooling, the aggregators will need to provide the option to pool only with other women passengers. In cases of non-transport vehicles being aggregated for ride-pooling, a limit of four ride-sharing intra-city trips on a calendar day and two ride-sharing inter-city trips per week for each vehicle with the driver has been stipulated.

What changes in terms of fare?

The guidelines stipulate that the city taxi fare indexed by WPI

for the current year shall be the base fare chargeable to customers availing aggregator service. In states where a city taxi fare has not been determined, an amount of Rs 25/30 will be the base fare. The base minimum fare chargeable to customers will be for a minimum of 3 km to compensate for dead mileage and distance travelled and fuel utilised for picking up the customers. Aggregators have been allowed to charge a fare 50 per cent lower than base fare and impose a maximum surge pricing of 1.5 times the base fare.

Additionally, the norms say that the driver of a vehicle shall receive at least 80 per cent of the fare applicable on each ride, thereby capping the commission charged by the aggregators at 20 per cent. Currently, the commission rates range between 25-35 per cent and differs from city to city. On cancellation of rides without valid reason, by either a driver or a rider, a penalty of 10 per cent of total fare not exceeding Rs 100 shall be put. The penalty imposed on rider will be divided between the driver and the aggregator in the proportion of the decided commission rate.

Full interview on www.indianexpress.com

MARKET WATCH

FPIs REMAIN NET BUYERS IN NOV

New Delhi: Foreign portfolio investors (FPI) remained net buyers for the second straight month in November by pumping in a whopping Rs 62,951 crore in domestic markets. As per depositories data, FPIs invested a net Rs 60,358 crore into equities. PTI

INTERVIEW: CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL HIGHWAYS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

'Will award projects worth ₹2 lakh crore by FY21, Covid has made us more aggressive'



Sukhbir Singh Sandhu

shelter, like they were in camps, but complying with the guidelines. So they started work immediately after the lockdown was lifted. In some cases, yes, the labour had gone back. But they also started coming back in a few weeks' time.

And many contractors sent their vehicles to Bihar, Bengal and Odisha to get returned labour back. Because contractors realised that the cost they were incurring with the machinery remaining idle at sites was much higher than the cost of getting labourers back through own transport arrangements. So we were back at work almost immediately.

Did you also have to give a lot of concessions to contractors?

Yes. We have started the system of releasing payments monthly. Earlier it used to be stage-payments, wherein the release of money was linked to completion of a certain stage of the contract. That was only five times in a year. Now it has become monthly and that has increased liquidity of the contractors to a great extent. They are very happy.

Did you take their feedback?

Oh yes. We spoke to contractors. There were some 80 suggestions. We immediately agreed to 60 of them and issued orders on the same day.

Awarding of contracts is one thing, but what about your

pace of construction and completion of projects?

That way we are slightly shorter than last year because for two months, the work had to be stopped before it picked up gradually. The lockdown was in April and May. These two months are equivalent to getting four months' worth of work done. The construction speed is the highest in these months because monsoon comes right after that so the work is usually expedited before that. And in winter also we do not construct as fast. But we are recovering very fast and hopefully by the end of March 31, we will be able to complete our target.

And the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway being your flagship project, is there any impact on that?

Not much. Maybe a month or two in terms of timeline. It is the biggest ever project and the speed of construction is not something seen in India. Our neighbouring country (China) is known for constructing roads with that good a speed. Rs 86,000 crore worth of a project completing in three years is a big deal.

How are you executing it differently from other projects?

We have divided the project into 44 packages. Most of them stand awarded. So instead of monitoring from one side, we are monitoring 44 different packages simultaneously. That has resulted in good speed. Also there is a dedicated land acquisition team and around 90 per cent of the land required is with us. Being a flagship programme everything is being monitored very closely. I monitor it sometimes weekly and sometimes fortnightly. Any issue crops up with states, we speak to chief secretaries and other officials. There is record-setting progress in this. So, by December 2023 it will be complete.

Full interview on www.indianexpress.com

and appropriate steps will soon be announced," an official source said. Some of the remedies will likely feature in the FY22 Budget.

The Budget is also likely to unveil a development financial institution (DFI) with the specific mandate to finance large rural infrastructure projects that require long-term finance and could serve as antidote to general investment famine during economic downturns. It will work under an innovative framework, where private corporate funds and global patient capital will find viability in India's rural projects. Also, there will be practical solutions to the issue of asset-liability mismatches faced by banks as they lend to long-gestation projects. FE

ITU evaluates three new 5G-related technologies

PRESSTRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

THREE NEW technologies, including '5G', submitted by the Telecommunications Standards Development Society India (TS-DSI) have completed "successful evaluation" and conform with rigorous performance requirement, according to a statement by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

During the multi-year development and evaluation process by the ITU Radiocommunication Sector, these technologies were deemed to be sufficiently detailed to enable global compatibility of operation and equipment, including roaming, it said.

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the United Nations specialised body for information and communication technologies or ICTs.

The latest move holds significance as one of the technologies evaluated, underlines India's contribution on 5G radio interface specification.



GUJARAT ACHIEVES HIGHEST FDI



SHRI NARENDRA MODI
Prime Minister, India

SHRI VIJAY RUPANI
Chief Minister, Gujarat

From April to September 2020, Gujarat has achieved FDI of INR 1.19L crore, accounting for 53% of the total national inflow. Despite tough times due to COVID 19, Gujarat, under the dynamic leadership of the Chief Minister Shri Vijay Rupani, has emerged as a front runner in overall industrial development, and is paving the way towards an Atmanirbhar Bharat.

INVESTMENT IN GUJARAT

Gujarat's FDI saw a massive surge of 240% for FY 19-20, which is the highest amongst any Indian state.

As per DPIIT data for April-September 2020, the state received FDI worth INR 1.19 lakh crore for the first six months for fiscal FY 2020-21, accounting for 53% of the total FDI investment received in India.

As per the Annual Survey of Industries, Gujarat stood first in India in terms of Industrial Output with 17.5% of India's output. Gujarat contributes to over 23% of India's exports (April-September 2020) and Gujarat's ports handle over 40% of India's cargo.

Gujarat stands 1st in terms of number of IEMs filed & actual investment reported for 2019.

Gujarat had 51% share (1st Rank in India) of IEMs filed in India in terms of value with a proposed investment of USD 49 billion in 2019 as per DPIIT data.

While India saw an increase of 48% in proposed investments (IEMs) in 2019, Gujarat recorded a growth of 333% over previous year.

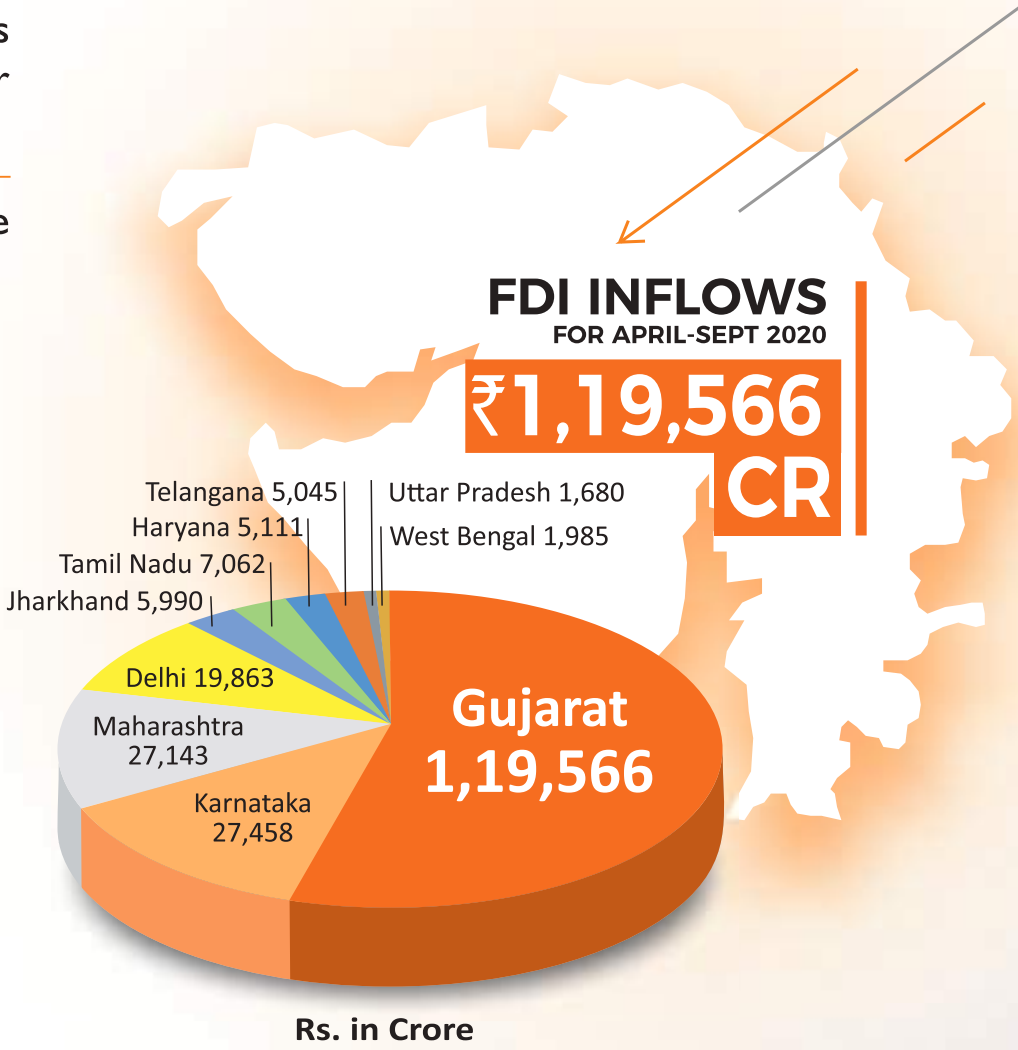
Nearly 100 Fortune 500 companies are already present in the state.

"Highest FDI inflow in these times is a true reflection of Gujarat as a business friendly state."

Shri Nitinbhai Patel,
Deputy Chief Minister, Gujarat

KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF GUJARAT INDUSTRIAL POLICY 2020

- 15 thrust sectors with incremental benefits
- Incentives based on capital investments in the state; First state to delink incentives with SGST
- Capital subsidy upto 12% of fixed capital investment
- Capital & interest subsidy to MSMEs
- Incentives for setting up R&D centers by private companies
- Relocation incentives for industries shifting from other countries
- Government land on lease for long term
- Dedicated relationship managers as single point contact
- Mega online permission & central inspection agency



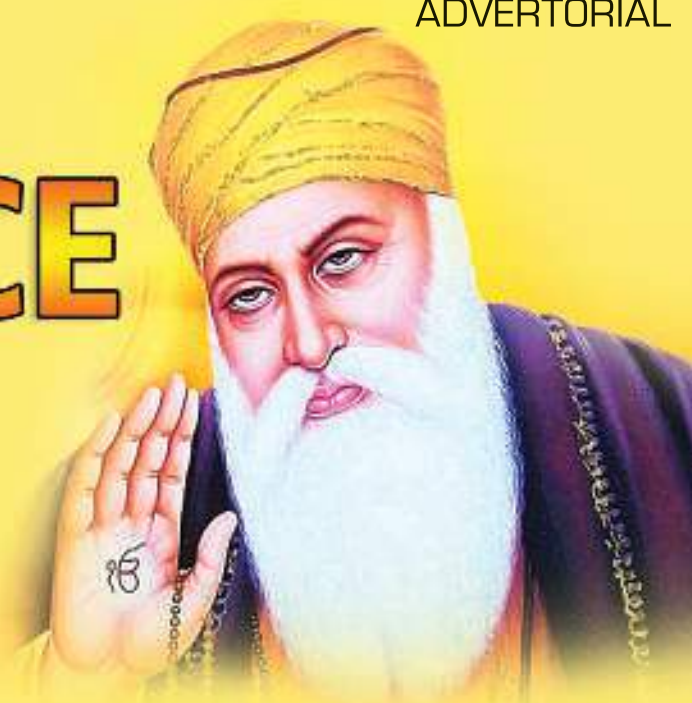


GURU NANAK APOSTLE OF PEACE

ADVERTORIAL



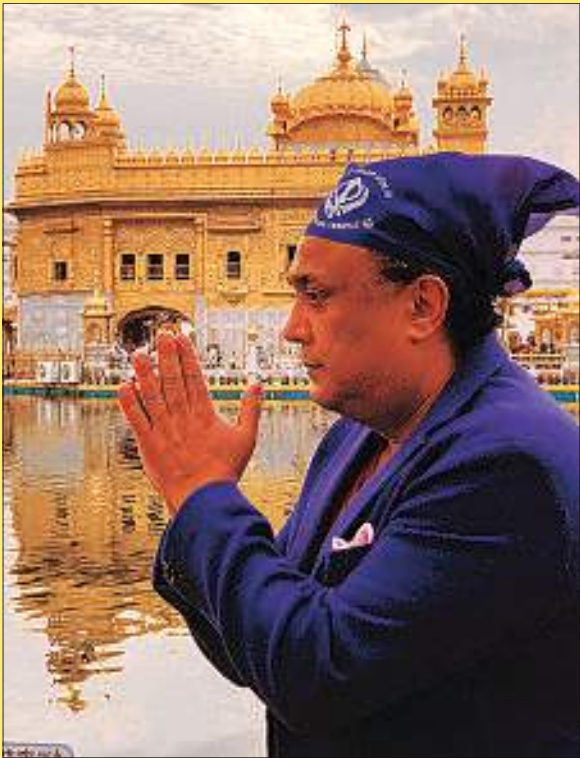
Guru Nanak’s Teachings Show Us the Path to Serve Humanity!



THIS has been a humbling year for humanity. We have been reminded of our mortality time and again as this pandemic has spread across the globe, continuing to steal lives, health, joy, and prosperity from every place it visits. Despite our grand technical achievements, despite our expansion into space, and despite enjoying the greatest period of peace and prosperity in human history, it has taken only a few months for us to be brought crashing back to the ground and find ourselves in the worst health crisis since the Spanish Flu Pandemic of 1918.

We are only facing one pandemic, but we are fighting many diseases. The symptoms of illness are evident throughout our societies, from the internal bleeding caused by divisions of racism and casteism to the fever-chills caused by cruel intolerance, a deep inequity, and untended injustices. Guru Nanak taught us not to accept things as they are, not to stand by and let evil prosper. He charged us to interrogate our ideas and traditions, to improve the world around us. He provided the spiritual framework for us to process the material world and experience the best of life. Indeed, the Sikh life is lived with deep love and respect for family and community. It is inherently democratic and inquisitive. It stresses the importance of gender equity so all can contribute equally. It is a path where forgiveness is a step that cannot be missed in addressing injustices. There is wisdom for everyone in his words, and as we continue our battle against the many diseases of our world, isn't it time to pause and reflect on them?

In this 551st celebration of the Guru's



birth, it can be easy to forget that he lived in similarly dark times and served as a beacon of light to the world. The Gurus continue to serve as celestial rays of light, guiding us toward peace and happiness if we would only follow them. Millions across this great land have been fed by Gurdwaras just in Delhi alone since April, and Gurdwaras across the globe have been feeding millions

and millions of people. Breaking bread together as equals also breaks cultural barriers.

Those who enjoy great privilege in life must acknowledge the even greater debt that privilege incurs, and must also recognize that they are elevated to their position by their neighbours and not despite them. As a Sikh, I attribute much of the success

I've achieved to the path I have been taught to follow and the charity I have been taught to practice. One should never give expecting a return, for the kind of generosity of spirit which Sikhism teaches cannot be tracked on a balance sheet. Those who treat their spiritual life as they do their material life – counting every penny to ensure their generosity is providing sufficient re-

turns – will find their harvest lean. Those who follow the Guru's example and give humbly and generously without taking account will find their harvest bountiful and their life's journey a rewarding one, regardless of what befalls them.

We cannot only call upon our faith in hours of trial, though. True friends are not those who only call when they are in need,

but also when they have joy and prosperity to share. Let's not just look for the Guru's light at dusk when all is dark around us, but let us also pursue enlightenment even during the brightest dawn.

We at Mainstreet Equity have worked to make our own humble contributions to the world. We believe in giving back in ways that create significant positive change and sustain the rich Sikh Indo-Canadian heritage, which successive generations have built. Through establishing the Dhillon School of Business at the University of Lethbridge, we are ensuring a bright educational future for young Canadians across the entire country. Through this humble project, we have been able not just to elevate ourselves, but instead to demonstrate our total submission and allegiance to our Guru who showed humanity the way forward centuries ago and continues to light the way forward even today.

This year has humbled us but it has also united us. Against a common enemy, we have rediscovered and reformed our common bonds, those links which bind all of humanity together in the vision expressed by Guru Nanak. Indeed, we have reformed those bonds but it is now up to us to maintain them.

We can do this by continuing to dismantle the divisions we have constructed and acknowledging we are one before God. We can do this by continuing to look for opportunities to serve rather than to be served. We can do this by calling out and challenging injustice wherever we find it.

We can do this by following the teachings of Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

*“Through our humble project of establishing the Dhillon School of Business at the University of Lethbridge, we have been able not just to elevate ourselves, but also ensure a bright educational future for young Canadians across the entire country. Following in the footsteps of Guru Nanak, Mainstreet Equity has been working relentlessly to make its own humble contributions to the world” – **BOB Dhillon**, Founder & CEO - Mainstreet Equity Corp*

Happy Gurpurab

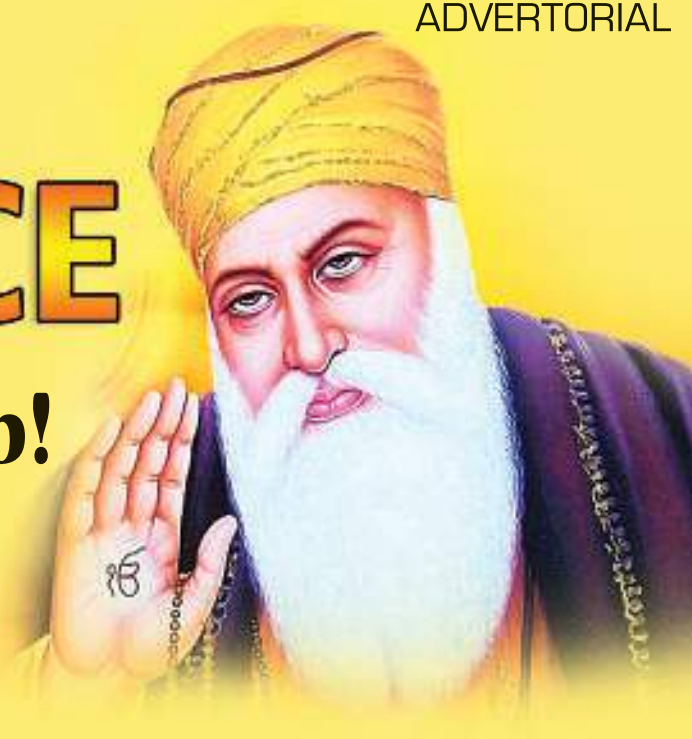
From Bob Dhillon & Mainstreet Equity Corp

CALGARY | EDMONTON | LETHBRIDGE | ABBOTSFORD | KAMLOOPS |
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GURU NANAK APOSTLE OF PEACE

ADVERTORIAL



Experion Group Wishes Happy GURPURAB!



Dr Ananta Singh Raghuwanshi
Senior Executive Director
Sales & Marketing

GURPURAB, also known as Guru Nanak's Prakash Utsav, celebrates the birth of the first Sikh guru, Guru Nanak. This is one of the most sacred and religious festivals in Sikhism. Guru Nanak is revered as one of the greatest religious innovators of all time and as the founder of the Sikh religion. He was an original spiritual thinker and expressed his thoughts and ideas in poetry that forms the basis of Sikh scripture. His religious ideas draw on both Hindu and Islamic thought, but are far more than just a synthesis.

Following the same guiding principles as advocated by Guru Nanak



Dev ji, Experion Group, a Real Estate group based in Gurugram, believes in delivering good Real Estate projects built with trust and transparency. When a 100 % FDI-funded developer Experion made a runaway

success with The Westerlies, a 100-acre township in Gurugram NCR, the group realized quite early on that owning a home was one of the most celebrated moments in one's life. The emotional involvement was significantly higher when people bought plots and built their own homes. The joy further magnified when people witnessed open spaces with an abundance of nature and greenery.

When, Parador Developers (Amritsar) Pvt. Ltd. planned to develop a plotted township at Amritsar, they enter into an understating with Experion to provide its technical help, branding and to share its experience



with Parador in development of Experion Virsa.

It was abundantly clear that the township that Parador will develop at Amritsar would undoubtedly be a destination where grand spaces and nature would converge. In keeping with this was conceived – EXPERION VIRSA.

EXPERION VIRSA is an integrated township, to be developed by Parador Developers (Amritsar) Pvt. Ltd., unfolding in Amritsar on G.T Road (NH-44). Launched in 2019, Virsa is steadily emerging to become a township that people will want to belong to and live a life rooted in traditional values and yet that is modern and discerning. The township is a tribute to the Punjabi lifestyle that is entrenched in respect for land & local culture.

This 93-acre township is planned around the theme of Miri Piri with meticulously planned gardens and Chowks named after the five life-giving rivers. The township's development is underway and being developed in several phases. The entrance of the township is through a majestic gateway that announces the grandeur of the project. Despite challenges due to global pandemic, Experion remains committed to its development, and the project is steadily progressing.

Elaborating on Virsa, Dr. Ananta Singh Raghuwanshi, Senior Executive Director

Sales and Marketing avers, "Virsa is an integrated township that aims to offer a discerning lifestyle with facilities and amenities in a meticulously planned, secure, and well-developed zone. We intend to build a township that appeals to a customer with diverse needs and budgets. We are delighted to have received an overwhelming response in Amritsar and thank our channel partners that have made our presence known to the warm and welcoming people of Amritsar."

Experion Virsa is RERA compliant township registered with PRERA with registration no. PH-1, PBRERA-ASR02-PR0530, all the other details in respect of sanctions/approvals of said township may be checked from the website www.rera.punjab.gov.in

Virsa's growing popularity is not merely due to excellent location, its proximity to the domestic and international airport and Harmandir Sahib but to a range on offer. The plot sizes start from 162 square metre up to 200 square metre coupled with value-driven pricing that starts from Rs 25 lakh onwards.

"At Virsa, you not just buying a plot but a lifestyle and building a legacy for your future generations. Virsa effectively meets lifestyle choices and investment needs," Dr. Ananta further added.

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Registered Office: F 9, 1st Floor, Manish Plaza 1, MLU, Sector 10, Dwarka, New Delhi 110075 | **Site Address:** Residential Project at Village Mannawala & Rakhjheeta, GT Road, Amritsar, Punjab. Experion Virsa Phase 1, Area: 284348.29 square meter
Disclaimer: This does not constitute a legal offer. Customers are advised to have their independent evaluation. Artistic impression as shown to highlight the architectural design are indicative and subject to change as may be decided by Promoter or as may be directed by any competent authority in the best interest of development. Concepts alluded herein are subjective. Layout plan can be amended at any time by the Promoter subject to the provisions of applicable laws. Experion Virsa shall be developed in a phase wise manner. *The sale shall be subject to the terms of Application Form and Agreement For Sale. ADA License No. LDC-ADA/2019/40 dt. 13.06.2019. In case of inspection of original approvals, the same can be inspected at corporate office with prior appointment.



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Farmers' big concern — and what govt could negotiate

Much of the opposition is to just one of the three new laws. It is the FPTC Act and its provisions that are seen as weakening the APMC *mandis*

HARISH DAMODARAN
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

EVEN AS the farmer protests against the three new agriculture-related laws have gathered momentum, one thing seems obvious: Much of the opposition really is just to one of the three laws. Even in that one — the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act — there are only some contentious provisions, which, although key, can still leave doors open for negotiation.

The other two laws

Consider first the two laws that ought not to be serious cause for farmer angst.

The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act is about doing away with the Centre's powers to impose stockholding limits on foodstuffs, except under "extraordinary conditions". These could be war, famine, other natural calamities of grave nature and annual retail price rise exceeding 100% in horticultural produce (basically onions and potato) and 50% for non-perishables (cereals, pulses and edible oils).

Given that stock limits apply only to traders — the amendment exempts processors, exporters and other "value chain participants" as long as they don't keep quantities beyond their installed capacity/demand requirements — it shouldn't concern farmers at all. Farmers, if anything, would gain from removal of stocking restrictions on the trade, as it potentially translates into unlimited buying and demand for their produce.

The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act has to do with providing a regulatory framework for contract cultivation. This specifically concerns agreements entered into by farmers with agri-business firms (processors, large retailers or exporters) ahead of any planting/rearing season for supplying produce of predetermined quality at minimum guaranteed prices.

Again, there is little rationale for objecting to an Act that merely enables contract farming. Such exclusive agreements between companies and farmers are already operational in crops of particular processing grades (the potatoes used by beverages and snacks giant



Farmers at Singhu village during their march to Delhi on Sunday. PTI

PepsiCo for its Lay's and Uncle Chipps wafers) or dedicated for exports (gherkins). The processors/exporters in these cases typically not only undertake assured buyback at pre-agreed prices, but also provide farmers seeds/planting material and extension support to ensure that only produce of desired standard is grown.

The point to note is that contract cultivation is voluntary in nature and largely for crops not amenable to trading in regular APMC (agricultural produce market committee) *mandis*. There is hardly any domestic market for gherkins, just as the high dry matter and low sugar content potato that PepsiCo needs

for its chips is different from the table *aloo* used in kitchens. Farmers don't sell sugarcane and milk in *mandis* either. The produce sugar mills and dairy plants source from them is practically contract farming. An Act that formalises contract cultivation through a "national framework" and explicitly prohibits any sponsor firm from acquiring the land of farmers — whether through purchase, lease or mortgage — should actually be welcomed.

The contentious one

That leaves the only law — the FPTC Act, for short — which is a bone of contention. It permits sale and purchase of farm produce outside the premises of APMC *mandis*. Such trades (including on electronic platforms) shall attract no market fee, cess or levy "under any State APMC Act or any other State law".

At issue here is the very right of the Centre to enact legislation on agricultural marketing. Article 246 of the Constitution places "agriculture" in entry 14 and "markets and fairs" in entry 28 of the State List. But entry 42 of the Union List empowers the Centre to regulate "inter-State trade and commerce". While trade and commerce "within the State" is under entry 26 of the State List, it is subject to the provisions of entry 33 of the Concurrent List — under which the Centre can make laws that would prevail over those enacted by the states.

Entry 33 of the Concurrent List covers trade and commerce in "foodstuffs, including edible oilseeds and oils", fodder, cotton and

jute. The Centre, in other words, can very pass any law that removes all impediments to both inter- and intra-state trade in farm produce, while also overriding the existing state APMC Acts. The FPTC Act does precisely that.

However, some experts make a distinction between agricultural "marketing" and "trade". Agriculture *per se* would deal with everything that a farmer does — right from field preparation and cultivation to also sale of his/her own produce. The act of primary sale at a *mandi* by the farmer is as much "agriculture" as production in the field. "Trade" begins only after the produce has been "marketed" by the farmer.

Going by this interpretation, the Centre is within its rights to frame laws that promote barrier-free trade of farm produce (inter- as well as intra-state) and do not allow stockholding or export restrictions. But these can be only after the farmer has sold. Regulation of first sale of agricultural produce is a "marketing" responsibility of the states, not the Centre.

Farmers, for their part, would want no restrictions on the movement, stocking and export of their produce. Maharashtra's onion growers have vehemently opposed the Centre's resort to ban on exports and imposition of stock limits whenever retail prices have tended to go up. But these restrictions relate to "trade". When it comes to "marketing" — especially dismantling of the monopoly of APMCs — farmers, especially in Punjab and Haryana, aren't very convinced about the "freedom of choice to sell to anyone and anywhere" argument.

The reason for this is simple: Much of government procurement at minimum support prices (MSP) — of paddy, wheat and increasingly pulses, cotton, groundnut and mustard — happens in APMC *mandis*. In a scenario where more and more trading moves out of the APMCs, these regulated market yards will lose revenues. "They may not formally shut, but it would become like BSNL versus Jio. And if the government stops buying, we will be left with only the big corporates to sell to," said a Panipat (Haryana)-based farmer.

What could be negotiated

If the protesting farmer union leaders were to sit down at the negotiating table, the government can possibly get them to agree to drop the demand on repealing all the three laws. Their problem is essentially about the FPTC Act and its provisions that they see as weakening the APMC *mandis*. There is also disquiet on the dispute resolution mechanism for transactions outside the *mandis*. The Act proposes these to be referred to offices of the sub-divisional magistrate and district collector. "They aren't independent courts and cannot deliver us justice, leave alone guarantee timely payment," alleged the same farmer.

These may be just fears, but they aren't small. From the government's standpoint, the elephant in the room would be if the farmers insist on an additional demand: Making MSP a legal right. That would be impossible to meet, even if the three farm laws were to be put on hold.

EXPLAINED THE PANDEMIC

The road to mass vaccination

Once a Covid-19 vaccine becomes available in India, how does the government go about immunising the population? Which groups should get the vaccine first, and who should get it free? In an interview to PRABHA RAGHAVAN, India's leading public health expert weighs in.

EXPERT EXPLAINS



PROF K SRINATH REDDY

From The Indian Express panel of specialists, exclusive insight

Why is it important to get vaccinated against Covid-19?

Covid-19 is a highly infectious virus which causes varied clinical manifestations with a wide range of severity. It has not been easy to predict who can be safe from it. Even young persons have been known to have become severely ill or die, though not as often as the elderly. Because of this unpredictable nature, everyone should feel vulnerable and seek protection.

A natural infection can provide differing levels of immunity, based on the variable viral load different persons are exposed to. We do not know how long such immunity lasts in each person. A vaccine administers a standardised dose that elicits a good immune response, which is likely to last longer than a natural infection of variable viral exposure and clinical severity. For that reason, getting immunised is a good idea. Further, other countries may not allow a non-immunised person to travel there if the virus is still actively circulating. Employers may not permit non-immunised workers entry to a worksite.

Which groups should get it first?

The two main criteria for selection of the initial groups to be offered the vaccine are essentiality and vulnerability. These criteria overlap in some groups. For example, healthcare providers who test, trace, treat or counsel persons infected with Covid-19 are both essential service providers and also very vulnerable to becoming infected. They will be the top priority everywhere. Other essential services include sanitation, security, transport and those involved in the production of essential goods and supplies.

Applying the vulnerability criterion, elderly persons and people with known comorbidities that enhance the risk of severe illness or death are a high priority. The coexisting health disorders which increase such risk include high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, obesity, chronic lung disease, malnutrition or any condition in which immunity has been reduced by disease or drugs. The problem in identifying this group is that several persons who have these conditions may be unaware of them, because the weak health services in urban slums, small towns or villages have not screened or tested them. In such cases, it is best to apply the age criterion as a probability predictor and move steadily down decade by decade from the 60+ age group to the 20+ age group.

Young persons constitute an interesting challenge. They are essential for current economic activity or need to pursue education, which is an investment for future economic revival and growth. They are highly exposed to the virus because of their higher mobility and socialising. While they are at a low risk of severe infection, they can infect others, especially the elderly members of the family. Are they an early priority for immunisation or a later priority? Opinions are divided. It depends also on the amount of vaccine available. If limited quantities are available initially, the older age groups will take priority and the demographic bulge of young persons will need to wait.



Serum Institute of India, where the vaccine Covishield is being developed. Photo tweeted by the Prime Minister during a recent visit. Twitter via PTI

How prepared is India to carry out a mass vaccination campaign?

This depends on the vaccine(s) available. I am assuming we will be able to choose from a set of safe and effective vaccines which do not have stringent cold chain requirements of severe sub-zero temperatures for storage and transport. Some of the successful vaccines will probably need to be stored at only 2°–8°C or even stay well at room temperatures. If we can access those, our supply chain logistics will not pose problems in the initial stages when clearly demarcated groups will be immunised. By the time our supply chain expands to cover

higher, co-morbidity levels are more, risk aggravating factors like air pollution are severe and health services are stronger. The experience gathered there will be helpful as the immunisation programme moves towards small towns and rural areas. However, if there are hotspots of rapidly increasing cases in any part of the country, urgent immunisation of susceptible persons there should be undertaken.

Who should get the vaccine for free?

I believe all persons should receive the vaccine free. Protecting people from this rapidly spreading infectious disease is the prime example of what economists call a "public good". If a person does not get vaccinated because it is unaffordable and gets infected, other susceptible persons can be infected by this person even as they await their turn. Whether it is the government or employers paying for it, access to the vaccine should not carry a cost to any individual. Since the private sector healthcare providers too will get involved in delivering the vaccine at some stage to supplement government agencies, financial mechanisms need to be worked out to ensure that individuals are not subjected to out-of-pocket expenses.

How many phases of vaccination may be required?

However other people may wish to number the waves of the pandemic or phases of the immunisation, I see the immunisation drive passing through key transitions as it evolves.

Initially, the supply to our health system will be limited as the production of any vaccine will be inundated by global demand. That is also the time when we will be applying the essentiality criterion and beginning the learning curve of our vaccine delivery system. The numbers vaccinated will be relatively small and the effort easy as the persons to be immunised are already listed.

That will move later to a phase where the vaccine supply will be larger, both due to more vaccines getting regulatory approvals and pro-

duction volumes expanding for the initial vaccines through outsourced manufacture. The domestic demand for vaccines will also grow as vaccine confidence builds up, if the initial global and country experience demonstrates safety. At this time, vulnerability will become an important criterion for prioritisation, but the general public too can be covered alongside, age group by age group. The health system too would be moving at full strength to deliver the vaccine, with the existing health workforce supplemented by trained auxiliaries. However, listing and sequencing the persons in the general population will be a challenging exercise.

Further on, we will transit to a steady state when a sizeable proportion of the population has been immunised and the task of immunising the rest becomes a part of the health system's routine immunisation programme. The capacity for a surge response will need to be kept as a planned reserve even at this stage, but both supply side and demand side pressures would have eased.

What do we still not know about the way the government is preparing to vaccinate the population?

I am basing my response on the information available in the public domain. It is possible that detailed plans have been made which the government has not yet made public.

We do not yet know which vaccine we will begin with. We also do not know what assurances are there for getting the stocks from the manufacturers early on. Have any advance purchase commitments been made? If multiple vaccines become available, what will be the guiding criteria for choice? If multiple vaccines are procured, how will they be distributed across states? Apart from the announcement that health workers, other essential service providers and persons with co-morbidities will be prioritised, the plan for the roll-out in the general population has not been revealed. The procurement will be coordinated by the central government. How will the demand of each state be accommodated, at different phases? At any stage, can states directly purchase from the manufacturers? If so, will the Centre provide quality and cost guidelines to maximally ensure uniformity?

Do some sections of the population have to pay? If so, what would the price be? There is no information on the proposed role of private healthcare providers, pharmacies and employers in the organised sector in the vaccination programme. How will they support the government programme?

How long, realistically, will it take for life to get back to normal?

It depends how the virus behaves over the next year, how early an immunisation programme can begin and how extensively it can cover the country in the months to follow. Will the virus become less or more infectious? We do not know. Will a vaccine pass all regulatory checks to arrive soon? It appears possible but we still need to see the final trial data.

Until much of next year, we will need to diligently observe public health advisories on masks, physical distancing, hand washing and avoiding super spreader events. The advent of summer may give us some respite but not full release.

So, if 2020 has been the year of despair and depression, 2021 has to be the year of discipline and determination to subdue the virus with all the tools we are gathering or making now.

EDITED EXCERPTS

Longer version: www.indianexpress.com

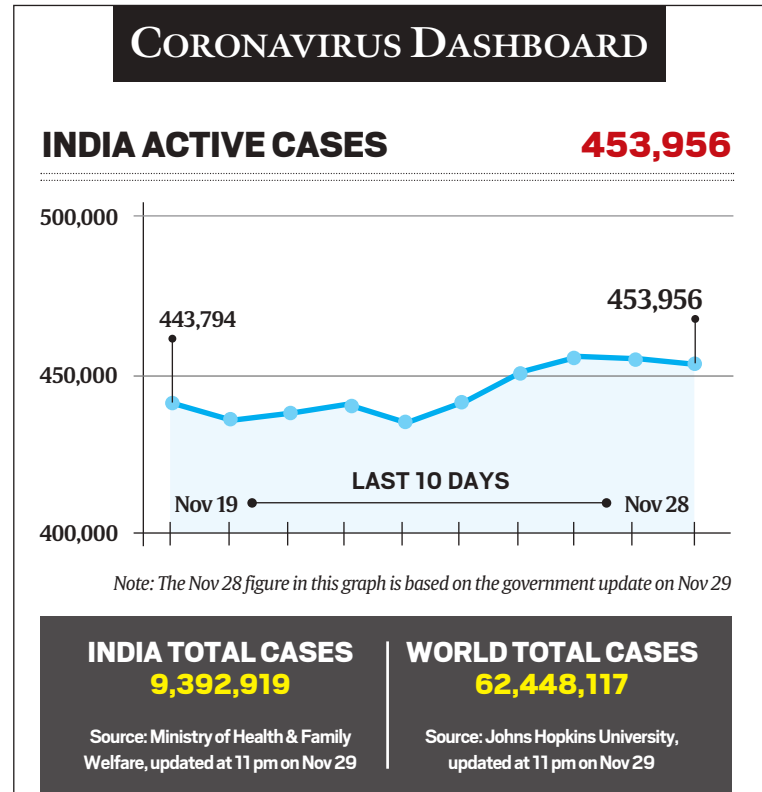
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Coronavirus mutations do not increase its transmissibility: analysis

A NEW analysis of coronavirus genomes from over 15,000 Covid-19 patients from 75 countries has found that none of the new mutations appears to be transmitted at a higher rate. The study, which is published today as a pre-print and has not yet been peer-reviewed, builds on another recent, peer-reviewed study published in the journal *Infection, Genetics and Evolution*. The previous study characterised patterns of diversity emerging in the genome of SARS-CoV-2.

"We employed a novel technique to determine whether viruses with the new mutation are actually transmitted at a higher rate, and found that none of the candidate mutations appear to be benefiting the virus," lead author Professor Francois Balloux (University College London Genetics Institute) said in a statement.

Coronaviruses can develop mutations in three different ways: by mistake from copying errors during viral replication; through interactions with other viruses infecting the same cell; or as a result of the immune response of the host. Most mutations are neutral, while others are advantageous or detrimental to the virus.

The research team from multiple institutions has so far identified 6,822 mutations in SARS-CoV-2 across the

global dataset. Of those, the researchers honed in on 31 mutations which have occurred at least 10 times independently during the course of the pandemic.

The researchers modelled the virus's evolutionary tree, and analysed whether a particular mutation was becoming increasingly common within a given branch of the evolutionary tree.

The researchers found no evidence that any of the common mutations are increasing the virus's transmissibility. Instead, they found some common mutations are neutral, but most are mildly detrimental to the virus.

The mutations analysed included one in the virus spike protein called D614G, which has been widely reported as being a common mutation which may make the virus more transmissible. The researchers said the new evidence suggests this mutation is, in fact, not associated with increased transmission.

The researchers found most of the common mutations appear to have been induced by the human immune system, rather than being the result of the virus adapting to its novel human host.

Source: University College London



New Delhi



[ISL WRAP: ROUND 2]

Lobera gets sweet revenge as Mumbai-Goa clash puts Kolkata derby in the shade

SHASHANK NAIR
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 29

BEFORE THE start of Round 2 of the Indian Super League, the first Kolkata derby of the ISL was easily the match most fans looked forward to the most. But a technical game of football between two Spanish coaches at Mumbai City FC and FC Goa, a few days before the tie between the Kolkata giants, showcased the quality of football that the rest of the league should aspire to.

Sergio Lobera, Mumbai City FC's new coach, once an integral part of the FC Goa set-up, was up against Juan Ferrando, a first-time coach in the ISL hailing from the same neck of the woods as Lobera himself. Lobera, who was unceremoniously sacked by Goa despite a league-leading entry into the 2019-20 playoffs, had a point to prove against his former club. Getting three points must have felt good for Lobera.

Both teams were organised to play from the back but it was Goa who enjoyed more of the ball and only gave up on that after Redeem Tlang got red-carded in the 40th minute of the match.

As the match progressed, a few things became clear. Goa's captain Edu Bedia, before the start of the season, had said that some teams had better tactics than them in previous seasons and ended up winning titles – a statement that almost felt like a parting shot at Lobera. But the movement that Goa showed in the final third of the pitch, and even when they didn't have the ball, was the difference against Mumbai.

Lobera's teams like control over midfield but as of now, figuring out how to work in the final third of the pitch is what should be Mumbai's primary concern. Before the red card, Mumbai hadn't had a single shot on target for almost 150 football-playing minutes. They finally ended their second game of the ISL with three shots on target against a team with a man down and had to rely on Adam Le Fondre's last-gasp penalty for all three points. Forced to play more than half the match with 10 men, Goa completed the game with over 300 passes, and the same number of shots on and off target as their opponents and had 17 interceptions overall for the team.

Mumbai's firepower, with Le Fondre and Bartholomew Ogbeche, who came on as a substitute in the 71st minute, should have made this result look a lot more convincing. But Goa, with a 2-2 draw against Bengaluru and now a narrow one-goal loss to Mumbai, have shown that they are just as competitive even though a number of their core players have left.

Kolkata derby

It's tough to justify the logic behind the Kolkata derby being conducted this early into



Sergio Lobera, Mumbai City FC's new coach was once an integral part of the FC Goa set-up.

the season. With both clubs in the ISL for the first time and there being no crowds allowed as of now, the match should ideally have been built up as a marquee event a little later in the season when both teams were not feeling the effects of life in a bio-secure bubble.

The rust showed with Bagan once again not able to find consistency in their passing but possessing a perfect get-out-of-jail card like no other in Roy Krishna – who scored his second goal in two games. East Bengal, though, have a far bigger concern with the lack of a pedigreed goal-scorer in their ranks, something that was evident in the derby when they had to rely on Balwant Singh to spearhead the offence.

Indian players

Time and again, the Indian Super League's spotlight has fallen on foreign internationals, when the focus of the tournament needs to be on Indian players and what they can do in the midst of quality overseas recruits and pedigreed coaches. With almost no football in eight months, one of the things to look out for was how the Indian national team players performed. Round 2 of the ISL was particularly fortuitous for a few of them.

Chances are if you are an Indian striker and your name isn't Sunil Chhetri, getting game time in the ISL is difficult. Manvir Singh, brought on as a substitute for ATK Mohun Bagan, managed to put in a lung-busting run in the final minutes of the Kolkata derby before a smart left-footed finish, cutting inside the box for his first goal of the season. His teammates at the back, Sandesh Jhingan and Subhasish Bose, two of India's four-man defensive backbone, have now managed two clean sheets in two games. This is particularly significant for Jhingan who has come back after a long injury layoff and is one of the best central defenders available for the national team.

'Exhibition' proved to be value for money as Jones Jr & Iron Mike left most watchers happy; YouTuber Jake Paul knocks out NBA Nate goes Frazier!"

GAURAV BHATT
NOVEMBER 29

MIKE TYSON'S comeback bout was an exhibition alright. Exhibition of the fact that the boxing great isn't out to make a mockery of the sport, or himself. Not yet, at least.

With 105 years, 131 pro fights, 91 knockouts and multiple world titles between them, Tyson and Roy Jones Jr took the ring on Saturday with only one thing to prove: buying the 'fight' on pay-per-view (PPV) wouldn't be a waste of time and money. And the pair delivered.

The California commission had already declared that there will be no 'official' winner. And the three celebrity judges World Boxing Council (WBC) had invited too consciously spread the points to secure a draw. Both boxers thus walked away with the newly-minted WBC Frontline belts, and satisfied customers and colleagues.

George Foreman said it was the "best exhibition I have ever seen", David Hayes called it "competitive" while Richie Woodhall said the duo "didn't disgrace themselves in any shape or form".

While the directive was to not go too hard, Tyson, in his signature black short shorts, attacked from the opening bell. Swaying and ploughing forward, digging into the body, double, triple-jabbing and trying to land that fabled right hook-right uppercut combination. All with the footwork and head movement to boot. Jones too rolled back the years with the lateral movement, jumping side to side and connecting flashy no-look jabs to the face.

Age, however, soon kicked in, as the 54 and 51-year-olds drew heavy breaths and clinched. Still, Tyson, the bigger and older of the two, showed more power and better conditioning. Jones was exhausted midway through the eight two-minute-round contest. Tyson looked like he could go two more. While his opponent would shuffle to the corner at the end of the rounds, panting, Tyson stood and stared menacingly.

"You can see it coming. You can see his stuff coming, right?" inquired Jones' cornerman after the first round. "Somewhat," the boxer exhaled. The meeting was on the bucket list of Jones, whose challenge was ignored by Tyson who walked away from the sport after the upset loss to Kevin McBride in 2005.

"I understand why they say some things are bucket list because when (Tyson) hits you, if it's his head, his punches, his body shots, it don't matter. Everything hurts," the former four-division champion explained after the contest. "I like him, but the dude is so strong."

Over at the announcers' desk, hip hop



Mike Tyson throws a punch in the third round. AP

artist Snoop Dogg was a little eager with his opening-minute zinger: "This sh't like two of my uncles fighting at a barbecue."

Crossover appeal

You only had to look at the rest of the commentators to discern whom the event

was playing to. Along with Dogg, leading the pack was veteran combat sports announcer Mauro Ranallo, who gained mainstream cred during his tenure with the WWE. UFC's undefeated middleweight champion Israel Adesanya was debuting as a commentator while boxing legend 'Sugar' Ray Leonard lent some credibility.

The event was criticised by purists as an anti-sporting spectacle, who questioned the safety of the two fifty-something main events.

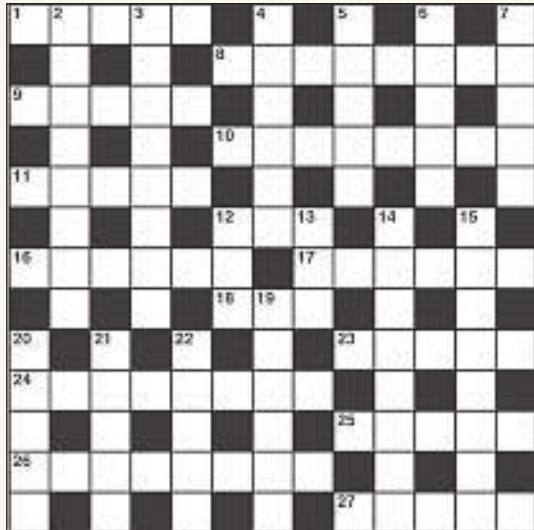
And while the signature act was a

throwback to the pre-YouTube age – when the only buffering was Michael Buffer's pompous ring introductions – the co-main event was a sign of the times, pitting YouTuber Jake Paul against former NBA player Nate Robinson.

To his credit, Paul, 23, knocked the three-time Slam Dunk champion out cold. That's two pro wins in a year for Paul, but is he any good? Tough to say when his opponents have been so bad. Robinson kept rushing in with no plans and was sent to the canvas thrice, the last one a firm two-minute faceplant which ended the fight and prompted ribbing from the NBA community.

"That was no representation of the NBA Family lol (sic)," tweeted Nick Young, while Thad Young invoked Ali-Frazier in his call: "Damn Nate ... "Down

CROSSWORD 4289



ACROSS

- 1 Money is significant (5)
- 8 Class includes group that might provide music (8)
- 9 Musical chairs (5)
- 10 Captivated by the Venus de Milo? (8)
- 11 It carries a load past between two points (5)
- 12 In a melodrama ham actors may come out with this (3)
- 16 Fellow in the French 24-hour race (2,4)
- 17 Rubber insect? (6)
- 18 Understand it's the Holy part of Rome (3)
- 23 A point always separate (5)
- 24 She is assigned to guard military uniform (8)
- 25 Will or won't stay (5)
- 26 Thought one needs a spare sovereign (8)
- 27 Stare in regal fashion? (5)

DOWN

- 2 Trained cadet due for promotion (8)
- 3 Fair verdict on an improved performance (3,2,3)
- 4 Capital hospital covers the local community (6)
- 5 A mass rising on the Indian border (5)
- 6 Pound postage (5)
- 7 Highly intoxicating (5)
- 12 A carrier on sea; a carrier on land (3)
- 13 Not a slow service, but it may count as one (3)
- 14 Leave some food and water (8)
- 15 Set to be a criminal accomplice (8)
- 19 Adjustment in ages for review (6)
- 20 What's turned out to be a cut of a scythe (5)
- 21 Matter for thought (5)
- 22 Being penniless, went to pieces (5)

Solutions Crossword 4288: Across: 1. Everything, 6. Slip, 10. Rapid, 11. Contralto, 12. Palmist, 13. Taste, 15. Tarring, 17. Pickets, 19. Pestles, 21. Bolster, 22. Learn, 24. Downpour, 27. Toothache, 28. Extra, 29. Dabs, 30. Present day. Down: 1. Earn, 2. Exposures, 3. Yodel, 4. Hacking, 5. Nonstop, 7. Lifts, 8. Professors, 9. Critical, 14. Stipulated, 16. Iolanthe, 18. Entrusted, 20. Sidecar, 21. Bowlers, 23. A-bomb, 25. Preen, 26. Mary.

JUMBLD WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

We cannot direct the ____, but we can adjust the ____ - Bertha Calloway (4,...,5)

BTAII



ADPULN



AAYS



EEKSDW



SOLUTION: TBIAI, ASSAY, UNPLANNED, KNEW
Answer: We cannot direct the **sails**, but we can adjust the **wind**.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



SUDOKU 4308

Difficulty Level 5s

Instructions

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level

1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius



SOLUTION SUDOKU 4307



DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

The Moon's enthusiastic presence in your chart makes it clear you must attend to home affairs and family relationships. In love, the temperature could rise as it becomes apparent that what you need, and what a partner wants, are not always the same thing. The quicker you find that out the sooner you can find a compromise.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

Life should be relatively quiet over the next few days, so you should be able to sidestep whatever pressures do come up. You may therefore have a welcome opportunity to recover from recent stress and strain. Use it. Very soon partners will be bombarding you with ideas.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

It's all a matter of gaining on the roundabouts what you lose on the swings. The emphasis in your chart is on pleasure. This doesn't mean having fun and putting your feet up, but seeing to it that you extract all possible satisfaction and enjoyment from even the duller routine.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

The Moon suggests that emotional tension now lies in the past, and that if you're still feeling a little stressed, it's because of events which took place last week or even earlier. If you have your wits about you, you can put it all into context - and even forget all about it.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

Domestic affairs will continue to niggle away at your peace of mind. However, there is little that can be done just yet, perhaps not until next week and probably not until four weeks' time. I know it's hard to wait, but that might be just what you have to do.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sept 23)

You're probably aware of your artistic talents, and you may also be very conscious that if the coming season is to be fruitful you should set out to develop all those personal skills which are all too often overlooked. No more excuses, please.

LIBRA (Sept 24 - Oct 23)

Venus, your planetary ruler, is hesitating. The one conclusion is that you may leave aside various tired relationships, and begin to operate in almost any romantic sphere you choose. And the emphasis is on precisely that, deciding for yourself who you want to be with.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 22)

There's still a certain secrecy in your love life, although it must be said that your feelings are your business and yours alone. Respect confidences, have regard for other people's desires, and you should do just fine. And if someone wants to cool it for a while, that's fine, too.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 - Dec 22)

Your talents are many but you sometimes lack the determination necessary to develop them. However, this is a time of year when you should consider all appropriate ways to improve the quality of your life by linking up with like-minded people. At work, as they say, it's who you know that counts.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

In spite of your current doubts, a public or professional move, which is now becoming inevitable, will be for the better. Mercury, ruling your ideas, is forcing you to face up to long-range plans for a change. What it really insists, though, is that you broaden your horizons.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

There seems to be an element of personal rancour, and even though some causes lie in the past, it looks as if a certain amount of friction at work could persist over the coming weeks. It's up to you to direct your energies constructively, and not to fall into a time-wasting trap.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

You are now coming to the end of a twelve-month period in relationships which, has been in some senses hugely enjoyable, in others intense and gruelling. You will very soon be drawing a veil over recent events. You might keep a few mementoes or hang on to a memory or two, but that's as far as it goes.

Phenom does an encore

Steve Smith's second successive 62-ball century seals ODI series with a game to play

SANDIPG
NOVEMBER 29

IT IS that man again, Steve Smith. He crunched his second hundred of the series, the third successive against India, to orchestrate what was, in the end, a routine 51-run victory that sealed the series with a match left. A slow head-turner he might have been in white-ball cricket, but Smith's surely making up for lost time with scintillating consistency. The twin hundreds seemed identical. The stroke-making on Sunday, though, was a notch or two more outrageous. Sample some of these.

In the 39th over, with Smith nudging into the 70s, Mohammed Shami flings in a near-perfect yorker. Fast, flat, in-swinging, on middle stump and landing at the edge of the crease. Smith just backs away, and without not so much as digging the ball out of the block home, bludgeons it through the covers. For a second, the world around Smith seemed to stop, wondering how to respond to the stroke. The fielders froze, skipper Virat Kohli looked overstrung. Even Smith's eyes got wider, for he would not have expected such divine timing.

The stroke was just the preface to more incredible shot-making that was to follow. Next over, Smith ran Jasprit Bumrah ragged, not an everyday occurrence. Smith usually stands deeper than most batsmen, but he went further deeper this time, and converted a standard yorker (to most other batsmen) to a full ball that burned the bright green grass of the SCG behind the square region.

It was a moment from which even Bumrah could not bounce back. Immediately, the bowler stationed another man in the region, before pulling his length back and getting his line wider. Maybe, Smith would slice a catch into the hands or target a different arc. Smith took it as a challenge — and slapped one between the newly-stationed backward point and the wicketkeeper. Bumrah lost it — the next ball was the juiciest full ball that Smith somehow contrived to miss before he consoled himself with a flick through backward square leg. Even the ever-smiling Bumrah struggled to force a smile.

Soon after reaching his hundred, Smith unfurled the most ridiculous of strokes — he threw himself at the line of a wide Hardik Pandya ball, not quite dissimilar to the diving catch he took to dismiss Shreyas Iyer later in the day, before scooping it over fine-leg. He was off-balance when he completed the stroke and landed a good couple of metres outside the 22-yard strip. Call it the flying scoop.

There were other typical traits too — the seemingly risk-free flicks through the leg side, the firm-footed drives, the merciless punishing of bad balls, and the constant impression that the pitch is five yards longer when he is on strike.

In the middle of the carnage, Kohli, the bowlers, the strategy panel and the rest, all



This was Steve Smith's fifth ODI century against India. Reuters

Warner injured

Sydney: Australia's swashbuckling opener David Warner's participation in the remainder of the limited overs series against India was thrown into doubt after he suffered a groin injury during the second ODI here on Sunday. Warner hobbled off the field after he struggled to get up following a dive in the fourth over of the Indian innings. A car waited outside the SCG to take the senior player into a nearby hospital for undergoing scans. Considering the way Warner grimaced in pain after falling while diving to stop the ball, it appears he could not only miss the final ODI but also the following three-match T20 series.

PTI

looked utterly blanked. How could anyone stop Smith, unless he decides to stop himself? He did eventually, but not before drilling a hole in India's comeback hopes and leaving a deeper dent in the mind of their bowlers.

If India hoped they could gloss over the cracks of their bowling furniture, they were utterly mistaken. Smith only magnified their weaknesses. Worryingly, it's not the much-storied shortage of the sixth-bowler that hurts them the most, but deeper problems. It's not merely a problem with personnel, but with strategy and methods too.

The visitors conveyed the impression that they were over-relying on Bumrah and Shami. But on days when their best get caned, who does Kohli turn to? Not Navdeep Saini, who somehow has lost his sharpness and snappiness. He struggled for the length that has earned him recognition — back of length. Either he was too

full or too short. And often wayward.

Yuzvendra Chahal - one of the snazziest bowlers in the IPL, has struggled to adapt to the conditions. Spinners who are relatively slower in the air and don't turn the ball much are prone to struggling in Australian conditions. He hardly purchased fizz off the surface, and his low-trajectory release does not help him in coaxing over-spin either. So if the team's third and fourth bowlers are struggling, the burden on the first and second only increases. Strangely, there seems to be confusion in harnessing the best out of them. Confounding was the tactic to dispense Bumrah with just a two-over spell upfront. It's probably the only time the Kookaburra swings around. It's not a T20 game wherein your gun bowler needs to be preserved for the death.

Defensive mindset

It's not like Bumrah was scattergun. He had conceded just seven in two overs, when Saini steamed in. His first ball was struck for a six. Already nervous after the first outing, wherein he had conceded 83 runs, the youngster wilted away. And by the time Bumrah returned in the ninth over, Australia had raced away to 50 for no loss with Saini accounting for 21 of them. The decision reeked of a defensive mindset — and it backfired. The strategic faux pas only played into the hands of David Warner and Aaron Finch, who added a match-shaping century partnership for the second consecutive instance. Bowling teams seldom recover from scores of 142/0 or 156/0 even if they possess a destructive arsenal of batsmen themselves. Even though most Indian batsmen have looked in glorious touch, chasing 370-plus is difficult.

In the magnificence of Smith, the openers' contributions are often ignored. But the sturdy foundation they lay goes a long way in furnish-

SCORECARD

AUSTRALIA vs INDIA

SYDNEY CRICKET GROUND
Toss: Australia, chose to bat

AUSTRALIA

D Warner run out (Iyer) **83** (77b, 7x4, 3x6)
A Finch c Kohli b Shami **60** (69b, 6x4, 1x6)
S Smith c Shami b Pandya **104** (64b, 14x4, 2x6)
M Labuschagne c Agarwal b Bumrah **70** (61b,

5x4)
G Maxwell not out **63** (29b, 4x4, 4x6)
M Henriques not out **2** (1b)
■ Extras (lb 2, nb 1, w 4) **7**
■ Total (50 overs) **389/4**

■ FoW: 1-142 (Aaron Finch, 22.5 ov), 2-156 (David Warner, 25.3 ov), 3-292 (Steven Smith, 41.2 ov), 4-372 (Marnus Labuschagne, 48.5 ov)
■ Bowling: M Shami 9-0-73-1; J Bumrah 10-1-79-1; N Saini 7-0-70-0; Y Chahal 9-0-71-1; R Jadeja 10-0-60-0; M Agarwal 1-0-10-0; H Pandya 4-0-24-1

INDIA

M Agarwal c Carey b Cummins **28** (26b, 4x4)
S Dhawan c Starc b Hazlewood **30** (23b, 5x4)
V Kohli c Henriques b Hazlewood **89** (87b, 7x4,

2x6)
S Iyer c Smith b Henriques **38** (36b, 5x4)
KL Rahul c Hazlewood b Zampa **76** (66b, 4x4,

5x6)
H Pandya c Smith b Cummins **28** (31b, 1x4, 1x6)
R Jadeja c Maxwell b Cummins **24** (11b, 1x4,

2x6)
N Saini not out **10** (10b, 1x4)
M Shami c&b Maxwell **1** (4b)
J Bumrah lbw b Zampa **0** (2b)

Y Chahal not out **4** (6b)
■ Extras (nb 2, w 8) **10**
■ Total (50 overs) **338/9**

■ FoW: 1-58 (Shikhar Dhawan, 7.4 ov), 2-60 (Mayank Agarwal, 8.3 ov), 3-153 (Shreyas Iyer, 23.1 ov), 4-225 (Virat Kohli, 34.5 ov), 5-288 (KL Rahul, 43.4 ov), 6-321 (Ravindra Jadeja, 46.1 ov), 7-321 (Hardik Pandya, 46.2 ov), 8-326 (Mohammed Shami, 47.3 ov), 9-328 (Jasprit Bumrah, 48.3 ov)
■ Bowling: M Starc 9-0-82-0; J Hazlewood 9-0-59-2; P Cummins 10-0-67-3; A Zampa 10-0-62-2; M Henriques 7-0-34-1; G Maxwell 5-0-34-1
■ Result: Australia won by 51 runs.

ing Smith the best conditions to bat. There is no doubt that in this divine touch, Smith might not be spending sleepless nights worrying about the new ball, but it remains the best chance to get him early. Especially against Bumrah, whose trickery and pace could pose a significant threat to any batsmen. On Sunday, Bumrah was reduced to guest appearances. He was used in six spells of 2, 1, 1, 2 and 3 overs. Resultantly, he seemed bereft of rhythm and precision, reducing the much-hyped Smith-Bumrah duel into a show of one-upmanship with Smith caning him for 35 runs off 17 balls.

Why NZ has threatened to send Pak team back home

TUSHAR BHADURI
NOVEMBER 29

PAKISTAN'S TOUR of New Zealand - comprising three Twenty20 Internationals and two Tests - plunged into uncertainty after as many as seven members of the touring party tested positive for coronavirus within days of entering New Zealand. The host country, which now has virtually no cases of local transmission, has alleged several cases of breaching the quarantine protocol, going as far as to say that the tourists could be sent home if they didn't adhere strictly to the regulations.

What happened?

The touring party underwent four rounds of testing before leaving Pakistan, and only those individuals who tested negative were allowed to board the flight.

However, six of the 53 squad members - Sarfaraz Ahmed, Rohail Nazir, Naseem Shah, Mohammad Abbas, Abid Ali and Danish Aziz - tested positive on their arrival in New Zealand on November 24. Assistant coach Shahid Aslam also returned a positive test result. One more person did so in routine Day 3 testing at a managed isolation facility in Christchurch.

How did the hosts react?

The New Zealand authorities have taken a "very dim view of it", according to Dr Ashley Bloomfield, the country's director-general of health. They said that the Pakistan visitors indulged in mixing in hallways, sharing food, and not wearing masks at all times - a clear breach of the isolation protocols. The squad's training privileges were also revoked, pending an assessment by health officials. The host government gave them a "final warning" that any more breaches will result in the tour getting cancelled.

How did the PCB react?

PCB CEO Wasim Khan, while empathising with the players who had to stay in a bio-secure bubble during the tour to England earlier this year as well, said 'this is a matter of the nation's respect and credibility.' "Observe these 14 days and then you'll have the freedom to go to restaurants and roam about freely. They have told me in clear terms that if we commit one more breach, they'll send us home," ESPNcricinfo quoted Khan as saying in a Whatsapp message to the Pakistan players.

What has been the reaction in Pakistan?

Some in Pakistan have taken the developments as an affront to their country, alleging that New Zealand has mistreated their players and disrespected the nation. Shoaib Akhtar has been the most promi-



Seven members of Pakistan's squad tested positive for coronavirus within days of entering New Zealand. AP

nent former player to express outrage and argued on his YouTube channel that New Zealand should be indebted to Pakistan for undertaking the tour during the pandemic so that the hosts could earn broadcast money. "It's not a club team. It's the national team of Pakistan - the greatest country on this planet," the former speedster said.

"Behave yourself, and stop giving these types of statements. Be careful (about) what you say next time. I'm deeply hurt, frustrated and angry," Akhtar added saying that PCB should have not taken the Kiwi statements lying down. "They should have called back the team themselves and decided not to play against New Zealand for five years."

What is likely to happen now?

The six players and assistant coach who tested positive on arrival will join the squad after completing their 14-day quarantine in Auckland.

The rest of the squad will undergo two more tests, on the sixth and 12th days of their isolation before they can leave quarantine. According to ESPNcricinfo, those who test negative throughout can go to the balconies of their rooms and visit a nearby park. Whether or when they are allowed to train in isolation, however, is subject to the decision of the local health authorities. The three T20Is are on December 18, 20 and 22, before the Test series starting December 26.

Is this the first instance of a touring team breaching protocols?

No. The West Indies team is also in New Zealand currently and they, too, were barred from training during their isolation period after they were found to have shared food and socialised in the hallways of their hotel. The team lost four days of training.

EXPLAINED

ADVERTORIAL

Simco Herbals Wishes You Happy Guru Purab!

TIME to time in the history of India, there has been Godly-people who have been creating revolution and transforming societies and nations in an unpredicted way. From time immemorial the personalities like Guru Nanak Dev Ji have brought great changes in the world and particularly in India. Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of the Sikh tradition, is one of the great men of Indian history. His memory is enshrined in the hearts of the millions of people who follow the Sikh religious practices. The universality of message combined with a dynamic approach to religion and the deep humanism and concern for the outcast's and downtrodden immensely raised his stature in the eyes of the people. In most part of India, especially in the area of Punjab, Haryana and other northern parts of the country, Guru Nanak Dev Ji is widely known and respected as a prophet, redeemer of the downtrodden and spiritual teacher.

Come November and Sikhs all over the world will be celebrating the birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev ji, the holy Guru. In today's world torn apart by the evils of hatred and violence the Guru's teachings hold special significance. He taught us that all are one and should work above cast, color and creed. His teachings establish

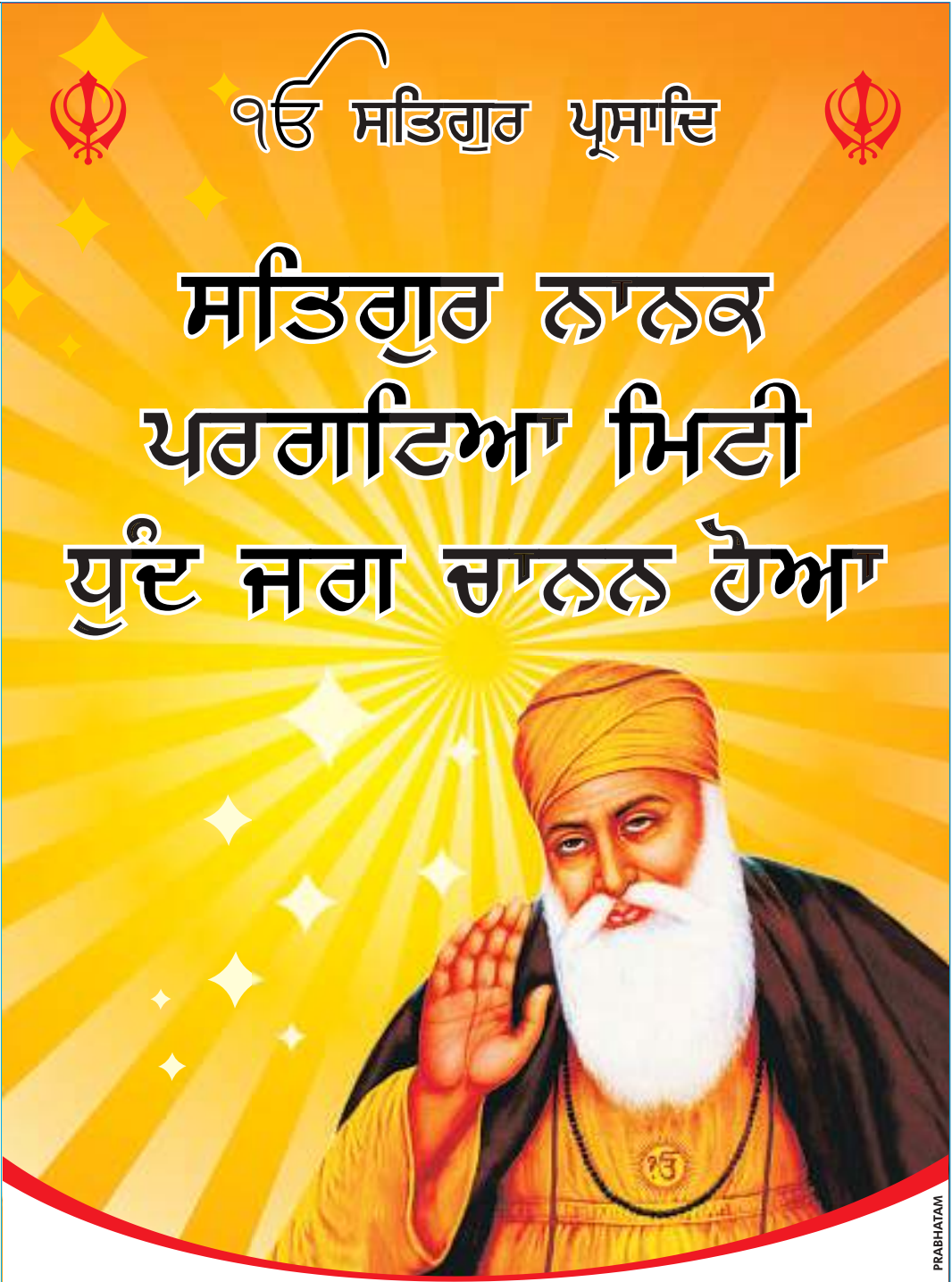


brotherhood of whole global community purely on the basis of the foundation of love and equality. On this auspicious day Gurdwaras not only in India but all over the world are illuminated as tribute to the holy Guru who tried to bridge the divide between different faiths and castes. Prabhat pheris are held and langar's are organized where food is distributed to every section of the society irrespective of caste, class, gender and creed.

ABOUT SIMCO HERBALS

Understanding constantly increasing demands of health and beauty care products all across the world, Simla Chemicals Pvt. Ltd. commenced its business operations in the year 1948. With over 60 plus years of experience in the industry, we are well known as the leading manufacturer, exporter, and supplier of differ-

ent types of health and beauty care products. The product range manufactured by us encompasses Hair Fixer, Hair Gel, Shampoos, Hair Oil, Cold Cream, Lotion and allied products. Our range is widely accepted for its stupendous results and effectiveness by our vast clientele spread all over the world. Over the past 6 decades, we have developed competency in manufacturing premium quality beauty and healthcare products. All the products are produced by using advanced technologies, under the proper guidance of extensively experienced personnel. These products are available in a variety of options to choose from depending upon the requirements of varied customers. We understand the needs of our valued customers, thus always take their suggestions into consideration for producing the assortment that complies with their expectations. We boast state-of-the-art infrastructure, which is well equipped with all latest machines and equipment based on modern technology. Our sound infrastructural set-up and team of highly qualified and experienced personnel form the backbone of our organization. They enable us to keep pace with current market demands and satisfy individual customers by offering, what they desire. All the machines and equipment are regularly upgraded at par with latest technological advancements.



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