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INDIAN
EXPRESS
GROUP



GENERAL AT THE FRONT

Army chief General M M Naravane visited forward areas along the LAC in Ladakh Wednesday. ANI

REPORT, [PAGE 8](#)

With Cong, Gupkar alliance has majority in 12 DDCs in J&K, but parties still wary

BASHAARAT MASOOD
SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 23

WITH COUNTING OVER and results out for all 280 territorial constituencies barring two, it is clear that the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) has gone past the majority mark in six District Development Councils (DDCs), all in the Kashmir Division of the Union Territory of J&K.

The Kashmir Division and Jammu Division comprise 10 DDCs each, and every DDC is divided into 14 territorial constituencies, elections for which were held over eight phases. For clear majority in a DDC, any party or alliance requires a minimum of eight seats.

The People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) consists of five parties — J&K National Conference, People's Democratic Party, CPI(M), J&K People's Conference and J&K People's Movement — and were rivals in the past.

It has bagged seven seats each in three more DDCs in the Kashmir Division, namely, Bandipur, Baramulla and Shopian, but with the support of Congress, it can go past the 50

BUSINESS AS USUAL

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percent mark, and wrest control of the Councils. Similarly, the PAGD-Congress can stake claim in three DDCs in the Jammu Division, namely, Kishtwar, Rajouri and Ramban.

In all, the post-poll arithmetic suggests that the People's Alliance along with the Congress can take 12 DDCs (nine in Kashmir and three in Jammu). But they are wary, and not celebrating yet because of fear that winning Independent candidates or even their own may change parties.

The National Conference and the Congress Wednesday **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**



National Conference leaders Farooq and Omar Abdullah at the party office in Srinagar on Wednesday. Shuaib Masoodi

BJP got more votes than NC, PDP, Cong together... message clear: Prasad

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

DESCRIBING THE outcome of elections to the District Development Councils in J&K as a "historic win" for the BJP, party leader and Union Minister for Law and Justice Ravi Shankar Prasad Wednesday underlined that the BJP had emerged as the single largest party in the polls.

Calling it a win for democracy, Prasad said the number of votes that the BJP gathered was more than the combined votes of the National Conference, PDP and Congress.

"The most important outcome of the DDC elections is that **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

DDC FINAL TALLY, MORE REPORTS
[PAGE 6](#)

THE WORLD

**NEW COVID STRAIN: AMID ALARM, UK TIGHTENS CURBS****ISRAEL GOVT COLLAPSES**
[PAGE 16](#)

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

A DISEMPOWERING ELECTION IN J&K
BY HASEEB A DRABU
[PAGE 12](#)

Muzaffarnagar riots: UP seeks to withdraw case against 3 BJP MLAs

MANISH SAHU
LUCKNOW, DECEMBER 23

THE YOGI Adityanath government has moved to withdraw a case against BJP leaders, including three MLAs, who are accused of making inflammatory speeches at a mahapanchayat organised at Nagla Mandor village in Muzaffarnagar in September 2013.

The accused in the case filed at Shikhedapoli police station include Sangeet Som, MLA from Sardhana (Meerut); Suresh Rana, MLA from Thana Bhawan (Shamli); and Kapil Dev, who represents the Muzaffarnagar Sadar seat in the Assembly; apart from Hindutva leader Sadhvi Prachi.

The BJP leaders are also accused of violating prohibitory or-

LETTER SENT TO MINISTRY

Open to talks, but need a more concrete proposal, not just tweaks: Farm unions to Govt

'We have rejected amendments the Govt suggested'

JIGNASA SINHA
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

FARMER UNIONS, protesting at Delhi's borders for nearly a month now against the new farm laws, said Wednesday that they have sent a letter to the Centre, stating they are open to talks, but the government must offer a concrete proposal first.

Reading out a letter sent by the farmer leaders, Swaraj India president Yogendra Yadav told the press at Singhu border: "We urge the government not to repeat those meaningless amendments which we have already rejected, but to come up with a concrete proposal in writing, so that can be made an agenda and the process of negotiation can be started as soon as possible."

"We are waiting for the government to proceed with an open mind and clean intentions. We have been listening to the same set of amendments since December 5. We have told them that we don't want these amendments," he said.

The letter is addressed to Vivek Agarwal, Joint Secretary in the Department of Agriculture Cooperation & Farmers Welfare.

Farmer leaders said they have rejected amendments suggested by the Centre to the three farm laws and have since received no fresh proposal from the government.

Shiv Kumar Kakka, national president of Rashtriya Kisan Mazdoor Mahasangh, said: "We spoke to Home Minister Amit Shah and told him we are not going to accept the amendments. We want the laws to be repealed, but they are delaying the process."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

At the Singhu border on Wednesday. Amit Mehra

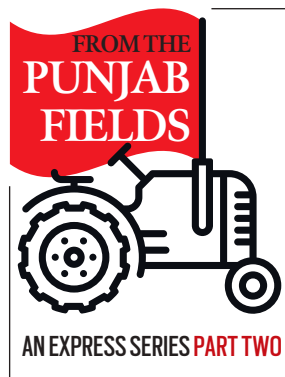
Farmer-mother with 3 kids to Arhtiya Boss: a growing coalition of fears and anxieties

VANDITA MISHRA
LUDHIANA, AMRITSAR, DECEMBER 23

JASBIR KAUR, 37, is a farmer with seven acres in Chohan village off the Jalandhar-Amritsar GT Road. She grows wheat and rice, potatoes and peas. The first two are picked up by the government procurement agencies at the Minimum Support Price (MSP) and she sells the latter two crops to private traders.

While the wheat and rice rates are at least "pukka" (predictable), she says, there is high fluctuation in the prices of non-MSP crops. "Tukka chalda hai... jaise jua" (it is a gamble, a roll of the dice). One month ago, peas were Rs 102 a kg in the market, today she sells them to the trader at Rs 13-Rs 14 a kg.

You get good prices if you stay ahead, but there are more lows than highs, no guarantee of



recovering even input costs, and price fluctuation is mostly a plunge, rarely a spike. On the other side, the rates of khaad, beej, spray (fertilisers, seeds, **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

TOMORROW: HOW POLITICAL PARTIES DO LITTLE BUT WATCH FROM THE SIDELINES

Retrospective tax: After Vodafone, India loses Cairn arbitration case

AASHISH ARYAN & AANCHAL MAGAZINE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23**EXPLAINED**
Govt may appeal

CAIRN ENERGY Plc won a major relief on Wednesday as the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague ruled that the Indian government's retrospective tax demand against the global oil and gas major was "inconsistent" with the UK-India bilateral treaty.

The international tribunal also ruled that India's demand of \$1.2 billion in retrospective tax was "in breach of the guarantee of fair and equitable treatment".

The judgment has asked the government to pay \$1.2 billion (roughly Rs 8,800 crore) to Cairn Energy Plc — this, at a time when its revenues are strained due to

INDIA HAS to decide whether to mount a challenge. Experts believe the government may prefer to challenge the appeal in Cairn case as it involves shelling out monies, rather than the Vodafone case, where the government does not have to pay any major damages.

the economic slowdown in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Cumulatively, corporate **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

Two Covid-positive passengers from UK go missing at Delhi airport, one reaches Ludhiana, other Andhra

PAGE 1
ANCHOR**ASTHA SAXENA & DIVYA GOYAL GOPAL**
NEW DELHI, LUDHIANA, DECEMBER 23

WHILE THE Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has issued detailed standard operating procedures (SOPs) with regard to travellers from the United Kingdom — following the detection of a new, more trans-

missible, strain of the novel coronavirus there — five Covid-positive flyers from the UK went untraceable after landing at the Delhi airport on Tuesday.

While three of them were traced by Tuesday night and admitted to Lok Nayak hospital in the capital, one managed to reach Ludhiana while another reached Andhra Pradesh, before they were brought back on Wednesday, *The Indian Express* has learnt.

According to sources, a 46-year-old man from Amritsar's Pandori village, who was among



At Delhi airport on Wednesday. Five Covid-positive flyers from UK went untraceable after landing on Tuesday

those who tested positive, managed to leave the Delhi airport unnoticed and reached Ludhiana, where he checked himself into a private hospital.

"The patient was shifted back to Delhi today (Wednesday) morning after authorities there wanted him to be sent back. The strain he was carrying is still unknown," the Ludhiana Additional Deputy Commissioner, Sandeep Kumar, told *The Indian Express*.

A senior health official from Punjab, requesting anonymity, said there was a clear lapse, as **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

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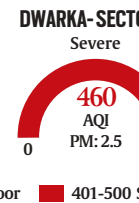
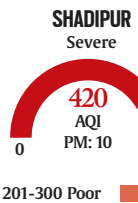
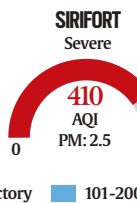
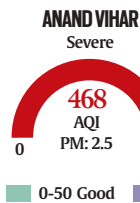
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0-50 Good 51-100 Satisfactory 101-200 Moderate 201-300 Poor 301-400 Very Poor 401-500 Severe

SKYWATCH
FORECAST: Dec 24
Mainly clear sky.
Moderate to dense fog in morning
MAX: 23 | **MIN: 4**
1.6°C above normal | 3.9°C below normal

280 SCREENS, CROWD MOBILISATION, STATUS REPORTS

BJP plans outreach to get PM farm message across Delhi

ABHINAV RAJPUT
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

DELHI BJP will set up screens in 280 municipal wards across the city on Friday to telecast Prime Minister Narendra Modi's virtual meeting with farmers. Party members have been asked to ensure a gathering of at least 200 people in each place.

The PM will interact with farmers from six states as part of an event to release the next installment of financial benefits under PM Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN). The event will be

held virtually at noon and will be telecast live.

Delhi BJP chief Adesh Gupta said LED screens will be installed in all wards, and BJP workers will be present to discuss work done by the party for farmers across the country. "It will start an hour before the PM's interaction," BJP national general secretary Arun Singh, in a letter to the state unit, said office bearers should distribute pamphlets on benefits of the farm bills to people at the venues.

"The programme should start an hour before the address and public representatives should discuss beneficial schemes

started by Modi government for the farmers..." it reads.

The letter also states that the programme should be organised at all Agriculture Produce Market Committees (APMCs) and cooperative organisations to ensure maximum participation.

"The programme should be widely publicised through various social media and other platforms... a report along with the photograph to be sent to the Central office as well as uploaded on Saral portal," it reads.

Delhi BJP vice-president Ashok Goel said the plan is to gather 200-250 people in every

mandal. Since Friday is also former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's birth anniversary, a floral tribute at Atal Nyas and other places will also be held, followed by a blood donation camp and other activities, he said.

Delhi BJP media department head Naveen Kumar said, "In some places, central ministers like Hardeep Puri, Nirmala Sitharaman will be present, for which an itinerary is being prepared by the state unit."

A letter by the Agriculture Minister discussing benefits of the new bills will also be distributed, he said.

Quieter but still present: Landless labourers say have much to lose

SOURAV ROY BARMAN
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

HIS KURTA a little crumpled, chappals worn out, eyes sunken and voice diffident, Dev Singh is not quite like the archetypal Punjab farmer — feisty and boisterous.

A Mazhabi Sikh, categorised as Dalits, Dev Singh represents the large community of landless agricultural labourers at the capital's doorstep, eager to make a point against the three farm laws by their quiet presence.

"Khet hi nahi bachenge toh khet mazdoor karenga kya (what will a farm labourer do if the farms cease to exist?) And if a farmer runs into losses, what will we be paid? We must be united in this fight," he said, a sentiment echoed by many farm labourers *The Indian Express* spoke to.

A resident of Fazilka district, Dev Singh's life trajectory, in many ways, mirrors the plight of Punjab's landless labourers, managing to eke out a living wholly dependent on those owning tracts of land.

"When I had started out, we used to be paid Rs 3 per hour. Today, we are paid about Rs 300 per day, and we put in at least 12 hours of work," said the 65-year-old father of two sons, who also work as farm labourers.

Those who have achieved a degree of prosperity cannot underplay the contribution of these labourers, mostly Dalits, in Punjab's annual bountiful harvest, be it wheat or paddy.

"They sow, harvest, rear livestock and carry out all other essential activities in a farmland and a farmer's family. Landed farmers like us are heavily dependent on them," said Harvinder Singh, whose family owns 22 acres of land.

As per the Punjab Village



Taza Begum, who runs a family of four by working as a farm labourer, is also at the protest. Her husband lost the function of his legs 14 years ago. Prem Nath Pandey

Common Lands Act, 1961, Dalits have ownership rights over one-third of common land or panchayat land.

"However, the Act has not been implemented in large parts of Punjab, except pockets in Sangrur district. There is a lot of resistance, and in many cases the upper caste landlords make bids on behalf of the Dalits and till the land themselves," said Lachhman Singh Sewewala, state general secretary of the Punjab Khet Mazdoor Union.

Along the Rohtak highway, where a sea of tractors from the state's Malwa region stretch into miles, there are also landless families who have turned up to "assist" their employers, essentially the landed peasantry.

Taza Begum, who runs a family of four by working as a farm labourer, is also at the protest. A resident of Barala district, Begum's husband lost the function of his legs 14 years ago. Her first husband died in an accident.

"We have come here to assist them. They stand by us in our

times of need; whenever we encounter any medical emergency or need advance for marriage," Begum said. Most labourers do not have the savings to meet exigencies and depend entirely on the benevolence of landlords.

However, benevolence is as much the truth as unbridled exploitation. Begum's husband Tota Kha worked for a zamindar for over 32 years before he became paralysed. "A family for which I toiled for over three decades threw me out. Even my past dues were not cleared," said Kha. The family stays in a one-room hutment.

At the protests, there are farmers whose produce ensures their subsistence. "I own one-acre land. There is no question of selling produce in my case. Our hut is also on the same parcel of land," said Kulwinder Singh from Sangur, father of a 9-year-old, who runs a milk trade to support his family. His brother runs a combined harvester on someone else's land.

Apart from the fear concern-

ing shrinking of farmlands and agriculture turning into a loss-making enterprise, labourers also fear that the abolition of cap on stock limits by traders will lead to hoarding by corporates and inflation.

Randeep Madokke, a Punjab-based filmmaker who has documented the plight of the landless in the state, said a large number of the landless are actively participating in the protests happening within Punjab.

"Most of them cannot afford to spend even a day without earning. So they are taking part in protests in and around their sources of livelihood. It is a fact that Dalits come into conflict with the landed in Punjab over land, which often turns violent or leads to social boycotts. Over the years, unions have stood up for the cause of Dalits, and they are also realising the value of unity, which also explains their presence at the protests," said Madokke, who was also born into a landless family.

SOMYA LAKHANI
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

A MONTH ago, when Jagjit Singh (40) hurriedly left his village in Punjab's Bathinda for Delhi, he only packed one pair of socks, which are now torn and dusty. "It takes very long for them to dry after I wash them because there's no sun at all some days. Nights are the hardest, it's too cold," said Jagjit.

On Wednesday morning, when he heard about 'Kisan Mall' being opened up by Khalsa Aid India, an NGO, at Tikri border, where he has been camping since November 25, he immediately asked if they have any socks. "I was so relieved when they gave me a pair. Apart from this, I took vaseline, vests, undergarments and a muffler," he said. It was day one of the Kisan



At the 'Kisan Mall'. Prem Nath Pandey

Mall at Tikri border, and at least 350 people picked up items of daily use they had not been able to access in the last few weeks, said Amarpreet Singh (32), direc-

tor (Asia-Pacific), Khalsa Aid India.

The 'mall' is open from 9 am to 5 pm, and the racks are stocked with toothbrushes, toothpaste, soaps, oil, shampoo, vaseline, combs, mufflers, heating pads, knee caps, thermal suits, *loi* (shawls) and blankets, among other things. While it's a mall, all items on the racks are free of cost.

"We have been at Singhu and Tikri borders for a month now and understand what people need. We have a warehouse each at the two borders, where we are storing all these items that have been donated to us. It's about dignified distribution of donations," said Amarpreet.

On Wednesday morning, the Khalsa Aid India volunteers went around tractors parked at Tikri border with tokens and a form that lists all the items they have at the Kisan Mall.

Gurwinder Singh (57), from a

village near Ludhiana, said he returned to the tractor with a soap bar, a thermal, one *loi*, three blankets and a tarpaulin. "There is no market nearby, and we are not familiar with the area either. While there are things that well-wishers are donating, they were not streamlined like this. The mall is helpful," said Gurwinder.

Sarabjit Singh (35) from a village in Bamala, picked up a mosquito-repellent spray. "It is impossible to eat or sleep some days. This spray is the first thing I picked up," said Sarbjit.

Amarpreet said there are 20 volunteers who are taking suggestions from protesters on the things they need. "We got a lot of requests for undergarments for women, so we will immediately stock that," said Amarpreet.

Amarpreet said there is no plan yet to start a similar mall at Singhu border.

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Director Education, Government of NCT of Delhi

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4 THE CITY



TOTAL CASES	HOSPITAL BEDS	VENTILATORS	Total	Vacant
			18,779	15,960
6,19,618	939	1,434	1,523	882
			25	82,386
Dec 22	871	1,585	18	87,861
Dec 23	8,003*	6,01,268	10,347	80,33,054
Total				

*Total active cases

AFTER DISCOVERY OF NEW STRAIN

Passengers from UK who arrived over past month to be tested again, says Delhi govt

ASTHA SAXENA
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

SIX MORE passengers who reached Delhi from United Kingdom late Tuesday night have tested positive for Covid-19, taking the total number of infected passengers coming from the country to 11. Five had tested positive on two flights earlier in the day. "Six out of approximately 500 passengers that landed on Tuesday night, tested positive... Doctors will decide if they need to be admitted or kept in isolation," said a DIAL official.

Health Minister Satyendar Jain Wednesday said people who have arrived here from the UK, where a "superspreader" strain of coronavirus was discovered, are being traced. "We are alert and watchful at our end. People who have arrived here from the UK in the last several days are being rigorously traced and tested for slightest of Covid-like symptoms. A team has been made and house-to-house tracing is being done... they are being advised self-isolation too," Jain said.

The Delhi government Wednesday decided to test for



Delhi govt has decided to test passengers who reached Delhi from UK between Nov 25 and Dec 23. Renuka Puri

Covid all passengers who reached Delhi from the UK between November 25 and December 23, even if they were tested earlier. Directives have been issued to all the districts in this regard.

"All passengers who are Delhi residents are to be compulsory tested by RT-PCR irrespective of earlier testing done. Further, the district surveillance officer will advise RT-PCR negative persons to self-monitor their health for 28 days and again get tested by RT-PCR in case they develop any symptoms. For all positive pa-

tients detected among UK returned passengers, a detailed history will be taken by the DSO for epidemiological linkages and other necessary aspects," state the minutes of the meeting.

The state health department has identified Lok Nayak as the facility for admitting Covid positive patients who have arrived from the UK. Passengers who had tested positive for Covid-19 on Tuesday have also been shifted to Lok Nayak hospital.

The contacts of the patients who have tested positive will be institutionally quarantined in the

EXPLAINED
High alert

THE NEW strain has prompted Delhi to become more alert. A list of passengers who have arrived in Delhi in the last four weeks has been circulated among all the districts. The districts have started testing the people and according to the sources, one patient each from east and southeast districts have tested positive for Covid-19 from the list.

Terapanth Covid Care Centre.

Asked about the threat of the new Covid-19 strain and the Delhi government's preparedness to combat it, Jain said, "Only ICMR and scientists can give us insight into this new strain. They say it's more contagious and some scientists conjecture the coronavirus strain in circulation in India may have already reached the new mutative state."

HC asks panel to fix SOP for post-Covid patients

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

THE DELHI High Court on Wednesday directed the state's expert committee on Covid-19 to come up with a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) within two weeks for those who have recovered from Covid-19 but are still facing complications. The SOP will be given adequate publicity, said the court.

Taking note of the Centre's decision to suspend inbound air travel from the UK, where a mutated strain of coronavirus is rapidly spreading, the division bench of Justices Hima Kohli and Subramonium Prasad said a large number of persons have travelled before the suspension to Delhi, and directed the Delhi government to ensure that adequate testing and follow-up in respect of those found positive is taken "with all seriousness".

"I hope you are focusing at the

airport after the recent scare... It is imperative that you have quarantine facilities around the airport in all those budget hotels," observed Justice Kohli.

The Delhi government earlier submitted district-wise data of Covid-19 positivity rate and other related information. After perusal of the data, the division bench said "the picture is encouraging as of now" as the positivity rate has climbed down since December 1.

Advocate Rakesh Malhotra, who is the petitioner in the case in which the court has been monitoring the situation, earlier submitted before the court that though it was good news that numbers have decreased, Delhi government has not taken any steps for post-Covid complications of people who tested positive earlier.

The court also observed that many people are coming back with complications and asked the state to consider preparing an overall SOP for follow-up.

Inappropriate touch, stalking, lewd remark: Chargesheet against sacked cop prepared

MAHENDER SINGH
MANRAL
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

Puneet Grewal

"PASSING LEWD comments on women, stalking, touching inappropriately on the pretext of asking address, masturbating, and driving car without back side registration number plate." These are some of the allegations in the police chargesheet set to be filed in the coming days against the 35-year-old sub-inspector, who has seven cases of molestation against him, *The Indian Express* has learnt. The SI, Puneet Grewal, was arrested two months ago.

Police have recorded statements of the women under section 164 of the CrPC before a magistrate, with an officer saying Grewal refused to undergo a test identification parade (TIP).

Police said Grewal was posted with the Special Cell at the time but had been working with one of the DCPs (traffic unit) in his personal section. He was dismissed from service once the allegations surfaced. "He was arrested on October 25 when police started investigating the molestation cases, which allegedly took place on October 17 and 20. He is in judicial custody," said a senior police officer.

The cases were initially registered at Dwarka district and later transferred to the Crime Branch. "Police have called all women, including a juvenile, and recorded their statements before the magistrate. They all corroborated their allegations against Grewal. One of the victims alleged he was wearing a mask and was passing lewd comments. The women alleged he followed them and touched them in an inappropriate manner on the pretext of asking for some address or direction. One of the women alleged he was in

semi-naked condition and was masturbating when he approached her," an officer said. The investigation officer also moved an application for TIP, but the accused refused. "Police have also found in their investigation that there was no registration number on his grey Baleno and the front side registration plate had only 'DL' written on it. Due to this, when he escaped after molesting the victim, they were not able to note down his car number," the officer said.

"Initially, five cases were registered against him, but during investigation, police were approached by two more women — one had lodged an FIR of molestation in March this year and another in 2018," an officer said.

After registering an FIR, police scanned CCTV cameras in the area. They spotted the car but found that the registration plate was incomplete. "Police started looking for the car in Dwarka, while also scanning CCTV footage from adjoining areas. After scanning footage from over 200 CCTVs, they found footage showing the car heading towards Janakpuri. Police then scanned other cameras and found where he lives. They reached his home and found the car parked inside... It was registered in the name of his wife, who is a teacher," the officer said.

Woman files rape FIR against tenant

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

POLICE HAVE registered an FIR against a 20-year-old man for allegedly raping a woman.

Police said the woman filed a complaint at Sarita Vihar police station on Monday, accusing the man of raping her and lying about his religion.

In the complaint, she alleged that her tenant gave her a wrong name. "We became good friends and he told me that he wants to marry me... he said he doesn't have a family. However, a few days later, he took me to a house where I met his parents and siblings. I then found he is Muslim... I fought with him over this but he promised he will not force me to convert."

She told police she married the man in May following which the accused and his family allegedly forced her to convert and change her name.

According to police, the woman alleged she was raped by the accused at his residence.

A senior police officer said an FIR under sections of rape, kidnapping and criminal intimidation has been registered and the woman's medical examination has been conducted.

Ex-councillor says facing threats in jail

ANAND MOHAN J
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

FORMER CONGRESS councillor Ishrat Jahan, facing trial in an Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act case in connection with Northeast Delhi riots, told a Delhi court that she has faced threats of mutilation in jail, and said, "Someone who does not feel pain while cutting her hand will not feel pain when cutting my face." Ishrat told the court that this is continuing despite bringing the court's attention to her harassment by three women, "who indulge in vulgar acts inside Mandoli Jail".

Jahan has allegedly been assaulted inside Mandoli jail twice. On Tuesday she told a court that she was called a terrorist and assaulted, following which the court summoned jail authorities to submit a status report.

On Wednesday, Jahan disclosed alleged incidents involving other inmates, and told the court that sections pertaining to sexual harassment must be invoked in the case.

Ishrat alleged, "Sir, it has been the second time that I have been attacked by the same group. There is a woman in this group who provoked them..."

Questions over DU's move to allot five supernumerary seats per college this year

ARANYA SHANKAR
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

IN A surprise move, Delhi University has decided to add five supernumerary seats per college for admissions in the current academic year, with relaxation of up to 10% in the cut-off, citing the Covid-19 pandemic. These students will have to pay the same fees as other students.

The move has come under criticism from some quarters, with teachers and students asking if this would be akin to "management quota" and allow "backdoor entry" to certain candidates. Four Academic Council (AC) members have written to Acting DU Vice-Chancellor P C Joshi to withdraw the notification.

University officials told *The Indian Express* the colleges would get to determine which five students would get admission, but there were no specified rules for selection yet.

"On the request of principals of the constituent colleges and the University of Delhi and elected Executive Council members, a committee was constituted to explore the possibility to provide few seats to the college(s) in view of Covid-19 pandemic for admission in UG courses (merit-based) over and above the sanctioned strength as supernumerary seats," Registrar Vikas Gupta said in the notification dated December 21.

"The Competent Authority of the University has approved the recommendation of the committee for five admissions under 'College-University seats' in the current academic session 2020-21," he wrote.

Of the five admissions, two "may be suggested" by the university, the notification said, adding, "The principal of the college shall submit the list of five candidates being permitted admission against these seats for the consideration by a committee constituted for the purpose by the University."

"The merit of the candidates eligible for admission under 'College-University seats' shall ordinarily be up to 5% and in no case beyond 10% of the last cut-

off issued by the college for the particular course for the respective category of the candidate," it further said.

According to officials, one final cut-off for the current academic year is yet to come out, after which the selection on the supernumerary seats will take place. Only those students who have registered on the portal and submitted their application form for admission would be eligible.

This has prompted AC members Deo Kumar, Kanchan, Rajesh Kumar and Saikat Ghosh to write to Joshi, saying the admissions fell "within the purview of the Academic Council" and "any decision related to admissions has to be compulsorily deliberated upon and ratified" by the AC.

"The provision allows principals of the colleges to make up to five admissions almost entirely on a discretionary basis, of which two may be 'suggested' by the University. When there is intense competition to secure admission in DU colleges, such a move is not only totally unethical, it is also illegal," they wrote. Executive Council member Rajesh Jha also demanded that the notification be withdrawn. "We are totally against any type of discretionary quota. This is in gross violation of the principles of merit, inclusiveness and social justice," he said.

Student groups Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad and All India Students' Association have also come out against the notification, threatening protests if it isn't rolled back.

A senior DU official, however, said it was a "positive" move. "We got representation from principals saying some students couldn't take admission due to difficulties because of the pandemic, and that there were contractual employees or ad hoc teachers whose kids don't qualify for ward quota, so we decided to introduce this. This isn't about favouritism," he said.

"The discussion around selection of these students has been left to the principals. The relaxation in cut-off is not much, so there is no question of management quota or backdoor entry," he added.



MARKET WATCH

An aerial view of a weekly market in Nizamuddin. Tashi Tobgyal

CM focuses on job creation, Sisodia on need for online teaching at Ambedkar Univ event

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

SPEAKING AT the ninth convocation ceremony of Ambedkar University, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia urged administrators of education institutions to plan their infrastructure and resource requirements keeping in mind changes in teaching-learning during the pandemic.

"This is not a direction or even a piece of advice from me. This is just a question that I'm raising: That administrators of universities, colleges and schools can now start thinking about how we have seen that conducting online classes is now a reality. It is not a replacement for physical classes.

But still, when things normalise in one or two years, it is necessary in our routines that we try and enforce as much physical presence of our students? Or can we come out with a new programme based on what we've learnt during this period? When we think of it this way, maybe our infrastructure requirements and our technology requirements can be thought of in a new way," he said.

In her address earlier in the convocation, vice-chancellor Anu Lather had announced that university authorities had completed most formalities with regard to beginning the development of two new campuses at Dheerpur and Rohini, at a budget of Rs 1,200 crore and Rs 1,100 crore respectively.

"The decision of spending Rs 2,300 crore will now come to the government, but before making that decision, as a minister of finance and education, I would urge that you all think of what other ways this money can be optimally utilised. Can we use this money to engage a larger number of students through technology and give them quality education?" Sisodia said.

At the convocation, Lather announced that 1,003 students graduated from the university in 2020, of whom 65% were women. While some graduating M.Phil and Ph.D students received their degrees in a physical ceremony on stage, a virtual ceremony was conducted for those who could not — with animated

avatars of students receiving their degrees from animated avatars of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, L-G Anil Bajjal, Sisodia and Lather. Addressing the gathering online, Kejriwal spoke about the new "start-up" policy which the Delhi government has said in the final stages of completion.

"It becomes important to do a job for one or two, three, four years... but after that you have to... create jobs for people of this country and that is the leadership role the university, the faculty and the students passing out from the university have to play... we are coming out with a comprehensive startup policy to provide legal and technical guidance, loan assistance, subsidies, and will help in many ways," he said.

Educators push to continue nursery admissions

SUKRITA BARUAH
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

CONCERNED ABOUT foundational learning and the role of teachers, several educators across Delhi expressed strong reservations after *The Indian Express* reported that the Delhi government is considering scrapping nursery admissions for the 2021-22 academic year.

"I have reached out to the education minister after learning about this proposal and he said that there will be a meeting soon for us educators to enter this conversation... This is a much larger conversation and at

the centre of it is the right of children to learn... I am sure that there has been some kind of miscommunication because more than anyone, the Education Minister understands and is concerned about the right of children to learn," said Springdales School, Pusa Road principal Ameeta Wattal.

She added, "Every child has a right to learn from the age of three onwards in accordance to the provisions of the Right to Education Act, which is an act of Parliament. It's a different matter if for some reason a child is not being able to access school and classes. But here we have people who are ready to



Delhi govt is mulling scrapping 2021-22 nursery admissions

admit children to school, and parents who want to enrol their

children in schools... Foundational learning is crucial

and the greatest learning happens in these years. This is a question of the entire future of a child and we can't take a decision on that without a debate," she said.

Jyoti Bose, who heads another branch of the Springdales School at Dhaura Kuan, also emphasised on the importance of early childhood education. "According to the report, students who were to be admitted this year to nursery may be admitted to kindergarten next year. But there are distinctly different curricula for nursery and kindergarten. I also feel that it needs to be pointed out that government schools conducted

admissions this year," she said.

"In the case of students who fell behind in this year, the move should be taking a closer look at those learning gaps and working to address them instead of a creating a learning gap of a year for an entire different set of children," she said.

Educators also expressed concern about where this proposal leaves nursery and kindergarten teachers.

"Are these teachers to remain idle for a year? If there are no students in nursery and KG for a year, how do we pay teachers of those classes? This might also lead to a stressful and panic situation for parents" said Bose.

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e-PROCUREMENT NOTICE

e-Tender No.: IRCON/2065/KTE-SGRL/DP-KTE/Tender/AT Welding/087 Dated: 24.12.2020
e-tender is invited for and on behalf of West Central Railway in Two Stage bid system from bidders meeting qualifying requirements for the work of "AT Welding with Supply of Portion-"
In Situ AT Welding of 60 KG / 52 KG, 90/72 UTS rails with improved pre heating welding technology with use of three piece prefabricated moulds. Single shot crucible fitted with Automatic Tapping Thimble (ATT) technology for KTKD, SLHA, MZHL, DRGM & GNDI Yards of KTE-SGRL Section in connection with Katni - Singrauli Rail Doubling Project."

Estimated Cost	INR 56,29,439.60
Last Date and Time of e-Bid Submission	07.01.2021 up to 15.00 Hrs. (IST)

For further details, visit website: <https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app>. Corrigendum, if any, would be hosted only on the website.
Project Director/IRCON, Katni-483501 (M.P.)



ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT

Petronet LNG Diversifying in Many Other Sectors Across the LNG Value Chain!

Even in a pandemic-induced scenario, coupled with the problems of lockdown and other unprecedented events triggered by the pandemic, Petronet LNG has been able to come out with flying colours, surpassing its previous year's profits, thanks to its robust operational efficiency and effective commercial planning. The company is the largest LNG importer of India and aims to increase LNG consumption in India by diversifying in many other businesses across the LNG value chain, providing LNG as automotive fuel, LNG in Mining, Gassing-up & Cool Down operations, Bunkering and expanding its business internationally in South Asian countries", says Manoj Kumar Pawa, Executive Director (BD and L&D), Petronet LNG.



PLL is pioneer of Small Scale LNG in India



India's 1st LNG Bus



India's 1st LNG Station



India's 1st LNG Fishing Boat

How has the company fared during the pandemic?

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on the LNG demand due to the steep decline in economic and industrial activity triggered by COVID-19 in March & April 2020. Gas demand started to increase as restrictions were eased from May onwards, and PLL's LNG import edged up in May after dropping sharply in April. As it can be said that LNG demand was more resilient than oil demand during the lockdowns, possibly because LNG is, among other things, used for electricity generation and that helped more stable demand than that in the transport sector for fuel.

PLL has been in the international media for its Bunkering and other marine services recently, how has PLL positioned itself for its new diversified business of marine services.

PLL is a pioneer in LNG bunkering not only in India but in the entire South Asia. PLL did 2 successful back-to-back LNG bunkering in 2015 and proved that not only it has the capacity but also the capability and correct infrastructure to do the same. PLL is now in the process of having a fully owned subsidiary to manage GUCD, LNG bunkering and several marine services at KOCHI SEZ.

PLL is open for any global partnering in making this a success not only in India but in other parts of world. With the growing need of using LNG as a clean fuel, by 2022, the world over, there will be more than 500 LNG propelled vessels and growing. Presently, most of these vessels are sailing in the European region, however, with PLL having its presence in the LNG bunkering, it will give confidence to the Ship owners to expand their businesses and plan their operations in this part of the world.

Is PLL playing any role for the use of LNG in the Mining Industry? What are the challenges expected to be faced in this new business domain?

PLL is actively pursuing this new business opportunity which has the potential of around 2 MMTPA of LNG demand in India and can contribute significantly to the vision of GoI of becoming a gas-based economy. PLL is better placed than any of its competitors because replacement of diesel is cannibalisation of its own product for OMCs, but for PLL it's entirely a new business domain. The main challenge in implementing use of LNG in the Mining sector is that the PESO approval for mobile LNG dispensing units is awaited. Once approved, it will facilitate lower capex infusion in LNG stations and enable earthmovers ac-

cessibility and catering to the segregated mines. We have been taking up the matter for PESO approval for mobile LNG dispensing, which can be a gamechanger.

How has the company's profits shaped up till now in the current financial year? What are the plans for next year in this regard?

During Q1 of FY 2020-21, our Company has reported PBT of Rs 697 Crore, as against Rs 486 Crore in the previous quarter and Rs 838 Crore in the corresponding quarter. The PAT for the Q1 FY 2020-21 was reported at Rs 520 Crore as against the PAT of the previous quarter and corresponding quarter i.e., Rs 359 Crore and Rs 560 Crore, respectively. In spite of the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the economy and the Oil & Gas industry, the strong financial results in Q1 of FY 2020-21 was achieved due to robust operational efficiency and effective commercial planning by the Company. Further, during the Q2 of FY 2020-21, our Company has reported highest ever PBT of Rs 1,242 Crore, as against Rs 697 Crore in the previous quarter and Rs 885 Crore in the corresponding quarter. The PAT for the Q2 FY 2020-21 was reported at Rs 927 Cr as against the PAT of the previous quarter and corresponding quarter i.e., Rs 520 Crore and Rs 1,103 Crore, respectively.

During Q2 of FY 2020-21, the Company has recorded highest ever throughput of 242 TBTU in a quarter at Dahej Terminal. The strong financial results in Q2 of 2020-21 was achieved due to resurgence of demand to pre-COVID-19 level. We are hoping to continue this growth momentum in numbers for the rest of this FY and next financial year as well.

What are your development plans in Kerala and utilisation of Kochi Terminal?

We are pleased to inform that Kochi-Mangalore pipeline has been commissioned recently, and we are expecting that our utilisation level should rise to 30%. We are engaged with the government(s) to support our various initiatives to push the use of LNG as fuel in Automotive and Marine sectors. We are trying to run at least 100 KSRTC buses on LNG and converting fishing boats on LNG in the state. PLL is in advanced stages of setting up new subsidiary at Kochi SEZ which would cater to flurry of marine services to international third parties.

Please tell us about your recent MoU with Ministry of PNG for undertaking compressed bio-gas (CBG) Projects?

Under GoI SATAT scheme, PLL signed a

MOU with MoPNG on 20 November 2020 for setting up of 100 CBG plants. PLL is looking to set up 4-5 CBG plants in the initial phase in states of Punjab, Haryana, UP and Gujarat. PLL is looking forward to have a separate SBU for its green energy initiatives. It is expected that PLL, apart from setting its own plants, would also include various others business modalities in order to start early implementation of the projects.

What is the role of Petronet LNG in the overall gas infra of India?

PLL is the biggest LNG importer of India and caters to around 75% of the country's LNG requirement by supplying 70 MM-SCMD of LNG collectively from its Dahej and Kochi terminals. It owns 53% share of the country's existing Regas Capacity with a capacity of 17.5 MMTPA at its Dahej terminal and 5 MMTPA at its Kochi terminal. PLL's Dahej terminal is the world's 4th largest terminal by throughput capacity. PLL has long-term chartered vessels, namely 'Disha', 'Raahi', and 'Aseem', to offtake LNG volume under the RasGas contract from Qatar to PLL's Dahej and Kochi terminals. PLL has spearheaded various initiatives in the past to push the RLNG consumption in many sectors such as Automotive, Inland Waterways, Coastal

Shipping etc.

PLL is currently engaged in pushing the use of LNG usage the in Mining sector as well. Petronet is putting best efforts to support the government to achieve the vision of our prime minister to raise the share of gas to 15% in energy mix much before 2030.

What are the future plans of the company?

PLL, apart from offering world-class regasification facilities at its Dahej and Kochi terminals, is also diversifying in many other businesses across the LNG value chain, offering services like providing LNG as automotive fuel through its chain of LNG stations in collaborations with OMCs and CGD players, LNG supply for industrial usages through trucks (virtual pipelines), LNG supply to earthmovers in Mining Sectors, Compressed Bio Gas, LNG Bunkering, Gassing Up and Cooling Down operations for vessels, etc. PLL is also planning to have an Ethane import facility at Dahej, setting up FSRU on East Coast (in Gopalpur, Odisha), foraying into Renewables and International expansion in South Asian countries catering to their LNG and related infrastructure requirements i.e., Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Mauritius, etc.

6 GOVT & POLITICS



DELHI **CONFIDENTIAL**



PORTUGAL PLANS

IF GLOBAL diplomatic travel resumes by next summer, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be headed to Portugal for the India-EU summit. As Indian and Spanish foreign ministers and officials held discussions on Wednesday, the two sides were exploring the possibility of holding the summit in May 2021. Modi was supposed to go for the India-EU summit in Brussels in March this year, but it was cancelled due to the pandemic.

THE HAGUE GAINS

LOSING THE crucial tax dispute case against Cairn Energy in the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague, the Indian government must pay over Rs 8000 crore in damages. But India's loss against Cairn is former Solicitor General Harish Salve's gain — he appeared for the British company. Salve was retained by the company alongside major law firms based in London and New York.

RECORD ATTEMPT

CHILDREN PARTICIPATING in the India International Science Festival being organised by the government are set to attempt five Guinness World Records. In their first attempt at the Guinness Record, more than 6,874 children joined in to simultaneously attempt to build sun-dials. Fifty of these children physically built a sundial on the lawns of CSIR-NISTADS institute while the rest joined in online. For the first time, the festival had 130 students from London joining in to make the sun-dials. Whether the event will make it to the record books is yet to be seen.

BJP wins big in Jammu division, but loses in several strongholds

ARUN SHARMA
JAMMU, DECEMBER 23



It is a big victory: Anurag Thakur

THE BJP won 72 District Development Council (DDC) seats out of the total 140 that went to polls in the Jammu division, but suffered defeats in some of its key strongholds.

Out of the 10 districts in Jammu region, the BJP has got a comfortable majority to have its chairperson in Jammu, Samba, Kathua, Udhampur and Doda. In Doda, though it won in eight of the 14 DDC constituencies, its main face and former minister Shakti Raj Parihar lost from both Gundana and Mamat constituencies.

The BJP won only three out of the 14 constituencies in Kishtwar district. In the 2014 Assembly election, the BJP's Sunil Sharma was elected from the Kishtwar Assembly constituency and was also sworn-in as a minister in the PDP-BJP government. Also, the district is part of the Udhampur parliamentary constituency, which has been represented by Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh since 2014.

In the Rajouri district, where the BJP won two out of the four Assembly segments in the 2014 election, the party won three DDC seats out of the 14 that went to polls, suffering defeat in some key strongholds.

The BJP lost Kalakote to NC's Anita Thakur and Nowshera to PDP's Manohar Singh. Kalakote was won by the BJP's Abdul Gani Kohli — also a minister in the PDP-

BJP government — and Nowshera by the party's UT president Ravinder Raina in the 2014 Assembly election.

The BJP swept the Jammu district, winning 11 out of the 14 DDC seats. However, senior leader and former minister Sham Lal Choudhary lost to an Independent Taranjit Singh Tony in Suchetgarh. The BJP lost in its stronghold Marh, where its candidate Vandana Kumari was defeated by Independent candidate Balbir Lal.

Marh had elected the BJP's Sukhnandan Choudhary twice and he was sworn-in as cabinet minister in the PDP-BJP government formed after the 2014 Assembly polls.

Union Minister Thakur, who was in charge of the BJP campaign, said in reply to a question that one of the two former ministers had lost by just 11 votes. He said 51 per cent of the 57 lakh electorate had cast their vote in the DDC elections. This shows that people came out to vote braving cold and militants' threats, he said, adding, "It is a big victory".

The defeat of former ministers points to resentment among the people over unfulfilled promises on the development front after the two were elected in 2014, said a BJP leader, requesting anonymity.

DDC polls verdict: Limited role but crucial space for those sidelined

MUZAMIL JALEEL
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

THE DISTRICT Development Council (DDC) polls, the first electoral exercise in J&K after its special status was abrogated and the erstwhile state was downgraded into a pair of Union Territories last year, aimed to achieve two key goals. One, normalise the Centre's monumental moves on August 5, 2019. Two, steer the political discourse towards village development by presenting the newly elected councillors as arbitrators between the people and the administration.

And mark out each of the 20 districts as a separate political unit, thereby initiating the replacement of the traditional political players.

Whether these objectives have been achieved is open to debate. What's clear is that the exercise compelled arch regional rivals National Conference, Peoples Democratic Party, and Peoples Conference to form a coalition — the Peoples Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) — and make the Centre's August 5 decision, rather than just local development, as the main issue to rally their supporters.

Now that the verdict is in, the



PAGD president and National Conference chief Farooq Abdullah at his party office in Srinagar on Wednesday. AP

polls have sharpened faultlines, as the PAGD has won largely in Muslim-majority areas while the BJP has retained its dominance in Hindu-majority Jammu. This faultline mirrored the one on August 5, as opposition to and support for the Centre's move followed this regional demarcation.

It is also clear that the newly floated party of former legislators, mostly from the PDP, J&K Apni Party, which had the blessings of the Centre, couldn't convince people that development — and

not a political fight for restoration of J&K's special status — was the way forward. There is, however, one unintended silver lining: the polls provide the Centre an opportunity to listen to the clear message from the people. For, on the ground, even though the PAGD wasn't allowed to campaign as freely as the BJP, its supporters came out to vote in significant numbers because they saw, in the results of these elections, a virtual referendum on August 5

The traditional support bases

of the parties that form PAGD were also convinced that the BJP needed to be kept out of the new political setup. But now that PAGD has won a substantial chunk of DDC seats, they will have to contend with the challenges ahead. Not least because the DDCs have little to do with state-level politics and their newly elected members have little role beyond overseeing developmental programmes in their respective districts.

In this situation, it is going to be a difficult task for PAGD to respond to the expectations generated by these results.

The polls, and especially the results, have, however, opened a space for them. A senior PAGD leader said: "There may not be a forum like the Assembly where political issues can be raised. They may not have votes to pass any law. No one can stop them from talking and raising political issues, however. If chairpersons of a dozen districts issue a strong political statement, it will have its value."

Moreover, he pointed out, these "fresh faces" cannot be as easily discredited as established leaders of the mainstream parties. "Most of these people have no past. They haven't signed any files as ministers," the leader said. "It will be very difficult to

dismiss them as corrupt and insignificant. They will talk politics. They will keep on raising August 5; our politics will stay relevant. The aim of these polls was to replace traditional parties like NC, PDP, PC, Congress which are opposed to BJP and its policies in J&K. That has failed."

He argued that the Centre has two ways to look at the results: "They can abandon this project halfway because it didn't go according to their wishes. Or they can build on it — allow us space and listen to us. If they listen to the ground, that can bring respite to the people."

The polls have also been an appraisal of the players introduced by the Centre to help fill the political vacuum in J&K. A former minister said: "A group of elected DDC members can protest outside Raj Bhawan or civil secretariat against a government policy that they think is not good. The government cannot wish them away. These newly elected people cannot be detained like a large number of mainstream politicians were jailed last year."

The newly elected DDCs may have a limited mandate but they have brought politics back to the centre stage. How the Centre will respond to this politics will determine the way ahead for J&K.



Mehbooba Mufti at her home in Srinagar. Shuaib Masoodi

BJP should fight me politically, not through NIA, ED and CBI: Mufti

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 23

ACCUSING THE BJP of "weaponising" investigating agencies of the country, former J&K chief minister and PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti said the party should fight her politically and not through them.

"The witch-hunt that the Centre had started has reached its peak. For the last two years they have been looking at my assets, where I have a house or land. When they couldn't find anything then started raiding our family members and colleagues. Whether it is NIA or ED, they have been weaponised," Mufti said.

"It has been conveyed to me several times that I should think about my future and to stop worrying about J&K. I did not agree to that. I cannot resolve the issue of Kashmir but I have continued to speak for the people of Kashmir."

The former CM said that while these agencies are supposed to investigate serious charges, "the Centre has stooped so low as to audit Mufti (Mohammad Sayeed) sahab's

mausoleum". She said that questions are now being asked about where the party got money to construct his mausoleum.

Mufti said that the BJP is bereft of any political argument and cannot fight her politically. "I want to tell all the BJP leaders, you have so much power and so many members of Parliament, fight me politically, not through NIA, ED and CBI. Agar mujhse jung ladni hai toh politically lado."

The People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) secured 110 of the 280 seats, gaining control over at least 13 of the 20 councils. PDP individually secured 27 of the 63 seats it contested. Mufti, who is the PAGD vice-president, said she was pleasantly surprised by the election results.

She said that through Waheed Para, the BJP was trying to connect her to terror funding. "They allege that we have ties with militants and that we have helped them. Yes, when Mufti sahab became chief minister the first time, families of militants who had been killed were being helped formally, through accounts. This is not something we have hidden."

NSCN-K faction announces ceasefire, signals return to peace talks

ABHISHEK SAHA
GUWAHATI, DECEMBER 23

A BREAKAWAY faction of the Naga insurgent outfit NSCN-Khaplang Wednesday declared a ceasefire and indicated that it would rejoin peace talks with the government.

This splinter group is led by the militant Niki Sumi, who said in a statement that the outfit has "resolved to strengthen and support the peace process at this crucial juncture".

Sumi said the group was "aware of the sincere and genuine efforts made by the GoI in the recent past" to find a lasting solution to the Naga issue "with the involvement of all the stakeholders". He said it has decided to revive ceasefire with immediate effect "by revoking the earlier decision of unilateral abrogation" of the ceasefire in 2015. Back then, the outfit was led by its founder, SS Khaplang, who died in 2017.

"We expect GoI to respond positively by honouring our decision as a confidence building measure in the larger interests of peace in Nagaland and Naga people in general," the statement said.

After its founder's death, the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang named Khango Konyak as the new head. In 2018, however, the outfit split when he was reportedly "impeached". Khaplang's nephew, Yung Aung, took over the group, which is based in Myanmar.

Meanwhile, the first breakaway faction of the NSCN-K, led by Konyak, joined peace talks in early 2019.

The NSCN (Isak-Muivah) — the largest and most influential Naga outfit — has, meanwhile, been engaged in peace talks with the Centre since 2015. These talks however, have not made much headway as the outfit has held on to its demands for a separate Naga flag and constitution, which the Centre is against.

The Naga National Political Groups — an umbrella body of several other insurgent groups of Nagaland (including Konyak's faction) that are in talks with the Centre — as well as civil society groups have maintained that they are open to a solution that does not involve a separate flag and constitution.

BTP withdraws support to Gehlot govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
JAIPUR, DECEMBER 23

THE BHARATIYA Tribal Party (BTP) on Wednesday withdrew support to the Ashok Gehlot-led Congress government in Rajasthan.

The BTP, a Congress ally which supported Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot during the revolt in his party earlier this year, was upset that the ruling party candidates chose BJP over it zila pramukh elections in tribal Dungarpur district, where the outfit is trying to expand its influence.

"The BTP had supported the Ashok Gehlot government at the time of crisis but the Congress betrayed the party in the zila pramukh elections. The Congress joined hands with the BJP to prevent the BTP from forming the board in the Dungarpur zila parishad, therefore, we have decided to withdraw the support," party state president Velaram Ghoghra told PTI.

Ghoghra said the intimation about the withdrawal of support has been forwarded to the governor, chief minister and the Assembly speaker.

The party has two MLAs in the state and the withdrawal of support will have no impact on the stability of the Congress government, which enjoys the support of 105 MLAs in the house of 200.

The BJP has 71 MLAs, RLP 3, CPI (M) 2, BTP 2 and RLD 1. The state has 13 independent legislators and three seats are lying vacant.

The BTP is trying to expand its influence in tribal-dominated southern Rajasthan.

Goa goes into huddle to find way around Karnataka slaughter law

SMITANAIIR
PANJIM, DECEMBER 23

WITH THE BJP government in Karnataka proposing a more stringent law on banning cattle slaughter, the Pramod Sawant-led Goa administration on Wednesday convened a meeting between cattle suppliers from Karnataka and meat traders of Goa to look for a legal channel for safe passage of livestock to the state.

With Maharashtra passing the anti-cattle slaughter act four years ago, Goa relies solely on Karnataka for bulk of its beef consumption — supplied either through transport of live buffalo and bull or carcasses from the neighbouring state's abattoirs.

Over the the past 72 hours,

with the state already starting to feel shortage of beef, the Goa government has come under growing administrative and political pressure to facilitate meat to a tourist state gearing for Christmas and New Year celebrations. The urgency of the situation can be gauged by Chief Minister Sawant's public assurances that he has a "duty to look after the 30 per cent minority population".

After the meeting with officials of the animal husbandry department on Wednesday, the meat traders in a statement said the government assured them all help to them to overcome the beef shortage arising out of the Karnataka legislation plan.

The beef trade in Goa is divided between fresh meat and frozen meat, with the former

headed by Quraishi Meat Traders Association and the latter by Cold Meat Storage Association.

While the Quraishi Meat Traders Association says the Karnataka Bill will be last nail in the coffin for them, the Cold Storage Association is now looking at an old channel to expand supply — meat export houses in Delhi.

Cold storage Association president Vernon Lobo says the situation is now dire as under the new Bill, "One cannot even transport bovines from one district to another. Even the farmers who want to transport bull and buffaloes will face a tough time. The powers are now available right till the rank of a sub-inspector to raid and arrest. Chances of getting beef from Karnataka is zero," he says.

With Rajdhani Express and



Abhishek Singhvi

Doda — while in Reasi, the saffron party has won seven of 14 seats.

"To ensure that (the BJP) does not have its chairperson in others, we can support PAGD... We already had seat sharing with it (PAGD) during the just-concluded DDC elections... While there had been seat sharing at 75 per cent places, we had a friendly

contest at the remaining 25 per cent places," Sharma said.

He, however, made it clear that "though we had a seat sharing agreement with PAGD, we were not part of Gupkar agenda".

Meanwhile, AICC spokesperson Abhishek Singhvi, addressing a press conference in Delhi, said, "We have not taken any decision on this so far, so it will be inappropriate for me to comment. But if you see Gupkar on one side and BJP on the other side, we cannot at any cost support the BJP... But whom to support, that decision is yet to be taken."

WITH ENS, DELHI



Complex compounds problem for trade

ADDING TO the troubles of Goa beef trade is the Goa Meat Complex, which remains shut for long period of time. The complex, which under Goa's anti-slaughter laws allows for bovines other than cow, has been shut for four years, according to the Quraishi Meat Traders Association. "They open it Eid to Eid, so it was last open in August," says association president Manna Bepari. "We legally have permission to get live animals from Karnataka and give them to Goa Meat Complex. But now with the complex shut we do not have any such option. It is further risky to get animals if Karnataka passes the Act."

Mangala Express bringing in two tonnes of beef tongue and undercuts and tenderloin daily from Delhi over the past few years, Lobo

says the math around volumes will now change. "Now, we have to fully rely on export houses of Saharanpur in New Delhi. Earlier,

they would only direct the undercuts and tongue to Goa market. Now we will have to go for deboned beef chunks entirely from New Delhi as without Karnataka our supply is affected 100 per cent," Lobo says. This would mean a domestic market now looking to get a share of the export volumes.

The cold storages in Goa stock a tonne at any given time, with the trade looking at minimum 8 tonnes of beef daily for Goan locals.

"We did look at other avenues. Kerala doesn't have that kind of supply as they too are dependent on Tamil Nadu. Further, no other south state has abattoir facilities like Karnataka. Tamil Nadu transport economics is working to be expensive," he says. "We still need to see how the next few weeks

shape as any delay in trains will affect supplies."

Quraishi Meat Traders Association president Manna Bepari says unlike frozen meat, the fresh meat traders cannot have fresh meat travelling for beyond three hours. "This rules out any other state for us, as Karnataka was the only viable one," he says. Every day, Bepari's association gets 15 tonnes of fresh meat in five trucks, which are then routed to five municipal markets in Panjim and Mapusa in north Goa and Ponda, Vasco and Margao in south Goa.

Cruz Cardoza, president of Shack Association in Goa, says the pinch was felt immediately. "Last week, tourists didn't have steaks... This will have an impact on tourism. Further, the pork segment will feel the pressure now."

PIL in SC seeks ‘free, safe, fair’ Bengal polls

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

ALLEGING THAT the violation of fundamental rights has reached its peak in West Bengal, a PIL filed in the Supreme Court Wednesday sought its intervention to ensure that the forthcoming assembly polls in the state are held in a “free, peaceful, safe and fair” manner.

The plea by Mumbai-based lawyer Puneet Kaur Dhandha sought directions to the Centre, the Election Commission and the West Bengal government for this and urged the court to direct the CBI to investigate the alleged killings of political activists and adversaries of Bengal’s ruling TMC.

The petition, filed through advocate Vineet Dhandha, also sought to draw the court’s attention to the attack on BJP president J P Nadda’s cavalcade in Bengal and requested it to direct the “Union Home Secretary and DGP, West Bengal to take strict action against errant senior officers involved in dereliction of duty in protection of” Nadda.

The plea alleged that the “continuous violation of fundamental rights, statutory rights and human rights in...West Bengal has reached its zenith and the state government and its police machinery is involved in such violations” and that “no steps to prevent such violation of fundamental, statutory and human rights is being taken by the state government...”

It claimed that “It is the state government and its machinery which is responsible for such brutal violation of rights in the State...” and added that the graph of “systemic killings” was on the rise in the state.

Dhandha urged the court to call for a detailed Action Taken Report and to direct the state police to ascertain the safety of opposition workers in the run up to the elections next year and if necessary, depute paramilitary forces to ensure this.

Baul singer who hosted Shah slams BJP after TMC outreach: They offered no help

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, DECEMBER 23

THE TRINAMOOL Congress (TMC) has made attempts to reach out to Bengali folk singer Basudeb Das Baul, days after he hosted Union Home Minister Amit Shah for lunch at his home in Bolpur.

In an about-turn, the Baul singer on Wednesday said the BJP did not help him in any way and the home minister also did not talk to him after the lunch on Sunday. Das had even sung some folk songs for Shah.

The artiste’s latest comments come after a meeting with TMC Birbhum district chief Anubrata Mondal at a party office on Tuesday evening. Das said he would perform at Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee’s rally in Bolpur on December 29.

“Amit Shah came to my



Basudeb Das Baul performing for Amit Shah. PTI/File

house, had lunch and left. I did not get the chance to talk to him. They did not extend any helping hand to me. No one even kept in touch with me after Shah’s visit. I thought I would request the home minister to help my daughter with higher studies,” the singer told reporters.

Mondal said the TMC’s education cell would help Basudeb Das Baul’s daughter complete higher studies. “Amit Shah came to his house to do a drama. He was not serious about their welfare. We have decided to bear all expenses of his daughter’s studies,” added the TMC leader.

Several injured in BJP-TMC clash in Suvendu stronghold

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CONTAI, DECEMBER 23

SEVERAL PEOPLE were injured in a clash between Trinamool Congress and BJP workers at Ramnagar in West Bengal Wednesday ahead of the TMC’s rally in Contai, the stronghold of former state minister Suvendu Adhikari, who joined the saffron party recently.

The police said the clash broke out when a procession by BJP activists was passing by a TMC party office on Ramnagar Road in Purba Medinipur district. Several persons were injured in the clash, said the police.

The police brought the situation under control, following the TMC and the BJP traded charges. The Opposition party alleged that TMC activists attacked its workers without provocation.

The TMC accused the BJP of vandalising its party office and beating up its workers.



Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee at the inauguration of the Bangla Sangeet Mela in Kolkata on Wednesday. Partha Paul

Won’t let Bengal become Gujarat: CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, DECEMBER 23

CHIEF MINISTER Mamata Banerjee Wednesday said she would not allow Bengal to become Gujarat.

Speaking at the inauguration of a music fair, “Sangeet Mela 2020”, in Kolkata, Banerjee slammed the BJP without naming it. “If there is harmony any-

where, it is in music. Music has no boundaries. The music stage never believes in divisions. We can have different surnames, colours, looks. But we are all a family together. That is mankind. Fight hard against those who want to divide it. Don’t be afraid,” Banerjee said.

“We have to respect and save our soil. No one can destroy Bengal. We will not allow Bengal to become Gujarat.”

BJP showcauses state women’s wing chief

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, DECEMBER 23

THE BJP Wednesday issued a show cause notice to its state Mahila Morcha president Agnimitra Paul for “anti-party remarks” after she spoke out against the against the induction



Agnimitra Paul

of TMC MLA Jitendra Tiwari.

The notice was issued by state BJP vice president Pratap Banerjee.

In a press byte, Paul had said she was not in favour of Tiwari joining the party.

On Tuesday, a similar notice was served to state BJP general secretary Sayantan Basu, and two other party leaders, Ganga Prasad Sharma and Santosh Hati. Basu, too, had spoken out against the induction of the former TMC MLA into the BJP.

Priest, nun get life term in Abhaya murder case

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DECEMBER 23

A CBI special court here on Wednesday handed life imprisonment to the Catholic priest and nun who were found guilty of the murder of Sister Abhaya (19), whose body was found inside a well at a convent in Kottayam on March 27, 1992.

Special CBI Judge K Sanal Kumar awarded double life sentence to Father Thomas Kottoor (71) and ordered him to pay a fine of Rs 6.5 lakh. Sister Sephy (57) was sentenced to life and ordered to pay a fine of Rs 5.5 lakh.

Kottoor and Sephy were awarded life sentence and a fine of Rs 5 lakh each for the offence of murder (IPC Section 302); with two years simple imprisonment in case of default in payment of fine. For destroying evidence (Section 201), the court sentenced the duo to seven years rigorous imprisonment and imposed a fine of Rs 50,000, with one year simple imprisonment in case of default.

Kottoor was handed a second life sentence and ordered to pay a fine of Rs 1 lakh under Section 449 (trespassing to commit offence punishable with death), with one year imprisonment in



Father Thomas Kottoor, main accused in Abhaya murder case, being brought out of the CBI court premises after his sentencing on Wednesday. PTI

case of default in payment of fine. All the sentences will run concurrently, the court said.

Earlier, the prosecution said the duo should be given the maximum punishment. Pleading for relief, Kottoor said he was old and a cancer patient. Sephy said she was diabetic.

In a statement, the Knanaya Catholic diocese of Kottayam said it respected the court’s verdict and was pained over the developments. Saying that the allegations were unbelievable, it said the duo had the right to file an appeal and prove their innocence.

Both the victim and the ac-

cused belonged to the Knanaya diocese.

The CBI had named another priest, Father Jose Puthrikkayal, as an accused but the court allowed his discharge petition before the trial, which began last year, citing lack of evidence.

According to the CBI, Abhaya, a pre-degree college student, was killed after she found the two priests and Sephy in a compromising position inside the kitchen of the Pius X Convent hostel.

Kottoor and Sephy, who were out on bail, were taken into custody on Tuesday.

Behind verdict: Thief’s statement, kitchen disruption, forensic report



Abhaya was attacked by the accused 'with intention to kill her', the court said

TO ARRIVE at the conclusion that Fr Thomas Kottoor and nun Sephy had murdered sister Abhaya in 1992, the CBI court has mainly banked on disturbance in the hostel kitchen, the statement of a thief, and report of a forensic expert.

Adakka Raju, a thief, had told the court that he had seen Kottoor in the convent building between 4 am and 4.30 am on the day Abhaya was killed. Raju was at the site until the 5-am siren and did not see Kottoor leave the location until he himself left.

“It follows that Kottoor remained there till at least 5 am,” Judge K Sanilkumar said.

The court went by forensic expert Dr Kanthaswamy’s conclusion that Abhaya’s death likely took place six to eight hours before the postmortem. This, the court noted, makes possible “the prosecution’s assertion that Abhaya was attacked between 4.15 am and 5 am...”

The location of the murder is significant – a convent, from which male presence is completely and unequivocally banned.

Given the nature of the head

injury suffered by Abhaya, it is sufficient to cause death, the court noted Dr Kandasswamy’s deposition. “The only inference possible here is that Abhaya was attacked by the accused with intention to kill her,” the court said.

The court noted the abnormal disturbances that occurred in the kitchen work area and in the kitchen wash area of St Pius X Convent Hostel on the morning of March 27, 1992 and that nun Sephy was alone at the relevant time on the ground floor, and Abhaya’s body was recovered from the well near Sephy’s ground-floor room.

Judge Sanilkumar said in the order that Kottoor failed to properly explain his presence in the convent during the early hours, and the evidence of Achamma, a help, shows that the compound

was guarded by fierce dogs, and that she had closed all the doors the previous night. It demonstrates the nefarious conduct of both accused, the court stated.

The order stated: “It is inexorable to infer that Kottoor entered the ground floor of the convent building with the help of Sephy to carry out their sexual activities, and on witnessing of the same by Sister Abhaya, she was attacked with a blunt weapon. It is proved that Sephy utilised medical intervention to shape artificially her body as that of a virgin, through evidence of two doctors who have examined her.”

The court also noted that it is “proved that Kottoor threatened Jomon Puthenpurackal, Convener, Action Council, while he was returning after taking part in a protest demonstration.... On the nature of evidence available...question of any entitlement of benefit of doubt would not arise: The evidence on record is worth its credence and is trustworthy...”

While delivering the verdict, Judge Sanilkumar quoted the observations in the Supreme Court order in Nageshwar Shri. Krishna Ghobe v State of Maharashtra, 1973: “Justice would fail not only by unjust conviction of the innocent but also by acquittal of the guilty for unjustified failure to produce available evidence.”

5 Big CATS To Be MOVED FROM CORBETT To RAJAJI

First tiger translocation in Uttarakhand today

LALMANI VERMA
DEHRADUN, DECEMBER 23

THE RAJAJI Tiger Reserve is set to welcome the first big cat from Jim Corbett Tiger Reserve on Thursday, in the first such relocation in Uttarakhand aimed at tiger population management. A total of five big cats from the Jim Corbett Tiger Reserve -- nearly eight years since conceptualisation of the project and four years after clearance from the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) -- are scheduled to be translocated from Jim Corbett to Rajaji.

“All preparations have been done for the translocation process in Corbett and Rajaji,” said JS Suhag, chief wildlife warden of Uttarakhand forest department. The tigress which will be translocated on Thursday was rescued, tranquillised and radio-collared on Wednesday.

Around 100 people, including IFs officers, forest personnel, veterinary doctors and wildlife scientists, will execute the entire exercise.

Spread over 557 sq km, Rajaji



The tigress which will be translocated was tranquillised and radio-collared on Wednesday

reserve has 37 tigers against a capacity of 83, and its western part spread over 380 sq km has only two tigresses -- codenamed T1 and T2. Forest authorities do not expect any reproduction as they are aged above 18 years.

An expert committee comprising forest department officials and scientists from the Wildlife Institute of India (WII)

Explained Why translocation is needed

THE WESTERN portion of the Rajaji Tiger Reserve, which occupies more than 60 per cent of the total reserve area, has only two tigresses, presumed to be unfit for reproduction as they above 18 years. Despite Rajaji having 37 tigers, the eastern part cannot boost numbers in the western portion as the two are divided by a traffic corridor which makes it difficult for the big cats to migrate. With this relocation, a rise in tiger numbers can be expected in the western part next year.

have identified two males and three females more than 60 per cent of the total reserve area, has only two tigresses, presumed to be unfit for reproduction as they above 18 years. Despite Rajaji having 37 tigers, the eastern part cannot boost numbers in the western portion as the two are divided by a traffic corridor which makes it difficult for the big cats to migrate. With this relocation, a rise in tiger numbers can be expected in the western part next year.

The five tigers are aged between 4 to 6 years and physically fit for reproduction, said Rahul, Director of Jim Corbett Tiger Reserve.

Sheds are being built for six elephants in the Motichur range of Rajaji. These pachyderms will

be used to help monitor the big cats post translocation and to prevent them from entering any

areas with human population. The forest staff in Motichur range was put on alert Wednesday night and safaris in the area have also been cancelled for a day.

“One tiger will be translocated at a time. At Rajaji, it will be kept first in an enclosure of one hectare area. Its movement will be constantly observed for the next few days. When we are sure that the tiger is comfortable at the new location and is behaving normally, it will be released in the forest,” said DK Singh, Director of the Rajaji Tiger Reserve, and member of the expert committee for source identification.

Advt. No. 112/2020

Government of India

Public Enterprises Selection Board

invites applications for the post of

Director (Finance)

in

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited

Last date of receipt of applications in

PESB is by 15.00 hours on

25th February, 2021

For details login to website

http://www.pesb.gov.in

झारखण्ड सरकार

वन, पर्यावरण एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन विभाग

प्रेस विज्ञापित

प्रेस विज्ञापित के माध्यम से डिम्बर मर्चेंट एसोसिएशन, धनबाद को सूचित किया जाता है कि आपके स्तर से माननीय मुख्यमंत्री एवं मुख्य सचिव, झारखण्ड को संबोधित पत्र दिनांक 07.05.2020 द्वारा श्री डी0 वेंकटेश्वरलू, क्षेत्रीय मुख्य वन संरक्षक, बोकारो के विरुद्ध लगाये गये आरोपों के संबंध में प्राप्त परिवाद की समुचित हेतु परिवाद में दिए गए पता पर निर्बंधित डाक से पत्र भेजा गया था, जो वापस हो गया है। आपके स्तर से प्रेषित परिवाद पर कार्रवाई के पूर्व आपकी समुचित/सहमति आवश्यक है। यदि उक्त परिवाद आपके स्तर से प्रेषित है तो उसे एक पक्ष के अंदर समुचित करने की कृपा करें।

उपरोक्त वर्णित समय-सीमा में उत्तर प्राप्त नहीं होने पर माना जाएगा कि आपको कुछ नहीं कहना है और विभाग द्वारा मामले को समाप्त करने का निर्णय ले लिया जायेगा। इस संबंध में किसी प्रकार की जानकारी आप स्वयं आकर अथवा डाक के माध्यम से निम्न पता पर उपलब्ध कराया जा सकता है।

पता-सरकार के प्रधान सचिव, वन, पर्यावरण एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन विभाग, नेपाल हाउस, डोल्खा, रांची झारखण्ड, पिन-834002

PR 238095 Forest, Environment and Climate Changes(20-21)D

(मितरंजु कुमार) सरकार के अवर सचिव

GOVT. OF BIHAR

BIHAR COMBINED ENTRANCE COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION BOARD

I.A.S. Association Building, Near Patna Airport, Patna-14.

UNDER GRADUATE MEDICAL ADMISSION COUNSELLING (UGMAC)-2020 for MBBS / BDS / B.V.Sc. & A.H. in Govt. Medical / Dental / Bihar Veterinaty Colleges and Private Medical / Dental Colleges of Bihar

Adv. No.- BCECEB(UGMAC)-2020/12 Dated 23.12.2020

द्वितीय काउन्सेलिंग से सम्बन्धित आवश्यक सूचना

विज्ञापन संख्या- BCECEB(UGMAC)-2020/09 दिनांक 20.12.2020 के क्रम में UGMAC-2020 से सम्बन्धित सभी अभ्यर्थियों / संस्थानों / सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि द्वितीय चक्र (2nd round) सीट आवंटन में हुए विलम्ब के कारण Document verification / नामांकन की तिथि को पूर्व में दिनांक 23.12.2020 से 24.12.2020 तक निर्धारित की गयी थी, उसे निम्नवत् विस्तारित किया जाता है;

क्र. कार्यक्रम पूर्व निर्धारित तिथि विस्तारित तिथि

i. Document Verification and Admission : 23.12.2020 to 24.12.2020 23.12.2020 to 26.12.2020

(2) सभी संस्थानों का Fee Structure परीद के Website: bceceboard.bihar.gov.in पर उपलब्ध है। अभ्यर्थियों के हित में निर्णय लिया गया है कि जिन अभ्यर्थियों का सीट आवंटन सरकारी संस्थानों में हुआ है वे उक्त संस्थान की नामांकन की निर्धारित राशि Online / नगद भी जमा कर सकते हैं।

निजी संस्थानों में 2nd round Counselling में जिन अभ्यर्थियों का Seat allotment हुआ है और उन्हें नामांकन लेना है तो वे अपने साथ सम्बन्धित संस्थान के शुल्क अनुसार कुल राशि online स्थानान्तरण करेंगे या उक्त राशि का Bank Draft लेकर नामांकन के समय जमा करेंगे।

(3) उल्लेखनीय है कि यह 2nd round counselling है, अतः इसमें upgradation का option नहीं होगा। अभ्यर्थी को सीट आवंटन अनुसार नामांकन लेना है। वैसे अभ्यर्थी जिनको नामांकन नहीं लेना है उन्हें Documents Verification हेतु Reporting Centre पर जाने की आवश्यकता नहीं है।

परीक्षा निबंधक

Haryana Staff Selection Commission

Bays No. 67-70, Sector- 2, Panchkula-134151 (www.hssc.gov.in)

ANNOUNCEMENT

Notice to candidates for interview for the post of Patwari, Land Records Department ,Haryana, Against Advt. No. 07/2015 , Category No.13

Chief Secretary to Government of Haryana vide memo No. 22/149/2015-1 GS-III dated 5th March, 2019, has informed that the State Government has decided that in respect of all advertisements where result of SBC has been put on hold due to Court Orders, the Haryana Staff Selection Commission shall treat the SBC posts to be under the Unreserved/General Category.

Therefore now, the Commission in continuation of earlier notice dated 20.05.2017 calling the candidates for interview on the basis of scrutiny of documents already held, hereby calls the following candidates bearing following Roll Numbers for interview/viva voce provisionally and further subject to fulfilment of their eligibility conditions as per advertisement and service rules for consideration against the 59 posts belonging to General Category (earlier SBC Category). The marks secured by the last short-listed candidate are given in bracket.

Advt. No. 07/2015, Patwari, Cat. No. 13

GENERAL (165 General + 59 SBC Posts earlier = 224 Posts)

1713106601 1713110197 1713111389 1713111645 1713111409 1713114727 1713115413

1713115751 1713115770 1713115935 1713116774 1713117068 1713117516 1713118189

1713118421 1713121589 1713124652 1713125291 1713125906 1713129766 1713130270

1713130396 1713130446 1713131888 1713132892 1713133230 1713136821 1713136956

1713137760 1713138480 1713138494 1713138836 1713139037 1713139183 1713141141

1713142254 1713142640 1713143484 1713144121 1713145164 1713145511 1713145795

1713147079 1713147164 1713149644 1713151390 1713151469 1713151844 1713152258

1713152371 1713152605 1713152630 1713157338 1713157591 1713158348 1713158643

1713159558 1713159574 1713160142 1713160589 1713160805 1713161192 1713161210

1713161422 1713161585 1713162373 1713165027 1713165834 1713166229 1713168233

1713169164 1713169229 1713169567 1713171446 1713171648 1713172221 1713172513

1713177365 1713178983 1713179908 1713183541 1713184660 1713185895 1713187178

1713187334 1713187674 1713187737 1713188042 1713188811 1713189169 1713189240

1713190493 1713191764 1713194185 1713194903 1713195002 1713195672 1713196899

1713196910 1713196911 1713204933 1713209725 1713212225 1713213707 1713215620

1713219523 1713221602 1713224298 1713228086 1713228297 1713228758 1713231780

1713232537 1713232757 1713233776 1713234689 1713234691 1713237273 1713237396

1713237735 1713243007 1713248954

(160)

1. Note:-1. The interview of the above candidates will be held on 28.12.2020. The candidates are advised to download the Admit Card for interview from the website of the Commission on/after 25.12.2020 and report at 09.00 A.M. in the Commission office Bays No. 67-70, Sector-2, Panchkula. They are also directed to bring all original documents, set of self attested copies of all documents.

2. In case a candidate does not appear for Viva-Voce/interview, he/she will be given no further opportunity thereafter. Candidates who have already been interviewed in court case, need not to appear again for interview/Viva Voce. If any candidate having any orders from any competent court of law regarding interview, they should also be present at above mentioned date and venue alongwith all relevant documents.

3. While every care has been taken in preparing and uploading the result, possibility of inadvertent/technical errors cannot be ruled out. The Commission reserves the right to rectify the same later on.

4. The result is also available on the website of HSSC i.e. www.hssc.gov.in

Sd/- Under Secretary

Dated:-19.12.2020 10757/HRV for Secretary,Haryana Staff Selection Commission

8 EXPRESS NETWORK

BRIEFLY



Vice Admiral Datta

Vice Admiral Datta named next DG, AFMS

New Delhi: Surgeon Vice Admiral Rajat Datta has been appointed the new Director General of Armed Forces Medical Services. He will assume charge on January 1, 2021. A cardiologist, he is a former Commandant of the Army Hospital (R&R), Delhi. **ENS**

WEST BENGAL

Classes X, XII Board exams in June: minister

Kolkata: Board examinations for Class X and XII will be held in June, West Bengal Education Minister Partha Chatterjee said on Wednesday. The Class X exams will be held first and the Class XII examinations after that, he said. "We have accepted recommendations of West Bengal Board of Secondary Education and West Bengal Council of Higher Education on holding the exams on later dates in view of the pandemic situation," Chatterjee said. **PTI**

GUJARAT

Age limit for entry to Class 1 to be raised to 6

Ahmedabad: The Gujarat education department has raised the age limit for admission to Class 1 to six years from the academic year 2023-24 in state board schools for parity with other education boards. In a circular issued Wednesday by the director of primary education's office, all district primary education officers, district education committees, district education officers, and administrative officers of all municipal corporations are directed to spread awareness among playgroups to rule out any "conflict situation" among parents. **ENS**

TELANGANA

Poacher held, 15 Barn owls rescued

Hyderabad: A total of 15 Barn owls have been rescued from the possession of a poacher here by police and forest department officers, sources said on Wednesday. The 22-year-old man was arrested from Falaknuma area Tuesday when he was planning to sell the owls, police said. He used to visit Srisaillam forest area and surrounding villages to trap the Barn owls and sell them for prices ranging from Rs 10,000 to Rs 1 lakh. **PTI**

TAMIL NADU

4 crew members test positive, film shoot put on hold

Chennai: The shooting of the Rajinikanth-starrer, *Annaathe*, was halted after four of the film crew tested positive for Covid-19, sources said Wednesday. Sun Pictures, the production house, said the top actor and other crew members have tested negative for the virus. "During routine testing at #Annaathe shoot 4 crew members have tested positive for Covid19. Superstar @rajinikanth and other crew members have tested negative," Sun Pictures said on its Twitter handle. **PTI**

'OPERATIONAL NECESSITY'

Navy makes strong pitch as debate over third aircraft carrier revives

KRISHN KAUSHIK
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

A THIRD aircraft carrier is an "operational necessity" for the Navy, a top officer from the force told *The Indian Express*, days after Navy Chief Admiral Karambir Singh stressed on the importance of aircraft carriers at the Navy Day press conference. The Navy Chief's views revived the discussion among the forces on whether India needs a third aircraft carrier – apart from INS Vikramaditya and the under-construction Indigenous Aircraft Carrier 1 (IAC 1).

Addressing reporters on December 3, Admiral Singh said the force "does not want to be a Navy tethered to the shore" and "air power at sea is absolutely required". "The Navy is all about reach and sustenance. If you, as a nation, that is aspirational... you will have to go outwards, seek the world, you will have to move out... And for that you require air power, and you require it at longer ranges, aircraft carrier is absolutely necessary," he said.

The strong pitch for aircraft carriers, however, may not ap-



India currently has one operational aircraft carrier, INS Vikramaditya (above), while a second carrier is being constructed at Cochin Shipyard. *File*

pear aligned with the views of Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat, who in the past – and most recently in an interview to *India Today* last week – said that aircraft carriers are vulnerable targets and that the islands of Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep can be used as "unsinkable aircraft carriers".

Prioritisation in defence acquisition is one of the major mandates of the Chief of Defence Staff.

The top Navy officer *The Indian Express* spoke to agreed with Admiral Singh's views. "If you have to guard your interests, you have to move outwards," the officer said. "Shouldn't we have the capability to go where the challenge lies?"

Without mentioning anyone in particular, the officer said, "They say the aircraft carrier will sink if attacked by an anti-ballistic missile... that it can, no doubt as all boats can sink. But then

why haven't we got anti-ballistic missiles? We should also develop them and use them as a deterrent against other forces. If they target our aircraft carriers we should target theirs. Why have this negativity, that an aircraft carrier can sink."

"We don't have the luxury," he said, in terms of finances, "but don't reject the idea, thinking that it will sink".

Underlining the importance of defending the vast Indian Ocean Region, the officer stressed on the need for "persistent air power – it should be there, day and night". "How does America come, how can China come (close to Indian Ocean Region), because they are guarding their interests," the officer said.

"Three aircraft carriers are tactically needed," as in the future "surge capability" will be needed, which a third carrier will add, he said.

He said another reason to build and have a third carrier is because of the expertise gained by the Navy and the country to run them. "We are very lucky that we have learned how to operationalise aircraft carriers and naval aviation in 60 years. We have mas-

tered the art of maritime aviation. We have developed the skill over the years, it is not easy to operate an aircraft carrier. Should we let this skill go to waste."

Giving three major reasons to build and have a third carrier, the officer said that first "it is an operational necessity", second, "don't deny yourselves the skill sets in operations, and the skill sets in design and building" of such carriers. Third, he said, "It puts money back into the economy, generates employment and enhances industrial capacity." He said 90 per cent of the cost will be invested back into the economy as it will be built indigenously, and will boost the economy.

He said, "rather than refining" the capability we have, "it will be pushed off" if the idea is rejected. "It is not that you don't have the need for another carrier, then you are denying it just for money. That is a misplaced understanding," the officer said.

Operationally, he said, "When the second carrier is commissioned, the first one will go for refitting, so we will again be left with one. But if you have two, in the field of war, it increases your options by a lot."



Gen M M Naravane with troops at a forward base. *PTI*

Army Chief Naravane visits forward areas along LAC in Ladakh

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

ARMY CHIEF Gen M M Naravane Wednesday visited forward areas along the Line of Actual Control in eastern Ladakh (LAC) where India and China have been engaged in an over seven-month-long military standoff.

Naravane assessed the situation at strategic points such as Rechin La as well as the living conditions of the troops of the XIV Corps, also known as the Fire and Fury Corps, who oversee the LAC in eastern Ladakh, the Army said in a statement.

Rechin La is one of several areas in the Chushul sub-sector where Indian troops have taken up positions at altitudes of over 14,000 feet. The altitude and the arid region, where temperatures can drop to minus 40 degrees Celsius, make for an extremely harsh environment for soldiers.

In the pictures from the forward areas, Army tanks are visible behind Naravane.

The Army chief also "visited forward base Tara and interacted with the local commanders and troops", the statement said. He distributed sweets and cakes ahead of Christmas.

During his visit to the headquarters, the Army chief was

given a detailed brief about the ground situation.

Nearly 50,000 soldiers are stationed on each side in eastern Ladakh, with the ninth round of Corps Commander talks awaited. This is for the first time that such a large number of troops have been positioned in such rough conditions through the winter.

While India has sent a memo to China, a response for the next round of talks between the senior military commanders is awaited. As of now, there is no sign of disengagement or de-escalation from either side.

India has been demanding status quo ante—or for the troops from the frontlines and depth areas, along with additional artillery, tanks and air defence assets, to be sent back to the positions they occupied in April.

China, however, has been asking for Indian troops to first vacate the heights they occupied towards the end of August in the Chushul sub-sector—including Mukhpari, Gurung Hill, Rezang La and Rechin La. These areas give Indian troops a direct view of China's Moldo Garrison and the crucial Spanggur Gap, allowing them to dominate the area. India has said that any disengagement will have to be across all friction points.

In bid to draw support, Punjab farm leaders begin travelling to other states

RAAKHI JAGGA
LUDHIANA, DECEMBER 23

FARMER LEADERS from Punjab protesting at Delhi borders have started travelling to different parts of the country from the dharna site to connect them to the ongoing agitation. Protesting unions now plan to take the agitation to 20 states covering nearly 500 districts by December end, the All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee (AIKSCC) said.

As part of the plan, Satbir Singh, the state general secretary of the Kirti Kisan Union (KKU), Punjab, was in Mumbai on Tuesday where he was part of protest rally organised by former MP Raju Shetti's Swabhimani Paksha and also by social activist Pratibha Shinde

Talking to *The Indian Express*, Satbir Singh said, "KKU's national wing All India Kisan Mazdoor Sabha (AIKMS) was also part of this protest. I had gone alone from Punjab as KKU is part of 32 farmer unions from Punjab protesting on a common

platform... The NDA government is repeatedly saying that protest is limited to Punjab, but in fact, we are being called by unions of other states as well."

Jagmohan Singh Patiala, general secretary of BKU (Dakaunda), said, "I am going to Patna on December 29 as a mega protest rally is being organised by many farmer organisations of Bihar on that day and I will be there as an AIKSCC member and also as a representative of a Punjab farm union. I will talk with local farmers there and their union leaders."

Talking about the role of Punjab unions in making the protest spread, P Krishnaprasad, working committee member of AIKSCC and a former Kerala MLA who is in Delhi these days, said: "Punjab is the powerhouse of this agitation against farm laws. They started aandalan in a very peaceful manner and reached Delhi borders which gave strength to crores of farmers. So, Punjab leaders are travelling to other states as well, because agitation against farm laws is being done by the farming community and not by any particular state."

Attempt to murder, riot charges for blocking Khattar convoy

SUKHBIR SIWACH
CHANDIGARH, DECEMBER 23

HARYANA POLICE booked 13 farmers on various charges including attempt to murder and rioting after they allegedly blocked Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar's convoy, damaged vehicles and showed black flags while protesting against the Centre's farm laws in Ambala Tuesday.

The FIR has been lodged under nine sections of the IPC including 307 (attempt to murder), and the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act, 1984.

The farmers said "false cases are being lodged against them to suppress their voice". According to the FIR, the protesters have been accused of "obstruction in their duty, push and shove and attempt to murder" and blocking the cavalcade. The FIR has been lodged on the complaint of a policeman, Gurjant Singh.

A large number of farmers had gathered in Ambala ahead of Khattar's public meetings on Tuesday. The FIR says: "Kisan union has launched an agitation against three farm laws of the central government. Today also,



Farmers showed black flags to Khattar on Tuesday. *Express*

the leaders of kisan union and a large number of people had gathered at Anaj Mandi, Ambala City. We have come to know through secret sources that they can cause damage to the hon'ble chief minister and other dignitaries. The policemen on duty through loud-speaker said they can hold their protest against the laws but peacefully...but despite that they reached Agrasen Chowk from Anaj Mandi while carrying black flags in their hands...At 12.30, when the CM cavalcade reached Agrasen Chowk, they stopped due to the warning and pilot vehicles and caused damage to these vehicles with their sticks. When police administration was providing exit to the cavalcade by

diverting its route, these rioters and others stopped the way and attacked the policemen."

Bhartiya Kisan Union Ambala district president Malkit Singh has criticised the Khattar government for lodging FIR against farmers. "The farmers had just gone to stage a protest not to kill anybody. Whenever any matter of farmer agitation comes, the police don't slap charges less than of attempt to murder against us. Attempt to murder charges were slapped even for getting opened the roads which were blocked by the authorities during the farmer agitation," Singh told *The Indian Express*.

We are installing boards in villages that only those political leaders will be allowed to enter villages who raise the voice of farmers. Anti-farmer leaders won't be allowed to enter villages," he added.

In Fatehabad, farmers staged a big protest demanding withdrawal of cases lodged against the agitators in connection with their recent protest. After holding a 'Kisan Panchayat', farmers marched to the office of local BJP MLA BJP Dura Ram to urge him to withdraw support from the BJP-JJP government.

her 'continued support'. A TMC spokesperson said that on Chief Minister's direction, a five-member delegation of MPs that included Derek O'Brien, Satabdi Roy, Prasun Banerjee, Pratima Mondal and Mohamad Nadimul Haque met farmers, who are on relay hunger strike at the Singhu border.

"Many farmers in small groups had an interaction on the

Cabinet approves 100% FDI in DTH services

New Delhi: The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved revised guidelines for Direct-to-Home (DTH) broadcasting services, allowing 100 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) as well as increasing the licence period to 20 years.

Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting (I&B) Prakash Javadekar said, "Due to our I&B guidelines, this

field was not getting the benefit of 100 per cent FDI. Now, from today's decision, after changing the guidelines, the guidelines will have the same guidelines as Commerce Ministry, and will come under 100 per cent FDI."

Under the revised guidelines the licenses will be issued for a period of 20 years, compared to 10 years at present, and will be renewed for a 10-year period. **ENS**

TMC MPs visit Singhu, Mamata speaks with protesting farmers over phone

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

A FIVE-MEMBER TMC MPs' delegation met farmers at the Singhu border on Wednesday, expressing their solidarity with them against the Centre's three farm bills. The farmers also spoke to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on the phone asking for

her 'continued support'.

A TMC spokesperson said that on Chief Minister's direction, a five-member delegation of MPs that included Derek O'Brien, Satabdi Roy, Prasun Banerjee, Pratima Mondal and Mohamad Nadimul Haque met farmers, who are on relay hunger strike at the Singhu border.

"Many farmers in small groups had an interaction on the

telephone with Mamata Banerjee who assured them of full solidarity with their movement. Some farmers also requested her to visit the dharna site," a spokesperson said.

The TMC said that they shared the farmers demand of repeal of the farm laws, and said it was unfortunate that farmers "who feed the entire country are being forced to go hungry."

Hallmark of great judges to be keener on justice, not merely on law, says CJI

DEBRAJ DEB
AGARTALA, DECEMBER 23

IT IS the hallmark of every great institution and judges that they are keener on justice and not merely the law, Chief Justice of India Sharad Arvind Bobde said here on Wednesday.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony of an e-Sewa Kendra at the Tripura High Court, CJI Bobde said he was "acutely conscious" that the decision to shift judicial processes online would make justice "technology-dependent" but it had to be done to avoid a complete shutdown of courts amid the pandemic.

Admitting that e-courts made access to justice became



Chief Justice of India Sharad Arvind Bobde during the inauguration of an e-Sewa Kendra in Agartala. *Abhisek Saha*

dependent on access to information and telecommunication

technology, the Chief Justice of India said e-Sewa Kendras seek

to eliminate and alleviate these problems.

"There was an old saying about legal aid in England and things can't be like that. The saying was that access to justice is like the rich hotel; it's open to all. It is this meaninglessness of such words which the e-kendra seeks to eliminate and to alleviate the problems," the CJI said.

"I can't say I know much about the law, having been far more invested in justice," he said, quoting the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Temple, while appealing judges to be more driven towards justice.

E-Sewa Kendras were conceived by the Supreme Court under a project to ensure access to justice for all.

'Make hearings easily accessible to physically challenged lawyers, litigants'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

WITH VIRTUAL courts here to stay, Supreme Court judge, Justice D Y Chandrachud, has called upon High Court Chief Justices to do the needful to make hearings more easily accessible to physically challenged lawyers and litigants.

In a letter to the CJs, Justice Chandrachud, who also heads the SC's eCommittee, pointed out that the creation of accessible infrastructure, including digital infrastructure, and an appropriate support system in the judiciary for lawyers and litigants with disabilities, is imperative in order to create a level playing field.



Justice D Y Chandrachud has written to HC chief justices

This, he stated, is a natural corollary of the right to equality guaranteed by Article 14 and the right to practice a profession of one's choice under Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution.

Dumping the responsibility of making the filings accessible on specially-abled lawyers would be like serving a file in a foreign language to an able-bodied lawyer, Justice Chandrachud wrote, and asked HCs and district judiciary to make necessary changes in the practices to enable this.

The letter noted that instead of printing and scanning submissions, lawyers should be required to file PDF documents, as they are prepared.

Only if there are hard copy annexures that need to be included in the paper-book would scanning them be necessary, Justice Chandrachud said. He added that these must then be saved as a PDF file, but only in Optical Character Recognition-based PDF format.

Care must be taken to ensure stamps and watermarks are not placed on the page in such a way as would hamper smooth access, the letter said. It pointed out that judgments/orders are sometimes inaccessible due to the placement of watermarks on each page.

Writing the Growth Story of UP.... Way Forward to Becoming a \$1 Trillion Economy

In his over three-and-a-half-years tenure as Chief Minister of UP, Yogi Adityanath and his government have successfully implemented comprehensive measures to ensure all-round development across all sections of society, with an aim to project UP as the shining example of new age development and to achieve its dream target of becoming a \$1 trillion economy by 2025.

The State Government firmly believes that UP has a rich cultural heritage to showcase when it comes to tourism. The state also considers tourism as a major shot in the arm to make the state realise its dream of becoming a \$1 trillion economy by 2025.

Boosting Infrastructure

WRITING THE growth story of Uttar Pradesh, the Yogi Adityanath government has embarked on a mission to make Uttar Pradesh a \$1 trillion economy by 2025. To achieve this target, the State Government has identified 5 major sectors - infrastructure development, industry, agriculture, urban development and service sectors. Currently, the state government is working with full force to bring noteworthy changes in these sectors to achieve its dream target.

For the past three-and-a-half years, Uttar Pradesh has witnessed a radical transformation in terms of its economic and social development under the dynamic leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. To project UP as the most investor-friendly destination in the country, the State Government seems to have adopted the mantra of – Revive the infrastructure, Invite the investments. Unless there's a robust infrastructure in place, the investments won't flow in. Therefore, the State Government is working with a mission to revive the state's economy by taking on infrastructure development.

The CM, Yogi Adityanath has managed to improve infrastructure in the state in terms of building roads, providing water supply and increasing irrigation capacity, along with year-round 24x7 power supply. Currently, the chief minister is actively engaged in facelifting the entire state to make it emerge as the hub of investments in near future.

Earlier this year in February, the Yogi Government presented a massive state budget for 2020-21 – a first of its kind in the history of the state. Estimated at Rs 5.12 lakh crore, the budget's key focus areas are infrastructure, youth education and employment, women empowerment and agriculture. This budget proposes the construction of 11



new airports at a cost of Rs 2,592.5 crore, including Noida International Greenfield Airport. To increase tourism footfalls, the second airport is planned at Ayodhya. Undoubtedly, once the airport is operational, Ayodhya is going to witness a huge surge in tourism on the lines of Varanasi. An increase in tourism will generate employment, especially in the hospitality sector, boost consumption and reduce out-migration of both skilled and unskilled workers from the region.

To boost industrialisation, the State Government has been organising investor summits. The first UP investors' summit was organized in February 2018 that fetched investment proposals worth Rs. 4.68 lakh crore. The government had also hold the DefExpo 2020 in Lucknow from 5th to 8th February. It was a grand success and the state received investment proposals to the tune of Rs 60,000 crore in defence industries to be set up in defence industrial corridor and parks. The government has also sanctioned 20 special economic zones (SEZs) focused on IT, ITes, electronic hardware and software, handicrafts and agri-based industries.

To further speed up the infrastructure growth in the state, some landmark projects such as UP Defence Corridor, Purvanchal Expressway, Bundelkhand Expressway and Ganga Expressway

are currently in various stages of development. Overall, the Yogi government is working in full swing to project Uttar Pradesh as a shining example of new-age development. All the government policies and initiatives are currently aimed at increasing the “ease-of-doing” business factor in the state, leading to an improved, business-friendly ecosystem for investors.

Government Efforts

When Yogi government assumed power in Uttar Pradesh in 2017, one of the biggest challenges for the newly formed Yogi Government was to revive the faith of people in the law and order situation of the state amidst the prevailing anarchy and “goonda raj”. To usher in a new era of industrial revolution, it was important for the State Government to put a curb on criminal activities that have hindered the state's growth for the past many decades. Therefore, the first step was to bring the law and order situation under control, tighten the noose around illegal mining, land mafia and shut down the unauthorised slaughterhouses polluting rivers in the state.

To spur industrialisation in the eastern part of the state, some 300 projects worth Rs 18,000 crore have been launched in Varanasi, including highways, hospitals and sewage plants etc. The government has also launched several initiatives to create investment

hubs in the state through various investment summits, including the UP Investors Summit in February 2018, which attracted about Rs 4.68 lakh crore of investment.

In 2020, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath launched widespread police reforms, introducing a Commissionerate system of policing for Gautam Buddha Nagar and Lucknow. The state had also been a major contributor to the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), urban and rural, with nearly 30 lakh homes built in the past 3.5 years. The State Government has built a record 1.3 million houses under the PMAY (Rural) in the year 2019-20. Also, 26.1 million toilets have been constructed under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin).

According to a survey, Central and State Government's schemes such as BPL ration card scheme (which ensures availability of foodgrains from Fair Price Shops at regulated prices), the PM Jan Dhan Yojana (for bank accounts) and the PM Ujjwala Yojana (having benefitted 1.47 crore women in UP) are well-known and spoken with approval across the state. However, the same survey also emphasizes that the government needs to continue publicizing these programmes and schemes, as many people are still unaware of such initiatives.

Currently, state government efforts are “required in infrastructure and skill

development, a digital based industrialisation strategy and planned urbanisation with the creation of smart cities in underdeveloped regions such as Purvanchal, Madhyanchal and Bundelkhand. This will require the creation of a good governance framework.”

Growing Prosperity

Being a major agricultural economy in the country, the UP government must ensure improving agricultural infrastructure and practices in rural areas, especially in the underdeveloped regions, to double agricultural growth rates in the state. This can be achieved by focussing on improving irrigation systems and agricultural markets, as well as strengthening the supply chain by developing warehouses and cold storage units. These measures will improve agricultural productivity and raise wage rates in this sector.

Being India's largest producer of milk, UP needs to ‘propel the dairy sector [forward] by raising milk processing levels from about 12 per cent now to at least 30 per cent over the next five years’, says an expert. Similarly, generating the second-highest output of sugarcane and sugar in the country, “UP needs to rationalise sugarcane pricing based on the 2012 Rangarajan Committee formula. The state must free up molasses from all reservations.” Encouraging innovative farming

practices, such as organic farming, and restoring and enhancing the poultry and meat production sectors, together with the development of fisheries, will also provide a stimulus in doubling agricultural growth rates in the state as well as help improve exports.

Agriculture will also benefit from infrastructural developments in rural areas such as building roads, providing power supply, improving irrigation, especially in drought-prone regions of the state, and having better disaster management systems, especially in Purvanchal region, to help boost agricultural growth and restore sustainable livelihoods. Such government interventions and structural changes are likely to bring fundamental difference in the state's economy, especially agricultural economy.

Monk with a Mission

In his tenure as the CM of UP, Yogi Adityanath has been uncompromising in dealing with criminals or criminal activities in the state. While maintaining law and order situation in the state is one of his important missions, boosting tourism is another. The State Government firmly believes that UP has a rich cultural heritage to showcase when it comes to tourism. The state also considers tourism as a major shot in the arm to make the state realise its dream of becoming a \$1 trillion economy by 2025. According to the UP Tourism department, in 2019, “the Prayagraj Kumbh Mela saw the highest footfall the mela has ever witnessed – a record 240 million people, including 1.1 million foreign tourists.” This was more than the annual tourist footfall in the state between 2014 and 2017.

The chief minister was widely appreciated for using this massive cultural event to supplement the state's coffers, whilst Prayagraj received a major infrastructural facelift with the funds generated. This development was central to providing a major fillip to Religious Tourism, which is a key aspect of the state's development blueprint.

The chief minister has also announced a number of social and income support schemes. An apprenticeship scheme offers educated, unemployed young people Rs 2,500 per month as training allowance. It may be recalled that the state had crossed the target of creating 261.4 million person-days (man days) of employment under MGNREGA in FY 2020-21 within first six month of year. The government has also taken steps to get additional increase in the person-days for the current year.

Uttar Pradesh emerges as an economic hub with Policies to attract investors



IN THE post-COVID-19 national economic scenario, Uttar Pradesh is most likely to emerge as a great economic hub as the Yogi Adityanath government has been working on attracting investments with more flexible and investor-friendly policies. Economic achievements during the COVID-hid period testify the assertion as the government allotted 420 acres of land to the industrial units coming with investments of approximately Rs. 6700 crore and employment potential for more than 1.35 lakh workers.

During Pandemic Investments of Rs. 45,000 crore attracted

As a result of pro-investor policies and

willingness to further tweak regulations to suit industries, the state could attract new investments worth Rs. 45,000 crore from companies from 10 countries, including Japan, the USA, the UK, Canada, Germany, South Korea. As much as 43% of these proposals, worth Rs. 14,900 crore, has so far been firmed up on ground.

German footwear major starts production in Agra

In the first week of November, famous German footwear major Von Wellx operationalized two shoe-making units in Agra. Von Wellx, earlier having operations in China, has shifted two of its shoe-making units to Agra. These units have been set up in partnership

with India's Latric Industries Group at the Export Promotion Industrial Park (EPIP) in Agra. A total of around 2,000 employment avenues have been created in these units. Von Wellx would invest around Rs 300 crore in phases in three projects in the state, generating around 10,000 jobs. Von Wellx had announced in May that it would be shifting its entire production of three million pairs of shoes from China to India.

Proposed investments

Investments that have already been firmed up include Rs 750 crore from the Hiranandani Group for a data centre in Noida. The foundation for the data centre was laid in the last week of November. Another investment of Rs

300 crore from Britannia Industries to set up an integrated food processing unit in Barabanki, Rs 750 crore from Associated British Food (AB Mauri) (UK) for a yeast manufacturing facility in Chitrakoot and Rs 200 crore from Dixon Technologies have also firmed up. Surya Global Flexi Films has given investment proposals for 953 crores, Acagrata Inc of Canada is to invest Rs. 746 crore, Edison Motors (S. Korea) will invest Rs. 750 crore in electric mobility in its first phase. In next phases its total investments could reach Rs. 3,500 to 5,000 crore while Yazaki (Japan) is to invest Rs 2000 crore.

Film City in Noida adjoining Yamuna Expressway

The government is also getting developed a film city in 1,000 acres near Noida. MSME Park, Electronics Park, Apparels Park, Handicrafts Park and Toy Park are also proposed in the same area. These projects are likely to attract investments to the tune of Rs. 40,000 crore with employment potential of 2.5 to 3 lakh workers.

Leather Parks

The UP government is promoting a Leather Park in Agra on the Agra-Jaipur Highway (NH-11) for finished Leather Goods or Footwear/ Shoe Industries. It is being developed with sectoral layout in an area of approx. 283 Acres at cost of USD 328 million. In the first phase, 71.07 Acre of land is being developed and various sizes of plots like 1000, 2100 and 4000 Sq. Mtr are available for industries. Technical assistance from Central Footwear Training Institute (CFTI) & Central Leather Research Institute (CLRI) is also available to the industrial units here.

Meanwhile, the government has announced another mega leather park in Ramaipur village of Kanpur with an investment of Rs 5,850 crore. The park, that is part of the mega leather cluster project, is likely to create 50,000 direct and 1.5 lakh indirect job opportunities. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is likely to lay the foundation stone of the

project soon. The mega leather cluster project is likely to attract an investment of about Rs 13,000 crores.

Samsung's largest mobile factory

It may be recalled that UP is the home to the world's largest mobile factory. It was set up by Samsung in Noida. The unit has a capacity of fabricating 120 million phones a year. It makes 10 million phones a month, 70 per cent of which are earmarked for domestic usage.

Fifth largest employment generator through MSME

During the Covid-19-hit period, the state emerged as the fifth largest employment generator through MSME units. The ranking was recently released by the Reserve Bank of India. The RBI ranked states on the basis of employment data in MSME units during the COVID-19-impacted period. Only Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh are ahead of UP in this regard. Government's flagship ODOP scheme has played a major role in this achievement. Even smaller districts have become employment-generating centres with the help of ODOP scheme.

Skill Mapping of Returnees

A big achievement of the state government has been the skill mapping of returnee workforce. More than 30 lakh skilled workers were mapped. Of these, more than 11 lakh have been linked with suitable economic sectors.

7,000 industrial licenses being issued every month

The kind of efficiency brought about in the regulatory systems may be seen in the fact that the UP Government is issuing more than 7000 licenses and NOCs every month for starting new industrial units and other business needs. All this has been done through the single-window portal “Nivesh Mitra” that currently offers 166 services related to 22 departments. Starting 58 new services on Nivesh Mitra by the end of November is also in the process.

Expressway projects running ahead of schedule

Bundelkhand Expressway is likely to be ready ahead of the schedule as more than 21% of civil work in the 296-km-long expressway has already been finished despite the coronavirus pandemic. According to UPEIDA CEO Awanish Awasthi, the draft proposal for seeking expression of interests for the PPP agreements for the proposed Ganga Expressway has been approved by the board and it would soon be forwarded to the state cabinet for approval. Also, the UPEIDA will open offices in Kanpur and Aligarh to facilitate investors in defence industrial corridor.

UPSIDA to monitor progress on 117 MoUs

The Infrastructure and Industrial Development Department (IIDD) of UP government has identified and mapped 117 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) to 13 nodal officers from UP State Industrial Development Authority (UPSIDA) for tracking progress and facilitating its implementation. The MoUs were signed between the investors and the state government during the Investors' Summit in February 2018. Meanwhile, with the continuous support and assistance from the nodal officers, projects with investments worth Rs 770 crore have successfully commenced commercial production.

Quick Investment Promotion Policy 2020

The Yogi Adityanath government has recently introduced new Quick Investment Promotion Policy 2020 for Backward Areas. Attractive incentives are being given under the policy for setting up industrial units in East UP, Central UP and Bundelkhand where a high number of skilled workers have returned from other states during the COVID-19-induced lockdown. Also, for faster processing of investment proposals, a help desk has been created under “Invest UP”, the new framework set up for promotion of investments.

New Delhi

Pune police deny permission for Elgaar Parishad-2, cite Covid, law & order situation

**CHANDAN HAYGUNDE &
SUSHANT KULKARNI**
PUNE, DECEMBER 23

PUNE CITY Police have denied permission for Elgaar Parishad, a conference planned on December 31 by a group of organisations under the banner of the 'Bhima Koregaon Shaurya Din Prerna Abhiyaan'.

Pune Police Commissioner Amitabh Gupta confirmed that permission has been denied for the conference. "They (organisers) had said that between 500 and 700 people were expected to attend it. Because of safety concerns due to the Covid situation, and also due to law and order reasons, permission has been denied," Gupta told *The Indian Express*.

On December 31, 2017, an Elgaar Parishad or evening conclave, organised by the Bhima Koregaon Shaurya Din Prerna Abhiyaan, had triggered controversy, with police alleging that “provocative speeches” at the event was one of the factors that led to violence in Koregaon Bhima area the next day.

While speaking to the media, as well as in the posts on his Facebook page, retired Bombay High Court judge B G Kolse Patil had called the programme, planned on December 31 this year, another 'Elgaar Parishad'. But in his letters to Ganesh Kala Krida Manch and Pune Police, he did not refer to the programme by that name.

Asked about the denial of permission by police, Justice (ret'd) Kolse Patil said, "We plan to move the Bombay High Court now. If the HC denies permission, we will go to the Supreme Court...if needed, we will change the date for the conference. But we will surely organise it."

Meanwhile, he also put up a post on Facebook, questioning the Uddhav Thackeray-led state government. He stated that the "so-called progressive Uddhav government has" done what the Devendra (Fadnavis) of RSS did not do".

Even in his earlier FB posts, Justice Kolse Patil had questioned the state government about “police keeping a watch” on their meeting, and claimed that he had played a role in the “defeat” of the BJP in Maharashtra. He had also warned of a ‘jail bharo’ protest in case of any hurdles in organising the Elgar Parishad.

KCR remembers P V Narasimha Rao on his death anniversary

New Delhi: Remembering Late Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao on his 16th death anniversary, Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao said on Wednesday that the former Prime Minister would remain in the country's history forever as a staunch reformer.

The CM said the country is enjoying the results of reforms that were ushered in by Rao in the field of education, economy, land, administration and other sectors. The CM said the firm attitude put forth by Rao in internal security, external affairs and diplomacy had strengthened the country's unity, integrity and sovereignty, according to a statement.

The CM further said that the state government was organising Rao's year-long birth centenary celebrations with a lot of responsibility and respect and as a befitting tribute to the polyglot, multi-faceted and great administrator.

Political leaders from the state along with the daughter of PV Narasimha Rao, Vani and son P V Prabhakar Rao paid tributes to the former PM at PV Ghat. **ENS**

**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE
ENGINEER, TRANSMISSION
LINE MAINTENANCE**
DIVISION-VIII, JKPTCL,
AMBEDKAR CHOWK,
RAILWAY ROAD, JAMMU
e-mail: xentlcd01@gmail.com
Tele/Fax: 0191-2451732
No: TLMD-VIII/J2971-73
Date: 18.12.2020

CORRIDGMENT

Reference to the e-NIT No TLMD-VIII/J24 of 2020-21 dated 12.12.2020, kindly read the Unit of Item Description at Serial no 1.7 as square meter instead of cubic meter.

Sd/-
**Executive Engineer,
TLMD-VIII, JKPTCL,
Jammu.**

DIP/J-3167

Two die, 16 fall sick after ammonia gas leak at IFFCO's Phulpur plant

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, DECEMBER 23

TWO SENIOR officials at IFFCO's Phulpur plant in Prayagraj died and 16 other employees fell ill after a major leakage of ammonia gas at the plant on Tuesday night. The Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative Limited (IFFCO) in a statement said the incident took place around 10.15 pm Tuesday when pipes carrying liquid ammonia ruptured, leading to the leakage.

The fertiliser plant is situated around 30 km from Prayagraj.

The deceased have been identified as Assistant Manager VP Singh and Deputy Manager Abhyanandan Kumar. Of the 16 people who fell sick and were hospitalised in the district, eight have been discharged, while one has been shifted to a Lucknow hospital. The condition of others are stable and out of danger, an IFFCO of-



An IFFCO employee under treatment at a hospital in Prayagraj on Wednesday. PTI

ficial said.

While IFFCO has set up a technical investigation committee to find out the cause of the gas leakage, the UP government has also ordered a probe into the incident.

Dr US Awasthi, Managing Director and CEO of the IFFCO, said prima facie "mechanical failure" appears to be the reason behind the cause of ammonia leakage. "Our emergency response

group, fire and safety team and plant operating staff bravely fought with the emergency situation and restricted the leakage to a small area within the plant and normalised it in a short time," the IFFCO said in its statement.

According to IFFCO officials at Phulpur plant, around 10.15 Tuesday night, staff members sensed ammonia gas leakage in plant number 2, causing chaos in the township.

“The incident took place around 10.15 pm when a cleanser detached from one of our ammonia pumps. It caused a leakage of ammonia which formed a cloud in a small area. In order to tackle the leakage, two of our officers died, and 16 others were affected. All those injured are stable,” Mohammad Masood Ahmad, head of the IFFCO’s Phulpur plant, said, adding they will do a detailed investigation to find out the exact reasons behind the incident.

The plant, where the leakage took place, has been closed and no one outside the complex has been affected, officials said.

Denying media reports that around 100 employees were present inside the plant when the gas leaked, IFFCO unit's spokesperson Vishwajeet said at any given time only 8 to 10 employees are stationed in the control room.

Meanwhile, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath expressed grief and ordered a probe into the matter. He also announced that a financial help of Rs 4 lakh each to the family of the deceased.

It has been confirmed that Tuesday's incident was not the first that took place at the Phulpur plant in past few years. At least two similar incidents, though of much lesser effect, were reported in 2018 and April last year. Sources said that four persons were affected in gas leakage in April last year, and nine in 2018 incident.



CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF PUNJAB

ONLINE INTERVIEW FOR MEDICAL OFFICER (MALE / FEMALE)

Applications are invited for Online Interview for engagement of a Medical Officer (Male/Female) on purely temporary/contractual basis on or before **04.01.2021** upto 5:00 p.m.

For date & time of interview, eligibility conditions, application form, terms & conditions and other details, please visit www.cup.edu.in

REGISTRAR

Main Campus, VPO Ghudsa, Distt. Bathinda-151401 Email: recruitment@cup.edu.in

Advt. No. CUP/HR/2020/1199


विज्ञान का हृदय विश्वविद्यालय की सेवाएं पर खसम है।

CUPB-1010

NOTICE FOR VENDOR REGISTRATION FOR SUPPLY OF MEDICAL STORES IN MILITARY HOSPITAL, AGRA FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2021-22

All vendors/stockists who are interested in supplying medicines & surgical items/consumables of Pathology/Dermatology/Ophthalmology / Ortho/ Gynae/ Radiology/ ENT / Hearing Aids / Med. eqpts / Medical gases are hereby informed that vendor registration application forms are available in 'Medical Stores, Military hospital Agra' during all working days from 08.30 AM to 02.00 PM. The completed forms along with all required documents/certificates are to be placed in a sealed envelope marked as 'VENDOR REGN. APPLICATION FOR THE FY 2021-22' and deposited in a sealed box in the main office of this hospital latest by 1200 hrs on 28 January, 2021.

sdf/
Brig. Sameer Kumar
Commandant, Military Hospital, Agra



बैंक ऑफ बड़ोदा
Bank of Baroda
ESTD 1962

www.bankofbaroda.in

NOTICE

Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) - Election of One Shareholder Director

List of Elected Candidate

Further to our EGM Notice dated 28th October 2020 for election of One Director from amongst the Shareholders of the Bank, other than the Central Government, EGM was held on 23rd December 2020 through Video Conferencing (VC) / Other Audio Visual Means (OAVM). Following One Director has been elected as Shareholder Director of our Bank in terms of Regulation 66 of the Bank of Baroda General (Shares & Meetings) Regulations, 1998 read with Section 9(3)(i) of the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1970.

Sl. No.	Name & Address	Age (Years)	Educational / Professional Qualifications
1.	Smt. Soundara Kumar B2/5, Gem Nirmalym, Kattabomman St, Ganapathy, Coimbatore – 641 006	66 years	B.Sc., CAIIB

The above Director will assume office w.e.f. 24th December 2020.

For Bank of Baroda

P. K. Agarwal

Company Secretary



राष्ट्रीय डिजाइन संस्थान
National Institute of Design
 रायचपुरा Acharya Pradeep


An autonomous institution under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Govt. of India,
 Acharpura, Elint Khedi, Post Arwalbiya, Bhopal MP 462038

E- TENDER NOTICE



Tender Title	Published on CPPP/Website	Pre-Bid Meeting date	Closing Date
Tender notice for Inviting Request for Proposal for Supply, Installation, Implementation and support of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution	18.12.2020	29.12.2020	11.01.2021

Detailed terms & conditions can be viewed on the institute website
www.ndimp.ac.in, and CPP Portal www.eprocure.gov.in

Registrar



भारत सरकार Government of India
परमाणु ऊर्जा विभाग Department of Atomic Energy
क्रय एवं भंडार निदेशावली Directorate of Purchase & Stores

Vikram Sarabhai Bhavan, 'O' Floor, Anushaktinagar, Mumbai,
Maharashtra - 400 084.

विज्ञापन संख्या 1/कमनि/2020 का परिशिष्ट /
Addendum of Advertisement No.: 1/DPS/2020

Consequent to the instructions issued on 13/11/2020 by the Department regarding procedure for Direct Recruitment to Group B (Non Gazetted) and Group C posts, the following addendum to the Advt. No.1/DPS/2020 published on 28/11/2020 in the Employment News for the various posts in the Directorate of Purchase & Stores is issued in the following senses:

A) 'Point 3 of Para III. Examination Pattern'

Level 2 - Written Examination (Descriptive Type) for Upper Division Clerk

Subjects	Max. Marks	Duration	Duration for persons with disability candidates
Descriptive written test inclusive of objective questions: Part A : English Language comprising of Comprehension, Précis and English Grammar	50	3 Hours	4 Hours
Descriptive test comprising of: Part B: Essay, Noting and Drafting	50		

Note: Part A of the Descriptive written test in Level 2 has to be written in English. Part B of the Descriptive written test in Level 2 has to be written purely either in English or in Hindi. If it is written in a combination of both English and Hindi, zero marks will be awarded.

B) 'Note mentioned under Para III. Examination Pattern'

- f) All candidates who have applied and fulfilled the eligibility criteria will be called for Level 1 written examination,
- g) For the post of UDC: In the event where large number of candidates obtain the minimum qualifying marks in the level 1 written examination, category wise short listing will be done as per the descending order of the merit score in the Level 1. Short listing will be done in the ratio of 1:20 for first 20 vacancies and in the ratio of 1:10 for the remaining vacancies.
- h) Resolution in case of tie in empanelment criteria:
 - i) Total of Level 1 and Level 2 marks in case of UDC and JPA/ JSK. Level 2 marks only in case of Stenographer Grade-II and Grade-III.
 - ii) Date of Birth (preference will be given to elder candidate).
 - iii) Alphabetical order of name (In the order of First Name, Middle Name and Surname)

All other sections of the advertisement remains unchanged.

Administrative Officer-III

IMPORTANT NOTICE									
This is notified for the information of rail passengers that the timings of the following Special Trains will be revised from the dates shown against each. To know more such as arrival/departure timing and stoppages enroute, the passengers are requested to contact Railway Enquiry No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in or may refer to NTES App please.									
Revised Timings of 02033/02034 Kanpur Central - New Delhi - Kanpur Central Superfast Shatabdi Special Train (Tri weekly)									
Train No.: 02033			↓	STATIONS		↑	Train No.: 02034		
ARR.	DEP.						ARR.	DEP.	
----	06:00	Kanpur Central					20:50	----	
11:20	----	New Delhi					15:50	----	
Revised Timings effective from : 02033/02034 from Kanpur Central/ New Delhi on every Monday, Wednesday & Friday from 01.01.2021 to 29.01.2021.									
Revised Timings of 04131/04132 Prayagraj - Udhampur - Prayagraj Superfast Special Train (Bi-weekly)									
Train No.: 04131			↓	STATIONS		↑	Train No.: 04132		
ARR.	DEP.						ARR.	DEP.	
-----	16:00	Prayagraj					13:00	----	
12:35	----	Udhampur					15:40	----	
Revised Timings effective from : 04131 from Prayagraj on every Tuesday & Saturday from 01.01.2021 to 30.01.2021 and 04132 from Udhampur on every Wednesday & Sunday from 02.01.2021 to 31.01.2021.									
Revised Timings of 04185/04186 Gwalior - Barauni Jn. - Gwalior Special Express (5 days in a week)									
Train No.: 04185			↓	STATIONS		↑	Train No.: 04186		
ARR.	DEP.						ARR.	DEP.	
-----	12:00	Gwalior					20:35	----	
12:50	----	Barauni					18:45	----	
Revised Timings effective from : 04185 from Gwalior Daily (except Monday & Thursday) from 01.01.2021 to 31.01.2021 and 04186 from Barauni Daily (except Tuesday & Friday) from 02.01.2021 to 01.02.2021.									
Revised Timings of 04113/04114 Prayagraj - Dehradun - Prayagraj Festival Special Train (Tri-weekly)									
Train No.: 04113			↓	STATIONS		↑	Train No.: 04114		
ARR.	DEP.						ARR.	DEP.	
----	21:00	Prayagraj					07:40	----	
13:10	----	Dehradun					14:30	----	
Revised Timings effective from : 04113 from Prayagraj on every Mon, Wed & Friday from 01.01.2021 to 29.01.2021 and 04114 from Dehradun on every Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday from 02.01.2021 to 30.01.2021.									
Revised Timings of 02683/02684 Yasvantpur Jn. - Lucknow - Yasvantpur Jn. Festival Express Special									
Train No.: 02683			↓	STATIONS		↑	Train No.: 02684		
ARR.	DEP.						ARR.	DEP.	
----	23:40	Yasvantpur Jn.					13:30	----	
18:40	----	Lucknow					18:30	----	
Revised Timings effective from : 02683 from Yasvantpur Jn. from 28.12.2020 and 02684 from Lucknow from 31.12.2020									
Revised Timings of 02414/02413 Hazrat Nizamuddin - Madgaon - Hazrat Nizamuddin Rajdhani Superfast Special (Bi Weekly)									
Train No.: 02414			↓	STATIONS		↑	Train No.: 02413		
ARR.	DEP.						ARR.	DEP.	
----	06:16	Hazrat Nizamuddin					12:25	----	
07:10	----								

JHARKHAND RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (JREDA)

3^d Floor, SLDC Building, Kusai, Doranda, Ranchi- 834002.
Ph.No: 2491161,Fax No: 0651-2491165, www.jreda.com, E-mail: info@jreda.com

**Very Short Notice Inviting e-quotation
Notice No.Energy/JREDA/Ranchi/17/20-21**

Government of Jharkhand through its Jharkhand Renewable Energy Development Agency (JREDA) is engaged in framing/revision of Schedule of Rates and as part of this endeavor, quotations through e-tender are invited for rate of items/materials annexed as Annexure-1 for Renewable Energy Projects from Manufacturer/ authorized dealers/ Suppliers and other stakeholders approved for respective items having valid GSTIN of materials. The rates conforming to specifications for inclusion in the Schedule of Rates for Government of Jharkhand to be used in different Renewable Energy Projects under JREDA shall be submitted online in the website [Http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in](http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in). Details of material and its Specifications are available on the above e-tender portal. The quotationer may download the documents from the website and quote their rate of materials online from 23.12.2020 at 10:30 hrs. to 29.12.2020 at 05:00 p.m. hrs. The quotation will be opened on 30.12.2020 at 01.00 p.m Hours. The quotation is invited to ascertain and assess the Rate of Materials at par with lowest market rate for framing of Schedule of Rate.

For any query or clarification you may Contact Electrical Executive Engineer

Shri Ravi Shankar +91-9570086777	Shri Mukesh Prasad +91-704806449
-------------------------------------	-------------------------------------

**Sd/-
Director,
JREDA, Ranchi**

PR 238084 (Energy)20-21#D

<p style="text-align: center;">झारखण्ड सरकार, ऊर्जा विभाग झारखण्ड रिन्यूएबल इनर्जी डेवलपमेंट एजेंसी (जेडा) तृतीय तल्ला, एसओएलडीसीओ भवन, कुसई कॉलोनी, डोरेडा, राँची-834002 फोन संख्या-0651-2491161, फैक्स संख्या-0651-2491165, email: info@jreda.com</p>					
<p style="text-align: center;">निविदा संख्या: 12/JREDA/GCRT/RC/19-20-ग्रिड कनेक्टेड सोलर पावर प्लांट के कार्य पूर्ण करने से संबंधित सूचना।</p>					
<p>एतद द्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि निविदा संख्या: 12/JREDA/GCRT/RC/19-20 के अन्तर्गत जेडा द्वारा विभिन्न संवेदकों को विभिन्न कार्यादेशों के माध्यम से ग्रिड कनेक्टेड रुफटॉप सोलर पावर प्लांट की आपूर्ति, अधिष्ठापन एवं ओ पब्स की याफिक रख-रखाव (सीओएमसीओ) हेतु कार्यादेश निर्गत किया गया है। उक्त निविदा के तहत निर्गत कार्यादेशों में से Non-performing संवेदकों को विवरणी निम्नवत है:-</p>					
Sl. No.	Name of agency	Issued Work Order No. & Date	Capacity (kWp)	Date of Agreement	
1	M/s Adarsh Solar Power Solution, Chennai	40/2019-20 Dt.05.03.2020	100	02.09.2020	
2	M/s BNK Energy Alternatives Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi	49/2019-20 Dt.05.03.2020	100	24.08.2020	
3	M/s Gayatri Engineering Construction and Consultancy Pvt. Ltd., Bhubaneswar.	62/2019-20 Dt.05.03.2020	100	30.07.2020	
4	M/s Kalinga Uttkal Bldyut Pvt.Ltd., Bhubaneswar	47/2019-20 Dt.05.03.2020	50	30.07.2020	
5	M/s Multi Services Inc., Jamshedpur	37/2019-20 Dt.05.03.2020	200	17.08.2020	
6	M/s Rajvansh Enterprises, Ranchi	72/2019-20 Dt.05.03.2020	30	30.07.2020	
7	M/s Samra Solar Energy Pvt. Ltd., Chatra	46/2019-20 Dt.05.03.2020	50	30.07.2020	
8	M/s Sashanka Agro Tech Pvt. Ltd., Ranchi	25/2019-20 Dt.05.03.2020	30	08.08.2020	
9	M/s Shivalik Engicon Pvt. Ltd., Ranchi	41/2019-20 Dt.05.03.2020	50	08.08.2020	
10	M/s Solex Energy Limited, Anand, Gujarat	53/2019-20 Dt.05.03.2020	30	08.08.2020	
11	M/s Universal HiTech, Jamshedpur	64/2019-20 Dt.05.03.2020	95	30.07.2020	
<p>उपरोक्त संवेदकों द्वारा एकरारनामा हस्ताक्षरित होने के उपरान्त एकरारनामा की कडिका-5.0 में निर्धारित Timelines के अनुसार अवतक कोई भी कार्यादेश नहीं किया गया है, जिससे उक्त योजना को समय पर पूर्ण किया जाना संभव प्रतीत नहीं हो रहा है।</p> <p>विधित हो कि संवेदकों को एकरारनामा की विधि से 03 (तीन) माह अथवा 90 दिनों के अन्दर आवर्तित क्षमता के ग्रिड कनेक्टेड रुफटॉप सोलर पावर प्लांट की आपूर्ति, अधिष्ठापन एवं कमिशनिंग कार्य पूर्ण किया जाना है। कार्यादेश की कडिका-17.0 (a) एवं कार्यादेश की कडिका- 16.0 (a) के अनुसार संवेदक विद्युत से आपूर्ति, अधिष्ठापन एवं कमिशनिंग कार्य के लिए दोषी पाये जाने पर संवेदक को निर्गत कार्यादेश को रद्द करने या संवेदक को काली सूची में डालने के लिए जेडा स्वतंत्र होगा।</p> <p>अतः संबंधित संवेदकों को निदेश दिया जाता है कि दिनांक 29.12.2020 तक एकरारनामा की कडिका-5.0 में निर्धारित Timelines के अनुसार अवतक की गई कृत कार्यादेशों के अनुसार ग्रिड कनेक्टेड में समाहित करना सुनिश्चित किया जाय अथवा निविदा, निर्गत कार्यादेश एवं एकरारनामा में निहित प्रावधानों के अनुसार सभी संवेदक के विरुद्ध जेडा प्रबंध समिति के अनुमोदनोपरांत नियमानुसार कोरमेशन कार्यादेश की जायगी तथा उपरोक्त सभी दोषी संवेदकों को झारखण्ड रिन्यूएबल इनर्जी डेवलपमेंट एजेंसी (जेडा) के निविदाओं में कार्य आवंटन एवं मणिक्य के सभी निविदाओं में भाग लेने से प्रतिबंधित करने हेतु कार्यादेश किया जाना तय किया गया है।</p>					
<p style="text-align: right;">80 / - निदेशक, जेडा, राँची</p>					

[illegible]

The Indian **EXPRESS**

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

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MESSAGE FROM J&K

Not exactly a spring but DDC election results mark a thaw in J&K's frozen politics, what next is the real test

THE PEOPLE OF Jammu and Kashmir have spoken unambiguously in favour of the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) in the District Development Council elections, the first democratic political exercise in the former state since the Centre stripped it of its special status and downgraded it into two union territories. Even though this was a local bodies election, both the BJP and the PAGD, whose constituents include the National Conference, the People's Democratic Party, the J&K People's Conference, plus the CPI(M), among others, turned it into a referendum on those decisions. When the BJP's apparent expectation of a boycott by the regional parties did not come true, and instead its prospects of winning diminished further with their decision to fight the elections together as the PAGD, none other than Union Home Minister Amit Shah lashed out at them as the "Gupkar Gang" who marched to a "foreign" tune, the allusion being to Pakistan. Naturally, the PAGD has projected its victory as a resounding rejection of all that the Centre has done in J&K over the last year-and-a-half, and as support for its own demand that special status and statehood be restored.

Seeking consolation in defeat, the BJP has been talking up its emergence as the single-largest party, and its win in three seats in the Valley. But what counts in these elections is winning the districts. The PAGD is set to control the councils of at least nine out of 10 districts in Kashmir and perhaps a few of the 10 in Jammu, Congress willing. The PAGD's victory is sweeter for all the obstacles that were thrown in its path, and the efforts made to discredit it in the eyes of the voters. The manner in which the administration waved names of senior PAGD leaders as Roshni Act beneficiaries ahead of the elections, the ED's actions against NC leader Farooq Abdullah, the arrest of PDP's star mobiliser Waheed Para, detaining candidates "for their own security" thus effectively ensuring they could not campaign, were all too apparent, orchestrated attempts by the Centre to control the election outcome. To their credit, the Gupkar alliance held firm against the strong-arm tactics.

The results should serve as a wake up call for the government. This is a new turning point in J&K, and calls for much political accommodation. As the party in office at the Centre, the BJP must take the lead. Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha should be praised for holding an election whose results are seen as a fair reflection of the popular will. Now, his real work begins. To ensure that the mandate is respected in letter and spirit. So the BJP should refrain from trying to engineer cross-overs in its favour, especially as it has loudly declared that "democracy is the real winner" of these elections. For its part, the PAGD should use this seat at the local high table to do justice to the aspirations of the people. Spring is still far away but there is a thaw in J&K's frozen politics, it needs a cautious welcome.

MESSAGE MUCH-NEEDED

PM's speech at AMU strikes many a welcome note. His followers must take heed

PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA Modi's speech at the centenary celebrations of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) was a welcome and emphatic reaffirmation of the first principles of Indian democracy — that all citizens are equal in the eyes of the state, no matter what their identity. It struck a note of inclusiveness and accommodation, at the end of a year that began with unprecedented nation-wide protests against a citizenship law that was widely seen as discriminating against the country's largest minority, and that has, most recently, seen a troubling criminalisation of inter-faith marriage in Uttar Pradesh. "The country is progressing on a path where no one can be left behind because of their religion," the PM said, addressing the students of one of India's oldest universities. He laid out a common ground of national aspirations — of self-reliance, development and women's empowerment — and played down the compulsions of ideological differences and narrow politics.

There was no better occasion than the centenary celebrations of AMU to remind the country of its heritage of diversity. The roots of the university lie in the vision of the nationalist reformer, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, who had set up the Mohammadan Anglo-Oriental College in the late 19th century with the aim of promoting a scientific temper and a modernist outlook in its students. Though set up as a minority institution, it opened its doors to students from across the Subcontinent without discriminating on the basis of faith, region or language. It remains true to that history. As the PM pointed out in his speech, it is a campus which accommodates both Urdu and Sanskrit, Quran and Ramayana. It is not only a "mini-India" but also a living example of the Ganga-Jamuni tehzeeb. True to its character of being an institution that encouraged scepticism of received wisdom and freedom of thought, AMU became home to an anti-colonial spirit rooted in a sense of Hindu-Muslim brotherhood. The PM invoked that history while urging AMU students to work towards the goal of a stronger India. This nationalism is a strength that matters more than ever at a time of increased social and political polarisation, because it seeks to inspire citizens without speaking a language of divisiveness. The legions of PM Modi's followers in his party and outside, and especially in Uttar Pradesh, where minorities increasingly feel the heavy hand of a partisan state, will, hopefully, also take note.

TRUTH OF THE WORD

Sugathakumari, extraordinary poet, was a moral presence that transcended Kerala's political divides

UNSURE OF THEIR merit, she published her earliest poems under a male name. However, a handful of poems were enough for the world to recognise that they were reading a prodigy. By the time of her death on Wednesday, Sugathakumari, 86, had been recognised as one of the greatest poets in Malayalam language. She had turned into an iconic public figure, a moral presence in Kerala's public sphere, who always, fearlessly and selflessly, spoke the truth to the powerful. Politicians, in and out of office and across ideologies, did not always follow her advice, but very few ever dared to openly question or challenge her. She had become a mother figure, asserting her feminine self, and forcing Kerala to confront the ugliness of destructive masculinity.

The Silent Valley movement in the late 1970s turned her into an environmental activist. News reports about the appalling state of the mental hospital in Thiruvananthapuram and violence against women strengthened her resolve to champion public causes in the later years. Her social vision mirrored the Gandhian resolve of her father; poet and freedom fighter Bodheswaran, and mother, Sanskrit scholar V K Karthiayayani Amma — she has a short poem in which she calls Gandhi and Swami Vivekananda her guiding lights. Her campaigns attracted attention to the problems of people with mental illness and destitute women. She lobbied with state agencies to reform policies and attitudes. Later, she took it on herself to set up institutions that provided care and shelter to victims of domestic violence and trafficking.

Sugathakumari once wrote — "I write for you, my soul-mate". Thousands found solace in her writings. Poems like *Pavam Manava Hridayam* (Poor human heart), *Krishna Nee Enne Ariyilla* (Krishna, You Don't Know Me), *Ambalamani* (Temple Bell), *Ratri Mazha* (Night Rain) are peaks in Malayalam poetry. They will be read as long as the language lives. However, her work as an activist is no less significant. In public life and poetry, she spoke with *karuna* not only about fellow humans, but also trees, rivers, birds and beasts. And she lived her words, a rare state of *advaita* few public figures of our times have managed.

Junior MLA, senior Panch

Both BJP and Gupkar Alliance make their point in DDC elections. What's lost is a framework of disempowerment



HASEEB A DRABU

WITH THE SUCCESSFUL conduct of elections to the District Development Councils (DDC) in Jammu and Kashmir, the BJP has made its point. Within a year of stripping the state of its special status, it is back to electoral politics as usual. Not only did all the regional mainstream parties participate after threatening not to, voter participation was not too bad either — the Valley has seen much worse. So too the incidence of violence. In popular perception, the BJP has managed the expected aftermath of abrogation well and of course, leveraged it very well, domestically.

In the results of the election, the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) has also made its point — loud and clear. Notwithstanding it being an amalgam of adversaries, PAGD has done very well. More importantly, not just in the Valley but also in parts of the Jammu province — the Pir Panjal region and the Chenab valley. As such, both sides have reason to feel vindicated.

For the moment, the Valley-centric mainstream political parties have at least redeemed themselves in their own eyes; redemption in the eyes of the people is still some distance away. In the Valley, more than a vote for PAGD, it is a vote against the BJP. As such, it may be too early for the PAGD to celebrate its victory, though the National Conference has more reason to smile than its old adversary and new associate, the Peoples' Democratic Party. The high percentage of independents winning, even if many of these are mainstream party proxies, has kept the end-game open. Overall, the results reflect extreme polarisation along regional and religious lines.

The real issue being subsumed in the electoral politics is the creation of a new and unique layer of elected representatives — a junior MLA or a senior Panch, depending on how one looks at it. What does this mean not only for the politics of Kashmir, but also for the institutional structure of Indian parliamentary democracy wherein citizens directly elect representatives to only three tiers of governance provided for in the Constitution — Parliament, legislative assemblies and the panchayats/ULBs? Unlike anywhere else in the country, another governance layer — the DDC — is being directly

Also, there is an obvious realpolitik purpose which the formation of directly elected DDCs will serve. This new system, given its positioning and powers, will over time change the political discourse; from autonomy, shared sovereignty and identity issues towards local developmental and quotidian issues. As such, politics will not be driven by Kashmir versus Delhi fighting for political power. Instead, it will be Jammu versus Kashmir for primacy in decision making or Poonch versus Pulwama for allocations; in other words, manageable demands.



G S BAJPAI

IN A landmark verdict in *Karan v. State N.C.T. of Delhi*, the Delhi High Court has secured the right to restitution for victims of crime. The progressive impact of the judgment on victim jurisprudence will certainly be unparalleled.

Even though Section 357 of the CrPC empowered courts to order the accused to pay "compensation" to the victim, this was rarely followed. This led the apex court to observe on multiple occasions that Section 357 must be used liberally. Ultimately, in *Ankush Shivaji Gaikwad v. State of Maharashtra* (2013), the SC held that lower courts must apply judicial mind and record reasons for passing, or not passing, orders pertaining to the use of Section 357 — effectively making its application mandatory.

However, the lower courts found practical constraints while applying Section 357. First, these courts were limited by the language of Section 357, which allowed them to issue orders for only such compensation as may otherwise be recoverable in a civil court. Second, the courts were restricted by the absence of a uniform head under which compensation could be granted. Third, the absence of a uniform mechanism to calculate the paying capacity of the accused as well as ascertaining the impact of the crime on the victim prevented courts from granting compensation under the section without risking arbitrariness. Fourth, the absence of sentencing guidelines impeded the application of the section. Neither Section 357

JUSTICE AS RELIEF

Delhi HC's judgment on victims' right to restitution is a landmark in jurisprudence

The significance of the 'Karan' verdict lies in the Delhi High Court's use of the Victim Impact Report (VIR) to determine the quantum of compensation. The Court's version of VIR is loosely based on the concept of Victim Impact Statements (VIS), but with some significant differences. VIS is an instrument of victim participation which effectively allows victims to inform the court in their own words as to how exactly the crime impacted them.

elected in J&K. These are not even statutory bodies, having been created by amending the J&K Panchayati Raj Act, 1989 through executive fiat. By electing 14 members each to 20 DDCs, the existing architecture of legislative democracy in J&K has been redesigned.

In fact, the DDCs are virtual "district assemblies", which are neither provided for in the Constitution of India nor is the direct mode of election stipulated. Yet the DDCs have been put atop the third tier of governance. No wonder, then, that this kind of model doesn't exist anywhere else in the country. Were it to be replicated all over the country, there will be 718 district assemblies in addition to 30 state/UT assemblies! A new federal system.

In all other states, members to district boards are elected by a council of sarpanches representing the panchayats. This indirect election of district board members by the sarpanches provides the only institutionalised link and authority between democratic decentralisation and the developmental administration. This critical link has now been snapped in the new framework of governance in J&K.

The direct election to the DDCs is problematic for a variety of reasons. First, it violates a basic tenet of democracy, that of, "one person one vote". The cardinal principle of delimiting the parliamentary or legislative constituencies is that anyone living in any part of the country will have the same weightage in electing representatives. Even in the case of panchayats, the area is divided in such manner that the ratio between the population of each panchayat constituency and the number of seats allotted to it is the same to the extent practicable.

On the contrary, no matter how large or small a district is in terms of its geography or demography, it has the same number of elected representatives in the DDC. So, for instance, with a population over 12 lakh, the Srinagar district has 14 representatives, so does Kishtwar with a population of less than 2.5 lakh. In terms of area, nearly 9,000 sq km of Doda and barely 250 sq km of Ganderbal are at par. Nowhere in the country is there such a wide variation in the per capita representative power.

nor the SC judgment in *Ankush Shivaji Gaikwad* came to the aid of the courts with respect to these limitations.

The significance of the *Karan* verdict lies in the Delhi High Court's use of the Victim Impact Report (VIR) to determine the quantum of compensation. The Court's version of VIR is loosely based on the concept of Victim Impact Statements (VIS), but with some significant differences. VIS is an instrument of victim participation, which effectively allows victims to inform the court in their own words as to how the crime impacted them. Barring minor variations, the VIS's format comprises the description of physical injury, emotional harm, or the damage or loss to property as a result of the offence.

VIS provides victims with the opportunity to directly address the court and, therefore, works towards providing them assurance about their concerns being heard and addressed by the court. It allows the victim to come to terms with the offence and makes the offender perceive and realise the impact of the crime on the victim. It also works to aid the court in determining the quantum of the sentence and fine.

It is in this sense that the Delhi HCs conception of VIR differs from a traditional VIS. The primary purpose of the VIR in the Court's conception is to act as an aid to determine the quantum of compensation to the victim in conjunction with the paying capacity of the accused. The VIR will not be directly made by the victim before the court but will

Second, direct elections to the DDC will undermine the primacy of the sub-national legislative assembly (UT at present or state in the future) as the representative of the people. To the extent that it does so, these elected DDCs will disempower the core of the second tier of the federal system. Every state in India, and indeed every subnational government in the world, has a constitutional position, a legislative competence, a developmental role and an administrative authority. In Kashmir, the distinctions are fast losing their meaning.

Backed by the democratic authority of having been elected directly by the people, the DDCs, individually and collectively, have the potential to become an institution parallel to the state assembly. It should not be difficult to see how these 20 "district assemblies" with 280 bush-league MLAs will provide the institutional structure to nullify or negate the state assembly on key political issues, as also the development strategy. It is a system that has been designed to undermine the legislative assembly of the state, as and when it is resuscitated to life.

Also, there is an obvious realpolitik purpose which the formation of directly elected DDCs will serve. This new system, given its positioning and powers, will over time change the political discourse; from autonomy, shared sovereignty and identity issues towards local developmental and quotidian issues. As such, politics will not be driven by Kashmir versus Delhi fighting for political power. Instead, it will be Jammu versus Kashmir for primacy in decision making or Poonch versus Pulwama for allocations; in other words, manageable demands.

From a federal perspective, a framework of disempowerment is being created in the garb of decentralisation. Far from being proto-democratic bodies strengthening grassroots democracy, it is the atomisation of electoral-representative democracy. This new system cuts into development and its delivery by the local self-government whose remit and mandate has been compromised. This takes the issue beyond the boundaries of Kashmir.

The writer is the former finance minister of J&K

DECEMBER 24, 1980, FORTY YEARS AGO

ASSAM BANDH

THE ASSAM GOVERNMENT has assumed special powers to combat publication of inflammable materials as normal life in Gauhati and several other towns was paralysed due to a 10-hour bandh against alleged police atrocities on satyagrahis demanding the deportation of "foreign nationals". The bandh called by AASU and AAGSP was officially described as peaceful except at Raha and Dhing, in Nowgong district, where police had to use teargas shells and lathicharge the satyagrahis. In assuming special powers under the Assam Special Powers (Press Act), 1960, an official notification said that the government was satisfied that a situation ex-

isted where communal harmony was threatened by the publication of certain matters.

SUPPORT FOR FARMERS

LEADERS OF THE Central Kisan Coordination Committee, which has been renamed "Kisan Sangam" will participate in the last leg of the long march of Maharashtra farmers. Devi Lal, convener of the Sangam, said that the protestors would leave for Nagpur on December 25. Chandrajit Yadav and Prakash Singh, two other leaders of the Sangam, also present at Devi Lal's press conference, said the committee comprised representatives of all political parties.

AND, IN TAMIL NADU

THE TAMIL NADU government invoked the provisions of the National Security Ordinance to arrest I Narayanswami Naidu, the president of the Tamil Nadu agriculturists association as the outfit began its agitation to block the supply of farm produce to urban areas.

UN PREMISES ATTACKED

The UN building in Beirut was attacked and set on fire by thousands of Lebanese protestors agitating against the failure of the UN peace-keeping force to protect them from Israeli attacks. They alleged that the UN was force in collusion with the Israeli government.

13 THE IDEAS PAGE

How to unscramble farm mess

Key lesson from the standoff is that steamrolling Parliament backfires. The new laws are desirable so why not notify them in select districts to demonstrate their beneficial effects?



ARVIND P DATAR

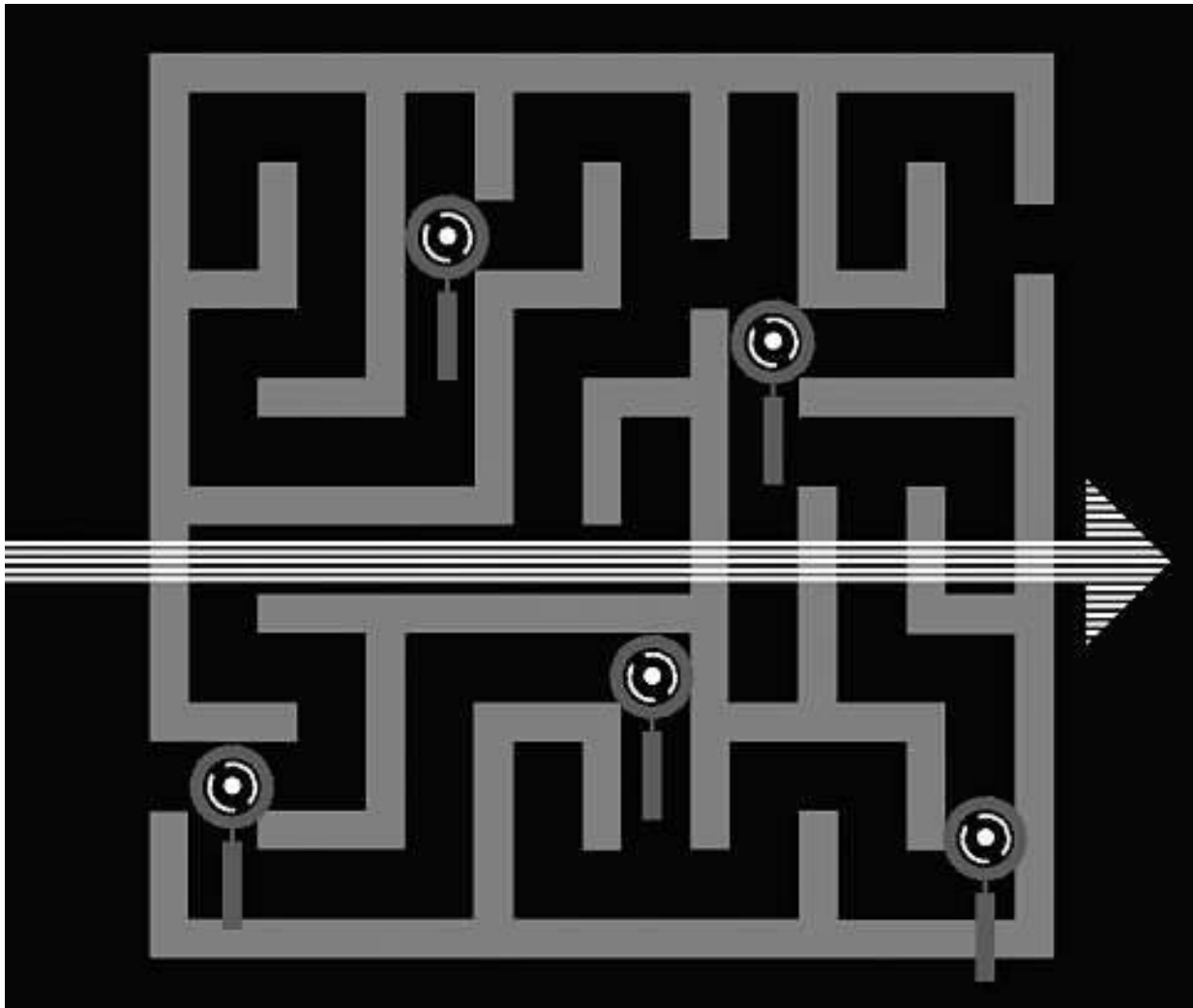
THE AGITATION OF farmers over the recent farm laws has continued for over three weeks and there is no end in sight. The enormous economic loss and the dislocation of normal life around Delhi could have been wholly avoided if the Bills had not been bulldozed through Parliament. The agitation teaches us the importance of following parliamentary procedure not just in letter but in spirit as well.

There are strong indications that the new legislation is desirable and will bring in much-needed market reforms in the over-regulated farm sector. As on date, there is no contrary evidence that the new proposals will adversely affect farmers in the long run. There is no justification for a minimum support price regardless of demand and supply. No one would think of assuring a pharmaceutical company a minimum price for essential medicines that it produces, irrespective of whether the quantity produced far exceeds the demand. The benefits of liberalising the non-agricultural sector of the economy in 1991 established that, in the end, market forces cannot be ignored. For the first 30 years, under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, several control orders were passed on products such as cement and steel, and these were intended to ensure their availability at fair prices. The result was just the opposite: Severe shortages, a huge black market and massive corruption. Equally disastrous were laws relating to monopolies and industrial development that left India a stunted nation with dwarf corporations.

Legislation that benefits the nation but hurts vested interests will always meet with vehement opposition. It is, therefore, necessary that the benefits of a new law are demonstrated through debate and discussion. There must be empirical or other evidence that shows the deleterious economic consequences of continuing with the status quo. As the farm bills marked a radical departure from the existing system of selling agricultural produce, the least that could have been done was to refer them to a Select Committee.

Regrettably, the three Bills were passed on a Sunday (September 20) by a voice vote despite a request for an actual vote. The demand by the Opposition for discussion was also turned down.

At the heart of a constitutional democracy based on the Westminster model is the importance of Parliament, which is the fountainhead of all laws. The ruling party undoubtedly commands a majority and has the right to implement the promises it has made in its manifesto. But, "Parliament" includes the Opposition as well and even though a bill may be certain to become the law, it is necessary that the established procedure is followed. Thus, if a proposed legislation has far-reaching consequences, it is best to refer it to a Select Committee for consideration. The Committee then gets to deliberate the Bill, clause by clause, and away from the sometimes surcharged atmosphere prevailing in



CR Sasikumar

both Houses of Parliament. And even more important, the Select Committee can, and often does, get the views of experts on the impact, particularly economic, of a proposed law. In the end, it is always open to Parliament to accept or reject the recommendations of the Select Committee, but every citizen has the satisfaction that a new, important legislation has come into force after careful scrutiny.

Courts in all functioning democracies pay great deference to laws passed by Parliament, which are presumed to be constitutional and are seldom struck down. These laws are supposed to represent the "wisdom of the legislature" because they are enacted, according to convention, after a careful examination of their provisions. And the essence of constitutional morality, according to B R Ambedkar, is respect and adherence to constitutional conventions. It is a matter of concern that fewer and fewer bills are being referred to Select Committees or even deliberated upon. Recently Chakshu Roy wrote that while 71 per cent of the bills were referred to a Select Committee in the 15th Lok Sabha (2009-14), only 25 per cent were so referred in the 16th Lok Sabha (2014-19). In 2019, 17 bills were referred and none in 2020. Lord Acton rightly warned: "The moment a ruler or state tries to achieve perfection, or 'one view' of how things should be, is when things start to go bad."

A new law can always come into force at a later date and can even be made applicable piecemeal. It is also possible to notify it to apply to select states or districts. If laws like the farm legislation are likely to meet with opposition by vested interests, the best way to demonstrate their beneficial effects

The biggest lesson for all ruling parties is that following constitutional conventions always pays a dividend — it benefits the nation and preserves the dignity of Parliament. The delay that arises by following parliamentary procedures and constitutional conventions can actually provide the proof that the new law is really the right choice and those opposing it have placed their short-term vested interests ahead of the national interest. Indeed, every ruling party must have the humility to accept that there could be an opposing viewpoint, which needs to be listened to and examined.

is to implement the laws in select states or districts for a year. Just as no company will launch a brand new, game-changing product without market testing or start a new manufacturing method without a pilot project, it is worthwhile considering the implementation of a controversial law on a trial basis. The feedback can decisively demonstrate whether the new law can achieve its objects and prove beneficial to the nation. It can also reveal flaws in the new law. Indeed, if GST had been implemented on a trial basis for select products, it would have revealed the serious technological deficiencies and the nation would have benefitted by delaying its implementation. It is still not too late to implement the new farm laws in select states and demonstrate their salutary effect.

The biggest lesson for all ruling parties is that following constitutional conventions always pays dividends — it benefits the nation and preserves the dignity of Parliament. The delay that arises by following parliamentary procedures and constitutional conventions can actually provide the proof that the new law is really the right choice and those opposing it have placed their short-term vested interests ahead of the national interest.

Indeed, every ruling party must have the humility to accept that there could be an opposing viewpoint, which needs to be heard and examined. The extraordinary haste with which the farm bills were pushed through both the Houses has created the present crisis, which can only exacerbate the economic woes caused by the pandemic. As philosopher Karl Popper put it: "Our greatest troubles come from our impatience to better the lot of our fellows."

The writer is a senior advocate

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"The Saudis are wary of seeing the formation of a bloc including Pakistan, Malaysia, Iran and Turkey lest it challenge Arab 'leadership' of the Muslim world" — DAWN

Year of American reckoning

Despite Trump's exit, the belief in a benevolent US as the leader of the 'free world' lies in tatters



VINAY LAL

IT SCARCELY seems possible that it was a mere 30 years ago, as the Berlin Wall came crashing down, the Soviet Union crumbled, and the "Iron Curtain" was lifted from eastern Europe, that commentators in the West were jubilantly pronouncing (to use Francis Fukuyama's phrase) "the end of history". The supposition was that the entire world was on course to accept the idea that the liberal democracies of the West and, more particularly, the United States, represented the pinnacle of human achievement and that the aspirations of people everywhere could only be met through the free market. It mattered not a jot that, precisely at this time, the US was cajoling nations into joining an international coalition designed to bring Saddam Hussein to heel and bomb Iraq "back into the stone age". Those who saw ominous signs of what unchecked American power might mean worldwide for democracy and social justice were dismissed as pathetic remnants of a warped communist vision that could not recognise the dawn of a new age of freedom.

The First Gulf War was followed by another a decade later, and still a decade later, the Arab Spring came and went. The promise of revolution was everywhere but it was thwarted by dictators, warlords and religious fanatics. But it was not only the Middle East that was imploding, aided by inept American foreign policy. The last decade has seen a large number of countries — Hungary, Poland, Turkey, Brazil, India, the US, among others — take the turn towards authoritarianism. Russia has been inventive in transforming Stalinism into oligarchic despotism and China seems determined to let its heavy hand fall where it will. At no other time since the end of World War II has so much of the world seemed so susceptible to political authoritarianism. That may be one reason why many are rejoicing that the US seems set after Joe Biden's triumph to rejoin "the international community" and assume leadership of the "free world".

However, what the US has indubitably established is that the US is altered forever and cannot simply pick up from where, as decent people fondly imagine, it veered off, forgetful of its supposed mission to serve as a beacon of light to the world. The dominant narrative that the US has been successful in circulating has American democracy being carved out of the enlightened thinking of "the founding fathers", but the genocidal impulse is just as inextricably built into its history.

The origins of the United States lie in the demographic holocaust perpetrated by the white man against Native Americans, whose annihilation was as much willed as it was pre-

cipitated by "Old World" diseases from which the indigenous people had no immunity.

It is epidemic disease which, ironically, is leading to the unravelling of the US. Most of the world is reeling from the coronavirus pandemic but the US is hurtling into the abyss. On one single day, December 16, over 3,600 Americans died; 175 million Americans have already been identified as COVID positive. It is baffling that the world's richest and most powerful country accounts for almost a fifth of the global mortality of 1.675 million.

Healthcare expenditures per capita are significantly higher in the US than any other country, and it boasts of the most advanced laboratories for medical research. And, yet, for nearly 10 months, barring a short respite over the summer months, the country has been awash with news of shortages of essential medical supplies, personal protective equipment, ventilators and ICU beds. The dead have overwhelmingly come from the ranks of the very old, ethnic minorities and prisoners. These are people who, as has happened so often in the American past, have been envisioned as disposable. Is it too much of a stretch to think that what is on witness in the US today is a permissive genocide?

Many people around the world would like to put its misfortunes down to the ineptness, even callousness, of Trump; among the more informed, there is also a greater awareness of how the federal structure of American governance, the strong traditions of states' rights, and the deep suspicion with which

many Americans view the state have contributed to the chaotic American response to the pandemic. But the problems run much deeper. The more sensitive Americans are agast at how dysfunctional the political system has become and the deep divisions that characterise the political landscape.

In truth, however much some would like to pin it all on Trump, the social and political ills that were always lurking in the shadows have become more visible and pronounced. It is no longer possible to speak of the Republican party as a legitimate political party. Its leaders are little better than hoodlums and mafia dons; they emit a stench not only of white supremacy but of self-aggrandisement, unchecked greed, and most disturbingly, a total disregard for truth and utter lack of compassion for the poor, the weak, and the marginalised. Similarly, the "divide" between "red" and "blue" states, liberals and conservatives, and the hinterland and the coasts considerably understates the extent to which the US is unravelling.

To be sure, the US will not crumble like a cookie: Empires do not die overnight, and there is much resilience and goodness in the American character. Nevertheless, those who live and flourish by brutalising others are themselves brutalised. There can be little doubt that, to use the historians' phrase, 2020 will be a "turning point" in American and thus global history.

Lal is the author of The Fury of COVID-19: The Politics, Histories, and Unrequited Love of the Coronavirus

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2021

COVID SHADOW, NEW YEAR LIGHT



RADHICKA KAPOOR

The insecure worker

Preference for fixed-term employees can improve industry relations

AS THE government attempts to woo investors in the electronics manufacturing sector, the violence at Wistron's iPhone manufacturing factory could not have been more ill-timed. The iPhone manufacturing plant came under attack from thousands of contract workers over alleged non-payment of wages. Wistron asserts it had deposited the money in the account of the contractor (staffing firms). Reports suggest that the staffing firms who supplied the labour may be fined or even blacklisted. This incident is just the tip of the iceberg.

Contract workers, who are hired via an intermediary (contractor) and are not on the payrolls of the company on whose shop floors they work, have been at the centre of much dispute over the last decade. Such third-party contracts which entail a division of responsibilities wherein the contractor is responsible for the payment of wages and the principal employer is responsible for welfare facilities deserve scrutiny.

The increasing reliance of industry on contract workers is well-established. According to the Annual Survey of Industries (2017-18), contract workers accounted for 36.4 per cent of total production workers in the registered factory sector. Contract workers often find themselves doing the same tasks as regular employed workers but receive lower wages, have limited social security benefits and operate under poor working conditions. In a bid to discourage the use of contract workers, given the discrimination

against them in comparison to regular employees, the government introduced the option of fixed-term employment in the Code on Industrial Relations (2020).

Fixed-term employees can be directly hired by employers without mediation by a middleman. They are ensured of the same work hours, wages, allowances and statutory benefits that permanent workers in the establishment are entitled to. However, fixed-term employees are not entitled to any termination notice or payment in lieu of services terminated as a result of non-renewal of the contract of employment. Employers are not required to provide retrenchment benefits. This imparts flexibility to the enterprises to adjust their workforce as per their requirements and at the same time, offers workers some amount of job security.

Despite the introduction of fixed-term employment, firms continue to rely on contract workers. The question that then arises is: Why do firms continue to do so when they have alternative options? It is worth noting that fixed-term employment in India is indeed quite open-ended. The Code does not specify a minimum or maximum tenure for hiring fixed-term employees. Nor does it specify the number of times the contract can be renewed. The absence of such safeguards can, in fact, lead to an erosion of permanent jobs. Workers may find themselves moving from one fixed-term contract to another, without any assurance of being absorbed as permanent workers by their employer. While this does not bode well for

labour market security, it is clearly a very flexible arrangement for firms.

It is indeed odd that despite such a liberal fixed-term employment regime, firms continue to hire contract workers. One possible explanation is that the cost of hiring contract workers continues to remain lower than the cost of hiring fixed-term employees, who are required to be paid pro-rata wages and social security including gratuity. In addition to the fact that hiring contract workers is cheaper than fixed-term workers, in the case of the former, the monitoring, legal compliance and litigation costs are shifted onto the contractor, thereby reducing the transaction costs of recruitment to firms. The rapid growth of staffing companies which supply contract labour is perhaps unsurprising in this context.

Ideally, to encourage a shift away from contract workers to fixed-term employees, the government should have completely prohibited the use of contract labour in core activities, that is, those activities for which the establishment is set up and includes any activity which is essential or necessary to the core activity, but does not include services such as security, catering and sanitation. Ironically, it has done the opposite. The Labour Code on Occupational Safety and Health has allowed for use of contract workers in core activities under certain conditions such as a sudden increase of volume of work in the core activity which needs to be accomplished in a specified time. Such a provision

encourages the use of contract workers, undermining the initiative of introducing fixed-term employment. Resolving the underlying conflicts in the labour codes pertaining to these two categories of workers is critical if they are to be effective in arresting the increasing trend of contractualisation.

Finally, it is worth drawing attention to the fact that Wistron hired a large number of contract workers this summer after the government notified the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for the mobile manufacturing sector. The scheme offers government subsidies for a limited period (five years for mobile handsets) at rates starting from 6 per cent and declining to 4 per cent on incremental sales over a specified base year level. While there has been much debate around PLIs, it is relevant to note that given the objective of the scheme is to create "good jobs", it may have been more useful to link these incentives (for which a financial outlay of Rs 1.45 lakh crore has been approved over five years for 10 sectors) explicitly to job creation, in particular, those jobs that are directly on the firms' payroll and not the contractors'. Significantly, under the Atmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana, the government is offering provident fund subsidies to employers for hiring new formal workers. Both these programmes could jointly be leveraged to give a big boost to formal job creation in the manufacturing sector.

The writer is senior fellow at ICRIER

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

FEARLESS PEASANT

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'Chorus on ground: Dhakka from Delhi won't work, protest now has life of its own' (IE, December 23). The Narendra Modi government has all along lambasted the protests as nothing but the oppositions' charade misleading the farmers. But many BJP leaders and ministers vilified the protest as being the handiwork of anti-national forces. The ground report reveals the character to be reminiscent of what Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel had to say about farmers while leading Bardoli Satyagraha of 1928. He said, "A peasant has no need to be afraid of anything because he is a son of the soil who has worked with hard rocks, wild animals, heavy rain, biting cold, scorching heat and against so many odds".

LR Murmu, Delhi

CBI PROBE

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'In the dock' (IE, December 22). The fact is that the Yogi Adityanath-led UP government was caught dragging its feet in the wake of the Hathras gang-rape. To make matters worse, the powers-that-be tried to sweep the ghastly incident under the carpet. The CBI probe shows some promise.

Varun Das, Zirakpur

IDEAS ONLINE

ONLY IN THE EXPRESS

● FOR PEOPLE-CENTRIC CROSS BORDER TRANSACTIONS: SANJAY KATHURIA

● THE POET, AMU AND BHU: SUBRATA MUKHERJEE

www.indianexpress.com

PERSONAL POLITICS

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Not just a job' (IE, December 23). As the Bengal election draws closer, there is a more frequent shifting of netas from one party to another. Not only has BJP MP Saumitra Khan's wife Sujata Mondal Khan joining TMC hurt their relationship, watching both of them cry their case on a split TV screen has taken audiences deep into their emotions. They used to say politics is the art of the possible. But in the age of social media, compromise is impossible.

Sanjay Chopra, Mohali



@ieExplained
#ExpressExplained

If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to explained@indianexpress.com

Why virus in Antarctica isn't an Indian worry yet

AMITABH SINHA & ABHISHEK DE
PUNE, NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

AT LEAST 36 people at a Chilean research station in Antarctica have been found infected with the novel coronavirus. This is the first instance of the virus on the icy, southernmost continent. Chile's armed forces revealed the cases on Monday, but some of them could have been infected earlier.

Antarctica is uninhabited except for those manning the nearly 60 permanent stations established by several countries, including India, for carrying out scientific research.

Where has the outbreak happened?

The infected people were stationed at the General Bernardo O'Higgins Riquelme, located on the northernmost tip of Antarctica, facing the southern Chilean coast. All have been evacuated, and put in isolation in Chile.

The infections were possibly passed on by people on board a ship that recently delivered supplies to the research station. Three people were found infected on the ship after

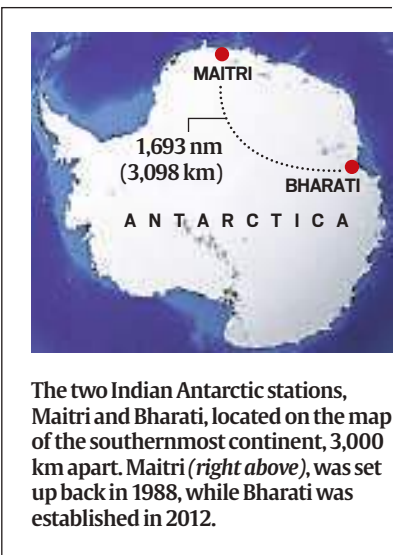
it returned to Chile earlier this month; on Tuesday, however, it was revealed there were 21 cases on board.

How far are the Indian stations?

As of now, the Indian contingent in Antarctica is not worried about the virus spreading. The two Indian permanent stations, Maitri and Bharati, are at least 5,000 km away from the Chilean base, according to M Ravichandran, director of the Goa-based National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR) which is the nodal agency for India's scientific expeditions in Antarctica and the Arctic.

The two Indian stations are themselves separated by almost 3,000 km, Ravichandran said.

"Following the Covid epidemic, an international protocol for working in the Antarctica has been agreed upon. There is practically no interaction amongst scientists of different countries. No one is going to any other country's research station. The team that is nearest to us is that of Russians, which is about 10 km away. The Chilean station is so



The two Indian Antarctic stations, Maitri and Bharati, located on the map of the southernmost continent, 3,000 km apart. Maitri (right above), was set up back in 1988, while Bharati was established in 2012.

far away, there is no chance of any interaction even in normal times," Ravichandran said. The Council of Managers of National



Antarctic Programs, comprising 30 countries, had decided early in the pandemic to cut team sizes and limit the number of people

at the stations. All major research projects were halted, tourism was cancelled, and several facilities were shut. The US sent only about a third of its usual staff strength this summer while the British Antarctic Survey said it was scaling back its research.

What precautions is India taking?

The Indian team of about 50, which had arrived in Antarctica in December 2019, is supposed to return now. The new team is preparing to sail for Antarctica in January, and Ravichandran said the big concern right now was to ensure these people remain safe from the virus.

"About 50 people are supposed to leave next month. We are taking all precautions to ensure that none of them gets the disease. All of them are already in Goa now, and have been quarantined in a hotel. They are being tested every five days," he said.

The team will travel to Antarctica directly from Goa, unlike in normal times, when it travels to South Africa and then boards a ship from Cape Town for the remaining distance. "Travelling to South Africa would have

been difficult. Flight services are disrupted. The team would have been quarantined in South Africa for two weeks. So we decided to travel directly from Goa," Ravichandran said.

"Precautions are being taken to ensure that no one gets infected during the journey, which will take about a month. The ship will have to refuel once, maybe in Mauritius. People would continue to be tested on board, and if someone tests positive, there are contingency plans to isolate and, if possible, de-board them on the way."

Has Covid impacted India's Antarctic programme?

Apart from personnel at the two permanent stations, several Indian researchers head to Antarctica every year for their own projects. Antarctica is extremely conducive to carrying out a variety of experiments, especially those related to weather and climate change, because of its unpolluted environment.

Indian scientists usually head to Antarctica in November or December, and remain there until April. This year no such group could go to Antarctica.

CORONAVIRUS DASHBOARD

Illegal trade in wild animals is unaffected by pandemic

DESPITE COVID-19 restrictions and the risk of animal to human disease transmission, illegal wildlife trade on social media networks has continued, with wild animals sometimes sold as "lockdown pets".

Researchers from Oxford Brookes University and the University of Western Australia analysed around 20,000 Facebook posts about wild pet trade, and found no clear evidence that the online wildlife trade was discouraged or decreased amidst the pandemic, Oxford Brookes University said in a media release.

Examining advertisements on Facebook in Brazil and Indonesia, the researchers found thousands of posts advertising wild animals, with a potential audience of over 200,000 people.

The university release quoted study co-author Anna Nekaris as saying: "We anticipated that we would see many posts mentioning Covid-19 regarding the potential dangers of

wildlife trade or using it as a reason for a temporary cessation of sales. Instead, advertisements mentioning Covid-19 often stimulated wildlife trade, suggesting the pandemic was a great time to buy an exotic pet for companionship, for example."

The researchers also found that no traders or consumers discussed the role of wildlife trade in spreading diseases, the release said. Instead, discounts were given, and home delivery services were provided.

The release quoted another co-author, Thais Morcatty, as saying: "Clandestine markets often expand to supply the demand that still exists and in that case, not only

does wildlife trade continue, monitoring it becomes nearly impossible."

The paper, which focuses on Brazil and Indonesia, is titled 'Online trade in wildlife and the lack of response to COVID-19'. It has been published in the *Journal of Environmental Research*.

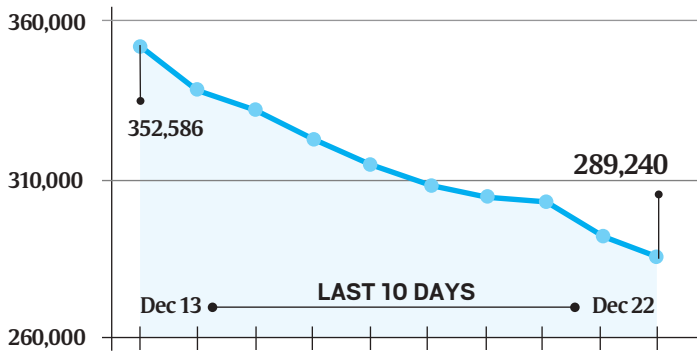
Source: Oxford Brookes University



PAPER CLIP
NEW RESEARCH

INDIA ACTIVE CASES

289,240



Note: The Dec 22 figure in this graph is based on the government update on Dec 23

INDIA TOTAL CASES	WORLD TOTAL CASES
1,099,066	78,197,192
Source: Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, updated at 11 pm on Dec 23	Source: Johns Hopkins University, updated at 11 pm on Dec 23

SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER

Targeting Big Tech in US, EU

What actions have been initiated by the United States and the European Union against Google? Does antitrust action work? What kind of regulatory scrutiny do the Internet giants face in India?

ANIL SASI

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

"WITH SIZE comes responsibility," Margrethe Vestager, the European Commissioner for competition and a redoubtable nemesis of Big Tech in Brussels, announced on December 15, as the European Union issued two draft digital-services laws that could launch an overarching supervisory apparatus covering tech companies.

The laws could potentially render Big Tech liable to face multibillion dollar fines in Europe and even the prospect of being broken up, if they failed to comply with the sweeping new regulations.

Around the same time in the United States, the federal government initiated antitrust cases against Google and Facebook, and a large number of US states collectively launched action on the two companies and others for a range of alleged infractions.

The seemingly concerted onslaught from regulators and administrators on both sides of the Atlantic is seen as a culmination of several mini-steps over the years to curb the growing influence of Big Tech, but is now seen as marking a decisive shift in competition policy governing the sector.

What do the EU regulations entail?

There are two laws — the Digital Services Act, and the Digital Markets Act.

The Digital Services Act is intended to create a single set of rules for the EU to keep users safe online, protect their freedom of expression, and help hold tech companies to account. An innovative idea is to introduce a sliding scale, under which tech majors, the larger and more influential they are, need to take on bigger obligations.

They could also face annual scrutiny of their dealings with illegal and harmful content under new rules of the European Commission, the EU's top policy making body. Fresh restrictions are also likely to supervise their use of customers' data, and to prevent the firms from promoting their own services above those of competitors' in search results and app stores.

Large fines — up to 6 per cent of a company's annual turnover — and break-ups are threatened for non-compliance. This fine, if levied on Facebook, would amount to over \$3 billion. Also, "recurrent infringers" could

be made to divest "certain businesses, where no other equally effective alternative measure is available to ensure compliance".

The second law, Digital Markets Act, focuses on the regulation of "gatekeepers", including the operators of search engines, social networks, chat apps, cloud computing services, and operating systems. This could cover Google, Facebook, Apple, Amazon and Microsoft.

What action has been initiated in US?

Last week, Texas and nine other states sued Google, accusing it of working with Facebook in "an unlawful manner" that violated antitrust law "to boost its already-dominant on-line advertising business". The states have asked that Google, which controls a third of the global online advertising industry, compensate them for "damages", and sought "structural relief" — which could potentially force the company to divest some of its assets.

The Texas lawsuit is the second major complaint from regulators against Google and the fourth in a series of federal and state legal suits aimed at controlling alleged infractions by Big Tech platforms. Google has called the Texas lawsuit "meritless."

How do the EU and US actions differ?

According to analysts, the US broadly seeks punitive action for infractions of the past, whereas the action by the EU has a wider scope, and is clearly forward-looking.

Vestager described the two laws as "milestones in our journey to make Europe fit for the digital age... We need to make rules that put order into chaos". The EU's Internal Market Commissioner Thierry Breton has said that the laws had been designed to be applied "very quickly" once they came into effect. But it will be some time before the new regulations come on stream.

But will these measures succeed?

Both the proposed EU laws still need to undergo a consultation process and can only then be passed by European lawmakers, a process that could take years. The UK regulator — Competition and Markets Authority — simultaneously announced its own plans to place limits on the tech majors this month. In any case, the EU laws would only come into force only after the Brexit transition period has ended.

In the US, chances of new laws being



Google's headquarters in Mountain View, California. NYT Archive

brought in are slim, given that Congress could well stay gridlocked. Most experts believe the impetus for sweeping action on Big Tech is far lower in the US than in the EU, given that almost all of the firms m American.

Also, there is an increasing view within policy circles in Washington in recent months that a dominant US tech sector is a strategic advantage in the slugfest with China. This view, according to some, is now overshadowing the previous bipartisan antagonism against Big Tech's control of digital commerce and its ability to manipulate what users read or watch.

There is also a difference being made out in the actions, depending on the company in question. For instance, the antitrust case against Google is being seen as having greater chance of succeeding, given that the alleged infringement relates to some \$10 billion in annual payments made by the Alphabet Inc company to Apple and other device manufacturing companies to ensure that its services got prominence on device screens. The charges are seen to have the potential to stick.

The case against Facebook is less potent: that it illegally acquired WhatsApp and Instagram to thwart competition. But Facebook had sought regulatory clearances for both acquisitions, and the two firms were small when they were bought. In 2012, when Facebook offered \$1 billion for Instagram, the latter had only 25 million users and practically no revenue stream. Facebook acquired WhatsApp in 2014 for \$19 billion, when the latter was already the mobile messaging

leader, but revenue monetisation was still a work-in-progress.

Also, antitrust action takes years. Microsoft's antitrust case commenced in 1998, and reached a resolution only in 2004. The last time that Google faced legal action for allegedly abusing its dominance in the search market was nearly a decade ago, when the US competition regulator Federal Trade Commission, in 2011, acted on a complaint filed by a Washington-based non-profit, Electronic Privacy Information Center.

The markets have shrugged off the impact of the regulatory tightening. Share prices of the so-called FAANG companies — Facebook, Apple, Amazon, Netflix, and Google — surged by over 45 per cent in 2020, on top of a 75 per cent surge in the last three years.

What could be the repercussion in India?

What is clear is that the new rules in the EU could force tech companies to revamp some of their practices across geographies, thereby potentially impacting more than the EU's 27 countries and 450 million people. There could be a ripple effect, at least in the long term.

Already, in India, there is increasing regulatory scrutiny of these firms.

■ In November, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) initiated an investigation into alleged abuse of dominant position by the company to promote its payments app, Google Pay — the third major antitrust probe ordered by the regulator against the company.

■ Earlier in October, the CCI had received reports of Google abusing its dominant position in the Android-television market by creating barriers for companies that wanted to use or modify its Android operating systems for their smart TVs.

■ And in June 2019, the CCI had said that Google had "abused" its dominant position in the domestic smartphone market by reducing the ability of original equipment and mobile phone makers to opt for alternate versions of its Android mobile operating system. It had then asked for a detailed investigation.

■ In 2018, CCI had launched a probe and fined Google Rs 136 crore for "search bias" and giving "undue" space to its flights option on its search homepage, over and above other rivals in the market. The regulator's order was, however, stayed by the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal, where the case is being heard.

Rapid expansion, random wage cuts: behind the Wistron violence

JOHNSON TA
BENGALURU, DECEMBER 23

WORKER UNREST following the non-redressal of payment and overtime issues at a new factory of Wistron Infocomm Manufacturing India Pvt Ltd, a subsidiary of Wistron Corporation, the Taiwan-headquartered computers and computer peripherals firm that manufactures iPhones for Apple and other products, resulted in a riot at the plant on December 12.

Production at the plant at Narasapura in Kolar district around 60 km from Bengaluru, employing 1,343 regular workers and 8,490 contract workers, was suspended following the violence.

Wistron's investment

Wistron, which makes devices and peripheral systems for major global tech companies, has manufacturing facilities and R&D centres at two dozen locations around the world. The company started a small pilot

plant in Bengaluru in 2017 to make the iPhone and, in 2018, decided to make a large investment in Karnataka for a full-fledged plant.

Wistron Infocomm Manufacturing India Pvt Ltd was incorporated on February 18, 2018 with the pilot plant at the Peenya Industrial Estate in Bengaluru as its official address. Initially the company supplied the iPhone SE and 6s from the Peenya facility. In January 2019, Wistron announced that it was looking to invest as much as Rs 3,000 crore in its Indian subsidiary.

"Given the consideration of long-term development of Wistron Group in India, the subsidiary of the company Wistron Infocomm Manufacturing (India) Private Limited has raised its authorised capital to INR 30 billion at once," the firm said in a statement to the Taiwan stock exchange in January 2019.

The Karnataka government allocated 43 acres in Narasapura for Wistron to build a larger plant. The company got environmental clearance in mid-2019 and, in 2020, announced investments to the tune of Rs 1,220 crore in equipment and machinery for the

Kolar plant, which is designated as a service and manufacturing centre. In August 2020, the plant became fully operational, with around 5,000 employees to manufacture the iPhone SE (2020) and iPhone 7 models.

That same month, Wistron said it "intends to build a factory building" at a cost of Rs 550 crore including a civil construction contract of Rs 250 crore in an expansion of its Narasapura facility. According to Karnataka government officials, the company has sought more land near its current plant. "They wanted to expand but we have to now see their revised plans [after the December 12 incident]. Earlier we had identified another 65 acres because they wanted to increase the built up area," a senior government official said.

'Running a sweatshop'

According to investigations by police, trade unions, and the state government, a pressure-cooker situation had built up in the factory due to anomalies in the wage payment system after Wistron rapidly scaled up its contractual employee strength

from around 3,000 to nearly 8,500 between September 2020 and December 2020.

"They scaled up very fast. This facility became operational only in August. Before August, the plant was not in existence. All the recruitment has happened in the last three or four months. They sought initial permission for 5,000 people, and then went to 9,000 at their level. Maybe there was more demand. This was when they moved from eight-hour to 12-hour shifts," said Gaurav Gupta, principal secretary of the commerce and industries department in Karnataka.

The contract employees were hired and paid through six manpower supply contractors, but their work was supervised and managed by Wistron officials. "In two months, we provided 2,300 workers to the firm; nearly 1,600 were young people from Kolar itself," said A N Srinivas, a recruiter for Creative Engineers, a local labour contractor.

Initial police investigations have revealed that the contractors were not paying the workers their full wages as per their contracts, or for overtime work. "The fac-

tory was being operated like a sweatshop," police sources said. While wages were slashed from Rs 22,000 to Rs 8,000 in some cases, wages for November were not paid until December 12, contract employees have said. Workers were working in two compulsory 12-hour shifts. With no employee grievance redressal system in place at the firm or a union, workers were constantly asking company officials for their dues, the All India Central Council of Trade Unions has said in a report.

An official of the labour department said the trigger for the violence during a 6am shift change on December 12 was an argument over the attendance system not capturing the exact work hours logged by the workers. Wistron officials initially estimated the damage at Rs 437 crore, but later revised it downward to about Rs 43 crore saying the "violence did not cause any material damage to major manufacturing equipment and warehouses".

Wistron, Apple reaction

Wistron has sent audit teams to esti-

mate the damage, see how fast the factory can be restored, and understand the lacunae in the payment system. "They have done their internal audit and I think they will be taking remedial measures," Industries Secretary Gupta said.

Wistron has acknowledged there were problems: "...We have been investigating and have found that some workers were not paid correctly, or on time. We deeply regret this and apologize to all of our workers," it has said.

"...We recognize that we made mistakes as we expanded. Some of the processes...to manage labour agencies and payments need to be strengthened and upgraded. We are taking immediate action to correct this, including disciplinary action."

Apple has put Wistron on probation, and said the company will get no more orders until it fixes the problems. "...We have placed Wistron on probation and they will not receive any new business from Apple before they complete corrective actions. Apple employees, along with independent auditors, will monitor their progress," Apple has said.

TOP OF THE WORLD



The New York Times said it volunteered to return the citation

USA

'Caliphate' podcast withdrawn as Pulitzer finalist

A HIGH-PROFILE podcast on terrorism from *The New York Times* that had been a finalist for a Pulitzer Prize was withdrawn as a contest entry in the wake of the newspaper saying the claims of a man central to "Caliphate" could not be verified. The board of the Pulitzer Prizes said it "accepted withdrawal of the entry as an appropriate resolution of this matter". The 2018 podcast series, about a Canadian man who said he had carried out atrocities for the Islamic State in Syria, had been named as a finalist in the international reporting category for 2019. **AP**

PAKISTAN

8 killed, 30 injured in blast at ice factory

AT LEAST eight people were killed and 30 others injured when the boiler of an ice factory exploded in this southern Pakistani city, police said. The explosion at the factory in the New Karachi industrial area on Tuesday night was so powerful that it badly damaged three other neighbouring industrial units, while shattering the windowpanes of two houses in the adjoining residential block. A large section of the boiler was flung into the air and landed some 250 yards away that damaged the industrial units and the residential facilities, police said on Wednesday. **PTI**

FRANCE

3 cops shot dead while responding to domestic violence call

THREE FRENCH police officers were shot dead by a man when they arrived at a home in Saint-Just, a remote commune in central France, to respond to a domestic violence call, police said on Wednesday. A woman who was the reported victim of the domestic violence had sought refuge on the roof of the house and was subsequently rescued by police, France's BFM TV broadcaster reported. Police said the suspected gunman was later found dead in his car. It was not immediately clear how he died. **REUTERS**

Britain tightens restrictions as alarm about new coronavirus variant grows

France opens UK border to drivers who test negative; South African variant of virus detected in Britain

THE NEW YORK TIMES
DECEMBER 23

STRUGGLING TO limit the spread of a potentially more infectious variant of the coronavirus, the British government ordered more sections of England to be placed under the most restrictive lockdown measures on Wednesday, as health officials said severely curtailing human contact was the only way to protect people.

"The new variant makes everything so much harder because it spreads so much faster," Matt Hancock, the British health secretary, said at a news conference. Two variants, the one detected in the UK and another in South Africa, are currently being studied by scientists, and while early indications suggest they are both more transmissible, more laboratory tests are needed to gain a fuller understanding of the dangers they pose.

Areas in England including Sussex, Oxfordshire, Suffolk, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire would move to the highest level of restrictions starting the day after Christmas, Hancock said.

Hancock also said the South African variant was even more easily transmitted than the variant already spreading widely in London and southeast England.

British authorities have detected two cases of the South Africa variant, Hancock said.

Meanwhile, ferries and trains from Britain began arriving in Calais on Wednesday morning, as France reopened its ports to Britain after a 48-hour shutdown. But the logjam of thousands of Europe-bound trucks stuck in

SIKHS OFFER FOOD TO STRANDED TRUCKERS

Dover: When thousands of truckers were stranded in southern England by France's border closure, help came from a small volunteer army of British Sikhs who jumped into action to rustle up thousands of chickpea curries and pizzas. Up to 10,000 truckers are stranded as they wait for Covid-19 tests to allow them to travel on to Europe. "We are British Sikhs and the least we can do is to practise our seasonal goodwill," said Ravinder Singh, founder of Khalsa Aid, which helped coordinate the deliveries. **REUTERS**

southeast England will take days to clear because drivers must show a negative coronavirus test before they can cross the channel.

The British Army was mobilised to help the National Health Service set up facilities to offer rapid coronavirus tests to drivers, who have been stuck in Britain since Sunday night, when France blocked passage to prevent the spread of the new variant of the coronavirus. But it was unclear Wednesday morning if the testing sites were up and operating. And there is mounting frustration, confusion and scepticism about the plans in Dover. Skirmishes have broken out among drivers, other waiting passengers and the police. One man was arrested after blocking a highway. And access to the port is blocked by drivers and other travellers unwilling to move.



Dr Anthony Fauci, the director of US' National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, receives his first dose of the new Moderna Covid-19 vaccine at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, on Tuesday. *Reuters*

Trump threatens to torpedo Covid aid Pfizer set to supply US with 100 mn more vaccine doses

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, DECEMBER 23

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump has threatened to torpedo Congress' massive Covid-19 relief package in the midst of a raging pandemic and deep economic uncertainty, suddenly demanding changes fellow Republicans have opposed.

Trump assailed the bipartisan \$900 billion package in a video he tweeted out Tuesday night and suggested he may not

sign the legislation. He called on lawmakers to increase direct payments for most Americans from \$600 to \$2,000 for individuals and \$4,000 for couples.

Railing against a range of provisions in the Bill, including for foreign aid, he told lawmakers to "get rid of the wasteful and unnecessary items from this legislation and to send me a suitable Bill".

If Trump were to upend the sprawling legislation, the consequences would be severe, including no federal aid to struggling Americans and small businesses,

and no additional resources to help with vaccine distribution.

Meanwhile, Pfizer and BioNTech said they would supply the US with an additional 100 million doses of their Covid-19 vaccine under a second agreement.

Pfizer already has a contract to supply the government with 100 million doses of its vaccine, which requires two doses per patient. Under the nearly \$2 billion deal announced Wednesday, the companies will deliver at least 70 million additional doses by June 30.



CHINA PREPARES FOR ICE FESTIVAL

Workers at the site of the Harbin International Ice and Snow Festival in China. For more than 300 "ice miners" in Harbin, work begins before dawn every day on the frozen Songhua river. Every day since early December, tens of thousands of ice blocks have been prised out of the river and moved to the venue of Harbin's annual winter festival, where they are used to build life-sized castles, bridges and even a functioning restaurant. The festival will begin on January 5. *Reuters*

Turkey sentences former editor of daily to 27 years in absentia for 'espionage'

REUTERS
ANKARA, DECEMBER 23

TURKISH JOURNALIST Can Dundar was sentenced in absentia to 27 years and six months in prison for espionage and aiding an armed terrorist organisation, his lawyers said Wednesday, calling the verdict politically motivated.

Dundar, the former editor-in-chief of Turkish daily newspaper



Can Dundar

Cumhuriyet, and a colleague, Erdem Gul, were both sentenced in 2016 to five years in prison for publishing a video purporting to show Turkish intelligence trucking weapons into Syria. They were later released pending appeal.

Now a resident of Germany, he had faced up to 35 years in jail for allegedly supporting terrorism and military or political espionage.

For critics of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the journalist has become a symbol of what they say is Turkey's crackdown on press freedom, especially since a failed coup in 2016. The government says the courts are independent and that it is responding to threats facing the country.

Israeli govt collapses, forcing a fourth election in two years

ISABEL KERSHNER
JERUSALEM, DECEMBER 23

ISRAEL'S GOVERNMENT collapsed Tuesday, pushing the country into yet another early election — the fourth in two years.

The Israeli Parliament dissolved itself at midnight Tuesday. The move forced a new election after weeks of infighting and paralysis in the so-called unity government, an uneasy coalition sworn in just seven months ago that paired Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's conservative Likud party with his main rival-turned-partner, Benny Gantz of the centrist Blue and White party.

Netanyahu and Gantz blamed each other for the crisis. "I think at the current time, we should have united forces to find a way to avert these needless elections," Netanyahu said in Parliament early Tuesday.

A new election must take place in three months and is scheduled for March 23.

Parliament automatically dispersed at midnight after failing to meet the legal deadline for approving a budget for 2020. Netanyahu, whose party holds the finance portfolio, had refused to present a budget, in violation of his coalition agreement with Gantz — the ostensible reason for the government breakdown.

But at the heart of the crisis lies a deep, mutual distrust between the two men and a country fundamentally split over the fate of Netanyahu, whose corrup-



Benjamin Netanyahu is set to fight another election on March 23

EXPLAINED
E One eye on graft trial

THE CORRUPTION cases against Netanyahu have, just like in the last three elections, played a major part in the PM's calculations as his party paves the way for yet another election, experts say. He has already tried and failed at least once to get Parliament to grant him immunity in the cases, and according to analysts, Netanyahu is hoping for a better showing in the next snap election so that he has the numbers in Parliament to grant him immunity even as the trial enters a crucial phase early next year.

tion trial is scheduled to move into an intensive, evidentiary stage in early 2021, requiring his regular presence in court. He has been charged with bribery, fraud and breach of trust. He denies any wrongdoing. **NYT**

Prachanda elected as new parliamentary leader of Nepal's ruling party

YUBARAJ GHIMIRE
KATHMANDU, DECEMBER 23

THE DISSIDENT faction of the Nepal Communist Party on Wednesday elected Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' as leader of its Parliamentary Party, a post previously held by Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli.

Madhav Kumar Nepal, who was elected chairperson of the party, proposed Prachanda's name as the leader of the Parliamentary Party. A party meeting then unanimously endorsed the proposal. However, none of Oli's supporters attended Wednesday's meeting.

Leaders of the Prachanda-led faction have also told the Election Commission that they hold a two-thirds majority in the party and therefore they must be granted official recognition by the election body, *My Republica* reported. "We are here with the proof that we are



Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda'

the only legitimate Nepal Communist Party," Leela Mani Pokharel, a standing committee member of the party, was quoted as saying by the paper.

Meanwhile, Nepal's Supreme Court began hearings on 13 petitions filed against the dissolution of the House. Chief Justice Chandra Shumsher Rana refused to grant an interim stay on the dissolution, but referred all the petitions together to a constitution bench comprising five judges.

— WITH PTI INPUT

Afghan official: Bomb, shooting attacks in Kabul kill 3 people

Kabul: Separate bombing and shooting attacks in Afghanistan's capital left at least three people dead on Wednesday, including the head of an independent elections watchdog, officials said.

Unknown gunmen shot and killed Mohammad Yousuf Rasheed, executive director of the non-governmental Free and Fair Election Forum of Afghanistan,

said Ferdaws Faramarz, spokesman for Kabul's police chief.

Rasheed's driver, who was also injured in the attack, died in a hospital from his wounds.

In a separate attack in the capital on Wednesday, a police vehicle was targeted by a sticky bomb in the eastern part of the city. The blast killed one police officer and wounded two others. **AP**

25 Indian Americans in Biden team to make new govt 'look like the country'

KARISHMA MEHROTRA
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

IT IS not just US Vice President-elect Kamala Harris. As US President-elect Joe Biden continues to fill his government structure in a way that will "look like the country", at least 25 Indian Americans are set to hold roles in the new administration, with at least 15 in key policy positions.

"We are enthused by the incoming Biden-Harris administration's recognition of the contributions of our South Asian community. They have selected several talented individuals for key roles, including Neera Tanden, Vivek Murthy, Rohini Kosoglu, Ali Zaidi, Bharat Ramamurti, Vedant Patel, Vinay

Reddy and Gautam Raghavan. We look forward to their service on behalf of the country," said Neha Dewan, national director, South Asians for Biden.

Biden's nomination of Tanden — a former Clinton and Obama advisor who heads a liberal think-tank — to the Office of Management and Budget has been criticised by Congress Republicans over her past remarks on Twitter. The 50-year-old would be the first woman of colour to manage the administration's budget, but election experts have expressed concern that her appointment may struggle to gain confirmation by the Republican-controlled Senate.

In another key position, Murthy will co-chair Biden's Covid task force, after advising

the President-elect for months on the pandemic and acting as Surgeon General under former President Barack Obama. Dr Atul Gawande and Dr Celine Gounder, who traces her roots to a Tamil Nadu village, will also be part of the task force.

Just this week, Biden named Vinay Reddy as director of speechwriting, Gautam Raghavan as deputy director of the office of presidential personnel, and Bharat Ramamurti as deputy director of the National Economic Council.

"Having watched every presidential transition since 2004, I am struck by how front and centre the Biden team has placed equity and diversity concerns. And I am further struck by how aggressive interest groups have been in holding the transition's feet to the fire.



Vivek Murthy (left), Ali Zaidi among names selected. *AP*

The Asian-American Pacific Islander (AAPI) groups have been especially vocal, and I think the Biden team has genuinely taken their concerns on board. There's really no comparison to the 2016 Trump transition," said Milan Vaishnav, Director and Senior Fellow, South Asia Program at the



Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

In a letter sent to Biden on November 22, Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) urged him to include "highly qualified Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) in his Cabinet." Drawing on the AAPI

voter turnout crucial to Biden's victory, influential Asian Americans have continued to call for more representation.

"For over two decades, there has been at least one AAPI appointed to serve in the Cabinet of both Democratic and Republican administrations. In fact, the Obama administration included a record three AAPI cabinet secretaries and the Trump administration included two AAPI women in the cabinet. In order to ensure your administration is filled with appointees who truly reflect the strength and diversity of our nation, we urge you to continue this trend of appointing AAPI candidates to the Cabinet and prioritising AAPI representation throughout your administration," stated the letter, signed by Congress rep-

resentatives Ami Bera, Pramila Jayapal, and Raja Krishnamoorthi.

Following Biden's initial picks, Democratic National Committee's AAPI caucus chairwoman Bel Leong-Hong told Politico: "We don't see too many Asian Americans there, do we?"

Among other appointments, Dr Arun Majumdar, former Google executive, Obama official, and IIT-Bombay graduate, has been nominated for Energy Secretary; Dr Rahul Gupta will lead the transition with the Office of National Drug Control Policy; Kiran Ahuja has been nominated for Team Lead for Office of Personnel Management; Vedant Patel will be assistant press secretary of the White House; Mala Adiga will be policy director to First Lady Dr Jill Biden; Bhavya Lal

will lead the transition at NASA; Punnet Talwar will be on the agency review team for the US Department of State; Pav Singh will help transition the National Security Council; and Seema Nanda will be with the US Department of Labor.

The administration's agency review teams seek to understand each agency and lead a smoother transfer of power.

During Trump's transition, he had appointed Nikki Haley, former governor of South Carolina, to be the US ambassador to the UN, and Seema Verma to be the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Barring three more appointments, all of Trump's other appointments by this point in his transition were White American.

MEETING WITH CHIEFS OF PSBs, SELECT PRIVATE LENDERS

RBI Gov asks banks to strengthen lending capacity by raising capital

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
MUMBAI, DECEMBER 23

RESERVE BANK of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das has asked banks to take proactive measures to strengthen their resilience and lending capacity by raising capital and making provisions. In a two-day meeting with the chiefs of public sector banks and select private sector banks, he also discussed the monetary policy transmission and liquidity situation. "Credit flows to different sectors of the economy including stressed sectors and MSMEs also came up," the RBI said in a statement after the meeting.

The meeting, held through video conference, was attended by Deputy Governors of the RBI. The progress in the implementa-

TAKING STOCK OF THE ECONOMY

RBI GOVERNOR Shaktikanta Das touched upon the current economic situation and emphasised the importance of the banking sector in supporting the ongoing revival.



tion of resolution framework for Covid-related stressed assets was also discussed.

Das touched upon the current economic situation and emphasised the importance of the banking sector in supporting the ongoing revival. With specific reference to the financial sector, he highlighted the steps taken by the RBI

since the onset of the pandemic to stabilise the economy and to ensure financial stability.

On the banking sector, he reiterated the need for banks to remain vigilant and take proactive measures to strengthen their resilience and lending capacity by raising capital and making provisions proactively.

RBI officials and bankers also made an assessment of the current economic situation and outlook. Other issues that came up in the meeting included progress in making the identified districts in states and UTs 100 per cent digitally enabled, strengthening and enhancing the capacity and efficiency of the IT infrastructure and IT systems in banks, and improving grievance redress mechanisms in banks.

The Monetary Policy Committee had mentioned about the "noteworthy development" of non-food credit growth getting accelerated and moving into positive territory for the first time in November 2020 on a financial year basis. Hitherto, the large inflow of deposits into the banking system was being predominantly deployed in SLR investment.

Digital lending: RBI warns against unauthorised apps

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
MUMBAI, DECEMBER 23

THE RBI on Wednesday cautioned consumers against digital money lending entities that promise loans in seconds at exorbitant rates of interest and then use high-handed recovery methods.

According to the RBI, there have been complaints about individuals and small businesses falling prey to growing number of unauthorised digital lending platforms. "These reports also refer to excessive rates of interest and hidden charges being demanded," it said.

Cairn arbitration: Why the ruling went against India

AASHISHARYAN
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

THE GHOST of retrospective arbitration returned to haunt the government on Wednesday, with the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) at The Hague ruling that the former's retrospective tax demand on Cairn Energy Plc was "in breach of the guarantee of fair and equitable treatment"

and against the Indian-UK bilateral treaty. Earlier, the Singapore seat of the arbitration tribunal had said that the Indian government's retrospective tax demand raised against Vodafone was unjust, unfair and in breach of the India-Netherlands bilateral treaty.

What has the court said?

In its judgment, the PCA said the Cairn tax issue was not just tax-related but an investment-related dispute and, therefore, under the jurisdiction of the international arbitration court. Akin to the ruling in the Vodafone arbitration case, the PCA once again ruled that the Indian government's retrospective demand was "in breach

of the guarantee of fair and equitable treatment".

"Tax demand against the claimants (Cairn Energy Plc and Cairn UK Holdings Limited) in respect of AY (assessment year) 2007-08 is inconsistent with the treaty and the claimants are relieved from any obligation to pay it and orders the respondent (Indian government) to neutralise the continuing effect of the demand by permanently withdrawing the demand," the three-member arbitration panel said in its judgment. The panel added that India must not make any more attempts to recover "the alleged tax liability or any interest and or penalties arising from this alleged liability through any other means".

What is the dispute all about?

Like Vodafone, this dispute between the government and Cairn also relates to retrospective taxation. In 2006-07, as part of internal rearrangement, Cairn UK transferred shares of Cairn India Holdings to Cairn India. The Income Tax authorities then contented that Cairn UK had made

capital gains and slapped it with a tax demand of Rs 24,500 crore.

Owing to different interpretations of capital gains, the company refused to pay the tax, which prompted cases being filed at the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT) and the high court. While Cairn lost the case at ITAT, a case on the valuation of capital gains is still pending before the Delhi High Court. In 2011, Cairn Energy sold majority of its India business, Cairn India, to mining conglomerate Vedanta. Cairn UK was, however, not allowed to sell a minor stake of about 10 per cent by the taxman. Authorities had also seized Cairn India shares as well as dividends that the company paid to its parent UK firm.

What are bilateral treaties?

Following the liberalisation in 1991, India signed bilateral treaties with several nations that assured certain safeguards for companies of those countries if they set up units in India as well. A common thread running through such treaties was that both countries would strive to encourage and promote favourable conditions for the investors of the other country.

Full report on www.indianexpress.com

PRE-BUDGET CONSULTATIONS CONCLUDE

FinMin gets suggestions on reforms, spending push and disinvestment



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman interacts with members of Gujarat Chamber of Commerce & Industry. via @nsitharamanoffc

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

FINANCE MINISTER Nirmala Sitharaman concluded her pre-Budget consultations on Wednesday, having held 15 virtual meetings over nine days with more than 170 invitees representing nine stakeholder groups. They presented her with dozens of suggestions — from focussing on growth and reforms to deepening the bond market and privatising PSUs for adoption in the Budget for FY22 to get the Covid-ravaged economy back on the high-growth path.

Sitharaman's last meeting was with a second group of economists; the first one with economists was held on Saturday.

Economists are learnt to have asked the government to bolster spending and resort to aggressive

divestment and asset monetisation to partly fund the expenditure. They also highlighted the need for continuous and bold reforms, mainly in the factors of production.

Growth should be the prime objective of the Budget for FY22 and the government need not worry much about the fiscal deficit target, they reckon.

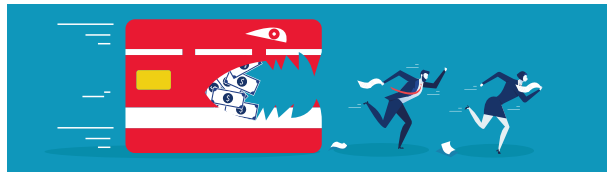
Although government consumption expenditure fell 22 per cent on year in the September quarter, there have since been signs of improvement. The Centre's budget spending rose 9.5 per cent on year in October and budgetary capex was up 130 per cent in the month, at Rs 31,519 crore.

Economic Affairs Secretary Tarun Bajaj last week said government's capital expenditure went up by as much as 15 per cent, year on year, in November and overall spending rose by 5 per cent. **FE**

COVID-19 IMPACT

'Higher delinquencies in credit card, LAP segments in retail loans'

Retail credit has seen a rise in serious delinquencies, with loans against property (LAP) and credit cards being the most affected segments, Transunion Cibil said in a report



Rise in loans overdue for over 90 days, as of August-end:
Credit card: 2.32%, up 0.51% from year-ago period
LAP: 3.96%, 0.34% over year-ago

Reasons for rising credit card delinquencies:
■ Salary cuts and job losses caused by pandemic
■ Lower payment priority

LAP delinquencies worsen: For LAP, a product generally used by small businesses as working capital finance, delinquencies had already been on the rise prior to Covid-19

Delinquencies reported by financial institutions, as of August-end:

■ Non-bank finance companies (NBFCs): 0.49% increase
■ State-run lenders: 0.28% fall
■ Private banks: 0.10% fall

Why is it important: The delinquency picture is "complicated; and will take time to emerge as the lagged effect of financial conditions, relief schemes backed by banks, and shifts in payment priorities play out

Source: Transunion Cibil/PTI

Call for startups, techies to scale up vaccine portal

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

AS PART of its efforts to find solutions for timely delivery of the Covid-19 vaccine, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, on Wednesday launched a challenge for startups and technology enthusiasts to "augment and scale" COVID Vaccine Intelligence Network (CoWIN) system.

As a part of the challenge, startups and technology enthusiasts can focus on seven key areas identified by the health ministry, which include monitoring and management, dynamic learning and infor-

mation systems as well as vaccine's logistical management, the IT ministry said in a release.

The challenge will also give the participants the option to work on the platform to augment its capacity to track any human resource related constraints as well as tracking enlisted beneficiaries for "any adverse event" after the vaccine dose has been given.

"The top 5 applicants will be provided the CoWIN APIs (application programming interface) to prove the efficacy of their solutions for possible integration with the platform. The solutions once integrated with the platform through open APIs will be assessed for robustness and scalability," the IT Ministry said.

BRIEFLY

GST liability: 1% to be paid in cash

New Delhi: Businesses with monthly turnover of over Rs 50 lakh will have to mandatorily pay at least 1 per cent of their GST liability in cash, the Finance Ministry said. The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs has introduced Rule 86B in Goods and Services Tax (GST) rules which restricts use of input tax credit for discharging GST liability to 99 per cent.

AP, MP get nod to borrow funds

New Delhi: The Centre has permitted two states — Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh — to borrow additional financial resources to the tune of Rs 4898 crore following reforms in urban local bodies (ULBs), the Finance Ministry said on Wednesday.

MSI township for employees

New Delhi: Maruti Suzuki (MSI) said it has completed a 360-apartment housing township for employees at Dharuhera, Haryana. **PTI**

Compressed bio-gas: Govt to 'handhold' first 100 plants

ENSECONOMICBUREAU
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

THE GOVERNMENT is going to handhold and support investors setting up compressed bio-gas (CBG) plants and ensure that CBG is marketed, Petroleum Secretary Tarun Kapoor said Wednesday.

He added that state governments were also coming forward and would help investors in making sure that land and feedstock for CBG plants would be available.

Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan had said in November that India was set to receive investments of Rs 2 lakh

crore in 5,000 CBG plants.

"... the first 100 plants, we have to do complete hand holding in respects. And we have we are setting up a mechanism where these plants will be registered with us," said Kapoor via video during a webinar on the promotion of CBG organised by the PHD Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

He said the Petroleum Ministry would ensure that CBG is marketed, noting that it could be marketed in several ways including through direct injection into networks of city gas distribution (CGD) companies and via supply to retail outlets supplying compressed natural gas.

Once tried to sell Tesla to Apple, Cook refused meeting, says Musk

REUTERS
BENGALURU, DECEMBER 23

TESLA CEO Elon Musk said Tuesday he reached out to Apple Inc CEO Tim Cook "during the darkest days of the Model 3 program" to discuss the possibility of the iPhone maker acquiring Tesla Inc for a tenth of its current value. "He refused to take the meeting", said Musk, CEO of electric-car maker Tesla, replying to a Twitter chain which cited a Reuters story on Apple looking to produce a passenger vehicle by 2024 with a new battery technology.

During 2017 and 2018, Tesla struggled to ramp up high volume production of the

"During the darkest days of the Model 3 program, I reached out to Tim Cook to discuss the possibility of Apple acquiring Tesla (for 1/10 of our current value). He refused to take the meeting"

ELON MUSK, TESLA CEO

Model 3 sedan, with Musk at the time informing investors the company was mired in "production hell" because of problems with automated production systems at its battery factory in Reno, Nevada.

Apple declined to comment while Tesla did not respond to a request for comment.

Rajasthan State Road Development And Construction Corporation Ltd., JAIPUR
No. MT/2020-21/17236-44 Date: 23.12.2020

अवकाशित ई-निविदा सूचना 306/20-21

निम्नलिखित कार्यों के लिए कंपनियों सरकार के अधिकाधिक निष्ठापूर्ण एवं प्रभावी रूप से अनुभवी संस्थानों से निविदा प्रपत्र में ई-प्रोक्वेस्ट प्रक्रिया से निविदा प्रपत्र को जमा करें:-

कार्य का विवरण	अनुमानित की (रु.)
Collection of Toll Tax (From Private Vehicles) on Kotsipali-Sikar-Kuchaman Road for 180 Days.	460.62 Lakhs

UBN No: RRC2021WSB00447

अतिरिक्त निविदा प्रपत्र जमाकरने वाले को अग्रिम दिनांक 19.12.2020 प्रा. 09.00 घंटे से 28.12.2020 प्रा. 6.00 घंटे तक

निविदा से संबंधित प्रपत्र में निम्न सूचना, सहित सभी, डाउनलोड करने व खोलने को अनिवार्य समझें। निविदा प्रपत्र को डाउनलोड करने के लिए निम्नलिखित लिंक पर क्लिक करें।
<http://eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in>, <http://ppp.rajjasthan.nic.in> तथा <http://roads.rajjasthan.gov.in> पर क्लिक करें। (इच्छुक संस्थानों को अपने निविदा प्रपत्र के माध्यम से निविदा ई-प्रोक्वेस्ट <http://eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in> पर उपलब्ध करवाएं।)

सहसचिव

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FASHION TECHNOLOGY
(Ministry of Textiles, Government of India)
NIFT Campus, Chheh Kangra, Himachal Pradesh-176001
Phone No. :01892-260874, Fax No. 01892-260872

NIIFT-KGR/TD/21/2020 **24 December, 2020**

E-TENDER NOTICE	
Sealed Tender is invited for supply of Table Top Looms (Hard Wood) with extra Beam & all accessories from Manufacturer of Table Top Loom and their authorized Vendors. Last date and time for submission of tenders as mentioned in the tender documents is as under.	
Date of Publication of e-Tender Notification	24.12.2020
Sale of E-Tender Document Commences from	24.12.2020
Last Date for Sale of E-Tender Document	27.01.2021 at 11.00 A.M.
Last Date for Receipt of duly filled in E-Tender	27.01.2021 at 03.00 P.M.
Date and Time of the Opening of E-Tender	27.01.2021 at 04.00 P.M.

The Interested Manufacturer/Authorized Agents may visit NIFT Campus on any working day during office hours and contact Administration or NIFT Website <https://www.nift.ac.in/kangra/tenders> for E-tender details. The detail of cost of the tender form is given in each tender document.

The Tender is to be filled and submitted online through the Website: <https://nifttenders.eproc.in>.

Joint Director (I/c)

DONATION TO NIFT ARE EXEMPTED UNDER SECTION 80G OF INCOME TAX

SALEM CITY MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
2020-21 TamilNadu Urban Road Infrastructure Project - Phase-II
Roc No. E4 / 12320/2020 Date: 22.12.2020

E - TENDER NOTICE (Double Cover System)

- Restoration of BT Roads, Storm Water Drain and Culvert Damaged work in Division No.3, 21, 22, 24, 25 and 28 in Suramangalam Zone. **Est.Rs. 650.00 Lakhs**
- Restoration of BT Roads, Storm Water Drain and Culvert Damaged work in Division No.4, 5, 6, 7, 13, 17, 29, 30 and 31 in Hasthampatty Zone. **Est.Rs. 550.00 Lakhs**
- Restoration of BT Roads, Storm Water Drain and Culvert Damaged work in Division No.9, 11, 33, 37 and 42 in Ammapett Zone. **Est.Rs. 550.00 Lakhs**
- Restoration of BT Roads, Storm Water Drain and Culvert Damaged work in Division No.50, 51, 55 and 60 in Kondalampatty Zone. **Est.Rs. 550.00 Lakhs**

5.Bid document and other information available at (free of cost) www.tntenders.gov.in, www.tenders.tn.gov.in, www.salemcitymunicipalcorporation.gov.in "e-submission" is also permitted.

6. Date, time and Venue for Tender Procedures.
Submission of bids - 24.12.2020 up to 28.01.2021 - 3.00 P.M.
Opening of bids - 28.01.2021 at 3.30 P.M.

DIPR/ 4886 /TENDER/2020 Commissioner, Salem Corporation

THE TAMILNADU COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS' FEDERATION LIMITED
AAVIN ILLAM 3-A, Pasumpon Muthuramalingan Salai (Chambers Road), Nandanam, Chennai- 600 035.
Telephone : 044-23464500, Fax : 044-23464505, E-mail:avinmilk@yahoo.co.in

REF No:13423/Proj./1/2020 TENDER NOTICE Dated : 22.12.2020

The TCMFP, invites **TWO PART TENDERS** by way of **OFF LINE / E-SUBMISSION** from the Manufacturers / Suppliers for Design, Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of the following New plants at Thanjavur & Madhavaram under DIFD Scheme.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Pre-bid Meeting	Tender Submission	Technical Bid Opening
1	New Dairy plant of capacity 100 TLPD at Thanjavur	07.01.2021	29.01.2021	29.01.2021
2	Fully Automatic Dairy Processing and Sachet Milk Packing Plant of capacity 10LLPD (Expandable to 15LLPD) at Madhavaram	at 11.30 AM	upto 2.00 PM	at 2.15 PM

Tender Document sale between 29.12.2020 to 28.01.2021 from 11.00 A.M. to 3.00 P.M., cost - Rs.2,000.00 + 18% GST and Rs.100.00 extra by post. For downloading tender documents, EMD and other details, refer website www.tenders.tn.gov.in and www.avinmilk.com for off line / www.tntenders.gov.in for e-submission. Tender documents can be downloaded at free of cost.

DIPR/ 4893 /TENDER/ 2020 Deputy General Manager (Enggs.), Head Office

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
TAMIL NADU SKILL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP No. 2210/SDC 4/2016 Dated: 21.12.2020

For Establishing Apex Skill Development Centres (ASDC) under Banking, Financial Services and Insurance sector (BFSI) REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (in single cover System) to impart high-end skill training will be received from interested firms/agencies to act as the Lead Implementation partner (LIP) at the office of Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation upto 3.00 P.M. (as per office clock) on 25.01.2021.

Pre Qualification criteria for LIP, Management of ASDC, EMD, Price of RFP document, place and availability of RFP document, receipt of RFP, opening of RFP and all other details are available in the website www.tenders.tn.gov.in & www.tnskill.in if there are any changes / corrections in the RFP, it will be published on the above website (s) only

MANAGING DIRECTOR,
TAMIL NADU SKILL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION,
GUINDY, CHENNAI-600 032.

DPR/4858/TENDER/2020

PERSONAL

0040558510-5	0040558505-6
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0040558510-6
I, Gufran S/O Mohammad Suaib,
R/O B-105, B-Block Bindapur
DDA-Flats Pratap-Garden
Uttam-Nagar, Delhi-110059,
have changed my name to
Gufran Ahmed.

DAUGHTER-IN-LAW NAMED MANOJ BHARDWAJ AND HIS WIFE SURAKSHA BHARDWAJ DUE TO THEIR DISRESPECTFUL, FIGHTING AND RUDE BEHAVIOUR AND HAS DISINHERITED/DISOWNED THEM FROM ALL THEIR MOVABLE /IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES/BUSINESS SITUATED AT DELHI. ANYBODY DEALING WITH THEM SHALL BE DOING SO AT HIS/HER/ITS OWN COSTS, RISKS AND CONSEQUENCES.

RANU CHADHA (ADVOCATE)

A.P. RAJENDRAN (A.P. RAJENDRAN)

Client have also severed all their relations with him. If anybody deals with him in any manner, he/She shall do so at his/her own risks, costs and consequences. My Client shall not be liable or responsible for the same in any manner.

Sd/-
RAKESH KUMAR
ADVOCATE
CHAMBER NO. 120 A.

प्रेक्ष्य क्र.: 2650/ Workshop

हेतु-संचालक
राज्य न्यायालयिक विज्ञान प्रयोगशाला
रायपर (छ.ग.)

कार्य का नाम	अनुमानित लागत	नगरीय प्रशासन एवं विकास विभाग म.प्र. भोपाल	अर्नेस्टपनी रु.	समय अवधि
3	4	5	6	7
Unit Price Rates of Spare Parts/ of Vehicles of Different Make/ Model of Ujjain Municipal Corporation	1,00,00,000.00	Non-SOR	8000.00 Rs/Per Group	15 दिवस

Corporation invites online Tender (e

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost Put to the Tender (Rs.)	Cost of work excluding Royalty & Material Testing Charges (Rs.)	Royalty Charge s (Rs.)	Material Testing Charges (Rs.)	Earnest money (Rs.)	Cost of Document with GST (Rs.)	Period of Completion
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Pre-bid meeting is open to all prospective tenderers who have downloaded tender form before the date of Pre-bid meeting .

Pre-bid meeting will be held on **05/01/2021 at 16.00 Hrs** at the office of Joint City Engineer, Water Supply & Drainage Department, Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation, Head Office, Old Pune-Mumbai Road, Pimpri, Pune18.

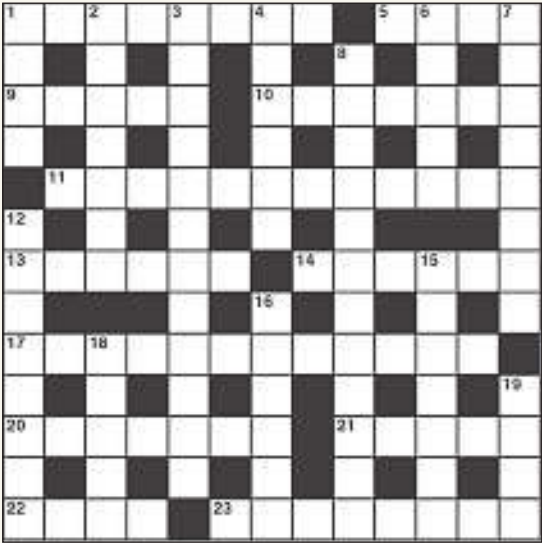
The Tender can be downloaded from date **24/12/2020, 15.00 Hrs to 20/01/2021, 15.00 Hrs.** & Technical bid opening date **25/01/2021, 15.00 Hrs.** (If possible)

Before submitting the proposal, the bidders shall mandatorily register and enlist themselves, on <https://www.mahatenders.gov.in>. Further, the bidders shall follow the operating procedure as may be prescribed on the said website. The Municipal Commissioner PCMC reserves the right to accept or reject any tender partially or completely without any reasons thereof.

Contact Person: For any further information / clarifications please contact
Joint City Engineer, Water Supply Department
1st Floor, Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation, Head Office, Old Pune-Mumbai Road, Pimpri, Pune – 411018.
Phone:020-67331401 Fax: 020-27425600
Email: To – p.ladkat@pcmcindia.gov.in
(Mob. No. 9922501727)

Adv. No. 636	Sd/-
No. WS/ 8 /KaVi/706/2020	Commissioner
Date. 16/ 12/2020	PCMC, Pimpri, Pune-18

CROSSWORD 4310



ACROSS

- 1 A pretty stiff programme of course (8)
5 Ring starts involuntary movement of the ear (4)
9 Revolutionary form of linen (5)
10 For thirty seconds one has quiet at least (7)
11 Skillful manoeuvre by expert oarsman (12)
13 He had high-flying ambition but became unstuck (6)
14 Chase gives us pure diversion (6)
17 Kind of talk more cordial than a tete-a-tete (5-2-5)
20 Give the sack to a priest: outcome of fun and beat music? (7)
21 Article about that particular point (5)
22 One always on hand for a date maybe (4)
23 Lets it break to a point that could be dangerous (8)

DOWN

- 1 Baker's list? (4)
2 Unable to begin at a choral work (7)
3 A grammatical building (12)
4 Comment made about Antony? (6)
6 The speed at which some work should be done (5)
7 The favourite comes round and takes part in the event (8)
8 Helpful to the orchestra for example? (12)
12 Event in the field undertaken by paratroops (4,4)
15 Instrument of the past or present maybe (7)
16 It may be picked by a criminal (6)
18 Impressive though not entirely legal (5)
19 Refusal to allow free vote (4)

Solutions Crossword 4309: Across: 1 In support, 8 Inner, 9 Reverse, 10 Flocks, 11 Petula, 12 Bungalow, 15 Strident, 18 Stolid, 20 Demise, 21 Abraham, 22 Utter, 23 Eradicate. Down: 2 Nice, 3 Useful, 4 Passable, 5 Tiring, 6 Angrily, 7 Crossword, 11 Passed out, 13 Not so bad, 14 Prime, 16 Desire, 17 Mosaic, 19 Inapt.

JUMBLLED 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 clue.

There can be no happiness if the things we ____ are different from the things we ____ Freya Madeline Stark (7,2,...,2)

LVEEE



AAUDLN



DMIIIO



AELRBV



SOLUTION: LVEEE: IDIOM, LANDLY, VERBAL. AAUDLN: AUDIENCE. DMIIIO: IDIOM, LANDLY, VERBAL. AELRBV: AUDIENCE. Answer: There can be no happiness if the things we believe in are different from the things we love. Freya Madeline Stark

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



SUDOKU 4332

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 4331



कार्यालय प्रधानाचार्य, स्वशासी राज्य चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय, फिरोजाबाद।

संख्या-एफजेडडी/2020/3301 दिनांक-23/12/2020

ई-निविदा सूचना

स्वशासी राज्य चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय, फिरोजाबाद के विभिन्न विभागों के उपकरणों के क्रय हेतु प्रतिष्ठित/ख्यातिमान फर्मों से ई-निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। ई-निविदा दिनांक: 29.12.2020 अपराह्न: 03:00 बजे से दिनांक: 11.01.2021 अपराह्न: 03:00 बजे तक डाउनलोड एवं अपलोड की जा सकती है एवं दिनांक: 12.01.2021 को अपराह्न: 03:00 बजे तकनीकी बिड खोली जायेगी। इस सम्बन्ध में विस्तृत विवरण संस्थान की वेबसाइट <https://www.asmcfirozabad.edu.in/> एवं ई-टेंडर की अधिकृत वेबसाइट पर प्रदर्शित किया जायेगा। प्रधानाचार्य

बीकानेर नगर निगम
नगर निगम नगर बीकानेर (राजस्थान) फोन-2226906 फोन-0151-2226902, 0151-2226905
email:nagamgambikaner@gmail.com, website:www.bikanernm.org
क्रमांक विवरण/2020-21/18651-52 दिनांक: 4/12/2020

ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या – 15/2020-21/विद्युत

नगर निगम कार्यालय, बीकानेर द्वारा विद्युत सम्बंधित कार्यों हेतु इच्छुक सम्भरणकर्ता जो कार्य करने/सामग्री समरन करने के लिए अनुमोदी हो, से निर्धारित प्रपत्र में ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट प्रक्रिया से ऑनलाइन निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा कार्य से संबंधित सम्पूर्ण विवरण एवं तिथि राज्य सरकार की ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट पोर्टल <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> तथा नगर निगम बीकानेर की वेबसाइट www.bikanernm.org पर देखी जा डाउनलोड की जा सकती है तथा निर्धारित अवधि तक ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट पोर्टल <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> पर अपलोड की जा सकती है। (निविदा लागत: 274.89 लाख)
आयुक्त नगर निगम, बीकानेर
UBN CODE: DLB2021WSOB18306
R.O.No.:Samwad/C/7901/2020-2021 dt. 21-12-20

MOTHER DAIRY
G.K.V.K. POST, YELAHANKA, BANGALORE-560065
(A Unit of: Karnataka Co-operative Milk Producers' Federation Ltd.)
e-mail: enggpur@motherdairykmf.in
Tele. No. 080-22179084. Fax: 080-28462652

TECHNICAL CUM COMMERCIAL TENDER FOR SUPPLY OF VARIOUS EQUIPMENTS THROUGH e-PROCUREMENT <https://proc.karnataka.gov.in>

TENDER NOTIFICATION

SECTION 1. INVITATION FOR TENDERS (IFT) Date: 24-12-2020

Mother Dairy, Bangalore invites tenders from manufacturers / dealers / eligible tenderers for supply/Service of the following Equipments.

Sl. No.	Details of Equipments	Qty
Tender No: MD/ENGG/PROJ/T-90/2020-21		
1	Supply, Installation & commissioning of 125KVA capacity Power generator for Bio-gas at ETP Section	01 Set
Tender No: MD/ENGG/PROJ/T-91/2020-21		
2	Fabrication supply installation of SS cupboards with sink and granite top at Quality assurance section	01 Set
Tender No: MD/ENGG/PROJ/T-92/2020-21		
3	Supply, Installation & commissioning of Mechanical lift, prepack Section.	01 Set
Tender No: MD/ENGG/PROJ/T-93/2020-21		
4	Fabrication supply installation of SS Double track Milk crate conveyor for Milk crate area at Prepack section	04Nos.
Tender No: MD/ENGG/PROJ/T-94/2020-21		
5	Supply of 2 ton capacity Fully electric operated stacker for Mother Dairy.	01No

1) Tenderers are advised to note the qualification criteria specified in Section VII to qualify for award of the contract. 2) Tender documents may be downloaded from e-procurement website. Interested tenderers may obtain further information at the same address. Mother Dairy will not be held responsible for the website problems if any, last date submission or non-receipt of the same. 3) Tenderer should pay the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD), and tender processing fee, which shall be Paid online through e-Procurement Portal. 4) Other details can be seen in the tender documents.
Date of commencement of Tender Download: 28-12-2020 Pre bid meeting at Mother dairy, date & time: 13-01-2021 at 11.00 am Last date for submission of Tender on or before 27-01-2021 upto 17.00 hrs Date of opening of Technical Tender: on 29-01-2021 at 11.00am.
For MOTHER DAIRY
Sd/- DIRECTOR

OFFICE OF ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER PHED, JAIPUR REGION-I, JAIPUR
Jyoti Nagar, Sahakar Marg, Jaipur-302005
Phone: 0141-2740170 (o) ace1.jpr.phed@rajasthan.gov.in

No.: FJ(ACE)/PHED/Ar. Dausa/ NIT 21/2020-21/5573-94 Date: 16.12.2020

(e-NIT No. 21/2020-21)
Online tenders are, hereby, invited on behalf of the Governor of Rajasthan for the following works from the bidder meeting eligibility as per criteria mentioned in the detailed tender document which can be seen and downloaded from website <https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>. Tenders are to be submitted online in electronic format on website <https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> as per schedule given below:-

NIT No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs. in lacs)	Earnest Money (Rs. in lacs)	Last date for submission of tender	Due date for opening
21/2020-21	RWSS Rajpura & Maharajpura Division Dausa Dist Dausa	203.79/-	203787/-	29.12.2020 (up to 6.00 PM)	30.12.2020 (1.00 PM)

NIT No.	NIB No.	UBN No.
21/2020-21	PHE 2021A4053	PHE 2021W50B07674.

SAVE WATER - SAVE LIFE

Sd/- (R.C. Mishra) Addl. Chief Engineer PHED, Jaipur Region-I, Jaipur

REMOTE SENSING APPLICATIONS CENTRE U.P.
Sector -G, Jankipuram, Kursi Road, Lucknow-226 021 (U.P.)
Ph: 0522-2730451, Fax: 0522-2730535 Email : director.rsac.up@gov.in
RSAC: PC: 2020:17 Date: 23.12.2020

e-TENDER NOTICE
Online e-tenders are invited from the Manufacturers/ Authorized distributors/ dealers for the supply of following items. The tenderers are required to submit their online Technical Bid and (800) Commercial Bid separately.

Sl. No.	PARTICULARS OF ITEMS	QTY	COST OF TENDER DOCUMENT WITH GST @ 18% IN Rs.	EARNEST MONEY DEPOSIT IN Rs.
1.	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) Mounting Camera for UAV & UAV Data Processing Software (in bundled form)	01 No.	590/-	33000/-

The supplier shall strictly adhere to all the latest guidelines of Director General of Civil Aviation, Govt. of India for supply of the above A-UAV & B-Mounting Camera, wherever applicable,

Bid Submission Start Date : 23.12.2020
Bid Submission End Date : 06.01.2021 1.00 P.M.
Bid Opening Date : 07.01.2021 3.00 P.M.

Detailed description and Tender Documents available at e-tender website <https://www.etender.up.nic.in> The tender will be accepted online only on e-tender Portal. The competent authority of Remote Sensing Applications Centre, U.P. Lucknow reserves the right to reject/ cancel any or all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

ACTING DIRECTOR

TIRUNELVELI SMART CITY LIMITED
SMART CITIES MISSION
NOTICE INVITING TENDERS (NIT) Dated: 23.12.2020
The Managing Director, Tirunelveli Smart City Limited, Tirunelveli hereby invites Bids through both on-line and off-line from eligible bidders for the following works:

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Estimate Amount Rs. in crores	Bid Security Rs. In Lakhs	Period of Completion
1	Construction of Whole Sale Market at Palayapettai in Ward No.5 near Truck Terminal.	13.81	13.81	12 months
2	Development of Cycle Track at NGO Colony in Ward No.27	2.84	2.84	6 months
3	Construction of Smart Bus Shelter in Palayamkottai and Melapalayam Zones. (15 Locations)	2.12	2.12	6 months
4	Development of Mahatma Gandhi Fruit and Vegetable Market at Palayamkottai.	14.92	14.92	12 months
5	Construction of Mahatma Gandhi General Market in Palayamkottai.	14.90	14.90	12 months
6	Construction of Mahatma Gandhi Commercial Complex at Palayamkottai.	10.22	10.22	12 months
7	Providing 10 MLD capacity of Sewage Treatment Plant adopting Advanced Technology Method at Ramayanpatti Compost Yard in Tirunelveli.	14.89	14.89	12 months
8	Construction of Washerman ghat with IoT at Karupandurai and Vannarpettai in Tirunelveli Corporation. (3 locations)	4.20	4.20	6 months
9	Re-development of VOC Stadium at Palayamkottai in Tirunelveli Corporation	14.95	14.95	12 months

A two cover bidding procedure will be adopted. The bidders shall satisfy the qualification criteria and the financial criteria as mentioned in the Bid document. The bidding documents will be available from 25.12.2020 to 27.01.2021. A pre-bid meeting to be held on 11.01.2021 on 11.00 hours. Tender documents can be downloaded from the website <https://tntenders.gov.in>. The bidder shall upload their bids on or before 15.00 hours on 27.01.2021. The tender will be opened on 15.30 hours on 28.01.2021.
Managing Director
Tirunelveli Smart City Limited, Tirunelveli Corporation Office,
Office : 0462-2329328
Fax : (0462)-2329327
DIPR/4912/TENDER/2020

PDPM Indian Institute of Information Technology, Design and Manufacturing, Jabalpur
(An Institute of National Importance, established by an Act of Parliament)
Dumma Airport Road, Jabalpur (M.P.)-482005

Short Employment Notice
Institute invites eligible applicants for Walk-in-Interview on Monday, January 11, 2021 for the position of Junior Research Fellow in a DST-RFBR Sponsored Research project. The last date of submission for application is January 9, 2021. For further details, please visit our website www.iitdmj.ac.in. Registrar

THE ASKA COOPERATIVE SUGAR INDUSTRIES LTD.
P.O. Nuagam (Aska) - 751111, Ganjam District, Odisha
Ph.No.06822 273464, Email: askasugar@yahoo.co.in,
Web : www.askasugar.com

TENDER CALL NOTICE
Letter No.Mktg./4536/4541/4544/4547 Dt.22.12.2020
The Aska Cooperative Sugar Industries Ltd., at Nuagam (Aska) in Ganjam District of Odisha State intends to (1)Sugar bag bagging, weighing, stitching, numbering, Stacking, Sugar bag Loading on the vehicle & removal of filter cake for 2020-21 Crushing Seasoning. (2)SALE OF MOLASSES Please visit our website askasugar.com for detailed Tender Call Notice. The last date for submission of tender till 5.00PM on 06.01.2021. Managing Director

नौरडा
नवीन ओखला औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण
मुख्य प्रशासनिक ऑफिस, सेक्टर-6, नौरडा
Website : www.noideaauthorityonline.com

सार्वजनिक सूचना
एतद्वारा सूचित किया जाता है कि नौरडा प्राधिकरण के विभिन्न विभागों में कार्यशील लगभग 140 दूरभाष तथा 80 ब्रॉडबैंड कनेक्शन के रख-रखाव, दूरभाष / ब्रॉडबैंड के प्लान / मॉडम लगाने तथा खराब होने पर अविलम्ब दूरभाष केन्द्र से समन्वय स्थापित कर ठीक करवाने हेतु 12 माह का अनुबंध (ए.म.सी.) किया जाना है। साथ ही प्राधिकरण में दूरभाष उपकरणों इत्यादि जैसे प्लान 1+1 तथा कोर्डलेस फोन, इन्टरनेट मॉडम की आवश्यकता होती है, इनकी दरे भी निविदा में उल्लेखित की जाये, निविदा फार्म, निविदा प्रपत्र हेतु सामान्य प्रशासन विभाग सेक्टर-06 से सम्पर्क करें।
इस संबंध में जो आवेदन/संस्था उक्त कार्यों का अनुभव रखते हो तो पत्र जारी होने के एक वर्ष हेतु वार्षिक अनुबंध हेतु दिनांक 24.12.2020 से 07.01.2021 तक निविदा प्रकाशित की जाती है। इच्छुक आवेदन विस्तृत विवरण सहित सील्ड कवर लिफाफे में दिनांक 07.01.2021 को अपराह्न 02.00 बजे तक सहा. महाप्रबंधक, सामान्य प्रशासन, मुख्य प्रशासनिक भवन, सेक्टर-06, नौरडा के कार्यालय में प्रस्तुत कर सकते हैं। प्राप्त निविदा को दिनांक 07.01.2021 को सांय 04.00 बजे खोला जायेगा।
स्वच्छ, हरित, सकृशल, सुरक्षित नौरडा

MADURAI SMART CITY LIMITED
Municipal Corporation Building, Aringar Anna Maligai, Tallakulam, Madurai - 625 002
Ref. No. MSC/L/003309/19 Phone : 0452 - 2530521 to 0452 - 2530526 Date : 24.12.2020

NOTICE INVITING REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) - 2nd CALL
The Managing Director, Madurai Smart City Limited hereby invites "Request for Proposal (RFP)" for Implementation of System Integrated Command and Control Centre at Madurai City Municipal Corporation under Smart Cities Mission Scheme. The RFP document for the subject project will be available at the following addresses on payment of Rs.12,500/- in the form of a Demand Draft from any scheduled bank, drawn in favour of "The Managing Director, Madurai Smart City Limited" payable at Madurai.
The "Request for Proposal (RFP)" document will be available for download at free of cost from the Website <http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in> from 24.12.2020 to 27.01.2021, 3.00 PM. Pre-bid Meeting is on 04.01.2021, 4.30 PM at Conference Hall in Aringar Anna Maligai. The RFP should be accompanied with an Earnest Money Deposit as (Rs. 12,31,000/-) specified in the Tender Document. The RFP documents shall be submitted in person on or before 03.00 pm on 27.01.2021 at the following address ;
"The Managing Director
Madurai Smart City Limited, Madurai City Municipal Corporation
Aringar Anna Maligai, Tallakulam, Madurai-625002"
Telephone Number : 0452-2532412
e-mail Address: mducorpc@gmail.com,
The RFP documents received after the due date of submission will not be accepted and such proposals will be summarily rejected. For any clarifications regarding this tendering, the applicants may contact the City Engineer, Madurai Corporation, Contact No: 0452-2532412 during the office hours.
Managing Director, MSC/L & Commissioner, MMC
DIPR / 4955 /TENDER/2020

NORTHERN RAILWAY

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Name of work and its location:-	30-Elect-16-T-R2-20-21-E3 Removing and commissioning of submersible pumps over Delhi Division.
Approx cost of the works in:-	Rs. 31.58 lacs
Address of the office:-	Sr. Divl Elect, Engineer/General, New Delhi.
Earnest Money:-	Rs. 63200.00
Date & time of submission of tender:-	21.01.2021, 12.00 Hrs.
Opening of tender:-	21.01.2021, 12.00 Hrs.
Website & notice board:-	www.treps.gov.in & Sr. Divl. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi.

2860/2020

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

BANARAS LOCOMOTIVE WORKS, VARANASI - 221004

Bld No. E-67/2020-21 E-Tender Notice Date : 19.12.2020

E-Tenders are invited for & on behalf of the President of India following items only E-tenders will be accepted for which vendors must have Class III Digital Signature and registration on IREPS. The details of tenders in the following sequence : S. No., Tender No. (Due Date), Description and Quantity. S. No. 1. 06201389 (05.01.2021), Complete Auxiliary Cubicle HB1 along with all equipments and cabling for WAG9 loco as per CLW Spec. No. CLW/ES/3/0191, Alt. E (Bare panel shall be as per drawing no. 1209-15.143-001 Alt. 11 & S. No. CLW/MS/3/047 Alt. 12) to PL No. 29171180, Quantity : 330 SETS. S. No. 2. 06201388 (05.01.2021), Complete Auxiliary Cubicle HB2 along with all equipments and cabling for WAG9 loco as per CLW Spec. No. CLW/ES/3/0192, Alt. F (Bare panel shall be as per drawing no. 1209-15.143-002 Alt. 13 & S. No. CLW/MS/3/047 Alt. 12) to PL No. 29171192, Quantity : 326 SETS. S. No. 3. 06201387 (05.01.2021), Pantograph for A.C. Freight Electric Locomotives with 5% extra throttle valve as manufacturing spares for WAG-9 Electric Locomotive CAT No. P/0/0168 C & D No. T016/001 SPEC. No. RDSO/2008/EL/SPEC/0066, Rev. 0, AMD No. 1, DL 31.12.08 with amendment No. 2 to Modification Sheet No. ELRS/MS/0333, Rev. 0 Dated 20.12.2004 & RDSO/ELRS/ELMS/0389 Rev. 0 Dated 31.08.10 to PL No. 29880026, Qty. : 676 Nos., S. No. 4. 06201391 (05.01.2021), Set of Cable Tray with Sliding Nuts and Hardware for WAG-9 LOCO, DRG No. 29612950 ALT. NIL Spec.: CLW/ES/03/0132/O to PL No. 29612950, Qty. : 338 SETS. The details of above Tenders are available on website www.blw.indianrailways.gov.in and www.treps.gov.in. Corrigendum S.N. 1, Tender No. : 05205357 Bld No. : E-61 Rev. 01 Existing Due Date : 23.12.2020 Revised Due Date : 05.01.2021 Existing Desc. : Existing Description : Heavy duty manually operated hydraulic mobile floor crane. S.N. 2, Bid No. : E-64 Tender No. : 09201132 Head Light Lamp, to PL No. 29610023 Revision : 1 Details : The date of opening of tender has been revised and now the same will be opened on 07.01.2021 instead of 30.12.2020. Note : All other terms and conditions will remain unchanged for above tenders. PRO/BLWS-73 Principal Chief Material Manager
f /banaraslocomwork "Website: <https://blw.indianrailways.gov.in>"

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

TENDER NOTICE

Senior Divisional Mechanical Engineer, Southern Railway, Divisional Office, Salem - 636005 invites ONLINE tenders for under mentioned works as per tender notice given in our e-tender portal www.treps.gov.in
1. Tender Notice Number and date: SA-M-12/2020 dated 21.12.2020.
2. Name of work: Supply, installation and commissioning of a Solid Waste Management Facility (Non-heater based Fully Automatic Organic Waste Composter (AOWC) with Material Recovery Facility) at Mettupalayam Railway Station.
3. Estimate Value: Rs.23.99,840/-
4. Earnest Money: Rs.48,000/-
5. Cost of Tender Form: Rs.3,360/-
6. Tender Closing date and Time: 12.01.2021 at 14.00 hrs.
7. Web address: <http://www.treps.gov.in> Visit www.treps.gov.in for all details relates to eligibility criteria, documents to be submitted, other terms & conditions, mode of payment of EMD. Only online application accepted. Enrolling in the e-portal and digital signing of online bid is mandatory.
Note: It is the responsibility of the tenderers to check any Corrigendum is issued for any correction, deletion or modification uploaded subsequently in the website and the same shall be taken into account while uploading the tender For further details please visit website at www.treps.gov.in.
Senior Divisional Mechanical Engineer, Southern Railway, Salem - 636 005.
Follow us on @GMSRailway

20 SPORT

MESSI SURPASSES PELE IN BARCA WIN

Barcelona turned on the style to thrash Real Valladolid 3-0 away in La Liga on Tuesday as Lionel Messi scored his 644th goal to surpass Pele as the all-time record scorer for a single club. Messi also finally got his first assist of the season when he picked out defender Clement Lenglet with a splendid cross and the Frenchman rose to head Barca in front after 21 minutes.

REUTERS

Bedi wants his name removed from Kotla stand over Jaitley's statue

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
DECEMBER 23

FORMER INDIA captain Bishan Singh Bedi has written to Delhi and District Cricket Association (DDCA) president Rohan Jaitley, asking for the removal of his name from a stand at the Feroz Shah Kotla after coming to know about plans to install a statue of Rohan's father and former head of the state association, Arun Jaitley, at the stadium.

Bedi and Jaitley were often at loggerheads during the latter's lifetime with the legendary spinner alleging corruption and misappropriation of funds during his tenure at the helm of DDCA. "After the Feroz Shah Kotla stadium was named hurriedly and most undeservingly after Late Arun Jaitley, my reaction then was maybe somehow good sense might prevail to keep Kotla sacrosanct. How wrong I was. I now gather a statue of

Late Arun Jaitley is going to be installed at the Kotla. I pride myself as a man of immense tolerance and patience but DDCA has truly tested me and forced me to take this drastic action," Bedi wrote.

"So Mr President, I request you to remove my name from the stand that was named after me with immediate effect. I also hereby renounce my DDCA membership. ... A mere google search would have helped to know that Late Arun Jaitley's tenure at DDCA was riddled with corruption. He might have been a good cricket fan too, but his dalliance with cricket administration was dubious and left much to be desired. This is not a rhetorical assessment but a factual appraisal of his time at DDCA. Take my word, failures don't need to be celebrated with plaques & busts. They need to be forgotten." Two stands at the Kotla were named after Bedi and Mohinder Amarnath in 2017 to recognise their contribution to Indian, and Delhi cricket."



Bishan Singh Bedi made the demand in a scathing letter addressed to DDCA President Rohan Jaitley, the son of late Arun Jaitley.

Express file

Taking a shot at the "DDCA's court culture of fawning obeisance", Bedi described himself as "too headstrong ... too Old school ... & too proud an Indian cricketer to be co-opted into the corrupt darbar of sycophants Arun Jaitley

It's WG Grace and not some former president whose statue is at Lord's. There's also Sir Garry Sobers at Barbados and Sir Don Bradman at SCG, Shane Warne at MCG. The list is endless... Sporting arenas need sporting role models. The place of administrators is only in their glass cabins."

BISHAN SINGH BEDI
FORMER INDIA CAPTAIN

mustered at the Kotla during his stewardship. ... "While stressing that it wasn't his intention to talk ill of the dead, Bedi said he had to stick to his principles. "I was not raised to carry on a fight to the next generation but

then I was also taught, and I firmly believe, to stick to the stand I take," Bedi wrote.

The former India skipper also had a word of advice for present DDCA president Rohan. "These are the ills of nepotism – you get blamed for decisions you weren't part of and you can't even give the excuse of absence."

Confirming to *The Indian Express* that there were plans to install a statue of his father at Kotla, DDCA president Rohan said, "That is something which (Bedi is doing) according to his will. I can't stop something (him). Right now, there is a proposal in the pipeline (for the statue) that other board members have taken. And whenever there is an appropriate announcement to be made, we will make it. I have not been a signatory to the resolution of this nature because it is a conflict also."

In his letter, Bedi pointed out that in almost every great cricket venue around the world, it's eminent players who are honoured with statues, busts and stands named

after them. "It's WG Grace and not some former president whose statue is at Lord's. There's also Sir Garry Sobers at Barbados and Sir Don Bradman at SCG, Shane Warne at MCG. The list is endless. So when kids walk to these stadiums, these majestic statues enhance and enliven the inspiring stories of these past heroes that their elders tell them. Sporting arenas need sporting role models. The place of administrators is only in their glass cabins," Bedi said.

He said the culture at the DDCA has left him with no option but to sever his ties with the association. "Since DDCA doesn't understand this universal sporting culture, I need to walk out of it. I can't be part of the stadium that has got its priorities so wrong and where administrators get precedence over the cricketers. Please bring down my name from the stand with immediate effect. ... I don't want my legacy to be maligned by my silence or association to this unsporting act," he added.

BRIEFLY

Maradona autopsy shows no drink or illegal drugs

In a bid to save its New Year fixture between India and Australia, the Sydney Cricket Ground Trust has offered to host the Brisbane Test too, if the Queensland government refuse to grant exemptions to the teams returning from New South Wales. Cricket Australia (CA) was put on high alert earlier this month after an outbreak of the COVID-19 virus in the northern beaches in Sydney, which is scheduled to host the third Test from January 7. Even though the situation in northern beaches has improved, there are concerns that Queensland may close its border with New South Wales, which will mean players and broadcasting crews will not be able to travel from Sydney to Brisbane between the third and fourth Tests.

Goa pip Jamshedpur in a thrilling contest

Vasco: Igor Angulo scored a stoppage-time winner to help FC Goa script a thrilling 2-1 victory over Jamshedpur FC in a Hero Indian Super League match at Tilak Maidan, here on Wednesday. Stephen Eze (33rd minute) had put Jamshedpur ahead in the first half but Angulo's brilliant brace (64th, 90+4th) helped Goa claim all three points and end JFC's six-match unbeaten run. Both the sides showed attacking intent from the word go but had just a single shot on target in the first half as they failed to create clear-cut opportunities. Brandon Fernandes had a chance to put his side ahead in the game early on when he was set up by Jorge Ortiz on the left. .

Juve suffers first league defeat

Turin: Juventus fell to its first league defeat of the season as the 10-man Bianconeri lost 3-0 at home to Fiorentina to slip further behind in Serie A on Tuesday. Duan Vlahovi got Fiorentina off to the perfect start when he scored in the third minute. An Alex Sandro own goal and a late effort from former Juventus defender Martin Ceres sealed the match for Fiorentina, which recorded its first win since Cesare Prandelli returned as coach.

AGENCIES

Very few players have overhauled their batting techniques so much and so often as Agarwal, as he looks for the recipe of consistent success at the highest level

SRIRAM VEERA
DECEMBER 23

DISCUSSIONS ABOUT batting technique aren't just a digression for Mayank Agarwal. He would get obsessed with it so much that after a few intense years, his coach RX Murali had to devise a diversion, to avoid so much tech-talk. And Murali is a "technique" coach! That's how desperate Agarwal was to get his game together to achieve his ambition of playing for India.

Much of the diversionary alleys were paved with meditation and fitness; Agarwal even attempted to marinate the two together. He would run long distances without the mental crutch of music in his ears. He didn't want to block out thoughts with songs, but allowed them to come into his head and swirli out without getting caught up in them. The meditative headspace he desired when batting. Self-doubts and distracting thoughts could drift in but shouldn't linger on. He desired a sense of balance at the crease, physically and mentally.

Adapting to change

In this Indian team, not many batsmen have continuously overhauled their games as much as Agarwal. Most innovate within an existing framework, but Agarwal's are re-inventions. That this can be achieved at this level, so clinically, passionately and professionally is gripping in its own way.

Like the way he holds his bat these days, as the bowler runs in, Agarwal put that method in place three years back, says Murali. There are two things in particular that stands out: The bat's toe-end faces the sky, and the hands are behind his right hip, way back.

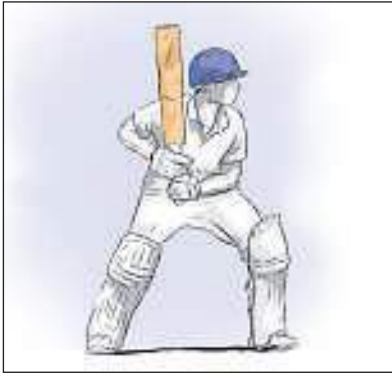
Why does the bat end face skywards, vertically up? The tall Mark Waugh used to go with the vertically-down approach, his hands relaxed as he waited for the ball to be released. Sachin Tendulkar held it more conventionally, and would lever the bat up. Graham Gooch had the bat up but not as much as Agarwal.

"The bat is at its heaviest when parallel to the ground. When it's vertically up - or down - it's lightest. When it's 90-degree facing sky-



Opener Mayank Agarwal gets out of the way of a bouncer. (Below) The change in the way he holds the bat.

Pic-AP/illustrations- Suvajit Dey



When the bat is vertically up — or down — it's lightest. Agarwal feels it helps in the wrist cocking-uncocking process which aids the smooth bat-swing.

wards or downwards, it's lighter. Mayank wasn't comfortable keeping it down. So, we decided to take it up. This also helps in the wrist cocking-uncocking process and smooth bat-swing," Murali says.

Unorthodox but effective

This unique positioning of the bat is allied with the way Agarwal has his hands behind his body. His friend KL Rahul comes close in terms of having his hands back but even his laxman rekha is at the right hip; Agarwal breaches it often. Why?

"To get the bat moving freely. His bat was overlapping his arm in his pick-up in the past. He used to cock his wrists so much that his bat used to pass his front shoulder at times. It wasn't helping him time the ball well. Since he had to uncock it perfectly before hitting the ball, he



He used to cock his wrists so much that his bat used to pass his front shoulder. Having his hands behind restricts him from cocking too much.

wasn't able to repeat it consistently," says Murali.

In other words, he had to make the entire bat movement simpler. "Yes, so that he could be more consistent. That's when we decided to have his hands behind his right hip. It restricts him from cocking his wrists too much. Now, everything syncs better, and the movement is smoother and repeatable."

This allows for a free movement of the bat to time the ball well, and also helps him stay side-on, says the coach.

"That's the reason for him to have his hands behind the right hip. He wanted to be in the side-on position and stay still for longer - that makes his balance better. This then helps in smooth downswing of the bat and helps his timing. What happens before the ball doesn't matter. What happens when the ball is re-

leased is what counts. At the time of the release, he is side-on, completely free. Sometimes this method can make you grip the bat too tightly, but he loosens it at release," Murali tells this newspaper.

Of course, it isn't as straightforward as that. When the bat is held high and behind the body, there is a threat that Martin Crowe used to talk about. "There is a potential for the hips, shoulders, and head to all close off and for the outside eye [Right eye for the right-hander] to aim at mid-off."

Crowe would worry about another thing with this stance, that can be seen now and then with Agarwal. "When standing tall, the weight can easily shift on to the heels," Crowe would say. This was the case in Agarwal's first innings in Adelaide. When he tried to get forward, the front foot landed on the heel, toe lifted in the air and the transfer of weight went awry. Ideally, batsmen prefer to stay on the balls of the feet, which allows for the best weight transfer. Agarwal landed on the front heel and was late with everything as a result: late on the ball, late in getting the bat down, late in closing the bat-pad-gap, and the ball shot through his defence to clatter the stumps. In the second innings too, occasionally he landed on the heel, and was invariably in trouble when he did so, edging one through slips.

In these times, the whole set-up (high bat-lift and hands behind body) can seem troublesome but line it up with what it seemingly offers Agarwal: An easier cocking-uncocking process, smoother bat-swing, and he, and his coach, feel it allows him to be more side-on. Murali isn't worried as much about coaching batting technique as he is about coaching run-making; and the pair felt this was the best way to go for Agarwal.

The ball-watcher

Crucially, it allows him to do the most important thing he wants to do at the crease: Watch the ball. "By holding the bat unlike that, it also helps him track the ball that much longer while he is waiting. Watching the ball is all he is doing now. It helps him lock into that position as his hands aren't doing anything else. He can focus on the other things: staying still in side-on, tracking the ball longer, and reacting to it."

Agarwal wasn't that good against spin a few years back, often holing out, but has made a remarkable turnaround on that front and took the lead in taking on Nathan Lyon in the last series in Australia. It remains to be seen if he tinkers with his technique further.

All the minute iterations go into Agarwal's mental checklist that he ticks off as he settles into the stance. The grip on the bat, the position of the hands with respect to his body, the vertical bat-lift, the shoulder, the head, and then he is ready to watch the ball.

Rahane is a bowler's captain: Ishant

REUTERS/AP
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

AJINKYA RAHANE is a "bowler's captain" whose calm leadership will come in handy in India's bid to bounce back in the four-test series against Australia, seamer Ishant Sharma said. Regular skipper Virat Kohli left Australia to attend the birth of his first child after India's eight-wicket humiliation in the series-opener in Adelaide inside three days.

Unlike an often-animated Kohli, Rahane maintains a low profile on the field and the bowlers are likely to be consulted more in the last three tests under him, said Ishant.

"He's very confident and I must say he's a bowler's captain," the right-arm bowler, who missed the tour with a side strain injury, told the ESPNcricinfo website.

"We've played so many times together. Whenever Virat was not there, he'd ask me 'What kind of field you want?' When you want to bowl? Do you want to go on (bowling)?" "He's a bowler's captain. He's not someone who'd say 'do this or do that.'"

The 32-year-old quick said Rahane, who led India to test victories against Australia and Afghanistan in the past, often acts as a conduit between the bowlers and Kohli.

While it was nearly impossible to match Kohli's energy on the field, Rahane's composed presence could help India during pressure situations, Ishant said. "If there's a partnership growing and it's a flat phase when fielders are just going through their motions, one player's energy level can change the scenario," he said.

"The kind of energy Virat brings to the table ... not everyone can match that. Jinx (Rahane) spreads calm energy in a pressure situation. There won't be any tension, he'd communicate with the bowlers very well."

Warner, Abbott to miss 2nd Test

Star opener David Warner and pacer Sean Abbott were on Wednesday ruled out of the second Test against India, beginning here Saturday, because of a mix of injuries and COVID-19 protocols. Both Warner and Abbott were outside the team's bio-secure hub to get treatment for their respective groin and calf injuries. The duo was flown out to Melbourne ahead of schedule on Saturday due to concern's over the recent outbreak of coronavirus in Sydney's northern beaches.

"While neither player has been in a specific hotspot on Sydney's northern beaches as outlined by NSW Health, Cricket Australia's biosecurity protocols do not allow them to re-join the squad in time for the Boxing Day test," Cricket Australia said in a statement.

ANAND INTERVIEW

‘Test cricket won’t occupy role it once did... classical chess could go that way’

NIHAL KOSHIE
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

VISWANATHAN ANAND is readying to work with a studio for his recently-announced biopic, he is starting a chess academy, mentoring some of the country's top juniors, and keeping an eye on the mash-up of E-Sports and chess. In an interview with *The Indian Express*, the 51-year-old former world champion talks about why Classical chess may go the way of Test cricket, but stops short of predicting the future graph in this pandemic stricken world.

Chess has grown in popularity during the pandemic. Did you expect the numbers we are seeing?

I underestimated the magnitude. It is amazing how big the number is of people, who had this idea that 'one day I would like to play a little more chess,' but never found the time, but suddenly found a lot of time this year. Chess stores started to run out of chess sets, and chess clocks and chess books. It is hard to

fathom. You don't have easy explanations because the numbers are too large for me to comprehend. People have alternatives, so why did this happen. Suddenly chess has become very cool this year.

World Champion Magnus Carlsen has this Tour for Rapid chess. What do you think is the future of Classical chess?

For someone like me and my generation, this feels like a loss because you think how can you possibly enjoy the game when everything is spinning by so fast? But I have to concede that a different generation sees it differently. As long as the overall popularity of the game is going up, you don't want to be complaining. Magnus said in a couple of interviews that Classical chess had some fundamental issues going forward, and that he thought computers had narrowed the space for Classical chess.

Would I be happy if there was only Rapid chess? I don't know. But in 10 years it matters more what the next generation does. In cricket, Tests will never again occupy the role it once did. In chess also it could get that way. The question is how much of offline tourna-



Viswanathan Anand with son Akhil.

Twitter/@vishy64theking

ments, or should we say 'normal' tournaments will resume. But there are some problems in Classical chess, Magnus is not completely wrong. And there is a lot of good in online chess.

But the world champion talking about the future of Classical chess not being certain should be a worry?

Yes, but he didn't bring up something nobody has thought about. His evaluation was a bit stark for me. But he is running a series of rapid tournaments online. I don't try to draw a conclusion. I am just saying it is out there. It is playing around in my head and like everything this year, we just have to wait and see.

Have you thought of starting a YouTube channel like some of the other players?

I will see, I am not against any of these things. I think you already need a search engine just for YouTube channels on chess by individuals sitting in their bedroom. At some point I will get to it. But there are so many of them, I just don't know what to say. Almost every chess player around the world has the same idea.

Now with streaming happening, how do you see the game changing?

It makes chess more accessible. Even

when you had computers, you needed a certain amount of expertise to understand what they were telling you. Now what we have is the final component, the human explaining the game. And also for online chess tournaments, commentary is made a 100 times easier.

You have announced the launch of a chess academy. How will it be structured?

There are a couple of things which inspired me. One was the Mikhail Botvinnik Chess Academy founded in the 60s. I think Anatoly Karpov was one of his students. Botvinnik felt he had to pass on his knowledge and think of the next generation. Just under two years ago, I went for the annual day of WestBridge Capital in Bangalore and at the end of the meeting was asked if there is something I want to do in chess. I said 'yeah actually.'

I think a fellowship or scholarship captures it better instead of an academy. I pick a few people and support them thanks to WestBridge. I thought we will start with our

youngsters. India has incredibly good juniors but we are not cracking the top-10. They do very well at the junior stage but later on the impact is not the same. So I picked younger players.

All the boys are under-17, Nihal (Sarin) is 16 and the rest are younger. Vaishali (Rameshababu) is 19 but a top junior girl.

Will you be focusing more on mentoring now?

It is not part of a plan, it has happened gradually. In the pandemic year it has not had any impact on my chess because that has pretty much shut down. But on the other hand I don't even know when the chess circuit is going to resume. Next year? I don't have a tournament yet, which I know I am going to play. Maybe something will happen, but it also depends on how effective the (Covid-19) vaccine is. I am also excited about doing these other projects. In the future I will definitely need time for chess and there is going to be a bit juggling.

Find the full interview on indianexpress.com