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AN EXPRESS INVESTIGATION PART FOUR

Govt sets up group under cyber security head to probe China Watching, will report in 30 days

EXPRESS IMPACT MEA talks to Chinese Ambassador; deeply concerned, Jaishankar writes to Cong MP

MANOJ CG, LIZ MATHEW & SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

TAKING up the matter with the Chinese Ambassador, the Government Wednesday set up an expert committee under the National Cyber Security Coordinator to study the revelations in China Watching, an investigation by *The Indian Express*, that a Shenzhen-based company, with links to the Chinese government, is monitoring over 10,000 Indian individuals and entities.



Raises issues similar to ones behind app ban, said official

EXPLAINED

WHY CHINA HARVESTS INDIA DATA PAGE 11

The "targets," as the ongoing investigation has revealed, include President Ram Nath Kovind, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, key Opposition leaders and men and women from across a range of disciplines, politics, legislature, science and strategy to business, judiciary and the media.

The expert committee, led by Lt Gen (ret'd) Rajesh Pant, India's chief coordinator on cyber security, will evaluate the "implications" of the digital surveillance



Foreign secy, Niti CEO on list; Facebook bans Zhenhua Data

KAUNAIN SHERIFF M, JAY MAZOOMDAAR & P VAIDYANATHAN
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

AT LEAST 200 influencers, including scholars, researchers, think tanks and media organisations, and 40 serving and retired Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officers who held key diplomatic positions are listed in the Overseas Key Information Database (OKIDB) created by Chinese firm Zhenhua Data, an



investigation by *The Indian Express* has revealed.
CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Delhi Police officials bring the 17,000-pages-plus chargesheet to Karkardooma court in the Capital on Wednesday. PTI

Police chargesheet 15 for 'conspiracy', link Delhi riots to anti-CAA protests

Ex-AAP councillor, Pinjra Tod members among accused

MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

TRANSCRIPTS OF WhatsApp chats, call records and 747 witnesses are among the key elements of the chargesheet filed Wednesday by the Delhi Police Special Cell against 15 people in a "conspiracy" case related to the February riots in Northeast Delhi.

The chargesheet includes the names of former Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) councillor Tahir Hussain, and Pinjra Tod's Devangana Kalita and Natasha Narwal, as accused. But it does not mention former JNU students, Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam, who were arrested under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) in the case.

Khalid was arrested three days ago and Imam last month in the case, and their names will be mentioned in the supplementary chargesheet in the coming months, police sources said. Imam was already under custody for his alleged role in the violence at Jamia Millia Islamia last December and on charges of delivering speeches deemed "seditious" during protests against the CAA and NRC.

A senior police officer told *The Indian Express* that the chargesheet, filed at the Karkardooma court, is well over 17,000 pages. "The operative part is 2,692 pages and the total number of pages, including annexures, about 17,500. We have 747 witnesses in the chargesheet and are relying on technical evidence, WhatsApp chats and Call

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"Impossible to justify licence given to BJP stalwarts — to rant, threaten"
JULIO RIBEIRO
FORMER MUMBAI POLICE CHIEF
PAGE 3

'Desi kattas in right pockets': Delhi House panel flags five copycat FIRs

SOURAV ROY BARMAN
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

THE DELHI home department has decided to flag five identical FIRs — filed in separate cases against five youths, identified as Faiz Ahmed (30), Athar (23), Sohib (22), Shahrukh (22) and Faizan (28), in connection with the Northeast Delhi riots — in a letter to the Delhi Police Commissioner, *The Indian Express* has learnt.

Besides the names of the constables and the youths, and the place and time of arrest, the FIRs are identical in content: all five seemed to be "suspects"; on spotting policemen, they "turned around" and started "walking away quickly"; and on being frisked, they were found to be carrying loaded "desi kattas" (locally made pistol) "in the right pocket" of their trousers.

The FIRs were filed at the Dayalpur police station under the Arms Act, 1959, on February 27, when the youths were allegedly spotted, between 3 pm and 9.25 pm, in different areas in Northeast Delhi, where the riots broke out on February 24-26.

The decision to flag the FIRs was taken on Wednesday after the Delhi Assembly's committee on welfare of minorities, which is hearing matters related to the riots, brought it to the notice of Principal Secretary (Vigilance) Rajeev Verma, who, officials said, attended the meeting instead of Principal Secretary (Home) B S Bhalla.

The committee also directed Verma to ask the Police Commissioner about the status of the probe into the death of 24-year-old Faizan who, along with two other men, was allegedly made to sing the national anthem

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Court fixes Sept 30 for Babri verdict, tells accused to be present

MANISH SAHU
LUCKNOW, SEPTEMBER 16

A SPECIAL court hearing the 1992 Babri Masjid demolition case on Friday fixed September 30 for pronouncement of judgment, and directed all the accused to remain present in court on that day.

Among the 32 accused are senior BJP leaders Lal Krishna Advani, Murli Manohar Joshi, Kalyan Singh, Sakshi Maharaj, Brij Bhushan Saran Singh and Uma Bharti.

According to PTI, Kalyan Singh, former UP chief minister and now Rajasthan governor, who had tested positive for coronavirus, was discharged from Sanjay Gandhi Postgraduate Institute of Medical Sciences in Lucknow and admitted to a private hospital in Ghaziabad.

In November last year, while deciding the Ayodhya title suit case in a unanimous 5-0 verdict, a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court had referred to the demolition of the Babri Masjid as a "calculated act" in breach of the court order to maintain status quo and "an egregious violation of the rule of law".

"On 6 December 1992, the structure of the mosque was brought down and the mosque was destroyed. The destruction of the mosque took place in breach of the order of status quo and an assurance given to this Court. The destruction of the mosque and the obliteration of

BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



No ground lost in Depsang but India hasn't accessed large parts for 15 yrs

Top officer says Indian patrolling points in area blocked since April; Army steps up presence, on alert to foil any ingress attempt elsewhere along LAC

KRISHN KAUSHIK & NIRUPAMA SUBRAMANIAN
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

CLEARING THE air on the situation in the Depsang Plains in Ladakh, where China has been blocking India's access to four traditional patrolling points since April this year, a top security officer has told *The Indian Express* that while there has been no loss of ground this time around, Indian troops have not had access to a large chunk of territory on their side of the Line of Actual Control for "more than 10 to 15 years" now.

The officer also said that other than the regular ceasefire violations and infiltration, no mobilisation of troops by Pakistan is evident either along the Line of Control, or near Siachen, located 80 km east of the Depsang Plains. Pakistan though has kept a sizeable number of Indian troops engaged on the western front, forcing the Army to increase its presence in Ladakh with troops from other commands.

While the focus at the mo-



An IAF jet in Leh on Wednesday amid the prolonged India-China face-off. PTI

ment is on eastern Ladakh, the Indian Army, the officer said, is fully seized of the possibility that China could attempt ingress at any other place along the contested LAC.

"We expect that China can act anywhere, why talk about just eastern Ladakh. We are looking at Eastern Command also," he said, adding that the forces are on alert along the entire LAC.

While China pulled back its

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

RBI rules out relaxation in loan recast: 'Must protect investors'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 16

RESERVE BANK of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das has virtually ruled out any relaxation in the loan restructuring scheme to tackle the Covid-19-related stress, saying the scheme had been structured to balance the interests of both depositors and borrowers, and to prevent the piling up of bad loans as had happened some years ago.

Das also cautioned that the economic recovery would likely be only gradual, as the upticks in some sectors "appear to be levelling off".

"We don't want to be back in the situation that was five years ago, when NPAs of banks had



Upticks in a few sectors are levelling off: RBI Governor

risen very steeply," the Governor said at the FICCI Executive Committee meeting on Wednesday. He was responding to a plea to extend the recast scheme to four years, with liberal ratios.

"We are also mindful of the fact that Covid has negatively impacted a large number of businesses... they also need relief," he said.

The RBI had chosen an accommodative policy, injected more liquidity, and eased various norms to tackle the global finan-

EXPLAINED Lessons from past crisis

THE MORE accommodative stance taken by the RBI in the wake of the global financial crisis of 2008-09, led to a surge in bad loans from 2014-15. The primary concern of banks, according to the Governor, should be to protect the interests of depositors.

crisis in 2008-09. However, this led to a surge in bad loans from 2014-15.

The primary concern of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

HC land deals gag order unprecedented, will go to SC: Jagan govt advisor

REENIVAS JANYALA
HYDERABAD, SEPTEMBER 16

CALLING THE Andhra Pradesh High Court's gag order as "unprecedented", Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy, a Cabinet-rank leader who is Advisor to the Andhra Pradesh Government (Public Affairs), Wednesday said the state will challenge it in the Supreme Court shortly.

The bench of Chief Justice JK Maheshwari issued an order Tuesday night not to report an FIR filed by the Andhra Pradesh Anti-Corruption Bureau against a former legal officer and others over land purchase in Amaravati.

"Our party and government feel that Tuesday night's order by



Never seen or heard of this kind of order, says SR Reddy

the court, that too a top court, is unprecedented. We have never seen or heard of this kind of order before. Normally, we see governments trying to muzzle the media or bringing in laws to put curbs on the media. When that happens, we have seen that courts have come forward to safeguard the rights of the media. After the High Court's order Tuesday night, we are left wondering how the situation has

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

Afghan women in Doha talks team: 'Taliban have to face, respect us'

DIVYA GOYAL
LUDHIANA, SEPTEMBER 16

THEY FACED the threat of mutilation for wearing nail polish or lipstick. They were publicly flogged for violating the dress code. They were barred from stepping out of home without a male companion. They were denied education.

Today, the three women in the Afghan government's 21-member team that is holding peace talks with an all-male Taliban delegation in Qatar's

Doha have drawn the line for any roadmap that emerges: "We are here to tell the Taliban that it has to face, respect and accept the new Afghanistan."

"We aren't reading from any book, but speaking from what we have experienced; what we, the women, have lived under Taliban rule from 1996 to 2001. We faced systematic discrimination, when women were not treated as humans. A girl could not go to school, our clothes were controlled, a woman could not even visit a doctor without a male companion. But now, the

Taliban have to understand that things have changed," says Fawzia Koofi, a lawmaker from Badakhshan province who is also the Deputy Speaker in Parliament.

The 45-year-old is among the three women at the peace talks that started on September 12, along with Habiba Sarabi, a former minister and teacher, and Sharifa Zurmati, a journalist. A fourth member, Fatima Gailani, not go to school, our clothes were controlled, a woman could not even visit a doctor without a male companion. But now, the



Fawzia Koofi, Sharifa Zurmati and Habiba Sarabi in Qatar

health reasons. Speaking to *The Indian Express* on phone from Doha, Koofi says she recently survived an assassination attempt when a gunman opened fire at her vehicle on August 15, injuring her arm.

"Be it pre-Taliban, Taliban or post-Taliban, women in Afghanistan have been through a lot. But it has only given us more strength to speak up. We are fighting for a country where everyone will have the right to cast their vote regardless of their gender, religion, sect, etc.

Women's rights and issues have to be included everywhere, they cannot be segregated," she says about her expectations from the crucial summit.

Koofi had set up a home school for girls during the Taliban regime and later was the face behind the 'Back to School' campaign for girls in 2001.

"Peace talks are almost always a complicated process across the world. Here, it is more so because there is the Taliban. We are carrying a double responsibility on our shoulders. We are representing not only

women but also our country. We have to preserve our democracy without which peace cannot happen. And democracy will

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



'India at table means it backs talks, recognises impact'

THE EXPRESS INTERVIEW P5

		Total	Vacant		
TOTAL CASES		14,576	7,722		
HOSPITAL BEDS		1,235	479		
VENTILATORS					
		Daily cases	Recoveries	Deaths	Tests
Sep 15		4,263	3,081	36	62,669
Sep 16		4,473	3,313	33	62,593
Total		30,914*	1,94,516	4,839	23,09,578

Gandhians have lost favour with this regime: Ribeiro replies to police chief

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

RETIRED IPS officer Julio Ribeiro Wednesday responded to Delhi Police Commissioner S N Shrivastava's email response to his open letter, saying he had not addressed Ribeiro's "doubts" on why BJP leaders Kapil Mishra, Anurag Thakur and Parvesh Verma's "communal" speeches were being ignored while probing the Delhi riots.

"I realise that it is difficult, indeed impossible, to justify the licence given to the three BJP stalwarts I named — licence to rant, rave and threaten those who were peacefully protesting perceived wrongs. If the speakers were Muslims or Leftists, the police would have surely taken them in for sedition," wrote Ribeiro, who was former Mumbai police commissioner, DGP Gujarat and



Retired IPS officer
Julio Ribeiro

Punjab, and former Indian Ambassador to Romania.

He also said Shrivastava "doubted the patriotism" of activists Harsh Mander and DU Professor Apoorvanand who he had named as "true patriots". "Harsh and Apoorvanand are Gandhians. I should have remembered that Gandhians have lost favour with this

regime!" he said.

Ribeiro said he thought about what he would do if he was in Shrivastava's place and had to "dispel the doubts that your retired brother officers still have about Delhi Police investigation into the NE Delhi riots".

"I would quickly file the chargesheet in all 753 cases, including specially the conspiracy case registered by your Special Cell and get the evidence authenticated in a court of Law. More importantly, I would not prolong the UAPA case by arresting persons just a day or two before the time limit expires for filing the chargesheet," he wrote.

In his original open letter, Ribeiro had said the Delhi Police was taking action against "peaceful protesters" while ignoring senior BJP leaders who made provocative, communal public speeches in the build-up to the violence while "true patri-

ots" like Harsh Mander and Apoorvanand were being entangled in criminal cases.

In response, Shrivastava had defended the investigation saying the police "had questioned persons without regard to their religion and party affiliation" and "collected documentary evidence, including scientific evidence, to support its case".

"While we do not differentiate a complainant on the basis of caste or religion, it may be mentioned solely for the purpose of clearing any doubt in the minds of people questioning our probe, that more than 410 FIRs were registered on the complaints of minority community. The other community accounted for over 190 FIRs. The remaining were registered on the basis of daily diary entries," he had written.

The Delhi Police did not respond to the retired IPS officer's latest statement.

Court stays order to unlock Markaz residence

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

A DELHI court Wednesday stayed an order directing Delhi Police to unlock the residential portion of the Nizamuddin Markaz, which was locked after a case was registered against several people who attended a religious congregation in violation of Covid-19 guidelines in March.

Additional Sessions Judge Sandeep Yadav passed the direction on a plea by Delhi Police, which approached the sessions court against an order passed by a magisterial court on September 11. The magistrate had directed police to inspect the premises in five days and hand over the keys of the residential portion of Nizamuddin Markaz to the family of Tablighi Jamaat chief Maulana Saad. The time period was due to expire on Wednesday.

The sessions court also issued notice to Saad's mother Khalida, on whose application the magisterial court passed the order, and sought her response to the police plea by October 8. An FIR was registered against Saad and six others on March 31, after thousands of people, including foreign nationals, participated in the Tablighi Jamaat congregation at Nizamuddin Markaz, with many of them testing positive for Covid later.

On September 11, the court had said every person, who is a citizen of India, is entitled to the right to life and liberty under the Constitution and the right to access to residential property would fall within one of the sacrosanct rights.

Civil rights activists say protesters being 'framed'

ARANYA SHANKAR
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

"IF YOU are watching this video, it means I have been arrested," said former JNU student Umar Khalid in a video which was recorded before his arrest under the UAPA on Sunday. The 2-minute-11-second video message was played at the Press Club of India Wednesday afternoon, on a laptop connected to a microphone, as civil rights activists held a press conference raising questions on the Delhi Police probe.

"Through this video, I want to send you all a message. The Delhi Police in its investigation is not catching the real perpetrators of the riots... They haven't been questioned even once. On the other hand, those who are critical of the government, especially those protesting against CAA-NRC, are being implicated in false cases," he said in the video.

Speakers at the press conference — senior advocate Prashant Bhushan, former Planning Commission member Syeda Hameed, All India Progressive Women's Association general secretary Kavita Krishnan, Former Delhi University Teachers' Association president Nandita Narain and Pamela Philipose, senior fellow at the Indian Council of Social Science Research — said the "Delhi Police has resorted to a sinister plan to brand, target, frame, and arrest" anti-CAA protesters.

Former JNU Students' Union president Kanhaiya Kumar, who was booked for alleged sedition alongside Khalid in 2016, was also supposed to attend the press conference, but didn't show up because he was occupied in a meeting. He, however, posted a statement on Facebook in which he criticised the arrest of Khalid and Pinjra dot activists Devangana Kalita and Natasha



Umar Khalid's mother Sabiha Khanum at the Press Club on Wednesday. Khalid was arrested on Sunday. Praveen Khanna

Narwal, and the naming of Sitaram Yechury, Yogendra Yadav, Jayati Ghosh and Rahul Roy in the supplementary chargesheet.

"... why have BJP leaders who openly instigated riots not been called for questioning and arrested? Questions being raised on the investigation in the Delhi riots are inevitable as the aim is not to ensure justice but to take political revenge," he said.

Bhushan spoke about BJP leader Kapil Mishra and his "goli maaro" slogans, and videos in which police personnel were allegedly seen pelting stones during the riots. "It's a criminal conspiracy by Delhi Police to frame innocent people protesting peacefully against an unconstitutional law, and those activists who were supporting these peaceful exemplary protests. It's a conspiracy to let off those against whom unimpeachable evidence is available to show their involvement in these riots," he said.

Hameed said the government's "objective" was to "target Muslims and other marginalised, deprived sections". "The idea is to

finish off our composite culture. We are running at a great speed towards a theocratic state. It is up to us to decide now what kind of a country we want," she said.

Krishnan expressed surprise that the government didn't have a record of migrant deaths during the pandemic, but police had 11 lakh pages of evidence against Khalid: "This shows this government's priority. Police is trying to isolate us, get us to speak against each other. I want to tell them — don't even try. There are many differences between us, but we know none of us is a conspirator."

The speakers demanded an "immediate end to the outrageous investigation", "immediate release" of those arrested under UAPA, and constitution of a "judicial enquiry commission" to "ensure justice for the Delhi violence". Many at the protest were holding placards and wearing face masks which said "hum sab (we are all)", followed by the name of someone arrested under UAPA. Among them was Khalid's mother, who wore a face mask saying "hum sab Umar Khalid".

UP's first detention centre for illegal foreigners set to open in Ghaziabad

AMIL BHATNAGAR
NOIDA, SEPTEMBER 16

UTTAR PRADESH'S first detention centre for illegal foreigners is set to come up in Ghaziabad and is likely to be operational by next month. According to district officials, a student hostel in Nandgram has been converted into an open jail for those found violating visa norms by government authorities.

"The property of the hostels had been handed over to the administration for building the detention centre several years ago. All those persons who are declared illegal foreigners are likely to be placed in this jail. The construction inside the hostel is complete and amenities have been taken care of. Some work on the outside portion is still going on," said Sanjay Vyas, District Welfare Officer, Ghaziabad.

The Dr Ambedkar Hostel for SC/ST Students was built between 2010-11 during Mayawati's tenure as CM. The hostel is situated close to the Delhi-Meerut Highway, behind



A student hostel in Nandgram has been converted into the centre, said officials

Rajkiya Inter College. Initially, students from Western UP and adjoining areas took up accommodation at the hostel. However, demand for the hostel declined and the property has been lying vacant for the past five years.

According to officials, district police will be involved with security of the detention centre as well as investigation into alleged violation of visa norms. The District Welfare Committee will be in-charge of running operations, a senior police officer said. The complex has a steel gate

at the entrance, with a separate walk-in entry. The boundary wall of the main hostel premises now has barbed wires across the perimeter. A channel gate has been built at the entrance of the main building. CCTV cameras will be placed at both entrances of the premises.

Intermittent construction work was being carried out but was halted due to the pandemic, said locals. Presently, the boys' hostel section has been converted and can hold approximately 100-120 persons. Inside the centre,

there will be running water and electricity supply with provisions of bathrooms, said officials.

As of now, the maximum number of detention centres, six, are in Assam. The centres have been built in accordance with the MHA's guidelines for those violating the Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1987, and Foreigners Act, 1946. In 2012, the Supreme Court had observed that foreign nationals who had completed their sentence for violation be shifted to detention centres till the time they are deported.

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'IT SHOULD BE THE WAY FORWARD'

HC calls for 'quantum leap' in RT-PCR testing in capital

SOFI AHSAN
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

OBSERVING THAT the Delhi government needs to increase its capacity for RT-PCR testing by a "quantum leap", the Delhi High Court Wednesday asked the Expert Committee constituted by the Lt-Governor on Covid-19 to convene a meeting on priority to consider the extent to which the capacity for RT-PCR testing should be ramped up in the capital. The Delhi government later in the day said in a statement it will implement the court's order.

"We are of the firm view that RT-PCR should be the way forward," the division bench of Justices Hima Kohli and Subramonium Prasad observed, amid opposition from the Delhi government to a proposed court direction asking it to increase RT-PCR testing instead of solely focusing on Rapid Antigen Tests (RAT). The RT-PCR capacity of Delhi is around 14,000 tests per day as against the RAT capacity of more than 50,000 per day.

In response to the court observation that at least 50% of the total testing in Delhi should be RT-PCR, Additional Standing Counsel



Testing underway at the Civic Centre, Tuesday. Praveen Khanna

Satyakam submitted there has to be "some benchmark" and there cannot be some "imaginary benchmark" for Delhi. Satyakam also submitted that Delhi's testing is the best today, adding that the state was doing "maximum testing" and it is not at number one in the country as far as infections are concerned but at 10th. The court observed, "Modesty is not your virtue. In any case, saying you are best should come from those who are residents of the city and not from the state executive. You are vying to be number one when we hope you never achieve that number in this competition."

The court added that Delhi had managed to bring down cases to below 1,000 per day and it should achieve that again.

The division bench earlier observed that testing through RAT is resulting in several false negatives, with asymptomatic patients walking around without being aware about their status as carriers of coronavirus. The court said it was a matter of concern that while RAT numbers have increased, the same has not happened for RT-PCR testing. The counsel representing Delhi submitted that RAT numbers may be going up due to an increase in the

EXPLAINED Issues with RAT

Questions over Rapid Antigen Tests stem from the high number of false negatives it can throw up. ICMR guidelines say those with symptoms who test negative through RAT must be retested via RT-PCR. This has proved to be difficult to implement. Only 0.8% of over 7 lakh who tested negative through RAT in Delhi have been retested through RT-PCR so far.

number of containment zones and that such numbers will be higher because there is no scrutinised criteria for testing under RAT strategy like RT-PCR. It was also submitted that Delhi's capacity for RT-PCR is limited.

The division bench said both mohalla clinics and community centres be roped in for setting up facilities for Covid testing, particularly when the number of cases are "shooting up" on a daily basis.

Two more hospitals to tackle Covid cases

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

WITH THE number of cases rising in Delhi, the government has partially converted two more of its hospitals — Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital and Baba Sahab Ambedkar Hospital — into Covid facilities.

Each hospital medical superintendent has been asked to set aside 100 beds each and turn them into Covid wards.

On Wednesday, the city recorded 4,473 cases — the highest till date. As the city's testing figures have gone up — over 62,000 people were tested on Tuesday — so have the number of cases. The overall positivity rate is around 10%, while the average positivity

rate over the past week hovers around the 7% mark. Almost a fifth of the tests were conducted through the RT-PCR method, while the rest were done using Rapid Antigen Test kits.

The total active cases in the city have touched 30,914. Of these, over 17,000 are under home isolation and their health is supposed to be tracked by district health officials every day. On Wednesday, deaths of 33 Covid patients were reported. The total case fatality rate in Delhi so far is 2.1%.

With no restriction in movement at borders and the increase in cases in the city over the past two weeks, hospital beds are also filling up. Of the 1,235 beds with ventilators, 62% are occupied. Overall, out of the 14,576 beds, 7,722 are available.

Willing to plan rehab of slum dwellers: Govt

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

DELHI URBAN Development Minister Satyendar Jain wrote to Union Railway Minister Piyush Goyal on Wednesday conveying willingness to formulate a plan to rehabilitate those living in the 48,000 jhuggis along railway tracks, which have to be evacuated as per Supreme Court orders.

Slum dwellers have to be rehabilitated before their houses are demolished, and alternate housing has to ideally be within 5 kilometres of the jhuggi. The Delhi government will have to work in tandem with the Centre as the land near railway tracks comes under the jurisdiction of Northern Railway.

"A detailed plan has to be created to find out where every slum is to be rebuilt. We will cooperate fully with you in formulating these policies, and the Delhi government can make these plans and give it to you if you need it," Jain wrote.

He also said that BJP and AAP have both promised slum dwellers permanent homes in the past. Delhi government has already built houses under Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission where jhuggi dwellers can be rehabilitated but most of these are in the outskirts of Delhi.

He proposed that those whose jhuggis do not have vacant land around them can be shifted to the existing houses in areas such as Bhorganh, Bhalaswa, Bawana and Ghoghha.

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BRIEFLY

'Decide bail plea of Jamia student expeditiously'

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court Wednesday directed the trial court to consider afresh the bail application of Jamia Millia Islamia student Asif Iqbal Tanha in the UAPA case registered against him and others by Delhi Police, and decide the application, in case it is filed, expeditiously, preferably within two weeks.

Constables transferred

New Delhi: A Delhi Police head constable and constable have been transferred after they allegedly slapped a man for not wearing a facemask while he was sitting alone in his car in Lajpat Nagar earlier this month.

Ridge panel meet postponed

New Delhi: A meeting slated for Friday of the Ridge Management Board, a committee formed under the Supreme Court's direction to preserve Delhi's Ridge, has been postponed until appointment of two independent members.

Man pushed to death

New Delhi: A 60-year-old man was allegedly pushed to his death by his neighbours from a building's third floor in Shahdara's Vishwas Nagar, following a dispute. Police said one man has been arrested. ENS

FROM SEPT 21, OPTION TO OPEN FOR CLASSES IX-XII

Allowed to reopen, pvt schools seek parents' guidance for the way ahead

SUKRITA BARUAH NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

PRIVATE SCHOOLS in the city have started reaching out to parents of senior students to assess how many of them would be willing to send their children to school to seek guidance from their teachers, as permitted by the Union Health Ministry, from September 21.

According to guidelines, schools outside containment zones will be allowed to reopen from September 21 for students of Classes 9 to 12. The attendance is to be voluntary, only for the purpose of extra guidance while online classes continue.

In preparation for this, schools are now trying to assess how many parents will be willing to be part of this. "We have formulated a consent form and sent it to parents through our PTA representatives and signatures of both parents will be required. The Health Department has provided us with

guidelines which will be kept in mind, but at the micro-level schools will also create their own SOPs depending on the number of students we are likely to see according to parental response," said The Indian School principal Tanja Joshi.

The SOP issued by the health department includes precautions such as sanitising all work areas in the schools with 1% sodium hypochlorite solution, staggered reporting of students to school, hand sanitiser and thermal screening at all entry points, markings on floors to ensure physical distancing and prohibition of sharing of items.

However, Jyoti Bose, principal Springdales School Dhaura Kuan, said the confidence of parents will be the most crucial part of the re-opening process. "We can have everything in place according to the SOP, but for now everything depends on the response we get. At the moment, most parents are petrified, especially looking at the number of cases in the past week



Once schools reopen, attendance will be voluntary and only for extra guidance while online classes continue

Classes are going excellently online, students are having their doubts cleared by teachers on Microsoft Teams. So it's for parents to decide whether they feel it's necessary to be physically present in school and we will prepare accordingly," she said.

Even as schools try to assess demand from the side of the parents, a set of schools have already formulated a detailed 48-page SOP to prepare for eventual re-opening for all grades, from 1 to

12. Formulated by a committee of principals of Indraprastha International School Dwarka, Mount Abu Public School Rohini, Venkateshwar Global School Rohini, DAV Public School Pushpanjali Enclave, and Dev Samaj Modern School Sukhdev Vihar, the SOP covers details on diverse areas including planning, infrastructure upgradation, transportation, sports and recreation management, and medical emergencies.

"Since schools will eventually have to re-open and the only way is to take complete precautions, we framed these guidelines to prepare ourselves early so we can be fully geared when the time comes. We are trying our best to prepare not just schools but everyone involved in the process, including parents, since we need to build their level of confidence. Any school which wants to prepare and need a point of reference can draw from it," said S K Bhattacharya, President of Action Committee of Unaided

Recognised Private Schools, an association of 400 private schools under which the SOP has been created.

The SOP includes training sessions for all stakeholders, teaching and administrative staff, security staff, transportation staff, students and parents; prominent signages throughout the school complexes reminding students to maintain precautions; no visitors in school premises, 3-4 square metres distance in classrooms; lunch-boxes to be brought from home and eaten at desks; 2-3 students in the washroom at a time; different gates for entry and exit for students travelling to schools through different means to spread them out. It also includes precautions on school buses including 20-25 children only on a 55 seater bus, marking seats with tape to prevent children from sitting close to each other, wiping the bus after each run, thermal screening before entry, tissues and hand sanitiser in the buses, and leaving windows open.

No nod to cut trees for projects in city until further orders, says Rai

SHIVAM PATEL NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

DELHI ENVIRONMENT minister Gopal Rai has asked the forest department to stop giving tree felling permission for projects in the city until further orders, The Indian Express has learnt.

In a letter sent last week, Rai asked the department to give details of how many trees have been felled in the city over the past two years, and compensatory plantation done for the trees felled. The letter, which was confirmed by two officials, states, "No permission of felling of trees will be issued until further orders."

The direction comes at a time when the forest department has had run-ins with the DMRC and Indian Army, over projects in the city. A proposal to cut 17,000 trees for Delhi's third ring road being developed by NHA has also been made in a draft environmental impact assessment report submitted to the DPCC.

An official from Rai's office told The Indian Express the government does not wish to stop development projects in the city. "Environmental issues are sensitive and we take them seriously. All (tree cutting) applications must be deeply examined and final approval must come from the Minister's level," said the official.

Until now, the forest department has been seeking the Minister's approval for projects which are spread over 1 hectare area, before granting permission to cut trees. While the official did not deny such a letter was sent, he said there should be no "immediate approval" of tree cutting applications: "It's not like we have not been giving approvals for projects. In fact, two approvals were given Tuesday... There should be deep monitoring of applications."

A government official said the sudden stoppage of granting tree felling permission could cause a rise in illegal felling: "If people take law in their own hands, it will be very difficult to tackle it."

Delhi Metro's Phase IV to get 'Silver' line

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

'SILVER' WILL be the colour code of Delhi Metro's Tughlakabad-Aerocity corridor being built under the Phase IV project. "The line number and colour code of the three priority corridors of Phase-IV have been assigned. Tughlakabad - Aerocity (line 10) will be Silver Line, Majlis Park - Maujpur (Line 7) is Pink Line Extension & Janakpuri West - RK Ashram (Line 8) is Magenta Line Extension," DMRC said in a statement.

All existing corridors of the Metro network are identified by

different colours. DMRC had decided to colour code its corridors to help commuters remember the routes easily. Accordingly, Line 1 is coded Red, Line 2 Yellow, Lines 3/4 Blue, Line 5 Green, Line 6 Violet, Line 7 Pink, Line 8 Magenta and Line 9 Grey and Airport Express Line Orange.

The lines built under Phase I were all coded using names of primary colours - Red, Blue and Yellow - while secondary colours were used to name Phase II corridors. In case of phase III, tertiary colours (mix of primary and secondary colours) were used.

DMRC MD Mangu Singh approved the new colour on Wednesday.

Sisodia alleges fund misuse in 6 colleges, they deny charge

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16



Sisodia alleged this was part of preliminary observations of an independent audit of the six colleges

DEPUTY CHIEF Minister Manish Sisodia alleged "huge misappropriation in accounts" of six government-funded Delhi University colleges, accusing them of not paying salaries to teachers despite having funds due to corruption and political scores. However, principals of these colleges and teachers' associations said the funds Sisodia referred to are part of accounts which cannot be used for paying salaries.

Staff members of 12 DU colleges funded by the Delhi government have not been paid for the last few months - some since May or June. While the government said it has released 23% of this year's funds, the 12 colleges have been struggling to pay staff as well as bills, which they said is because of fund shortage.

On Wednesday, Sisodia alleged that preliminary observations of an independent audit initiated by the Delhi government of six colleges indicate misappropriation of funds. "The colleges have been screaming they don't have funds and creating noise about the Delhi government not releasing it. In preliminary observations, it has come to fore that these colleges have kept funds in fixed deposits in an illegal manner. They are not paying salaries; the university and college administrations are doing politics together. They have crores with them but are not paying teachers' salaries despite that," he stated.

He alleged auditors found that Keshav Mahavidyalaya has Rs 10.52 crore in its account. "If it has Rs 10 crore, why is it not paying teachers? What does it want to do with this money? Does it want to spend it on bungalows, cars, luxuries? After we increased the salary grant by 3 times in 5 years, you have this money in account but you're not paying salaries and are trying to do politics. This is unacceptable... criminal," he said. He also alleged Bhagini Nivedita College had a balance of Rs 2.5 crore at the end of 2019-2020; Deen Dayal Upadhyay College has Rs.65 crore balance; and Shaheed Sukhdev College of Business Studies Rs. 3.5 crore in their balance sheet in 2018-2019 and Rs 10.45 crore in fixed deposits.

The summaries in the preliminary observation report are of Students Society Funds Account, which principals of the colleges concerned said is not used for salary payment. "How can I make use of funds in one account for payments which are to be made from another account? The grant-in-aid is the only account meant for salary purposes. If I had Rs 6.5 crore that I could use, why would I not pay my staff for months and receive notices from telecom and electricity suppliers for not being able to pay bills?" said DDU college principal Hem Chand Jain.

Shaheed Sukhdev College of Business Studies principal Poonam Verma said the targeting of the six colleges is political in nature. The Delhi government, the colleges and the DU administration have been caught in a tussle over the constitution of governing bodies in these colleges for a long time. "... Student Society Fund is collected for very specific purposes; it is a basic accounting principle that funds raised for one purpose cannot be used for another... In my college, we had democratically elected Kavita Sharma - former principal of Hindu College and former V-C of South Asian University - as governing body chairperson. The Delhi government has been upset its candidature was not selected. ... I am very agitated because these charges are affecting the future of my students," she said.

SALUTE THE SOLDIER MARTYRS OF 201 COBRA. SH. MANORANJAN SINGH, AC (Police Medal for Gallantry), SH. RAKESH KR. CHAURASIA, AC (Police Medal for Gallantry), SI/GD SUSHIL KR. VERMA (Police Medal for Gallantry), HC/GD LALIT KUMAR (Police Medal for Gallantry), CT/GD UDAY KR. YADAV (Police Medal for Gallantry), CT/GD MANOHAR LAL CHANDRA (Police Medal for Gallantry). Martyns of 201 COBRA, CRPF made supreme sacrifice during a search and destroy operation in the area of Vill- Singhnamdgu, Gachhanpalli, U/PS- Chintaguppha, Distt- Sukma, Chhattisgarh on 17th September 2009 in a true act of valour. The brave soldiers will always be remembered for their patriotism and courage. To these brave martyrs we pledge that we shall always be guided by their immortal spirit and do their name proud. IG & All Ranks of COBRA

OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER PHED REGION-I, JODHPUR. No. ACE-IPHE/JU/Distt cr/2020-21/5195-5203 Date 9.9.2020. NOTICE INVITING TENDERS FOR WORKS. Online tender are hereby invited in two envelop system, on behalf of the Hon'ble Governor of Rajasthan for the following works from eligible enlisted contractor / firm as per rules. Details of this tender notification and pre qualification criteria can also be seen in NIT exhibited on web site www.dipr.rajabhandha.gov.in, http://www.rajabhandha.gov.in, in electronic format on website http://www.rajabhandha.gov.in.

NORTHERN RAILWAY Tender Notice. Fabrication, supply, installation & commissioning of rain water arrestor for roof in LHB type AC coaches (1st AC, 2nd AC, Chair car & Pantry car) of Delhi Division. Name of work, Tender No., Approx cost of the work in (Rs.), Cost of tender form, Address of the office, Earnest Money, Period of completion of work, Last date & time of submission of tender, And opening of tender, Website & notice board.

NORTHERN RAILWAY NOTICE INVITING TENDER. Name of work and its location, Approx cost of the works in, Address of the office, Earnest Money, Date & time of submission of tender, Opening of tender, Website & notice board.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY ATOMIC MINERALS DIRECTORATE FOR EXPLORATION AND RESEARCH. BRIEF E-TENDER NOTICE. NIT NO.:AMD/CD/WR/UMRA/CORE/2019-20/178, DATE: 09.09.2020. The Director, (AMD), Begumpet, Hyderabad invites for and on behalf of the President of India, sealed tenders in two parts (TECHNICAL & COMMERCIAL) from eligible Core Drilling contractors, for the following Drilling works in Rajasthan.

कार्यालय मुख्य अभियन्ता, जल संसाधन संभाग कोटा. इस् कार्यालय के पत्रक 603 दि. 20.05.2020 से निविदा सूचना संख्या 01 वर्ष 2020-21 आमंत्रित की गई है। अतिरिक्त कार्यों से निविदा उपरोक्त राजस्थान.गोव.इन पर अपलोड करने, टेंडर करंट, बिड सिम्कॉर्टरी एवं एम.डी.आर.आर.एर.एर. करीब जमा कराने की दिनांक निम्न प्रकार संशोधित की जाती है।

TAMIL NADU WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD INVITATION OF BIDS - TWO COVER - ITEMWAR TENDER SYSTEM. IFB No., Fund, Eligibility, Tender Invitee, Sale of Bid & Place of Sale, Downloading website, Pre Bid meeting, Bid Submission, Bid opening.

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU - PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT BUILDING ORGANIZATION - OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, P.W.D., BUILDINGS (CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE) CIRCLE, SALEM - 7. PRE-QUALIFICATION APPLICATION AND PRICE TENDER - FORM OF CONTRACT - LUMPSUM (TWO COVER SYSTEM) SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE No. 14/2020-22/ISB/C&M/SLM, Dated: 15.09.2020.

Tiruchirappalli City Corporation TENDER NOTICE No : 119/2020-2021. The tenders willing to submit tenders for Establishing Education cum Entertainment Park in CV Raman STEM Park at Panjakkari to cover various Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics concepts in Tiruchirappalli City Corporation valuing at the cost of Rs. 1490.00 Lakhs to be executed under the Tiruchirappalli Smart City Mission are requested to submit tenders through E-Tendering procedure in http://tenders.gov.in as well as through sealed hard copy on or before 3.00 p.m. of 21.10.2020, which will be downloaded and opened at 04.00 p.m. in the same day.

DEVELOPMENT & PANCHAYAT DEPARTMENT BLOCK SONIPAT, DISTT. SONIPAT NOTICE FOR INVITING E-QUOTATIONS. The Governor of Haryana is inviting the bids from eligible bidders through online bids in the website https://etenders.hry.nic.in for the works detailed in the table.

Government of Jammu and Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, PHE, GROUND WATER DIVISION, BAGH ALI MARDANA NOWSHERA, SRINAGAR KASHMIR Gist of E-Tender. NIT No: PHE/GWDS 26 of 09/2020 Dated: .09.2020. For and on behalf of Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir e-tenders are invited in 02 Cover System for Construction production tube well at the following location/site from registered water well drillers/contractors as per the details given in tender document.

MP govt using benefits scheme to sway bypoll voters: Tankha

IRAM SIDDIQUE
BHOPAL, SEPTEMBER 16

CONGRESS RAJYA Sabha MP Vivek Tankha has accused the Madhya Pradesh government of violating the electoral code of conduct by announcing a week-long calendar of welfare programmes ahead of the crucial bypolls in the state.

The Gareeb Kalyan Saptah, from 17 to 23 September, will see Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan inaugurate 601 new anganwadis, add lakhs of beneficiaries to the Public Distribution System and pass on various kinds of benefits to the people.

Tankha wrote to the Election Commission saying the un-scheduled programme was aimed at exploiting the government machinery to influence voters ahead of the bypolls to 27 seats.

He urged the poll body to restrain the ruling BJP in order to conduct free and fair elections.

Tankha claimed in his letter that Collectors and Divisional Commissioner across the state have been instructed to organise the programs under the 'Gareeb Kalyan Saptah' banner "under which crores of rupees are expected to be transferred to voters and BJP workers with the intent to induce, gratify and cast undue influence on voters just before the elections".

The Kamal Nath-led Congress government in the state had lost power after MLAs led by Jyotiraditya Scindia switched over to the BJP.

The bypolls will be held around November.

'Afghanistan's obligation to ensure world not threatened'



THE EXPRESS
INTERVIEW

WITH
**ZALMAY
KHALILZAD**
US SPECIAL ENVOY ON
AFGHANISTAN
RECONCILIATION

We did not discuss the issue of Indian engagement with the Taliban.

Do you think India is moving towards engaging with the Taliban?

Well, I think India's participation in the inauguration is an indication that it supports intra-Afghan negotiations for peace. India recognises the negotiations that not only the Afghans have a role to play in this—which is the primary role—but also the regional powers and the broader international community is affected by the conflict in Afghanistan. It is affected by the outcome of this conflict, but also contributes most to reaching an

agreement and the implementation of that agreement and sustaining whatever peace agreement is made by economic assistance, investment, trade. This is very welcome and very positive. We were very pleased.

What about India's concerns on terrorism that emanates out of Pakistan that may affect Indian interests in Afghanistan and beyond, in India as well?

The key part of the agreement between the United States and Taliban and the joint statement between the United States and the Afghan government is about terrorism. And the presence of terrorist groups like Al Qaeda and others on Afghan soil should not be allowed. They should not be allowed to recruit there, raise funds there. And not pose a threat to countries in the world, including India.

The key requirement from the world is that Afghans deserve economic investment from and trade with the rest of the world but in turn, it is their obligation to make sure that the world does not feel threatened from Afghanistan. On this issue, there is no difference of view, and we are on the same boat...on the issue of terrorism.

In what ways can India and the US cooperate in Afghanistan?

Well, we can cooperate in encouraging the parties to compromise, to stay at the table, to come to a political agreement, to come to an agreement immediately on reduction on violence, then on

the permanent ceasefire—in the case of Afghans.

And with regard to the region and beyond, India and the United States and others can cooperate to make sure that the environment regionally and internationally is supportive of the peace process. I found the discussions very constructive in that spirit in Delhi.

So you talk about cooperation from regional powers. Do you see the possibility of India and Pakistan cooperating on Afghanistan?

I hope the objective that I described can be supported by Afghanistan's neighbours, all of them, certainly Pakistan as well. Pakistan has been supportive of our efforts to pursue peace. Also, (they) are supportive of that objective as described. I was in Islamabad and had similar discussions there. So I think this is a moment of opportunity where we can all use our relations that we have to ensure (that) the process succeeds.

What about the concern about women's rights in Afghanistan?

We support women's rights... We support minority rights. We stand for democracy, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, rule of law. We know that Afghans can decide for themselves, but we know what we stand for. We would like Afghans to respect these universal values. We are encouraging them to do so. India (has) made similar points.

3,005 UAPA cases in 2016-18, only 27% had chargesheets, govt tells Rajya Sabha

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

THE GOVERNMENT has told Parliament that while cases under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act have increased since 2016, the chargesheeting has been poor.

According to data provided by the Home Ministry in Rajya Sabha, 3,005 cases were registered under the anti-terror law between 2016 and 2018, but chargesheets were filed in only 821 cases, indicating

that investigations could be completed only in about 27% of them.

MoS (Home) G Kishan Reddy said 123 cases in 2017 were pending investigation for more than one year while in 2018 the figure was 62. The data is significant as, given the nature of the offence, the accused under UAPA find it difficult to get bail and with delayed probe continue to languish in jails.

In reply to another question, Reddy told Rajya Sabha that in 2017 and 2018, 1,198 people had been detained by police under the

National Security Act. Of them, 563 continue to be behind bars, Reddy said.

Across the country, in 2018, a total of 697 people were detained under the NSA, of whom 406 were released. In 2017, 501 people were detained and 229 released by review boards.

The government also told Parliament that 12 states had seen the influence of Islamic State and southern states were badly hit.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

**GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU
TAMIL NADU SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
GREATER CHENNAI CORPORATION**

PROCUREMENT OF DGPS SURVEY INSTRUMENT INCLUDING ONE YEAR WARRANTY AND OPERATION & MAINTENANCE SUPPORT FOR THREE YEARS

INVITATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB)

E-Procurement Notice

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING

(Two-Envelope Bidding Process with e-Procurement)

Bid No.: R.D.C.No.G1/2296/2015

- The Government of India has received a Loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development in various currencies towards the cost of Tamil Nadu Sustainable Urban Development Project and it is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contracts for which this Invitation for Bids is issued.
- Superintendent Engineer (Planning), Greater Chennai Corporation, Chennai, now invites online bids under "Two bid" system namely "Technical bid" and "Price bid" are invited from the OEMs or authorized dealers for the items listed below including one year warranty and three years Operation & Maintenance.

Package No.	Name of work	Approximate value	Bid security / EMD	Cost of document	Period of completion
3	Tender for Procurement of DGPS Survey Instruments including one year warranty and Operation & Maintenance support for three years	Rs.394 Lakhs	Rs.3,94,000/-	Free	4 years

However, for complete eligibility, milestone and qualification requirements refer to Evaluation and Qualification Criteria in the bidding document.

- Bidding will be conducted through the National Competitive Bidding (NCB) procedures agreed with World Bank. The bidding is open to all eligible bidders as defined in the Bank's Procurement Guidelines. In addition, please refer to paragraphs 1.6 and 1.7 of the Guidelines setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.
- Bidding document are available online from 21st September 2020 to 27th October 2020 for online bidding at www.tntenders.gov.in and used at free of cost. The bidders, who have downloaded the bid documents, shall be solely responsible for checking the web site for any addendum / amendment issued subsequently to the bid document and takes into consideration the same while preparing and submitting the bids.
- For submission of the bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities, authorised by Government of India for issuing DSC. Aspiring bidders who have not obtained the user ID and password for participating in e-procurement in this Project, may obtain same from the website : www.tntenders.gov.in
- Bids security of the amount specified in the bidding document, drawn in favour of the Commissioner, Greater Chennai Corporation must be submitted as per the procedure described in paragraph 7 below. The Bid security will have to be in any one of the forms as specified in the bidding document and shall have to be valid for 45 days beyond the validity of the bid. Bids must be submitted online on or before 27th October 2020 upto 3.00 p.m. (website) for receipt of bids and the 'Technical Part' of bids will be opened online on 28th October 2020 at 03.15 p.m. The 'Financial Part' shall remain unopened in the e-procurement system until the second public bid opening for the financial part. Any bid or modifications to bid (including discount) received outside e-procurement system will not be considered. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time. The electronic bidding system would not allow any late submission of bids.
- The bidders are required to submit (a) original demand drafts towards the cost of bid document and registration on e-procurement website (if not previously registered); (b) original bid security in approved form; and (c) original affidavit regarding correctness of information furnished with bid document with Superintendent Engineer (Planning), IV Floor, C- Wing, Amma Maaligai, Greater Chennai Corporation, Ripon Building Campus, Periyar EVR Salai, Chennai-600 003, Tamil Nadu before the opening of the technical part of the Bid given above, either by registered post/speed post/courier or by hand, failing which the bids will be declared non-responsive and will not be opened.
- Other details can be seen in the bidding document. The Purchaser shall not be held liable for any delays due to system failure beyond its control. Even though the system will attempt to notify the bidders of any bid updates, the Purchaser shall not be liable for any information not received by the bidder. It is the bidders' responsibility to verify the website for the latest information related to this bid.

The provisions in the Instructions to Bidders and in the General Conditions of contract are based on the provisions of the World Bank Standard Bidding Document - Procurement of Goods.

(a) Cost of Tender Document	: Free
(b) Date of bid document available in online	: 21.09.2020
(c) Last date for submission of bidding document in online	: up to 03.00 PM on 27.10.2020
(d) 1 st Pre-Bid Meeting	: at 11:30 AM on 30.09.2020
(e) 2 nd Pre-Bid Meeting	: at 11:30 AM on 12.10.2020
(f) Last date and time for submission of bids in online	: up to 03.00 PM on 27.10.2020
(g) Time and date of opening of bids	: at 03.15 PM on 28.10.2020
(h) Place of opening of bids	: Office of the Superintending Engineer (Planning)

Address:-
Superintending Engineer
Planning Department,
IV Floor, C- Wing, Amma Maaligai,
Greater Chennai Corporation,
Ripon Building Campus,
EVR Periyar Salai,
Chennai-600003,
Tamil Nadu.

Contact Details:-
Ph. No. : 044 - 25303826
E-Mail : seplanning@chennaiacorporation.gov.in
Website : www.chennaiacorporation.gov.in

**Superintending Engineer / Planning
Greater Chennai Corporation**

DIPR/ 3478 /Tender/2020

LJP TO DECIDE ON NDA STINT AT A LATER DATE

Chirag meets Nadda, bats for BJP fighting 'more seats' than JDU



DIPANKARGHOSE & SANTOSH SINGH
NEW DELHI, PATNA, SEPT 16

EVEN AS uncertainty continues in the relationship between LJP and JD(U), and the decision on whether the former will contest the Bihar Assembly elections as part of NDA, party president Chirag Paswan held a meeting with BJP chief J P Nadda late Tuesday night.

Paswan communicated this to party leaders at a meeting of LJP MPs, both present and past, on Wednesday. Sources said that he urged the BJP to contest more seats than JD(U) in the Bihar polls.

Paswan has also written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, informing him of the political situation in the state, and the ostensible anti-incumbency against the JD(U) government of Nitish Kumar, sources said.

Asked on a call on LJP's NDA stint, party's principal general secretary, Abdul Khaliq, said they



Chirag Paswan and J P Nadda met late Tuesday night. File/PTI

would discuss a vision document of "Bihar First, Bihari First" at the next meeting. "The party has authorised Chirag Paswan to take a final decision on NDA alliance at the LJP central Parliamentary board meet, which would take place after our next meeting."

In a statement issued after Wednesday's meeting, the party said, "Chirag Paswan congratulated all members about steps taken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for Bihar. He informed about a meeting with the national president of BJP late last night, as well as a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi."

About Paswan's meeting with Nadda, a senior leader told *The Indian Express*: "He reiterated the ground situation to the BJP president—about anti-incumbency against the Chief Minister—and

said that in the current climate JD(U) should compromise on seats. This was also the crux of his letter to the PM."

The LJP has continued to show support for BJP, but has incessantly slammed its Bihar alliance partner JD(U). On Wednesday's meeting, a resolution was passed welcoming a comment from JD(U) leader K C Tyagi, who has said that his party has no alliance with LJP.

Tyagi told *The Indian Express*: "Whatever Chirag Paswan is saying is against basic spirit of coalition. We have perfect understanding with BJP. I still maintain that we never had an alliance with LJP. It is just poll posturing (by LJP)."

A senior LJP leader said, "At today's meeting, all feedback from the ground was of anti-incumbency (in Bihar). Other parties have started hitting the ground, and the LJP must, too. While we will still wait for a word from BJP, a decision will be taken latest by September 25."

Gadkari tests positive for Covid, goes into isolation

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

UNION MINISTER Nitin Gadkari has tested positive for Covid-19, he announced on social media Wednesday.

"Yesterday, I was feeling weak and consulted my Doctor. During the course of my check up, I have been tested COVID 19 positive. I am at present doing well with the blessings and good wishes of all. I have isolated myself," tweeted Gadkari, 63. He was in Parliament on Tuesday.



"I request everyone who has come in my contact to be careful and follow the protocol. Stay safe," he tweeted.

MPs were tested before the start of this session. Seventeen Lok Sabha MPs and eight from Rajya Sabha had tested positive. Gadkari, who was negative then, tested positive in Nagpur.

ऑयल इंडिया लिमिटेड
Oil India Limited

P.O. Duliajan - 788 602, Assam, India ; CIN : L11101AS1959GOI001148

Oil India Limited intends to engage personnel on contract basis for its on-land operations in Rajasthan Fields purely for temporary requirement. The Walk In Interviews for engagement of Drilling Engineer on contract for Rajasthan Field (CONT/ RF/ DE/2020-11) and IT Engineer on contract for Rajasthan Field (CONT/ RF/ IT/2020-12) has been scheduled on 06.10.2020 and 07.10.2020 respectively at Jodhpur, Rajasthan. Please visit our website www.oil-india.com for details.

ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & MANAGEMENT GWALIOR
(An Institute of National Importance under Ministry of Education, GOI)

Advertisement No: 2391 Date: 14.09.2020

Admission to Full Time/ Part Time PhD Programme Session: 2020-21

Online applications are invited for admission to the full-time/Part time PhD programme in Engineering (Computer Science/Information Technology/Electronics and Communication Engineering), Management, and Applied Sciences (Physics and Mathematics). For details visit our website. For any queries dial 0751-2449704/720/741 OR email to phdadmission@iiitm.ac.in

Online form submission opens: 14.09.2020
Online form submission closes: 11.10.2020

Joint Registrar (Academics)

CSIR - NATIONAL PHYSICAL LABORATORY
(Council of Scientific & Industrial Research)
Dr. K.S. Krishnan Marg, New Delhi-110012 (INDIA)

Press brief NIT (04/0184)/19-W&S)

Item rate tenders in two cover (stage) system, are hereby invited, online through e-tendering portal <https://etenders.gov.in> for the below mentioned work.

Sr. No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost (In lacs)	EMD/Tender Fee as per NIT	Time of Completion
1	Round the clock operation of Utility Installation at NPL Colony.	Rs. 15.839	Rs. 31,700/- Rs. 500/-	365 Days

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HOUSE DIARIES

THE PANDEMIC EFFECT

■ As many as 14 Rajya Sabha MPs, including former PM Manmohan Singh and cutting across political parties, have written to Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu, seeking grant of leave of absence on medical grounds during this session. Eleven have sought leave for the entire session.

■ While all Rajya Sabha MPs wore masks and some also wore gloves, Congress MP from West Bengal Pradipta Bhattacharya went a step further and also wore a surgical cap during the proceedings on Wednesday, prompting Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu to say that the MP looked like a doctor. Bhattacharya said he was not going to take any chances. "Sir, what do I do? It is better to protect ourselves," Bhattacharya said.

■ Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who was to take up the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Bill, came to the Lok Sabha after the proceedings began. However, she could not find a seat as the treasury benches were full and no one seemed to have noticed she was looking for a seat. The Finance Minister then went to Rajya Sabha and took a seat there. When the Speaker called her name for the Bill, Sitharaman said she is sitting in the Upper House and she sat there through the debate. But when the debate concluded, she was brought to the Lok Sabha to give the reply.

NO QUESTION HOUR: MY QUESTIONS



■ What is the rationale in creating a centralised PM CARES in times when decentralisation is required?

■ Does the government plan to introduce Hindi as compulsory language under NEP?

HIBI EDEN, CONGRESS

Rajnath to make statement on China in Rajya Sabha today

MANOJ CG
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

DEFENCE MINISTER Rajnath Singh will make a statement in Rajya Sabha on Thursday on the military standoff with China along the Line of Actual Control in Ladakh, and will take a couple of questions from Opposition MPs, it is learnt. The partial breakthrough came at a meeting convened by Singh on Wednesday with top Opposition leaders: Ghulam Nabi Azad, Anand Sharma, Jairam Ramesh (all Congress), Derek O'Brien (TMC), Tiruchi Siva (DMK) and Ram Gopal Yadav (SP).

Opposition members had slammed the government on Tuesday after they were not allowed to ask questions following Singh's statement in Lok Sabha.

At Wednesday's meeting, the government is learnt to have agreed to the Opposition's demand to hold discussions in the Upper House on issues such as payment of GST compensation to states, the National Education Policy and the slump in economic growth and joblessness. But the stalemate over passage of four Bills, including the three contentious farm-related ones that will replace ordinances, continued. Opposition parties remained firm on their position that these Bills require scrutiny by Parliamentary panels.

Sources in Opposition said the Defence Minister was accommodating at the informal meeting, which was also attended by Union ministers Piyush Goyal, Thaawarchand Gehlot, Pralhad Joshi and V Muraleedharan. Gehlot is Leader of the House in Rajya Sabha.

EXPLAINED

Discuss some issues, stalemate over 4 Bills

THE CONGRESS appeared isolated on its demand for a discussion on the Chinese aggression in Parliament. Sensing that the Congress does not have the support of fellow opposition parties on this, the government side deftly agreed to have discussions on other issues raised by the opposition parties. So, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will make a statement on China on Thursday but will only take one or two questions. However, it is to be seen how the government manages to break the impasse on the four Bills.

Opposition-ruled states have been at loggerheads with the Centre for asking them to borrow in order to bridge the GST compensation deficit. Chief ministers of West Bengal, Kerala, Delhi, Telangana, Chhattisgarh and Tamil Nadu have written to the Centre, opposing the options which require states to borrow to meet shortfall and have instead asked the

Centre to borrow.

Sources said a calling attention notice given by O'Brien on the situation arising out of non-payment of GST compensation to states has been admitted and a discussion would take place based on the notice.

Similarly, Jairam Ramesh is likely to give a calling attention notice on the draft Environment Impact Assessment notification. The government, sources said, agreed to allow a discussion on the issue.

The government also accepted Tiruchi Siva's demand for a discussion on the National Education Policy. A discussion on economy and jobs, suggested by Azad, Sharma and Ramesh and backed by all opposition parties, has also been agreed to, it is learnt.

But sources said Opposition leaders remained firm on their demand that Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, and Banking Regulation (Amendment) Bill should be referred to House committees. Sources said the government did not give any assurance on this.

O'Brien is learnt to have said that while the government is talking about "shortage of time", it has "already robbed 27 hours — one hour of Question Hour and half-an-hour of Zero Hour every day for 18 days". He is learnt to have also said that the government's track record on ordinances is the "worst since 1952."

Yadav, sources said, told the government side that the Opposition will not at any cost allow passage of the farm ordinances.

RAJYA SABHA DISCUSSION ON PANDEMIC

Oppn tears into govt over Covid management; BJP says stop politics

MANOJ CG & ESHA ROY
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

OPPOSITION PARTIES and ruling BJP on Wednesday crossed swords in Rajya Sabha as it began a discussion on the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Opposition slammed Prime Minister Narendra Modi for announcing a nationwide lockdown in March with just four hours' notice and accused the Centre of not financially supporting state governments and leaving migrant workers in the lurch. They emphasised the need to strengthen the federal structure of governance, and accused the Centre of taking unilateral decisions.

Hitting back, BJP's Vinay Sahasrabudhe said Prime Minister Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and other top bureaucrats held discussions with chief ministers at least 15 times since the lockdown began (on March 25). "But no chief minister has said that the lockdown should not have been imposed."

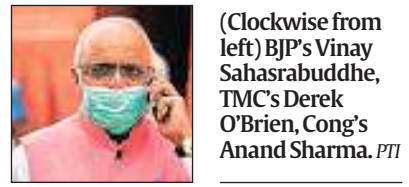
Initiating the discussion, Congress deputy leader of House Anand Sharma questioned Health Minister Harsh Vardhan's assertion in his statement in Parliament that early lockdown announced by Modi prevented 14 lakh to 29 lakh Covid cases, and 37,000 to 78,000 deaths.

Sharma asked: "How have you derived this figure? What is the scientific basis? The House must be informed (how) we have reached this conclusion (that) but for the sudden lockdown the number of cases would have gone up (by another) 29 lakh... The day the lockdown was imposed, using emergency provisions under NDMA Act, we had 600 cases in India. As we discuss this subject (today), there are 50 lakh cases, and almost 82,000 deaths. This is the true picture."

He said before imposing the lockdown, the Centre should have taken state governments into confidence so that the local administrations could carry out the necessary groundwork.

Sharma, and other leaders, also slammed the government on not having figures on the number of migrant workers who died during the lockdown, most of them trudging back home. "This is such an unfortunate situation for the country. How can you not have figures? Every state knows who died. They (victims' families) should be given compensation, and the government should make a database of migrant workers for future," Sharma said.

Accusing opposition parties of playing politics, BJP member Sahasrabudhe said, "Like in the case of GST... decisions are taken (in GST Council) on the basis of a consensus, but they (chief ministers of Opposition-governed states) played politics outside... The Opposition should not show such double standards."



(Clockwise from left) BJP's Vinay Sahasrabudhe, TMC's Derek O'Brien, Cong's Anand Sharma. PTI

He said Modi and Shah are often targeted on social media by the Opposition and others. "I believe politics of responsibility is more important than politics of ridicule," he said.

Trinamool Congress MP Derek O'Brien asked whether the Centre held any discussions with state governments before the lockdown was announced. "You said you had 43 video conferences. Please give us the dates of those video conferences. Did you hold one video conference before March 26," he asked.

Modi announced the nationwide lockdown on March 24 night; it got under way from midnight.

Slamming the government for putting a freeze on MPLADS fund, O'Brien said: "...On the subject of finance, the most opaque and dark fund in the world is called the Prime Minister's Couldn't Care Less Fund [sarcastic allusion to PM CARES Fund]. Oh! I said the name wrong... And what about students attempting NEET and JEE exams? What was your preparation from April to now?"

DMK's Tiruchi Siva said while the first Covid-19 case was detected in the country in January, the government did nothing about the situation until March — "because you were hosting Donald Trump's visit". After the lockdown, he said, "India's performance has been the worst, with the lowest GDP and one of the highest case (load). You are under-reporting cases."

Biju Janata Dal's Prasanna Acharya said: "What financial assistance has the Centre given to states to deal with the pandemic, apart from issuing advisories?"

Hitting out at Sahasrabudhe's speech, RJD MP Manoj Kumar Jha said even he could talk on about the Bihar government's failure in dealing with the pandemic, "but I do not want to get politics into such an important issue". He asked: "Was the lockdown imposed as an individual's decision? Or was it a consultative process of a group, for which there is the Cabinet? If there was such a Cabinet meeting (to decide on the nationwide lockdown), then please release the details."



BRIDGING DISTANCE

Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut with Union Ministers Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi and Hardeep Singh Puri at Parliament Wednesday. PTI

LS passes Bill to bring cooperative banks under RBI supervision

LIZ MATHEW & SUNNY VERMA
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

LOK SABHA on Wednesday passed the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Bill amid the Opposition's contention that it is an "assault on federal structure" and "would destroy the cooperative banking sector".

While the Bill seeks to bring cooperative banks under the supervision of the RBI, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman asserted that the proposed legislation does not mean regulation of cooperative banks by the central government.

Sitharaman maintained that the government had to bring ordinance during the lockdown in order to protect depositors as there had been "some unfortunate situation in banks which had put the depositors into hardships".

Replying to a debate, during which the Opposition accused the government of violating norms of the federal structure, Sitharaman said: "For the last two years, depositors of cooperative banks and small banks are facing problems. We are trying to bring this amendment in order to protect the depositors..."

She said the government wanted to regulate banking activity within its power and would not interfere with federalism. "Consultation with states is required only when legislating on concurrent list item, but this Bill is under the Union legislative power. So consultation is not necessary," the minister said.

As per the changes in the law, a cooperative bank, with prior approval of the RBI, may also issue equity shares, preference shares or special shares to its members or to any other person residing within its area of operation, by way of public issue or private placements. They can also issue unsecured debentures or bonds with maturity of not less than 10 years.

Congress MP Manish Tewari, who initiated



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman

the debate on the Bill, said, "At a point in time when our GDP growth rate had been in a free fall for seven quarters preceding the lockdown and when all economic activities during the lockdown had come to a complete standstill, there was absolutely no rationale for promulgating this ordinance, especially when the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Bill was under consideration in this very House."

A number of Opposition MPs demanded that the role of the RBI be reviewed during the debate. "The RBI is itself a conflicted institution by design... If there is a need to bring about substantive reform, the need is to unscramble this egg called the Reserve Bank of India and segregate its various functions..." Tewari said.

DMK's Senthilkumar S, TMC's Saugata Roy and YSRCP's Lavu Krishna Devarayalu agreed with Tewari that the RBI is overloaded. "Let's not make the RBI the one-stop solution for every problem," Devarayalu said. Roy said, "The power of RBI to remove management or draw up plans to merge/dissolve cooperative banks will override the power of the State Registrar of Cooperatives. So, as has been said earlier, it is a clear infringement on the states' rights."

BJP's Shivkumar Udasi and Tejasvi Surya argued that the changes in the Bill would protect depositors and prevent cooperative banks from falling into fraudulent activities.

State rivalries play out in LS, raise heat of Covid-hit session

LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

AMID SCREENS and distancing measures in view of the pandemic, rivalry between political parties in the states played out in the chamber of Lok Sabha on Wednesday.

A heated exchange broke out between members of the Trinamool Congress and the BJP when Hooghly MP Locket Chatterjee alleged that under the Trinamool Congress government, West Bengal was turning out to be "like old Kashmir".

Chatterjee alleged that BJP workers were being targeted by the state government and "goons" of the ruling party.

"It is really a matter of sadness that the state of West Bengal is in danger and it is turning out to be like the old Kashmir," she said, alleging that a "particular community" in Hooghly refused to go through testing for Covid-19 and this triggered a communal riot. "The riots went on for three days with bombing, looting and violence and even a temple was damaged," Chatterjee said, adding that BJP leaders tried to visit the area but the administration did not allow them.

Taking a swipe at Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and her MP nephew Abhishek Banerjee, she said, "The aunt-nephew duo will milk the cow while the common people of West Bengal get kicked and suffer. There is not an iota of democracy in the state," she said, as Mahua Moitra and other Trinamool Congress MPs engaged in a war of words with BJP members.

TDP MPs launched a protest when YSRCP's Midhun Reddy sought a CBI investigation into the Amaravati land scam and accused the previous TDP government in Andhra Pradesh of corruption.

The Rajampet MP's allegation that there was a huge scam in the construction of the new state capital at Amaravati by the erstwhile TDP government drew protests from TDP MPs.

HIGH PITCH

'West Bengal is in danger and it is turning out to be like the old Kashmir'

LOCKET CHATTERJEE, BJP

'Kerala has surpassed crimes of every Communist regime from Colombia to Venezuela, Cuba to North Korea in four years of governing the state.'

TEJASVI SURYA, BJP

'The land, which was bought for a few lakhs of rupees, is now worth crores of rupees.'

MIDHUN REDDY, YSRCP

a CBI probe into the matter.

Tejasvi Surya, BJP MP from Bangalore South, targeted the LDF government in Kerala, accusing it of indulging in scams during flood relief and collection of Covid patients' data.

"The Communist governments in Kerala have used every public tragedy as an opportunity for personal enrichment... The Communists in Kerala government seem to be masters of nepotism. Like their ideological compatriot Kim Jong-un of North Korea who appointed his sister and close relatives to important roles in government, Kerala's Communist Ministers have come under severe criticism by Kerala High Court for appointing their close relatives as heads of PSUs and government bodies," Surya alleged.

"The fact that the gold smuggling scam has close links with the Chief Minister of Kerala and that there are attempts to obstruct impartial investigation that is being undertaken is something of public knowledge," he added.

Left MPs raised objections when Surya said Kerala has "surpassed crimes of every Communist regime from Colombia to Venezuela, Cuba to North Korea" in four years of governing the state. "The great land of Lord Ayyappa, Adi Shankara and Sree Narayana Guru cannot be let to suffer at the hands of Communist despots. I want to assure all the people agitating for democracy in Kerala that we are all with them," he said, amid protest by Left MPs.

When Congress MP A Revanth Reddy sought a CBI probe into the fire at Srisailem hydroelectric plant, TRS's Nama Nageswara Rao stood up in protest and sought Speaker Om Birla's intervention, saying, "How can you ask for a CBI probe into an accident? This should not be allowed."

Reddy alleged that the state government had not allocated money for the proper maintenance of the plant which led to the incident that claimed the lives of nine people, including five engineers.

RS passes Bill to accord 'national importance' status to Jamnagar Ayurveda institutes

ESHA ROY
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16

RAJYA SABHA on Wednesday passed a Bill to accord the status of national importance to a Jamnagar-based cluster of Ayurveda institutes. The Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda Bill, 2020, was passed by a voice vote.

Lok Sabha had approved the Bill in the last session, in which three Jamnagar-based institutes — Institute of Post Graduate Teaching and Research in Ayurveda, Gulabkumwerba Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya and Institute of Ayurveda Pharmaceutical Sciences, are to be conglomerated. While not opposing the Bill, the Opposition asked why Ayurvedic institutions in Gujarat had been selected in particular, when several other Ayurvedic institutes of renown, particularly in Kerala, existed.

Health Minister Harsh Vardhan replied that the selection of the Jamnagar institutes was not "biased" and that it was chosen as it is one of the oldest institutes under the category, established in 1956.

"There are 103 institutes of national importance in the country but not even one Ayurveda institute. Not only is this the oldest institute, but the only one which is collaborating with the WHO. In the past 20 years, it has imparted training to students from 65 different countries and has signed MoUs with 30 different countries. It is probably the number one institute deserving this status. When the other institutes in the country upgrade their research standards, they will also be considered," the minister said.

The proposed institute would have a 15-member committee, including the AYUSH Minister, AYUSH Secretary and the Gujarat Health and Family Welfare Secretary, along with three MPs — two from Lok Sabha and one from Rajya Sabha.



The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

SORRY, YOUR LORDSHIP

Show vilifies Muslims but prior restraint sets a dangerous precedent when dissent is being criminalised — and courts are fumbling

A BENCH OF Justices D Y Chandrachud, Indu Malhotra and K M Joseph have canned Sudarshan TV headman Suresh Chavhanke's awful show "Bindas Bol" (literally, an exhortation to "Speak Carelessly"). Promoted online with #UPSC Jihad, the show vilifies Muslims, accusing them of a campaign to infiltrate the bureaucracy, and undermines the Union Public Service Commission, by the implication that it offers unfair advantage to the community. Dodgy on facts and analysis, it is informed by a "wanton disregard of the truth", as the Supreme Court very accurately observed, and is premised on a denial of the reality of a plural India. The bench called out the show for what it was — hateful propaganda masquerading as analysis. The court was spot on — especially when Sudarshan TV is not alone in this shameful corner. Through the months of the protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act and the National Register of Citizens, and in the initial days of COVID-19, with the exception of a few, TV news channels revelled in an inglorious orgy of partisan deception, vilification and rumour-mongering.

News will be weaponised by those in power when they have willing accomplices in TV studios but prior restraint, as the Supreme Court itself has repeatedly underlined, is a solution that has ramifications as disturbing as the problem it's trying to address. As Solicitor General of India Tushar Mehta wondered in court, to what extent can the media be regulated by other institutions? On August 28, the Court had rightly declined to impose a "pre-broadcast interlocutory injunction" against the offending show. On September 9, the Centre permitted transmission of an episode of #UPSC Jihad, with the caveat that it must not violate the Programme Code. But this week, the bench observed that circumstances had changed and "the drift, tenor and content of the episodes is to bring [a] community into public hatred and disrepute," which violates the Code.

The court's apprehension is legitimate: Hateful memes can spread like wildfire across social media and promote, even incite violence. But, as Justice Chandrachud said, perhaps self-regulation — an oxymoron it may be — needs to be explored more rigorously. Giving prior restraint the imprimatur of the highest court, the bench sets a dangerous precedent at a time when a lynch mob is just one comment away. Motivated parties would only have to file an objection in court for restraint to be clamped, prior to airing the programme, until the matter is heard — and a court could rule for restraint to continue. Since news has a very short shelf life that is counted in hours, a mere allegation made in court could kill a programme. Significantly, the Court took a dig at the News Broadcasters' Association whose remit includes legal, ethical and regulatory concerns. It asked if the body exists only in the form of its letterhead. In that aside, the Court tacitly indicated where one solution may lie.

REGULATORY UNCERTAINTY

SEBI circular on multi-cap funds was avoidable during these uncertain times

LAST WEEK, THE Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) issued a circular specifying that multi-cap schemes of mutual funds must invest a minimum of 25 per cent of their total assets in each large, mid and small-cap category. Until now, there was no such allocation criteria. The guidelines had only prescribed that at least 65 per cent of the investments of such schemes be directed towards equities, giving fund managers the flexibility to allocate funds across large, mid or small-cap firms as per their discretion. A few days later, SEBI clarified that apart from rebalancing their portfolio, these multi-cap funds had other options, ranging from, merging with existing large-cap schemes, to converting these schemes to other categories. While SEBI's directive may have been driven by the desire to ensure that these funds are "true-to-label", its decision raises several questions: Why curb fund manager flexibility? Won't changing the character of the fund heighten the risk and uncertainty for existing investors? Moreover, are their enough quality small-cap firms to absorb this inflow? If there were such companies available in this segment, wouldn't they have been attractive proposition for fund managers to begin with?

Mutual fund data from various fund houses shows that put together, the total assets of these multi-cap schemes stand at around Rs 1.45 lakh crore. Of this, the mid-cap and small-cap exposure stands at 16.4 per cent and 6.25 per cent respectively. These numbers imply that in order to meet the requirements imposed by the SEBI circular, roughly Rs 40,000 crore will have to be directed from these funds towards mid and small-cap firms. Considering that most of these multi-cap funds, especially the bigger ones, are largely geared towards large-cap companies and that finding liquid enough quality stocks in these segments will be challenging in the present circumstances, it is possible that these schemes, rather than opting for rebalancing, will opt for one of the other options available.

Multi-cap funds were created to provide the fund manager the freedom to move across stock classifications, depending on the opportunity presented. If they have gravitated towards large-caps it is because of the possibility of greater returns. If the pandemic is likely to lead to greater economic concentration, benefitting the bigger firms, then surely fund managers and their investors should have the flexibility to take advantage of these trends. This degree of control by the regulator is odd. It was an avoidable move, that only heightened market uncertainty.

SCIENCE KNOWS

Donald Trump doesn't think so. But being a climate change sceptic could have political consequences

IN ITS 175-year history, *Scientific American* had never felt the need to take a political stand. In 2020, for the first time, the popular science magazine has endorsed Joe Biden for the US presidency. But 2020 is the year of the pandemic, where ignoring the science behind a pathogen has had real consequences in terms of lives and livelihoods. And the head of the most powerful government in the world has decided to blame the victims of a natural disaster in the largest state in his country, coming up on an election.

The intensity and frequency of wildfires in California has caused consistent damage in America's most populous, richest and politically significant state. Donald Trump, speaking to people whose homes and natural surroundings have been devastated, blamed the blazes on people and authorities not "raking the forest floor" or "clearing dead timber". When it was pointed out that there is a near universal scientific consensus that both the frequency and intensity of the wildfires has increased due to climate change, Trump stated, "I don't think science knows". The response of his rival for the US presidency has been to label the president a "climate arsonist".

The essence of science is based on the distinction between what David Hume called fact and value — truth and opinion. Confidence is a great thing in a public figure, but politicising what many would think is unpoliticisable — a natural disaster — Trump may end up being beaten at his own game. "Climate arsonist", though hyperbolic, is bound to have a bit of resonance in the middle-class California suburbs that saw their homes and surroundings engulfed in flames and smoke. In fact, blaming an all-pervasive problem like climate change could have helped Trump escape the blame. But he blamed the victims instead. On the heels of his alleged (mis)management of COVID-19, the president's lack of respect for scientific truths might bear a political cost.

Bend with the wind

India should opt for income support so that pandemic does not turn into a financial crisis



JAHANGIR AZIZ

EVEN A CURSORY reading of Brazil's recent history will confirm that the adoption of the all-encompassing cap on government spending in late 2016 was critical in rescuing the economy from the crisis of 2014-16.

After riding the commodity boom of the 2000s, economic mismanagement and a series of corruption scandals pushed the country into an economic and political crisis in 2014-16, which ended the 14-year rule of the Workers Party (PT). During its rule, PT had implemented sweeping social programmes (such as Bolsa Familia) to reduce inequality and eradicate poverty. Although contested, most assessments suggest that these programmes helped in improving living conditions (income, health, and education) of the poor. But with the end of the commodity boom, Brazil's growth faltered and funding these programmes strained macroeconomic management, widened the fiscal deficit, and raised public debt. While the 2013 Taper Tantrum was the trigger, the ensuing economic recession, weighed down by corruption scandals, turned into a political crisis ending PT's rule. Inflation, unemployment, and the fiscal deficit all jumped to double-digits.

In an effort to regain policy credibility, the interim government proposed and passed a constitutional amendment in late 2016, which, starting from 2017, capped government expenditure — excluding interest payments but including capital spending — to its 2016 level adjusted each year for the previous year's inflation. This law effectively set a ceiling on government spending at around 20 per cent of GDP that can only be reviewed in 2026. While stringent by the standards of international fiscal rules (that are mostly in the form of restraints on fiscal deficit and public debt), it is almost draconian in the case of Brazil as more than 90 per cent of its spending is mandated by law, leaving little room for even expenditure switching.

The recovery from the crisis has been gradual, especially as most of the needed structural reforms (barring changes to the social security system) as promised by the new

government elected in 2018 are yet to be legislated. But the spending cap set a transparent fiscal anchor that restored macroeconomic stability and in doing so helped to bring down inflation from over 10 per cent in 2016 to around 2.5 per cent and opened the space for policy interest rates to be cut from above 14 per cent to 2 per cent at present.

Yet, despite the demonstrated centrality of the spending cap in securing macroeconomic stability, the government allowed the spending cap to be breached with large pandemic-related additional expenditure including a generous income support, especially to the Bolsa-Familia households (roughly equivalent to BPL households in India), which alone can amount to over 4.5 per cent of GDP. Taken together, these measures will raise overall spending to above 28 per cent of GDP and together with the revenue shortfall, will increase Brazil's fiscal deficit from 6 per cent of GDP in 2019 to an astounding 17 per cent of GDP this year.

And the additional spending has helped. Although Brazil's COVID-19 infection rate was about the same as in India in the second quarter (in the last two months the rate has stabilised while that in India has continued to climb), GDP growth collapsed by 33.5 per cent, half of that in India. Indeed, at 67.2 per cent (annualised quarterly rate), the growth collapse in India was the second largest in the world next only to that in Peru. If one looks under the hood, public spending helped to offset some of the collapse in private demand in Brazil but in India it added to the decline. On the back of the continued income support, analysts have upgraded growth in Brazil while further downgrading it in India.

All this discussion about Brazil's economics is to underscore a simple point: There are times when policy needs to lean against and times when it has to bend with the wind. This is the time to do the latter. It isn't that the market has been overly generous towards Brazil. In fact, at present there is palpable market angst about the Brazilian government's budget plans for 2021. If the 2021 budget does not reverse

the pandemic spending, the market will not take it kindly. The ensuing financial stress will likely unanchor inflationary expectations and force the central bank to raise rates despite the still fragile recovery. On the other hand, if the government brings spending below the cap, the attendant fiscal drag will be substantial. But the central bank can continue to keep interest rates low for longer and strengthen the private sector recovery in 2021 especially as balance sheets will be less damaged than otherwise because of the income support this year.

And this is where the importance of income support lies. It is not so much that it has helped to support demand this year, but that it has protected, to varying degrees, household and SME balance sheets from the extensive damage the pandemic is likely to leave in its wake. Unlike typical EM crises, the pandemic is not an instance of a financial crisis turning into an economic shock because of damaged balance sheets. Instead, it is an economic shock brought on by the failure of the public-health system that can turn into a financial crisis if the damage is extensive.

In India, the debate over fiscal policy has been too focused on demand management. Income support or other government spending can help only modestly in compensating the collapse in private demand until the link between infection and mobility is broken. That's a public health problem. Economic policy cannot compensate for the weaknesses in the public-health system. But appropriate economic measures now can have a much bigger and long-lasting impact when the pandemic has been brought under control and an economic recovery gets underway in earnest. What is needed is ample income support for households and firms now so that the recovery is not hamstrung by excessively damaged balance sheets. Otherwise, the pandemic can easily turn into a financial crisis, delaying the recovery and hurting medium-term growth.

The writer is Chief Emerging Markets Economist, J.P. Morgan. Views are personal

SAFFRON AND SECULAR

Swami Agnivesh's commitment to plurality, rationality within faith never wavered



TEESTA SETALVAD

SWAMI AGNIVESH'S unique persona brought special meaning to the saffron robe. Drawing deep spiritual and metaphysical strength from the faith of the Arya Samaj, a religion that was associated with power and hegemony and had no role in social transformation or justice was of no use to him. Through the 28 years of our association, what could have been the relationship between this Swami and a woman, an agnostic and her partner, Javed Anand, the same?

This is probably best summed up in the tribute that he paid to our monthly magazine, *Communalism Combat* on its 10th anniversary in August 2003, a year after the Gujarat violence of 2002: "The passionate commitment that *Communalism Combat* exemplifies to disinfect the soul of India, countering the cancer of communalism with the antidote of trans-religious solidarity and uncompromising commitment to justice and equality, makes it the foremost bastion of inspired journalism in our times... this association is an engagement of true spirituality."

Swami's journey into Indian public life is best remembered through the efforts of the Bandhua Mukti Morcha established in 1981 that culminated in the *Bandhua Mukti Morcha vs Union of India* judgment, the passing of the law to abolish child labour and further explorations in the courts on the deepening of constitutional rights of the most marginalised. This commitment never wavered and we saw him take this into the dark reaches of Chhattisgarh for peace talks with Maoists in 2010, where he was attacked by a Salwa Judum mob. The experience led him to file an affidavit in the Supreme Court, which

had an impact on the judgment banning Salwa Judum a year later.

For those of us battling the corrosive cancer of communalism, it was Swami's vision of Indian society and state as multi-hued and diverse, based on an unflinching commitment to secularism and rationality, that was so special. He stood tall and proud in his Hinduism at the Allahabad Kumbh Mela, opposite the stall of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, reclaiming a faith that he saw being both militarised and hegemonised. He marched against the practice of Sati in Rajasthan and he argued with his counterparts from other faiths, questioning notions of "Hell" and "Damnation" and exclusive evangelisation. His commitment to rationality within faith never wavered.

In 1998, when the Kalyan Singh government was set to make Saraswati Vandana compulsory in UP's schools, Agnivesh's sharp detraction was unique: "The wry humour of the situation becomes apparent when we recall that Saraswati is supposed to be the goddess of learning. UP is a state where illiteracy is endemic. Universal education for all children under 14 years of age, as mandated by the Constitution, has not been a priority with any of the successive governments... Could it be that the insult to the goddess of learning in keeping millions of people illiterate is sought to be compensated by forcing school children to do in ritual what the government won't do in reality?"

No wonder, then, that it is the pallbearers of an exclusivist faith who — intolerant of a powerful symbol in saffron that spoke for a more eclectic Hinduism — attacked him brutally in Jharkhand in 2018 again, in an attempt at public humiliation, disrobing, even lynching. He escaped narrowly but the damage done to the 80-year-old's health was near fatal.

him brutally in Jharkhand in 2018 again, in an attempt at public humiliation, disrobing, even lynching. He escaped narrowly but the damage done to the 80-year-old's health was near fatal.

Since 2014, he engaged in a direct satire of obscurantist utterances from men in power, even those at the very top. Videos of these speeches drew support in far-flung villages and towns. In one such video, Agnivesh points out, "The PM said that the Kauravas multiplied themselves into hundreds. This, they achieved through stem-cell transplants". Agnivesh mockingly laments: "Such lies, such pageantry, such superstitions, and India's PM is perpetuating these! The country will move towards a deep abyss."

The physical attacks did not stop after July 17, 2018. In August, a month later, he was again seriously attacked, even by a woman as he went to the BJP headquarters in Delhi to pay respects to former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The last such attack was in Thiruvananthapuram in October last year when Sangh Parivar cadres attempted to manhandle him at a function which the governor was also slated to attend.

For this saffron-robbed modern-day Swami, the colour of the robes he proudly sported meant sacrifice, purity and commitment. In a life well and fully-lived — one that should be celebrated — he brought a renewed faith in the colour saffron.

The writer, previously co-editor *Communalism Combat* now co-edits *Sabrangindia*, in and is secretary, *Citizens for Justice and Peace*

SEPTEMBER 17, 1980, FORTY YEARS AGO

SALES TAX DISCORD
THE UNION GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSAL to enlarge the additional excise duty net came in for severe attack from state governments. One non-Congress-I government went to the extent of questioning the Centre's right to discuss the issue that came within the constitutional jurisdiction of the states. The subject came up at the conference of Chief Ministers and ministers in charge of sales tax at Delhi. Although Finance Minister R Venkataraman made it clear that the Centre is not aiming at "wholesale abolition" of the sales tax, the state governments stuck to their stand that placing restrictions on the tax would affect their re-

source mobilisation capacity. They also did not agree with the Centre's position that four more items — vanaspati, pharmaceuticals, cement and petrochemical products — should be brought under additional excise duty.

TARAPUR IMPASSE
THE US SECRETARY OF State Edmund Muskie had conceded that India would not be bound by the agreement in respect of the accumulated plutonium wastes if the 1963 Tarapur agreement is breached by the US by withholding uranium supplies to the power plant. He also made it clear that India had not issued any threat pertaining

to nuclear waste. The Secretary of State, in fact, brought up the issue to reinforce his appeal to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to give up its Opposition to the Carter administration's decision to honour the 1963 pact.

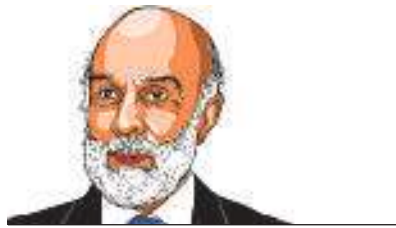
GAS POLITICS
Bangladesh Prime Minister Aziz ur Rahman has said that gas would not be sold to India, "against the will of the people". He told this to a group from the United Peoples' Party who had organised a sit-in at the Secretariat in protest against the proposed move to sell gas.



9 THE IDEAS PAGE

Our larger China picture

A new national strategy, combining diplomatic and military means, is needed to counter Beijing's strategy to make India submit to its interests



RAJA MENON

SOMETIME IN MARCH-APRIL this year, Beijing started to concentrate troops, armoured vehicles and munitions opposite our posts in Aksai China at Galwan, Finger posts and Depsang. By May-early June, they had mustered close to 40,000 troops and accompanying artillery and armour. Why 40,000? Maybe we will never know. It is a number too small to take Ladakh, and too large to win a border skirmish. Now that four months have passed since what turned out to be two border skirmishes, we can take a breath, pause and reflect on what it was all about. There has been a healthy and vociferous debate among the thinkers in India and many interpretations have been published in the press and even many more offered outside, among the general public.

Slowly but steadily the interpretations of what happened have coalesced into two schools. One of them, or the first, believes that the Chinese exercise was a territorial snatch in Aksai Chin, which they believe is entirely theirs, accompanied by a "lesson" to the Indians on being what they see as obdurate and aggressive Indian behaviour in not conceding Aksai Chin; and continuing to publish Survey of India maps showing the entire Aksai Chin as Indian territory up to the Johnson-Ardagh line, or our border with Tibet.

This school's thinking has many obvious flaws. The chief one is that four NSAs have spent something like 20 interrupted years asking their Chinese counterparts the following: One, where does Beijing think the international border lies? Two, what is their version of the LAC in Ladakh? Unfortunately, the contents of the talks by the four NSAs have never been made public, but bits and pieces have emerged sporadically. The first bit of news is that the Chinese want the settlement of the border postponed to "the next generation". Secondly, they are chary of handing over any map showing the Chinese version of the LAC in the West. Militarily, the recent mobilisation of 40,000 troops, artillery and armour has gained them something like 800 metres at the western LAC. Does this make any strategic sense? They might even have obtained that much, and perhaps more, if they had negotiated a settlement at the NSA-level talks. What they have achieved is to force India to move forward three divisions to the western LAC and go through the trouble of supplying them through the winter. So, it is unlikely that Xi Jinping had thought all this out for a tiny extension of their LAC.

The second school of thought in India believes that territory has nothing to do with it. They believe that, as China grows into perhaps the most powerful nation on earth, overtaking the actual US GDP by 2030, Beijing will lay down the rules of world governance. But what if India stands in the way of Beijing's desire to dominate Asia? We contest their entire southern border, refuse to join the Belt and Road initiative, create an anti-China maritime coalition, compete with them for influence in South East Asia and



CR Sasikumar

Africa, are unresponsive of their crackdown on Taiwan, Hong Kong and Xinjiang and move ever closer to the United States. Let us not forget that Chinese political thought has not matured in the crucible of the Enlightenment. They don't read Voltaire, Rousseau, Adam Smith, Descartes, Diderot, Locke, Kant and Spinoza, leading to the concept of establishing a democratic secular republic. However faulty the US record has been since 1991 as the world's hegemon, when China assumes hegemonic power after 2030, we are going to get a nasty surprise.

Secularism, democracy and the rights of man will play no part in Chinese foreign policy. Beijing will overturn every international, financial, trade, diplomatic, arms control and nuclear agreement that the world has put together in seven decades. As long as a nation pays "symbolic" tribute to Beijing, China will follow a hands-off policy — as they do with North Korea.

We in India need to conduct a large and vociferous debate on Chinese intentions. If it is to creep forward on the international border, mustering overwhelming strength at odd places to surprise us in a strategic ambush, then, stringing 3,50,000 troops along the border to "defend" it is adequate. If the Chinese intention is to "teach us a lesson" or

The competition with China will not lead to war. It is a game of perceptions. What China wants is Indian acceptance of Beijing's benign superiority, and that is a purely Chinese trait, not to be confused with the known rules of international diplomacy. Talking from a position of inferiority will not lead to an equitable solution. But first, a national debate.

"keep us in our place" or make us submissive, need a new national strategy, combining diplomatic and military means.

That military strategy needs another article but is best executed in the Indian Ocean. However, if our national goal is to concentrate on the creation of wealth and growing GDP, thereby limiting our defence budget and pensions to 2 per cent of GDP, let us proclaim it, tighten our belt, look down and walk softly. Post the Galwan incident, Wang Yi, the Chinese foreign minister has already told S Jaishankar to forget the territorial dispute and concentrate on "the larger picture". But after Galwan and Pangong Tso we will clearly approach the larger picture from a position of tactical inferiority, unless we develop some punitive capability, which it seems could only be in the Indian ocean. The competition with China will not lead to war. It is a game of perceptions. What China wants is Indian acceptance of Beijing's benign superiority, and that is a purely Chinese trait, not to be confused with the known rules of international diplomacy. Talking from a position of inferiority will not lead to an equitable solution. But first, a national debate.

The writer, a former rear admiral in the navy, is author of *A Nuclear Strategy for India*

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

Several months into the pandemic, it should not be beyond the capacity of ministers, in partnership with the NHS and others, to meet the current, more modest demand for tests. — THE GUARDIAN

Building a new India

In six years, PM Modi has transformed the narrative within the country, and outside it



YOGI ADITYANATH

"RAJAKALASYAKamam" — the timeless wisdom that Bheeshma Pitamah passed on to Yudhishthir in the "Shanti Parv" of the Mahabharat — may seem esoteric in spirit, but it carries a message. It means a ruler is never a slave of circumstances, but creates them by his acts. The sad story of India since Independence has been of a lacklustre leadership pushing the nation into anarchy, insecurity, social disharmony, crisis of faith and unavailability of the basics. If this was the internal condition, on the world platform, the country failed to command respect from its peers. Fortunately, those circumstances have now been consigned to the past and a new India has emerged. In six years, our illustrious Prime Minister Narendra Modi has turned India into a nation to reckon with.

Since Independence, the leaders kept talking about the last man in the last line, but it is only now that the fruits of welfare endeavours and infrastructure have actually reached the common man. The unique journey from "Antyodaya" to "Rashtrodaya" was made possible by the sheer compassionate persona of Modi, who comprehended the ethos, mindset and sentiment of the masses and linked them to nationalism. This, indeed, was an example of channeling the power of masses into nation building.

The Prime Minister has united the poor, youth, farmers and women into a single unit and upheld the slogan of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vishwas". Be it Beti Padhao-Beti Bachao or the Ujjwala Yojana, welfare schemes have been created to benefit the last man in the line and to instil in women a sense of self-pride and self-reliance. How can one forget the abolition of triple talaq. With this one act, the PM, on behalf of the nation, bestowed honour on women and restored their fundamental rights.

In the last six years, a string of welfare schemes were introduced to establish a new regime of social justice and public welfare. Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana was one such scheme, through which the government subsidised houses for the poor and down-trodden — about three crore houses were built. As many as four crore families benefited through the ambitious Har Ghar Bijli scheme. Eight crore gas connections under PM Ujjwala Yojana were distributed to women below the poverty line. It was the first instance someone had thought of saving women from carbon-induced diseases. As many as 12 crore farmers were honoured with Prime Minister Kisan Samman Yojana, over 23 crore were linked to the Mudra Loan Yojana and 50 crore people were benefited by the Ayushman Yojana.

The PM Crop Scheme, PM Agriculture Irrigation Scheme, MSP, Kisan Samman Nidhi provided solace to farmers, who had been neglected for years. He galvanised the youth of this country and made them self-reliant

and self-sufficient by launching Skill India, Stand Up India, Start Up India, Make In India and Mudra Yojana, which also gave economic impetus to the country.

The sustained efforts of the Prime Minister has led to our great country re-establishing its mythological, cultural and spiritual traditions. India received global recognition through Namami Gange, Vishwa Yoga Day, laying of the foundation stone of Shri Ram temple at Ayodhya, and the conduct of a grand Prayag Kumbh. It took a superhuman effort for Modi to get Yoga recognised by the United Nations, which declared June 21 as International Yoga Day. Over 200 countries are now following this great cultural and spiritual tradition of our country. Over 24 crore devotees experienced the religious and spiritual grandeur of Prayag Kumbh. Under the guidance of the Prime Minister, it turned out to be "Divya Kumbh Bhavya Kumbh", which made UNESCO tag it as "intangible heritage" of humanity.

The country had been facing security challenges for the past several decades. The Prime Minister has thwarted all those challenges and laid the foundation of a powerful Bharat. With the "Look East" policy, the PM brought infrastructural benefits to the Northeast and through "Act East Policy", the region could accrue the advantages of proximity to East Asia. Articles 370 and 35 A that had been haunting Indians for decades were abolished. With this, the Prime Minister reaffirmed the idea of "Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat". In both the Northeast and Kashmir, there is now an atmosphere of peace and harmony and people have become development oriented.

In international relations, the PM has taken "friendship" with "friends" to new heights, while the enemies were handed a strong message. While keeping the country's sovereignty and security in the focus, the PM has given due importance to dialogue, compassion, co-operation, activity and partnership in the foreign policy. The neighbouring country against whom we carried out a surgical and air strike in retaliation, cannot even dare to look at us. At this point, superpower USA considers India as its strategic partner and Europe wants to establish economic and defence cooperation with us.

It is Uttar Pradesh's good fortune that Kashi, the ancient city of Baba Vishwanath, is represented in Parliament by the Prime Minister. In the last six years, Modi has referred to Kashi as "My Kashi", which has gone a long way in giving new dimensions to its culture and spirituality. Kashi's ghats, temples and most importantly, Baba Vishwanath Dham are symbolic of the PM's personality and body of work. His keen eye for detail and constant monitoring of development projects in Kashi is inspirational. The way he interacts with both-levels workers to social, cultural, spiritual and business organisations, sends out a positive message.

I find myself blessed to have got a leader, mentor and guide in our beloved PM Modi, a person with unmitigated righteousness, unquestionable sense of service towards mankind and overwhelming sensitivity. I pray to Shri Ram that Modiji continues to grace our lives forever.

The writer is Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh



MRINAL PANDE

Mubarak Ho! Modiji

At 70, the prime minister has come to represent the spirit of the times

BEFORE THE proponents of Shuddh Hindi bop me on my head for using the Urdu phrase Mubarak Ho! instead of the Hindi Badhai Ho! let me clarify that the reason I use this phrase to wish our Prime Minister a very happy 70th birthday is, that Bollywood has already stolen the traditional phrase, "Badhai Ho!" and given it an avoidable spin.

On your 70th birthday today, you, sir, command a powerful image: An uncommonly honest man, scrupulous about material affairs who has risen from the ranks. An ordinary family in a small town where the men work in factories or tea stalls and women cook and clean for their own family and often for other families too, few sons were lucky enough to complete their education and luckier still to get that coveted college degree. You, Mr Prime Minister sir, have told us that hard work is above Harvard. True. You yourself have imbibed most of your deep insights into human nature, not at Oxford or Cambridge, but in India from your seasoned, kind and wise mentors of the Sangh Parivar.

This reminds one of a story. An arrogant scholar who had studied at various metaphysical schools came to the fabled Mullah Nasruddin and expressed a wish to share ideas with the great teacher since he had spent so much time in studying in the best schools of philosophy. "Alas," said Nasruddin, "you have studied the teachers and teachings. What should have happened is that the teachers and their teaching should have studied you".

In the Jewish tradition, 70 is a very significant number. Seventy elders were assembled by Moses on God's command in the desert. Psalm 90:10 allots three scores and ten (70 years) to an age that spells strength. Strength such as this brings a serenity and calm within the heart and leads to a certain detached view of the world. Truth be told, since the ad man Prasoon Joshi located a certain fakir like soul in you, the nation too has glimpsed that. We have all witnessed your soulful journeys into remote epochs via hill shrines and forests of the beautiful Devbhumi of Uttarakhand.

The trip to the jungles in the Corbett Park was particularly a treat to sore urban eyes. Accompanied by Bear Grylls, you spoke all through in Hindi, translated into English, we were told, simultaneously by a device planted in Grylls' ears. That and the unfolding images in pristine surroundings set a really holy-sur-realist tone, almost crossing into the territory marked by great painters like Magritte or Chagall. But then harsh political realities cut the dream trip short. As you rushed back to Delhi to meet a crisis, we realised how the pedestal upon which the nation places a great leader, can be such a lonely and demanding place. Not many there do get to embrace Mother Nature for long.

But with your well-targeted strike against the Enemy, sir, you taught the nation of peaceniks that, in 2019, the only lasting path to regional arms control, is the one where instead of turning the Gandhian

cheek, we let them have it on both cheeks. By abandoning your idyllic trip half way, you turned an "apada" into an "avasar", and ensured that a resounding electoral victory followed at home later.

The nation has learnt much from you since.

You have, for example, helped millions of us realise that electorally speaking, God may be said to be in details, but the Mother Goddess lies in questions. So at each election rally you raise prickly questions about your no-good rivals: Isn't liberalism cowardice? And what about the Lutyen's lifestyle? TRP ratings escalated each time you roared: "Bhaiyo, behenon, un logon mein zamaneee Bharat ka aayan/bhrishta char/vanshvaad etc tumne bhi dekha hai ki nahin dekha? Dekha hai ki nahin dekha? Bolo meri baat sahi hai ki nahin?" And till even those who had climbed trees and poles to see you, yelled back, "Ek dum Sahi!". And, as though on cue, a roar went up chanting your name like a mantra.

Many of your detractors may try to sully the narrative here by pointing out how the Indian economy stands considerably weakened by the pandemic, global climate changes, trade deficits and shrinkage of jobs. But with the wisdom age brings we senior citizens know better. Hasn't (Groucho) Marx sung in *Duck Soup*: "The world is but a stage, my friend, and life is but a game.../For whether a man is right or wrong/A woman gets the blame."

Don't let them sully your birthday mood by petty nit-picking. It is you who has also opened gates to popularity on the social media, where what the Germans call the zeitgeist, the spirit of the times, resides. You have also entered young India via the twin popular arenas of cricket and Bollywood. A few joyous photo-ops and you made more youthful and talkative friends there, outstripping even your biggest Bollywood admirer, Big B, or the cricketing legend, M S Dhoni.

Even in the matter of citizenship, you have injected vast changes. Under the rule of the law as spelt out by our Constitution, we had been told we were equals. But the amendments to the British Epidemic Diseases Act of 1897, and a timely promulgation of the Epidemic Diseases (Amendment) ordinance, has ensured that in these difficult times, for our own sake, we must be treated as unequal when need be. The word "police" has once again been made synonymous with its Middle French meaning, that is government. The state of Uttar Pradesh, as always, leads here from the front by example.

So a grateful nation wishes you a very happy 70th birthday with lines from a birthday poem by Samuel Johnson: "Wealth, Sir John, was made to wander, / Let it wander as it will; / See the jockey, see the pander; / Bid them come and take their fill."

The writer is former chairperson, Prasar Bharati.]

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

PENALISING FARMERS

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, "Wrong way out" (IE, September 16). The central government once again prohibited exports of all varieties of onion with immediate effect as prices trebled in a month. The government should have allowed restricted export of onion. Such market interventions with a complete ban are wrong because producers are losing their share in the international market. India's share has already come down to 40 per cent from 80 per cent. A six-month ban on onion export had ended only a few months ago. If such practices continue, the international market will not rely on India. The ban will affect the farmers the most — the government's anti-farmer side is now showing.

Sanjay Chopra, Mohali

COMPLICATED PEACE

THIS REFERS TO the article, "Two theatres of peacemaking" (IE, September 15). Exactly 19 years after the US military intervention in Afghanistan following the 9/11 terror attack, the Taliban and Afghan government are sitting down for peace talks in Qatar. While the peace negotiations will be tough, the Islamist group and its Pakistani benefactors do seem to have the upper hand. After all, Pakistan has never given up on cultivating Afghanistan as strategic depth against India. But India enjoys huge goodwill among the Afghan people. And many within the Taliban have been wary of Pakistan and make common cause with

IDEAS ONLINE

ONLY IN THE EXPRESS

● PRADHAN SEVAK OF NEW INDIA: PRABHAT JHA

● LIMITS OF A LIMITED WAR: SAJID FARID SHAPOO

www.indianexpress.com

Pakistani Pashtuns in opposing Islamabad's oppressive policies.

Vandana, Chandigarh

KANGANA'S MUTINY

THIS REFERS TO the article, "Establishment's Warrior" (IE, September 15). Kangana Ranaut has had a frosty relationship with the high and mighty of Bollywood after she took up the nepotism issue on Karan Johar's show. Instead of lauding the courage of this small-town girl who made it to Bollywood and yet chose to run the gauntlet, she was rubbished publicly amidst audacious cheers to nepotism. Actually, Bollywood has always been a "quarantine zone" of its own kind. Maybe Kangana's mutiny is a momentous one.

Sangeeta Kampani, Delhi

POSTGRADUATE INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH, CHANDIGARH
Advertisement No.PGI/RC/2020/1223065 Dated: 16.09.2020
NOTICE FOR WALK-IN-INTERVIEW

NORTHERN RAILWAY
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
Name of work and its location: 30-Elect-24-T-2020-21-E3
Electrical work in connection with replacement of over head with underground cable & augmentation of power supply arrangement with other allied works at S.P.Marg.

CORRIDGEMENT OF EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
Northern Railway Moradabad Division invited Expression of interest on date: 17.08.2020 to work as a rail aggregator / handler for collection and transportation of cargo, whose suggestions and questions were sought till 10.09.2020.

Integrated Helpline No. 139 Security Helpline No. 182
Please join us on Northern Railway
visit us at: www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
विशेष कार्य प्रमण्डल, भवन निर्माण विभाग, राँची।

अल्पकालीन कोटेशन आमंत्रण सूचना सं0-05 वर्ष 2020-21
नई दिल्ली, बसंत विहार अस्थान ब्रम्हचर भवन में दो अदद ऑटिस मेक अधिष्ठापित लिपट (Machine No. T000548/49)

RAJIV GANDHI PROUDYOGIKI VISHWAVIDYALAYA
(A University of Technology of Madhya Pradesh)
Airport Road, Bhopal - 462033, Phone : 2678868, Tele Fax : 0755-2742006, Website: www.rgpv.ac.in

E-TENDER NOTICE
Online Tenders are invited up to 08th October 2020 till 3.00 PM by RGPV, Bhopal from eligible Manufacturers/ Authorized Dealers/Distributors, for the supply of the laboratory Equipments and related items for its various departments, worth approximately Rs.760 Lakhs from grant under RUSA/AICTE/University funds, as per following details, for its various departments:

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE
SR. No., NAME OF DEPARTMENT, NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER, OPENING DATE, CLOSING DATE, AMOUNT / END (APPROX.) IN RUPEES, WEBSITE OF THE DEPARTMENT, NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL

Slain Kerala soldier was days away from leave
Thiruvananthapuram: The Kerala soldier killed in a ceasefire violation along the Line of Control on Tuesday was just days away from returning home. Naik Aneesh Thomas, 36, of 17 Madras Regiment was set to reach

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
Buildings (C&M) Circle, (Medical Works), Madurai - 625 002.
EXTENSION NOTIFICATION NO.07SE/BCMC (MW) /MDU/2020-2021. DATE : 16.09.2020

Appeal for Identification
General Public is hereby informed that one female namely. Name : Suman W/o Rahul R/o Nangloi Delhi was found at Near Pahar Ganj Bus Stand, DBG Road, Delhi She had come from Nangloi and forgotten the way to her house and now she has been staying in BAPNU GHAR, Bhagwadd Road, Delhi. In this regard, a DD No. 119-A date

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY Auction Notice No. 05/2020-21
E-Auction Program for the Month of October - 2020
All prospective bidders are invited to participate in the on-line public auctions being conducted for sale of scrap material.

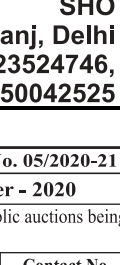
Table with 3 columns: E-Auction Dates, Jurisdiction of lots, Contact No.
8, 17 & 28 October 2020, Dy. CMM / GSD / Gorakhpur, 0551 - 2283558

THE ADMINISTRATION OF UNION TERRITORY OF LADAKH OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, LEH
Subject: Declaration of Missing persons as dead.
NOTICE
Whereas, the Superintendent of Police, Leh has reported that below mentioned person belongs to Tyakshi Village has been reportedly missing from the District.

Table with 3 columns: IFB No., Name of the work, Estimate Contract Value (In INR)
16/20-21 / Smart City / TO, Dated: 16th, 2020, Tender document for "Design, Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of 330/433 KV 500 KVA Transformers"

'Art was expression of life for her'

SHINY VARGHESE NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 16
SCHOLAR, INSTITUTION builder, cultural matriarch—Kapila Vatsyayan was known for her intimate knowledge of Indian classical dance and her innate ability to knit literature and the arts in the aesthetic understanding of it.



KAPILA VATSYAYAN 1928-2020

foundation in Sanskrit, Indology and archaeology. In 1956, she married Hindi writer S H Vatsyayan, but they later separated.
Vatsyayan would eke out the essence of every art tradition and see it in the light of modernity. This culminated in her book Classical Indian Dance in Literature and the Arts (Sangeet Natak Akademi, 2007).

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE
No. SNT-JU-04-2020-21, Dt: 15.09.20 (S&T), Jodhpur for and on behalf of the President of India for S&T work. Details as below: (1) Name of work: S&T works in connection with TTR and TBR work over JU Division of NW Railway.

Rajasthan: 11 die as boat capsizes
Jaipur: At least 11 persons drowned and two others were missing after a boat capsized in Chambal river in Rajasthan's Kota district on Wednesday morning, police said.

वर्षिणीय विद्युत वितरण निगम लि.
ऊर्जा भवन, 220 के.वी. विद्युत उपस्थान, बार्ड-पार रोड, सिक्का, अगरा - 282007
(CIN No. U31200UP2003SCCO27460) (GSTIN No. 09AACDD0695D1ZS) ई-निविदा सूचना

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IPL 2020 SHORT STORIES | SHANE WATSON

The golden age

Older, wiser and happier, the 39-year-old Australian has rediscovered himself and found fulfillment in T20 cricket

SANDIP G
SEPTEMBER 16

"AT THE ripe old age of 39, just two old guys doing what we love", wrote Shane Watson on Twitter above the footage of him and MS Dhoni locked in a power-hitting bout under inky Emirates skies. Until five years ago, when he was still playing international cricket, it wasn't love that ruled the Aussie's heart. Fear at times, disillusionment even, and an emotional state of mind that constantly burnt away his mental energy at the crease.

The most important change he brought about to affect a turn-around was to meet a mental-skills specialist five years ago, around the time of his international retirement, but IPL has also played a significant part. He says he has never felt so "precious" as he had been in his last three years of franchise cricket.

T20 fits Watson like a skin. No one would fault his 40s and 50s. No one would ridicule his diminished pace. They couldn't have enough of him, on his knee, thumping over midwicket or cover, his Atlas-like shoulders pounding proudly like the levers of a giant machine.

A song plays in Watson's head these days when he is batting. Literally. And if another thought tries to sneak in, he blocks it out by humming a song. It's his way to switch off between deliveries and at the end of overs. He found he was burning himself out in the middle, sweating over the wrong stuff.

"I wish I knew why we do things. A deep dive into 'why do I do that?'" Watson says in his podcast T20stars. Over the years, he had

ignored his inner world, fussing too much on the technicalities of his batting. "Was my front shoulder closed? Was the bat face shut? ... I never asked myself, where was my mind in the lead-up to the shot? Where was my mind in the lead-up to the game? Was I burning my energy?"

He found a way out around the time the curtain came down on his international career. "It's in the last four years that I know what mental state I am chasing every single ball. Once I have a deeply defined best version of me, I know what to do ... Conserve mental energy. I never asked the right questions to Ricky [Ponting] or Matt Hayden. I just thought you are built a certain way and

that's what you are," Watson says.

These days he meditates a lot. "Let the thoughts float by like clouds," he says in a vlog. "You are not grabbing. It's floating through. Thoughts come in and float out." Every day, he has at least a 20-minute meditation session.

"Watch your breath. Or watch a flame. Or a mantra." He intones a deep rumbling 'Om' as an explainer.

A new beginning

If IPL gave him love now, it had provided self-belief and reignited his international career 12 years back. By the time he had come to play the first IPL in 2008, he was, in his own words, in the "scrapbook of Australian cricket. I was told by an 'expert' that I should give up bowling as my body just couldn't take being an all-rounder". Instead, he went all in. Fired by a will to prove people wrong,



The IPL reignited Shane Watson's career 12 years back. CSK/Twitter

Watson helped Rajasthan Royals win the tournament and stormed back into international cricket.

In his podcast, he talks about a life-mantra that his mother taught him. "There is always a silver lining. There is a reason why something happens, even if we don't understand then," he shares. It would be severely tested in his career. He was selected to play the 2006-07 Ashes series but injuries ruled him out. Others took his place. "I shut myself for a couple of weeks, I was locked in my apartment. I was nowhere ... I couldn't handle it. I played guitar, lots of Blues music. Guitar. Lots of Eric Clapton." He couldn't understand the reason before a small voice came through. "There are little things that I needed to work on my batting. Iron out and be better than what I was before the injury." There would be more such moments where Watson would be really tested but he would tell himself there must be a reason and there will be a silver lining.

He also absorbed life lessons from books; he reads a lot, say his former team-mates like Mike Hussey. Recently, he named a couple of his favourites. Andre Agassi's autobiography Open and Outliers by Malcolm Gladwell. "Fascinating and changes perspective on what makes people successful and why. All those little sliding door things that happen all the while and they become an outlier," Watson says.

One can understand the fascination. For a long while, he had missed those sliding-door moments until he cleared his head, opened his heart, and rushed in for the ride of his life.

In elite company

Watson is among the three most influential Australian cricketers to have featured in the IPL, alongside Shane Warne and David Warner. Even in this group, Watson's trajectory is different. When the IPL was conceived, Warne's international career was over. When Warner established himself, IPL was fashionable. But Watson's early IPL days were different. Those were fraught times, and Watson is the bridge between the sceptical past and the bristling present.

His T20 numbers are glittering — 8,522 runs at a strike rate of 138.99, the 10th highest run-getter in the format. The hitting rate is better than that of Brendon McCullum, Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma. In the top 10, only Kieron Pollard has more wickets than him, 71 ahead but having played 180 matches more than him.

Watson's impact in the last couple of years exceeds the numbers. With a little more luck, he would have been Man-of-the-Match in back-to-back IPL finals. Watson knocked a futile 80 last year, while the year before, he blew Sunrisers Hyderabad away with an unconquered 117 off 57 balls. Not to forget the wind he was beneath the wings of Rajasthan Royals in the inaugural edition — smacking 472 runs and nabbing 17 wickets.

A decade and more in IPL, it could be said

that Watson has discovered in franchise cricket what he didn't in international cricket. He found love. What Watson could not be to Australia, he could be to Rajasthan Royals and Chennai Super Kings. What he could not be to Test cricket, he could be to T20 cricket. A consistent, impactful cricketer as any the IPL has seen. A career fulfilled, with little residual repentance. A superstar in every waking stride.

Different goals

It's no longer greed for fatter pay cheques that is leading the drive, but a sense of "enjoyment and empowerment." "What excites me now is going into a really good team environment. Getting to know people I might only have played against or never met. Some of the younger guys I know with opportunities to go elsewhere were prepared to forgo more money or a higher profile team because they liked what we were doing," he told The Australian in an interview last year.

Those acquainted with his international career could get the drift, and could relate to the joy he's experiencing now and the anguish he had endured with the national team in the past, where love was not as forthcoming. Once his early promise began to falter, he was often mocked. The catalogue is long — from the nude calendar gig, the frightened night in Brett Lee's room after apparently seeing a ghost in Durham ('Scare Dinkum Aussie' was an inevitable headline), the heart attack that turned out to be diarrhoea and the multiple injuries he sustained, shaded out only in number by the jokes they spawned. Worse, former coach Mickey Arthur claimed Michael Clarke considered Watson a "cancer on the team".

He has now found serenity and love in the IPL. From cancer to cynosure, from an underachiever to a pathbreaker, from a scattered sound lost in the clutter to a distinct voice heard and loved, Watson is fulfilling his cricketing destiny.

Woods aims to end lacklustre run at US Open

REUTERS
MAMARONECK, SEPTEMBER 16

TIGER WOODS hopes to snap his run of lacklustre performances at the U.S. Open this week, nearly a year after his last PGA Tour victory. Woods has yet to finish in the top 10 of any tournament since the sport returned after being suspended due to the novel coronavirus, while his last victory came at the Zozo Championship last October when he equaled Sam Snead's record of 82 PGA Tour wins.

"This year I really haven't putted as well as I wanted to, and the times I did make a few swing mistakes, I missed it in the wrong spots," said Woods.

"I've compounded mistakes here and there that ended up not making me able to make pars or a birdie run, and consequently I haven't put myself in contention to win events."

The 44-year-old has enjoyed one of the more enduring careers in golf, despite four back surgeries that had once put his future in the sport in doubt.

Woods, who has 15 major titles — three short of Jack Nicklaus' all-time record, said last month that he was looking to clean up his game ahead of the U.S. Open — which was pushed back from June to Sept. 17-20 due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

He told reporters on Tuesday, however, that he was not trying any radical new approaches to putting.

"I have changed the routine and some of the things that I've done over the years, but I still go back to what my dad always taught me, which is obviously putt to the picture," said Woods.

"Whatever I'm working on at that particular time, once I get out there and I putt, just putt." Woods got his first major title after an 11-year drought at the Masters last year, showing he remains a contender on the sport's biggest stages.

Yet Winged Foot Golf Club will offer little relief should the three-times U.S. Open champion slip up and there will be plenty of contenders ready to pounce if he does.

MARUTI SUZUKI

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