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China's words and actions don't match, no power can stop patrolling at LAC: Rajnath

Says one can start a war but ending it is not in one's hands; agrees to suggestion to brief party leaders

MANOJ CG & SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

UNDERLINING THAT there is a mismatch between what China says and does, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh told Rajya Sabha Thursday that India will not back down from taking "any big and tough step" in its interest, and that there will be no change in the "traditional and well-defined" patrolling pattern of Indian soldiers along the Line of Actual Control in Ladakh.

"No power in the world can stop Indian soldiers from patrolling," he said.

Making a statement in the House on the situation in Ladakh, two days after he made a similar statement in Lok Sabha, Singh



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in the Rajya Sabha on Thursday. ANI

said the government wants to assure 130 crore people of the country that it will not let India "bow down" its head. At the same time, he said, it does not want to bend anyone else's head.

"Yudh ki shuruat toh hamari haath mein hoti hai, lekin uska ant nahin hota hai. Aur mujhe kai baar tajjub hota hai ki shanti ka yeh sandesh jis dharti se poore vishwa ko mila hai, us dharti ki shanti mein vighna daalne ke prayas kiye jaate hain (One can start a war but ending it is not in one's hands. Many a time, I am surprised that attempts are made to disrupt peace in the very land which gave the world the message of peace)," he said.

Citing operational reasons for not giving detailed replies to questions from members, Singh, CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Harsimrat quits Cabinet, says can't be party to anti-farmer laws

After Shiv Sena, another old BJP ally revolts; Lok Sabha passes Bills

LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

UNION MINISTER Harsimrat Kaur Badal, an MP of the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), one of the BJP's oldest allies, resigned from the Narendra Modi Cabinet on Thursday, publicly criticising the farm policy of the government.

The SAD made a dramatic announcement of her resignation in Lok Sabha, protesting against The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020 and the Farmers' (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill 2020, which have brought farmers in Punjab and Haryana out on the streets. The Opposition has accused the Centre of "destroying the federal structure" by bringing the Bills in Parliament.

"I have resigned from Union Cabinet in protest against anti-farmer ordinances and legislation. Proud to stand with farmers as their daughter & sister," Food Processing Industries Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal wrote on Twitter. "The SAD cannot be a party to anything anti-farmer," she said.

"My decision symbolises my party's vision, its glorious legacy and its commitment to go to any extent to safeguard the interests of the farmers," Harsimrat said



Harsimrat Kaur Badal

EXPLAINED

SIMPLY PUT WHY IS SHIROMANI AKALI DAL OPPOSED TO THE FARM BILLS?
PAGE 13

IN PARLIAMENT

MINISTER: MSP STAYS, FARMERS TO HAVE FULL FREEDOM TO SELL PRODUCE
PAGE 5

in a four-page resignation letter addressed to the Prime Minister.

"I am proud that today I am able in my humble way to take that legacy forward... That legacy will not change, come what may. The trust in farmers placed in us is sacred to us."

Harsimrat told reporters outside Parliament that her resignation was not a "sacrifice", only "a natural and normal course for any proud Akali Dal member".

Despite the resignation and CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Insurance regulator wants pandemic risk pool for informal, low-income sectors

GEORGE MATHEW
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 17

AMID THE Covid outbreak, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) is considering a recommendation by its working committee to set up a pandemic risk pool to address losses and displacement caused to the informal and low-income sectors in case of another similar crisis in the future.

According to a report by the committee, the pool would cater to around 4 crore MSME workers and lead to a capacity of Rs 75,000 crore initially, including the provision of a government backstop. This could peak to Rs 1.23 lakh crore later, with the backstop being triggered only in the event of a pandemic and if the payouts exceed capacity.

While around Rs 2,000 crore could be expected from insurers and reinsurers, a substantial part of the pool should come from the government in the form of the backstop, the report said.

EXPLAINED

Extra cover needed

TWO SIMILAR pools, to cover terrorism and nuclear risks, are already in place. For the pandemic pool, though, the Rs 2,000 crore that insurance firms would be able to chip in may not be enough as a significant chunk of the 4 crore MSME employees would need this cover.

Under such pools, insurance firms — with or without support from governments — come together to provide protection for payouts to people and companies in the wake of catastrophic CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Rs 750 for burnt restaurant, Rs 8,500 for store: Delhi Assembly panel flags gaps in riot relief

SOURAV ROY BARMAN
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

AFTER HIS small restaurant in Gokulpuri was vandalised and looted during the Northeast Delhi riots, Usman Ali sought Rs 3 lakh in damages from the state government. He was paid Rs 750.

Days into her pregnancy, on February 25, Gulzeb Parveen's



Usman Ali (right) sought Rs 3 lakh as compensation, got Rs 750. Sourav Roy Barman

husband Moshin Ali was killed. His charred body was found metres from the Khajuri Khas police station. On Tuesday, she gave birth to a baby girl, who is in the ICU at a Hapur hospital. "The compensation was withheld because we didn't have Moshin's death certificate... and that was delayed because of the lockdown. Now, we have submitted all the documents, but we still haven't got any compensation,"

Shahnawaz, Moshin's elder brother, said.

Over six months after the riots, the Delhi government faces charges of delays, mismatches and false rejections over its compensation disbursement to victims and their families.

On Wednesday, a Delhi Assembly panel on welfare of minorities asked the state revenue department to review at CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

STAY ON TV SHOW

If you want guidelines, regulate digital media first, Centre tells SC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

THE CENTRE urged the Supreme Court on Thursday to confine the matter regarding the Sudarshan TV show *Bindass Bol*, whose telecast had earlier been stayed by the Court, to the channel alone, and not lay down "any further guidelines" for the entire mainstream media.

In an affidavit, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting added that however "if" the "Court decides to undertake the exercise, it should first be undertaken with regard to digital media as there already exist sufficient framework and judicial pronouncements with regard to electronic media and print media".

A three-judge Bench of the Court had on September 15 CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Court rejects CBI closure report, orders case against Shourie for hotel sale by Atal Govt

HC said no proof... my name not in original CBI FIR: Shourie

DEEP MUKHERJEE
JAIPUR, SEPTEMBER 17

A SPECIAL CBI Court in Rajasthan's Jodhpur district has ordered the registration of a criminal case against former Union minister Arun Shourie, retired IAS officer Pradip Bajjal and three others, after prima facie



finding offences such as criminal conspiracy and cheating proved against them in relation to the



sale of a luxury hotel in Rajasthan dating back to 2002. CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



A workshop in a lane cuts glass to stand between Delhi power corridors, virus

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

AVISHEK G DASTIDAR
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

A COMPUTER-operated laser-cutting machine, the size of a table-tennis board, is silently embossing the State Emblem of India on a transparent acrylic sheet in a corner of a workshop in the industrial neighbourhood of Delhi's Paharganj. In the unseasonal September afternoon heat, five-six labourers, all in their 20s, are busy making signboards, glow signs and name plates — and, increasingly these days, putting the Ashoka symbol



At the workshop in Paharganj, New Delhi, where the acrylic shields are manufactured. Tashi Tobgyal

on acrylic sheets.

As the work of the government goes on amidst the coron-

avirus, the desks of the high and mighty in the Capital have started sporting these transparent sheets,

standing as barriers between them and visitors. For want of a better name, the sheets have been dubbed "sneeze guards".

Parliament began its Monsoon Session this week armed with similar sheets, though made from polycarbonate and selected by the Central Public Works Department keeping in mind the building's heritage furniture. "The idea was to provide a partition between MPs. The sheets are light-weight, with minimum alteration to the furniture," a senior Parliament official says.

At the Paharganj Om Sai Plastic workshop, it's one man's job and one hour's work as a 5-mm-thick acrylic sheet is cut into a 2 ft X 3 ft rectangle with CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

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WEB EXCLUSIVE



A BRIEF HISTORY OF JAYA BACHCHAN AND HER 'GUTSY' STATEMENTS

In Jaya Bachchan, Kangana may have met her match. Mrs Bachchan is known for being blunt, a stark opposite of husband Amitabh Bachchan's dignified diplomacy and play-safe approach to everything, especially politics. Jaya's defence of her industry should not surprise anyone.

VIDEO OF THE DAY



SAMSUNG GALAXY M51 REVIEW

Its simplicity is what convinces a consumer to buy a phone like this

KERALA



OOMMEN CHANDY'S 50 YEARS AS MLA

He is more important to Congress and Kerala politics than ever before

EXPRESS AUDIO

How big data is used to keep tabs on the world

NEW EPISODE EVERYDAY

Today on the '3 Things' podcast, a look at our investigation into how a tech firm with links to the Chinese govt and military is monitoring over 2.5 million individuals

FROM PAGE ONE

Delhi riot relief

least 30 cases of mismatch between claims and amount sanctioned, and 50 cases of rejections. So far, out of 3,200 claims, over 900 have been rejected. The government has cleared 1,526 claims and disbursed compensation amounting to around Rs 19 crore. However, gaps in several cases between compensation claimed and the amount approved prompted the panel to take up the matter, sources said.

"CM aur deputy CM ke directions ke bayjood koi kaam hua hi nahi... (work on compensation did not get done despite directions from the CM and Deputy CM)," Haji Yunus, AAP's Mustafabad MLA and a member of the panel, told top officials of the district and revenue department during the meeting of the panel Wednesday.

A ground check by *The Indian Express* revealed some of these alleged discrepancies. Take, for example, the case of Usman Ali, whose eatery in Gokulpuri is on rented space. "When I visited the SDM office, I was told the compensation had been transferred to my account. But my bank statement showed that I had been given Rs 750," he said.

Pictures taken in the aftermath of the violence on February 24 show Ali's restaurant stripped bare of furniture, ovens and other items, and the floor strewn with pieces of wood, plastic and paper. "Business is down to 40%. I have not even been able to pay rent to the landlord," said Ali, who stays with his wife, their two children, and his mother.

Around 5 km away is Gamri village, where Zazar Ali runs a poultry shop. The area witnessed violence through the day on February 25. In a complaint to New Usmanpur police station, Zazar, who pays a monthly rent of Rs 6,000 for the shop, listed his losses: two gates made of aluminium, one aluminium board, geyser, a bug killer machine, a gas cylinder, a steel sink, a wash basin, two weighing scales, 40 chickens, Rs 45,000 in cash and another Rs 10,000 in a child's gullak. For all the damage, the shop owner has been paid Rs 8,500 by the government, records show.

Media guidelines restrained Sudarshan TV from airing the remaining episodes of the show, which it had been promoting with the hashtag UPSC Jihad. While doing so, it had hinted that it plans to set up a panel to suggest guidelines for electronic media.

In its affidavit, the Centre said the issue of "balancing between journalist freedom and responsible journalism is a field already occupied either by the statutory provisions made by Parliament or by judgments" of the Court. Hence, the government said, "the present petition be confined to only one channel, namely Sudarshan TV, and this Hon'ble Court may not undertake the exercise of laying down any further guidelines with or without appointment of an Amicus or a committee of persons as Amicus."

It further argued, "(the) situation in each case shall have to be decided on a case-to-case basis and a broader exercise which is too general in nature is neither warranted nor permissible".

The government said that in the event of the court proceeding with the exercise, "there is no justification to confine this exercise only to mainstream electronic media", and stressed the influence of digital media.

Media, it pointed out, "includes mainstream electronic media, mainstream print media as well as a parallel media namely digital print media and digital web-based news portal and YouTube channels as well as Over The Top (OTT) platforms... while in mainstream media [whether electronic or print], the publication/telecast is one-time act,

rejected cases, they said it cannot be done in the absence of any government direction.

"If all the cases are reopened for review, we will effectively be opening a Pandora's box. That is simply not practical. The panel should fix the criteria and some cases can be reviewed accordingly. After all, the claims were reviewed by teams of SDMs and PWD officials. The entire exercise cannot be doubted," said a senior revenue department official.

Insurance panel

events, such as floods, earthquakes or a pandemic.

"Indian reinsurer, GIC Re, who has experience of managing the Indian Terrorism Pool and Indian Nuclear pool in India, should be an apt administrator for the proposed pandemic pool," the panel, headed by IRDAI Executive Director, Suresh Mathur, said.

"There are apprehensions about Covid. It's truly a global pandemic," said IRDAI chairman Subhash Khuntia.

According to the panel, the first phase would cover income losses due to non-damage business interruption caused by a future pandemic and subsequent lockdown for up to 10 employees per enterprise — with maximum reimbursement of Rs 6,500 per employee per month for three months or easing of a lockdown, whichever is earlier.

As pandemic losses are currently covered under health insurance products, a future outbreak may be covered under the pool in the second phase. In later phases, the coverage may be expanded to the life insurance segment. "The pool premium collection is proposed to be invested in government securities or specifically designed bonds by the government," the panel said.

The committee estimated that the total payout will be Rs 78,000 crore, it's assumed that 4 crore employees and workers get benefits and the payout is limited to a maximum of three months. Similar pandemic pool proposals across the world, including in the US, France and Germany, are in various stages of approval and hinge heavily on governmental support in the form of a backstop.

Media guidelines

restrained Sudarshan TV from airing the remaining episodes of the show, which it had been promoting with the hashtag UPSC Jihad. While doing so, it had hinted that it plans to set up a panel to suggest guidelines for electronic media.

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'China's words, actions don't match'

responding to a query from Congress leader and former Defence Minister AK Antony, said there will be no change in the patrolling pattern of Indian soldiers.

With all Opposition parties backing the government, the Congress, which had been demanding a full-fledged discussion on the issue, did not register any protest.

Singh also agreed to Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu's suggestion that he consider meeting some prominent leaders in his chamber and brief them on the ground situation.

"They are all our people. Everybody is interested in country's unity, safety and security, irrespective of parties. They should also know the actual position. So, in fitness of things, if the government briefs them also, taking them into confidence, then that will be an ideal situation," Venkaiah Naidu told Singh after his statement.

Earlier, the Defence Minister briefed the House on how and when the present crisis began, and the diplomatic and military steps taken by India to resolve the issue.

Singh said the "situation this year is very different, both in terms of scale of troops involved and the number of friction points" but maintained that India "remain committed to the peaceful resolution of the current situation".

He said since April, India had noticed a "build-up of troops and armaments" by the Chinese side in the border areas adjacent to Eastern Ladakh. In early May, he said, the Chinese took action to hinder the normal, traditional patrolling pattern of Indian troops in the Galwan Valley area, which resulted in a faceoff.

He said while the Chinese side has taken the position that the situation should be handled in a responsible manner and peace and tranquility should be ensured as per bilateral agreements and protocol, it is "apparent from Chinese activities that their words don't match their actions".

"A case in point is that even when the discussions were going on, the Chinese side again engaged in provocative military manoeuvres on the night of August 29-30 in an attempt to change the status quo in the South Bank area of Pangong lake. But yet again, timely and firm actions by our armed forces along the LAC prevented such attempts from succeeding. As is clear from these events, the Chinese actions reflect a disregard of our various bilateral agreements," he said.

"As of now, the Chinese side has mobilized a large number of troops and armaments along the LAC as well as in the depth areas. There are several friction areas in Eastern Ladakh including Gogra, Kongka La and North and South Banks of the Pangong Lake. In response to China's actions, our armed forces have also made appropriate counter-deployments in these areas to ensure that India's borders are fully protected," he said.

Antony asked Singh what he meant when he promised the House that the "government will do everything to protect the sovereignty of the country".

"You have to clarify. Sovereignty means status quo ante as in the middle of April. That is the meaning of protecting the sovereignty," Antony said.

Stating that Galwan Valley was never a disputed site, he

said, "even in Galwan Valley, our soldiers are now not allowed to patrol at the point which they used to patrol earlier. In Pangong area also, in more than 8 km of area, they are not allowing us to patrol the area which we used to patrol. Previously, we used to patrol up to Finger Point 8. Now, we are not allowed to patrol up to it. After these negotiations, I would like to request the government that our Army and ITBP must be allowed to patrol up to the points which we used to patrol."

Responding to these remarks, Singh said "our former Defence Minister who I respect a lot, Antony Saab, has talked about the patrolling pattern. And he has said that China is stopping India from patrolling. I want to make it clear: that is the reason for the fight, the faceoff. As far as the patrolling pattern is concerned, the patrolling pattern is traditional as also well-defined. No power in the world can stop India's jawans from patrolling. Our soldiers have made sacrifices for this. And there will be no change in the patrolling pattern."

Referring to Singh's statement that diplomatic and military engagements with the Chinese are continuing, Congress deputy leader Anand Sharma said, "we hope that the diplomatic channels will be exhausted for disengagement and de-escalation" and asked "do we understand that restoration of the status quo ante will remain non-negotiable and the final objective of India."

Singh replied that the position on status quo has been clarified in his statement and that he has taken "cognizance" of what Sharma said.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of

External Affairs, recalling the agreement reached at the Moscow meeting between External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on September 10, and also the September 4 meeting between Rajnath Singh and Chinese Defence Minister Wei Fenghe, said: "There was consensus between the Ministers of the two sides, during both the meetings, that there should be quick and complete disengagement of troops from all friction areas along the LAC."

"Both sides should, therefore, focus on easing tensions in the friction areas by refraining from any actions that may lead to an escalation in the situation. This requires strict adherence to the bilateral agreements and protocols and not making unilateral attempts to change the status quo," MEA spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said.

"As Defence Minister has stated categorically in the Parliament on 15th September as well as earlier today, we are committed to a peaceful dialogue with the Chinese side, including through diplomatic and military channels," he said.

"The Chinese side should sincerely work with the Indian side for complete disengagement at the earliest from all friction areas including Pangong lake as well as de-escalation in border areas in accordance with the bilateral agreements and protocols on maintenance of peace and tranquility in border areas. We hope the Chinese side will strictly respect and observe the Line of Actual Control and not make further attempts to unilaterally change status quo," he said.

Harsimrat Badal resigns over farm Bills

protests, however, the two Bills — which seek to replace Ordinances passed in June — were passed in Lok Sabha by voice vote.

Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar assured the House that the proposed legislation would "liberate" farmers. He rejected the apprehension that the new laws would lead to the dismantling of the minimum support price (MSP) regime.

"Contract will not lead to taking over of land. If the corporates build some infrastructure, it will only benefit the farmer in the end... Licence, Inspector Raj will end, corruption will end, and farmers and traders will be free to buy and sell anywhere in the country," Tomar said.

Earlier, as the SAD waited for its chance to speak on the Bills, the BJP's floor managers seemed to have no idea of what was coming.

Senior BJP leader Rajendra Agrawal was in the chair as SAD president and Ferozpur MP Sukhbir Singh Badal stood up to speak. As Sukhbir attacked the Congress for including a prom-

ise to abolish the Agriculture Produce Marketing Committees (APMCs) in its manifesto ahead of the 2019 elections, the Treasury benches applauded. When Agrawal tried to cut Sukhbir short and called YSRCP's Lavu Krishna Devarayalu to speak, BJP MPs pleaded with the Chair to give him more time.

As Sukhbir continued his speech, Speaker Om Birla took the Chair. Sukhbir spoke against the Congress again, and then said: "I would like to make an announcement that Harsimrat Kaur would resign from the government in protest." Before the Treasury benches and Opposition MPs realised what was happening, Sukhbir walked out of the House with Harsimrat. He returned later to take part in the debate that was still continuing.

The SAD had issued a three-line whip to its MPs in both Houses to vote against the Bills, if there was voting.

"Its quite natural," SAD's Rajya Sabha MP Naresh Gujral told *The Indian Express*, referring to the resignation. "We can-

not be part of the government when we have decided to vote against a Bill which was the decision of the Cabinet. There is a collective responsibility for the decisions of the Union Cabinet," Gujral said.

Harsimrat's resignation is a major setback for the BJP. It has lost another traditional ally after the Shiv Sena, which broke away last year. The BJP fought accusations of being anti-farmer when it pushed the land acquisition Bill; it will now have to counter similar charges again.

The impression that the party is a poor coalition manager comes just ahead of the Bihar election, which will be fought amid increasing unemployment, the crisis of migrants, and the economic slowdown.

Both Sukhbir and Harsimrat said she had tried her best to persuade the Cabinet to take the actual stakeholders, the farmers, on board and allay their apprehensions. "The Minister expressed her objections at every platform available to her. We have written a number of letters to the concerned Minister,"

Sukhbir said.

"As a state we have always focused on the farming sector. We ushered in the Green Revolution and we fed the nation. Fifty per cent of the food-grain comes from Punjab and it's a state that is 100 per cent irrigated," he said. The Bills, he said, would "spell doomsday" for Punjab's farmers.

Gujral pointed out that the SAD could not possibly support these Bills. "Our cadre is farmers. The Bills have created a perception that they are against the farmers. Ninety per cent of the farmers are on the streets, how can we support the Bills?" he asked.

Meanwhile, in Punjab, the Congress MLA from Fatehgarh Sahib, Kuljit Singh Nagra, resigned from the Vidhan Sabha to protest the passage of the Bills in Lok Sabha.

"I do not want to continue to be in Vidhan Sabha as an elected representative on a day when Lok Sabha passes Bills that would ruin the farmers," Nagra told *The Indian Express*.

WITH KANCHAN VASDEV, CHANDIGARH

digital media has faster reach from wider range of viewership/readership and has the potential to become viral because of several electronic applications". Naming WhatsApp, Twitter and Facebook among the apps, the Centre said, "Considering the serious impact and the potential, it is desirable that if this Hon'ble Court decides to undertake the exercise, it should first be undertaken with regard to digital media..."

In its order staying the telecast of the remaining episodes of *Bindaas Bol*, the Supreme Court

Bench led by Justice D Y Chandrachud had said the purpose of the show was to "vilify the Muslim community", and added that it made statements "in wanton disregard of the truth".

Hotel sale

In an order dated September 15, the court of Special CBI Judge Pooran Kumar Sharma rejected a closure report filed by the CBI in the matter of the sale of Laxmi Vilas Palace Hotel, Udaipur. Summoning all the accused via arrest warrants, the court said

that *prima facie* it had been proved that Shourie, during his tenure as Disinvestment Minister in the Vajpayee government at the Centre, and Bajjal, as the Secretary of the department, had "abused their posts collectively and independently" to cause a loss of Rs 244 crore to the government of India in the sale.

The court also directed the District Collector, Udaipur, to take possession of the hotel, now known as The Lalit Laxmi Vilas Palace, appointing the officer as the receiver of the property.

Shourie said he would appeal against the order in the Rajasthan High Court. Expressing surprise over the charges being brought up after 18 years, he told *The Indian Express*, "The process of disinvestment was challenged in the Rajasthan High Court earlier and the HC said there is no evidence of any undervaluation. The CBI too had closed the case saying there was no evidence of any wrongdoing. My name was not there in the original FIR and we have no idea how it has been added now."

The Special CBI Court order says Shourie and Bajjal "criminally conspired with Bharat Hotels Ltd, Ashish Guha, Managing Director of M/s Lzard India Ltd, and Kantilal Karamsey Vikramsey of M/s Kanti Karamsey & Co to cause the Government of India a wrongful loss of Rs 244,63,91,000 and also caused a wrongful gain to the tune of the same amount to self or others". It names Jyotsna Suri, Director, Bharat Hotels, as among the accused.

The CBI had registered an FIR on August 13, 2014, in relation to the 2002 sale of the hotel, then a heritage property of the ITDC (Indian Tourism Development Corporation), to Bharat Hotels for Rs 752 crore. The FIR said the deal had resulted in a loss of Rs 143.48 crore to the government. In its order, the court said the CBI probe had found that the property was worth Rs 58.87 crore and the land on which it stood of the value of Rs 193 crore, amounting to "loss" of Rs 244 crore.

In the initial FIR, the CBI did not include Shourie, only naming Bajjal, Guha of New Delhi-based Delhi-based Bharat Hotels, apart from "other unknown government officers/officials and private persons", under Sections of the Prevention of Corruption Act.

Later, in its final report, the CBI said it had not found enough evidence to launch prosecution in the disinvestment. However, it held that Kanti Karamsey & Co. had failed to do proper valuation and referred the matter to the Ministry of Finance.

Subsequently, the CBI had not filed any chargesheet and instead submitted a closure report, requesting the court to accept it.

Shourie said, "It is pertinent to note that none of these decisions of disinvestment were taken by me or by any officials personally but by the Cabinet Committee on Disinvestment headed by then Prime Minister Shri AB Vajpayee and which comprised the then Finance Minister among others. Also, a lot has been floated about the valuation and there seems to be a misunderstanding. There is a difference when an establishment is evaluated when it has closed and when it is running with all its losses and liabilities."

Questioning the arrest warrant against him, Shourie said, "A Supreme Court judgment states that there has to be a summons, a bailable warrant and if both of these are disregarded, then a non-bailable arrest warrant should be issued in serious cases."

Bajjal said he had no comments to offer as of now, and was reviewing the documents. The Lalit's communication officials did not take calls.

Rejecting the CBI's closure report, the Special CBI Court said offences under Section 120 B of the IPC (criminal conspiracy) read with Section 420 (cheating) as well as Sections of the Prevention of Corruption Act had been proved against Shourie and the others. "When the investigating officer had accepted in the probe that Laxmi Vilas Hotel was undervalued, then he should have presented a chargesheet," the court said.

Noting that Shourie is associated with journalism and has often spoken about the Prevention of Corruption Act, the judge said, "But despite that, he indulged in this activity, which shows his double personality."

The court directed the District Collector to ensure the running of the hotel through an organisation of the government of India with experience in the same.

A five-star hotel, Laxmi Vilas was originally a palace of the erstwhile King of Udaipur Maharaja Fateh Singh, dating back to 1911. Finance Ministry records show the Central government sold 89.97% stake in it for Rs 752 crore

in 2002 against a reserve price of Rs 6.12 crore. The hotel had posted provisional losses of Rs 1.07 crore in 2000-01.

Writing for *The Indian Express* soon after the CBI filed the FIR in 2014, Shourie had said, "to earn gross revenue of Rs 2 crore a year, the hotel spent Rs 3 crore — a loss of 51 per cent... Eleven parties expressed an initial interest in bidding for the hotel. Five of them carried out thorough due diligence. Such was the condition of the property that four of the five dropped out."

The hotel is now among Rajasthan's top heritage properties.

A workshop

the Ashok stambh embossed towards the base. Another sheet, of width 10 mm, is cut into a stand to hold the rectangle, which can then be placed on a table.

"The client sends the design on WhatsApp. We feed it into the machine," says Akshay Rajput, 25. Not really impressed at the link that now connects him to the power corridors of the country, just 5 km away, he adds, "We are not bothered about what the sheets are called and where they go." The unit has so far delivered 50 such sheets.

Few labourers wear masks at the workshop, occupying the first floor of a three-storey building. A hand sanitiser dispenser hangs on the wall but is hardly used.

Covid-19, however, hangs heavy in the air in this industrial area, housing many small units like Om Sai Plastic, which have seen demand nosedive.

"We are pitching to Secretary-level officers at the moment. They are the ones with a steady stream of visitors all day," says Prashant Shukla, the owner of Hybrid Proximity, which has given the contract for the sneeze guards to a vendor, who in turn gets the job done at Om Sai Plastic.

Excited at his two-year-old Delhi-based start-up that specialises in augmented reality products getting this opportunity to "introduce ourselves to policymakers", Shukla queries he has been fielding queries since the first sheet was put up on the table of Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba on July 1, he says.

Apart from Gauba, the sneeze guards are being used by the Principal Secretary to the PM, PK Mishra, Secretaries of Defence, Finance, Food, MSME, the NITI Aayog CEO, and others. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's desk also has one, though it is not supplied by his firm.

Rajiv Khanna of Studio KIA, a Gurgaon-based company, has provided similar sheets to Rail Bhavan, including the office of Minister Piyush Goyal. "We are actually an architecture firm. But thanks to the pandemic, we are designing these products. What do you do when you don't have an office room large enough for social distancing? That's where this product comes in handy," he says, adding that their clients include a multinational pharmaceutical company and banks.

Shukla says orders had come as a godsend, with Hybrid Proximity not getting much work post-lockdown. It had also pitched the concept of a VR-based zoo to the National Zoological Park, but the tender got cancelled. Shukla says they have got queries from the Army, the President's Guards and an order from the Vice-President's Secretariat.

Vivek Shukla, the 40-year-old owner of the Om Sai Plastic workshop, says people are learning to live with the virus. "Some of my labourers left for their villages in the lockdown. But now all have come back."

Officials say it is a little disconcerting but they are getting used to the sneeze guards. "Sometimes I peek from the sides to get a good look at my visitors," said an official.

FULL REPORTS ON
www.indianexpress.com

| TOTAL CASES | Total | | Vacant | |
|-------------|---------------|------------|--------|-----------|
| | HOSPITAL BEDS | 14,963 | 7,971 | |
| 2,34,701 | VENTILATORS | 1,247 | 484 | |
| | Daily cases | Recoveries | Deaths | Tests |
| Sep 16 | 4,473 | 3,313 | 33 | 62,593 |
| Sep 17 | 4,432 | 3,587 | 38 | 60,014 |
| Total | 31,721* | 1,98,103 | 4,877 | 23,69,592 |

*Total active cases

Court grants bail to Narwal: 'Not seen inciting violence'

ANAND MOHAN J
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

A DELHI court Thursday granted bail to Pinjra Tod member Natasha Narwal in connection with the riots in Jafrabad, observing that there was no specific allegation of threat to witnesses and that the videos shown in court do not show her indulging in or inciting violence.

Since Narwal has not been granted bail in a separate UAPA case related to the riots, she will not be released from jail.

Additional Sessions Judge Amitabh Rawat granted bail on furnishing a personal bond of Rs 30,000, with one surety of the same amount. She has been directed not to get in touch with any witnesses, tamper with evidence or leave Delhi without the court's permission.

The court said videos played by the investigating officer show she was part of an unlawful assembly, but "do not show the accused indulging or inciting violence", while also accepting that it was mindful of the fact that there were statements made under CrPC Section 161 by witnesses against her.

It observed, "Prosecution can't say that till witnesses are examined, accused can't be released on bail. There is no specific allegation of threat to wit-



Natasha Narwal will not be released from jail as she is yet to get bail in a UAPA case related to the riots

nesses, who are, in any case, protected and their identity concealed."

During the hearing, police submitted to the court that the accused chose Jafrabad area "calculatively" to start a communal clash.

The Special Public Prosecutor argued that from February 22 to 26, 4-5 calls were made between Umar Khalid and the two Pinjra Tod members, Natasha and Devangana Kalita.

"All their mindsets are the same to disturb the place, create riots... I am not saying that the whole riots were scripted by these two girls. But they played a vital role to execute this script," the SPP argued.

The court also said the accused was booked in the UAPA case, "however, that case is under specific legislation and investigated separately and thus will be dealt with accordingly. At this stage, only bail is to be considered and not acquittal or conviction. Moreover, she is not a flight risk and the witnesses are police officials only or protected witnesses."

In this case, police had also added sections of murder following the death of 18-year-old Amaan, who was hit by a bullet which allegedly ricocheted off a Metro pillar on February 25 at Jafrabad.

A total of 11 persons were chargesheeted in this case along with Pinjra Tod members Narwal, Kalita and Jamia Millia Islamia student Gulfisha.

The Delhi High Court had earlier granted bail to Kalita, noting that, "investigating agency had failed to produce any material that she in her speech instigated women of (a) particular community or gave hatred speech due to which precious life of a young man has been sacrificed and property damaged".

Narwal's counsel Adit Pujari had said police had not placed any material before the court that Narwal would tamper with evidence or influence witnesses.

SEEK DIRECTIONS TO CENTRE TO SET UP INQUIRY BY SITTING OR RETD JUDGES

In meeting with President, oppn parties raise doubts on riots probe

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

LEADERS of five opposition parties, including the Congress and the Left, Thursday met President Ram Nath Kovind and asked him to direct the government to set up a probe by a sitting or retired judge into the investigations by the Delhi Police in the Northeast Delhi riots in February. They told the President that the police, under "directions of the Union Home Minister", are "orchestrating a script" that is linking peaceful anti-CAA-NPR-NRC protests to this violence.

"A credible and unbiased probe is crucial to restore public trust in the law and order machinery of the state. The investigation cannot be allowed to become a fishing and roving expedition aimed at causing a chilling effect on dissent and protest in the country. We... urge you to call upon the Government of India to institute an inquiry into this investigation under the Commission of Inquiry Act, 1952, headed by sitting/retired judge(s)," the leaders said in a pe-



(From left) Manoj Kumar Jha, Kanimozhi, Ahmed Patel, President Ram Nath Kovind, D Raja and Sitaram Yechury

tion to the President.

The leaders - Congress treasurer Ahmed Patel, CPM general secretary Sitaram Yechury, his CPI counterpart D Raja, Rajya Sabha MP and RJD leader Manoj Kumar Jha and DMK's Kanimozhi - told the President that there are "serious questions about the role played by the Delhi Police during the violence and also the manner in which police is harassing and attempting to falsely implicate activists and young people who took part in the anti-CAA/NRC/NPR movements as the perpetrators of vio-

lence". "Such a manufactured conspiracy theory has now begun to falsely implicate political leaders. The name of Yechury... and also names of well-known intellectuals, academicians and activists have now surfaced in material put out in the public domain. This is a disturbing trend that raises serious questions over the manner of such investigations," they said.

They claimed "there are several publicly documented accounts and videos of police being complicit in the violence, direct-

ing mobs pelting stones, or looking the other way when mobs were indulging in violence".

"The notable silence in the chargesheets on the role of leaders associated with the BJP, who gave inflammatory speeches, raises serious concern about the impartiality of the probe. Since December 2019, there are publicly documented speeches by leaders of the ruling party instigating and provoking violence against those involved in the anti-CAA protests, including that of a minister raising slogans to 'shoot the traitors'," the memorandum said.

Alleging that Delhi Police has turned a blind eye towards the role of its own personnel and BJP leaders in the violence, the leaders said police, at the same time, appear to be "pursuing a line of inquiry criminalising the protests against the CAA and portraying them as a conspiracy which resulted in the riots in Delhi".

"The entire investigation appears to be aimed at arriving at a pre-meditated theory about a conspiracy propounded by the Home Minister in Lok Sabha in March 2020, before any investi-

gation had even begun into the riots. The FIR... regarding this 'conspiracy' being investigated by the Special Cell, in which the draconian Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) has been invoked, is being used to carry out a fishing and roving inquiry against activists and young persons who were involved with the protests," they said.

"The ongoing probe by Delhi Police, therefore, does not inspire confidence. There are serious questions about the impartiality of the probe, especially given the recent order of the Special Commissioner of Police (Crime) citing 'degree of resentment among the Hindu community' regarding arrests of 'some Hindu youth' from riot-hit areas in Northeast Delhi and directing that 'due care and precaution' be taken while making arrests," they added.

Delhi Police had earlier said, "The police is doing its work in a professional, free and impartial manner... To suggest otherwise, is a deliberate attempt to malign Delhi Police's image and is totally biased and unsubstantiated."

BRIEFLY

DDA reaches out to RWAs

New Delhi: In an online exercise, Delhi Development Authority Wednesday reached out to RWAs of plotted colonies to seek their opinion in the formation of Master Plan for Delhi, 2041. The RWAs gave suggestions on fixing the transport infrastructure, clearing encroachments and ensuring no waterlogging in the city.

3 held for gangrape

New Delhi: A 17-year-old girl was allegedly gangraped by three men, who also attacked her with a knife, in Northeast Delhi, police said Thursday. The accused have been arrested by local police. Police said the girl was returning home with her relative on Tuesday night when the accused tried to snatch her purse. When the girl objected, the men allegedly threatened her with a knife and raped her. "The victim and her relative were also attacked with a knife and sustained injuries to their hands," said a senior police officer.

ASI mowed down by truck

New Delhi: A 49-year-old Assistant Sub-Inspector from Traffic Police, Radhe Shyam, died after he was allegedly mowed down by a truck while on duty at North Delhi's Burari. The incident took place on Wednesday evening at the Ring Road. Shyam was posted at ITI Center in Dheerpur area.

Cong councillor proposes naming street after Sushant

New Delhi: Delhi Congress vice-president and SDMC councillor Abhishek Dutt has proposed to name a stretch of road in South Delhi's Andrews Gunj area after late Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput. Dutt has sent the proposal to the civic body's road naming and renaming committee, saying that there is a strong demand from locals of the area as well. He said a large number of people living in the area abutting road no 8 hail from Bihar. **ENS**



OUTSTANDING

People queue up outside Rajiv Chowk Metro station. Praveen Khanna

Delhi sees most Covid deaths in 60 days; Jain says new cases will rise with testing

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

DELHI RECORDED 4,432 fresh cases of Covid-19 Thursday, taking the total tally to 2,34,701. The death toll mounted to 4,877, with 38 more deaths reported in the last 24 hours - the highest in over 60 days. Of the total cases, 1,98,103 have recovered. The number of active cases stands at 31,721.

Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain Thursday said

But we will be able to contain the spread of infection in the long-run through effective isolation as planned, said Jain

Covid-19 cases in the city will rise in the next 10 days as testing capacity has quadrupled. "Cases of Covid-19 and active cases will rise in the next 10-15 days as

testing has been ramped up four times. But we will then be able to contain the spread of infection in the long-run through effective isolation, as planned," he said.

The city performed 60,014 tests - 9,564 RT-PCR and 50,450 rapid antigen tests - Thursday, with a positivity rate of 7.38%.

On the results of the seroprevalence survey conducted in the first week of September, Jain said the report will first be placed before the Delhi High Court. According to sources, initial findings of the third survey

suggests that around 33% of the 17,000 people surveyed have developed antibodies against the virus. The samples were processed in 18 labs authorised by the state government.

Antibodies against Covid-19 infection were found in 29.1% of people in the sero survey in August, Jain had said last month while announcing its results. The results further suggested that 79 of the 257 people, who recovered from Covid and were part of the exercise, did not have antibodies against the virus.

Court takes cognizance of riots chargesheet against 15

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

A DELHI court Thursday took cognizance of the chargesheet filed by Delhi Police under the stringent UAPA and other legal provisions against 15 persons in a "conspiracy" case related to the February riots in Northeast Delhi.

Cognizance, however, was not taken in matters related to sections of sedition and promoting enmity between different groups as sanction to prosecute is pending in the matter. Additional Sessions Judge Amitabh Rawat directed Delhi Police to supply copies of the chargesheet filed on Wednesday to the accused persons. The court will take up the matter on September 21.

The Delhi Police Special Cell told the court that while collecting evidence, it relied on call detail records and WhatsApp chats. It said WhatsApp groups were used by conspirators for "vio-

lence" in Seelampur and Jafrabad areas. "We have several pieces of technical evidence, including WhatsApp chats of February 24 when the violence was happening. At that point, key conspirators were guiding their foot soldiers in the area and were directly in touch with them. There were around 25 protest sites, and around 25 WhatsApp groups were especially created for each site. The impression was given that they were anti-CAA protest groups," a senior police officer had claimed.

The chargesheet includes names of former 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 UAPA in the case.

The Special Cell said Tahir Hussain, Khalid Saifi and Umar Khalid had allegedly planned to carry out massive violence in the capital during US President

Donald Trump's visit.

In its chargesheet, police listed 747 witnesses and of them, 51 have recorded their statements before the magistrate under Section 164 of the CrPC. Police said it has given a chronology of conspiracy and relevant events in its chargesheet, which is likely to be taken up for consideration soon.

The court said sanction for prosecution under Section 45 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, for offences under Sections 13/16/17/18 of the said Act is on record, along with sections of murder of the IPC.

However, for offences under section 124A (sedition), 153A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc.), 109 (abetment if act abetted is committed in consequence and where no express provision is made for its punishment), and 120-B (criminal conspiracy) of the IPC, police is yet to procure the requisite sanction.

DU principals deny fund misuse, Sisodia ups attack

SUKRITA BARUAH
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

A DAY after Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia accused six government-funded Delhi University (DU) colleges of misappropriation of funds, principals of several DU colleges called his statements "baseless" and "unsubstantiated".

On Wednesday, Sisodia had accused the administrations of Keshav Mahavidyalaya, Deen Dayal Upadhyay College, Shaheed Sukhdev College of Business Studies and Bhagini Nivedita College of having crores of rupees lying in college accounts while saying they are unable to pay their staff salaries due to fund shortage. He had said this was revealed in a preliminary report of a special audit initiated by the government in the colleges.

On Thursday, the Delhi University Principals' Association held a press conference to condemn Sisodia's allegations. In attendance were principals of at least 11 colleges - including Hindu, Miranda House, and SGTB Khalsa - apart from those colleges against which Sisodia had raised accusations.

In response, Sisodia continued to allege lack of transparency in the colleges and questioned how they have raised funds in college fixed deposits.

In a statement Thursday, he said: "...money in their FDs is consistently increasing. This money is not provided by Delhi govern-



Manish Sisodia

Singh, DUPA president and principal of SGTB Khalsa College.

Among the allegations that Sisodia had raised was that one of the colleges had spent Rs 25 lakh on "donations". Preliminary observations report of the special audit stated: "During FY 2017-18, the college donated Rs 25 lakh for 'Atal Incubation Centre' out of the student society fund account."

"It is an extremely irresponsible statement to refer to the Rs 25 lakh as a 'donation'. It has been committed - and not even spent - by the college as seed money for skill development through an Atal Incubation Centre. It has been done from the Student Society Account for a student-centric purpose," said Manoj Sinha, DUPA secretary and principal of Aryabhata College.

According to a statement released by the association, the fund requirement from the government in the current financial year is Rs 270 crore across the 12 colleges fully funded by it. "Ideally, 75% of the required grant, i.e. Rs 202.5 crore, should have been released before July 2020, whereas only Rs 37.5 crore has been released till date," read DUPA's statement.

In the statement, they also questioned the basis on which colleges were selected for the special audit. "Is it because the members of their choice could not be elected as chairperson in the governing body of these colleges? If that is so, it amounts to scuttling the democratic process," it said.

As focus shifts to e-vehicles, govt looks at maximising charging stations in Delhi

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

DELHI GOVERNMENT will focus on installing slow charging points to help mass adoption of electric two- and three-wheelers in the city. There will be fewer fast charging stations as they cater primarily to premium four-wheelers, a statement issued by the Delhi government said.

The government has created a Charging Infrastructure Working Group, with officials from power discoms, municipal corporations, DDA and Delhi government, to oversee the work. In its meeting on Thursday, chaired by Jasmine Shah, Vice Chairperson, Dialogue and

EXPLAINED Charging key to adoption

AMONG THE biggest hurdles in quick adoption of electric vehicles is the lack of charging stations in the city, officials believe. The government's plan to get more people to buy electric vehicles in future includes setting up charging points at accessible locations, in addition to giving incentives to people who are willing to switch to greener vehicles.



Jasmine Shah

Development Commission of Delhi, it was also decided that land-owning agencies will look for 200 locations for the stations.

A statement issued by the Delhi government said that installing charging facilities at malls, office complexes and group housing societies will be a priority.

"Given these premises have high capacity commercial connections, it was discussed that setting up of a large number of slow-charging points at these facilities would be inexpensive and a quick way of setting up thousands of additional charging points in the city and reducing range anxiety," it said.

The working group was created avoiding problems owing to multiplicity of agencies in Delhi. "Delhi government will soon be rolling out financial incentives promised under the EV policy. By creating a Charging Infrastructure Working Group, Delhi government has brought on board all the different agencies and discoms...to initiate work on accelerated rollout of charging infrastructure," said Shah.

HOUSE DIARIES

THE PANDEMIC EFFECT

■ "Mantriji, kripya mask laga dijiye (Minister, kindly wear the mask), Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu told Defence Minister Rajnath Singh as he began speaking on the developments in Ladakh. While Singh was wearing it, one member was heard telling him that mask was for his own safety. Naidu promptly said it was for everyone. "For a minute, he forgot to wear it. He was reminded... toh acha ho gaya... isme kya hain," Naidu said.

■ MPs were spotted wearing masks of various designs in Rajya Sabha Thursday. While Deputy Chairman Harivansh wore a mask with colours from the tricolour — white mask with orange and green borders — BJP MP Rajeev Chandrashekar wore a mask with an Army combat fatigue print. Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan wore a printed mask.

NO QUESTION HOUR: MY QUESTIONS



■ As per GST Act, the Centre is supposed to pay compensation to states every 2 months. What is the logic behind asking states to borrow?

■ Did the Centre plan adequately before announcing lockdown?

K K RAGESH, CPM



Congress MPs stage a protest against the farm Bills, at Parliament on Thursday. PTI

2 farm Bills passed, minister says: MSP stays, farmers will be free to sell produce

Tomar targets Oppn, says UPA, in its 10 years, didn't approve Swaminathan recommendations

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

Despite passage of two farm Bills, the minimum support price (MSP) mechanism will continue to remain in place, Union Agriculture Minister Narender Singh Tomar reiterated on the floor of Lok Sabha on Thursday.

Tomar said that the Congress-led UPA government allocated Rs 12,000 crore for agriculture ministry, and "now Prime Minister Narendra Modi has allocated Rs 1,34,000 crore".

He said: "That is the kind of priority this government gives to farmers...the law is going to bring revolutionary changes in the life of the farmer...until now, the farmer was chained to the mandi to sell his produce. Through the passage of this Bill, he will have complete independence."

Tomar highlighted that 86 per cent of small farmers will benefit from the law and will get better prices for their produce. "The creation of the law will result in a significant increase in competition — private investment will reach villages, the agriculture infrastructure will be built and employment opportunities generated," he said.

Taking on the Congress for not implementing the Swaminathan committee recommendations on MSP, the minister said: "The UPA, in its 10 years, didn't approve Swaminathan recommendations. The Modi government ensured that MSP is increased by 1.5 times, and purchase will continue to be based on MSP. Agriculture will prosper — the law will not increase the income of corporates but will increase farm income."



Union Agriculture Minister Narender Singh Tomar speaks in Lok Sabha. PTI

Tomar maintained that the licence to sell in any market will end the licence raj. "Competition will increase in the market. The farmer will reap the benefits. Licence raj, inspector raj, and corruption will end, as farmers can sell (their produce) in any part of the country," he said.

The minister said the proposed law will ensure that money is transferred to the farmer within a stipulated three days. "Some are protesting on the e-NAM platform. Like the gas (LPG) subsidy, or the PM Kisan (scheme), there will be zero leakage," Tomar said.

"On this platform, 1,000 mandis were joined and Rs 35,000 crore (worth of farm produce) was traded. More platforms will be created for trading. The law will ensure that the farmer gets his money within three days."

Oppn tears into Bills: Draconian, send to panel

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

THE LOK Sabha on Thursday passed the two contentious farmer's legislation amid strong protest from various parties, including NDA ally Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), with main Opposition Congress terming them "draconian", and other opposition parties posing several questions to the government.

During the debate on Farmer's Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, and Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said, "No farmer in the country has expressed happiness on this... I appreciate Harsimran Kaur (Union minister who resigned), who displayed guts by opposing the draconian legislation. These three laws are a toxic triangle. You want to deregulate the farmer market. (But) look at what has happened in Bihar, which is deregulated, and compare it with the regulated markets in Punjab and Haryana..."

Biju Janata Dal MP Anubhav Mohanty said the Bills should go to the Standing Committee for scrutiny and more clarity. Telangana Rashtra Samithi MP Manne Srinivas Reddy questioned the use of the e-NAM portal.

Trinamool member Mahua Moitra said: "This Bill is in direct violation of the federal structure of the Constitution, namely Article 246(3) read with Schedule VII, List II, Items 14, 18, 30 and 45. It squarely puts agriculture, items relating to agricultural land, rents, revenue assessment, and collection on the State List. Once

EXPLAINED

Little chance of protests spreading

SO FAR, protests against three farm ordinances have centred in Punjab and Haryana, where the arhatiya system (commission agents) is more powerful than in other states. The likelihood of the protests spreading to other states is very low, as the farmer-arhatiya bond is not as strong elsewhere. In fact, a few agrarian states, such as Bihar, have already abolished APMC mandi system.

again, this government is doing what it does best, which is arrogating to itself a constitutional authority it is not vested with."

The Left asked why the Bill does not ensure that the price of agriculture produce is linked with MSP. "This Bill should not have been kept outside the purview of the Essential Commodities Act and other Acts. The government should have ensured that prices of agricultural produce should have been linked with MSP. It should have ensured that farmers get at least some remunerative price for their produce above this MSP," CPI(M)'s P R Natarajan said.

RS DISCUSSES COVID India's mortality rate lowest, govt aims to bring it down to below 1%: Vardhan

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

HEALTH MINISTER Harsh Vardhan on Thursday said the government aims to bring down India's Covid-19 mortality rate to less than 1 per cent from the current 1.64 per cent, which, he mentioned, is still the lowest in the world.

Replying to a debate in Rajya Sabha, Vardhan said the country's recovery rate of 78-79 per cent is one of the highest in the world, and although total cases may have crossed 50 million, active cases are less than 20 per cent.

Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Ghulam Nabi Azad, meanwhile, noted that several countries have already secured favourable commitment for supply of a Covid-19 vaccine, and India should be well placed to get the vaccine at an "affordable price" and at an "early stage" through a mechanism such as pooled procurement.

However, Azad cautioned, the government should be extra "cautious" about the quality, safety and efficacy of a new vaccine, as any long-term side-effects would impact a country with a large and young population.

In his reply to the Upper House on the second day of discussion on the pandemic and steps taken by the Centre, Vardhan said deaths in India due to the pandemic are less than many European countries and the government is determined to better the testing rate of the US. He said there are chances that a vaccine could come in the country early next year but until then it is necessary for people to follow physical distancing norms and wear masks.

"We want to bring it (mortality rate) to less than 1 per cent. We have 50 lakh cases right now but out of these, only 10 lakh are active cases," Vardhan said.

On development of a vaccine, he said the Science and Technology Ministry, ICMR and drug companies have come together for a solution. This matter, he added, is being personally monitored by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "Vaccines can come in future. Extensive planning is underway to execute how to manage the scenario," Vardhan said.

He said there are three vaccine candidates which have reached phase one, two or phase three level. "Under the Prime Minister, an expert group is studying this. We expect that by the beginning of next year we can have a vaccine in the country. In this regard we are also coordinating with the World Health Organization and global organisations," he said.

Replying to Congress member Anand Sharma's question on Wednesday — on how the government had deduced that the nationwide lockdown prevented approximately 14-29 lakh Covid-19 cases and 37,000-78,000 deaths in the country — Vardhan said the government had derived the figures from the findings of five scientific bodies, including the Boston Consulting Group, PHFI and the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation. "These agencies did five studies and based on that we prepared this data," he said.



Health Minister Harsh Vardhan

Govt: Childline received 2.39 cr calls since 2018

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

IN A written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha today, Union Minister for Women and Child Development Smriti Irani has said the government's child helpline service has received 2.39 crore calls from 2018 till August this year.

The minister presented data which shows that the child helpline received 1.12 crore calls in 2018, 78.64 lakh calls in 2019 and 48.18 lakh calls till August this year.

"From January 1, 2018, CHILDLINE services were available in 413 districts. As on September 15, 2020, the coverage has been enhanced to 594 districts," said Irani in her reply.

Irani also said that a committee under the chairmanship of the Minister of State for Women and Child Development has been formed to look into re-organising the functionality of Childline.

Amid statement on China, GST protest, some cracks in Oppn camp

MANOJ CG
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

DAYS AFTER Opposition parties shied away from pressing for a division of votes in the Deputy Chairman election in Rajya Sabha, fearing that cracks in their unity might be exposed, three developments on Thursday indicated cracks in the Opposition camp.

The Congress, which has been demanding a full-fledged discussion on the Chinese aggression in Parliament, found itself isolated as most Opposition parties expressed solidarity with the government after Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's statement in the Upper House.

Sensing the mood, the Congress refrained from protesting, but its leaders said they were far from satisfied with Singh's statement and the government's tackling of the Chinese aggression.

Outside, the Trinamool Congress rallied a group of eight regional parties and protested in front of the Gandhi statue demanding payment of GST dues to states. The Congress was not invited to the protest, which was attended by leaders from the TMC, TRS, RJD, AAP, DMK, SP, NCP and Shiv Sena.

Speaking to reporters after the protest, TMC MP and its national spokesperson Derek O'Brien said the Congress was not invited for the agitation. "It is increasingly becoming clear to us that in Parliament, the regional parties are finding it easier to coordinate with each



Opposition MPs demand payment of GST dues to states, in Parliament Thursday. PTI

other to strategise. The Congress can no longer decide the subject and then the dosage of opposition strategy. They cannot do something in the states and seek support in Parliament," O'Brien said. The Left, too, was missing although it is in government in Kerala.

The government had on Wednesday agreed to hold a discussion on payment of GST compensation on a calling attention notice by O'Brien. When asked why the Congress was not invited for the protest, some leaders said that parties like TRS and AAP were not comfortable sharing space with it.

In a separate development, the Congress,

CPM, CPI, RJD and DMK went to President Ram Nath Kovind to convey their concerns over the Delhi Police investigations of the riots in Delhi in February. Other Opposition parties — particularly the Left's rival in West Bengal TMC — were not part of the initiative.

While the CPM said "other Opposition party leaders who agree" with the memorandum submitted to the President could not be part of the delegation due to pandemic protocol, the memorandum had the signatures of only leaders from these five parties. However, all the Opposition parties have vowed to oppose the three farm Bills jointly in the upper house.

With exit of traditional ally, BJP faces setback ahead of Bihar polls

LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

AMID THE pandemic, the economic downturn, and Chinese aggression at the border, the ruling BJP on Thursday suffered a setback with a minister from one of its traditional allies resigning over an issue related to the farm sector.

With the central government having completed a year, and the BJP gearing up for elections in a key state, two of its oldest allies have now exited the government. While Shiv Sena broke away from the BJP-led NDA soon after the Maharashtra elections late last year, SAD leader Harsimrat Kaur Badal quit the PM Narendra Modi-led government while her party continues to be part of the NDA.

Harsimrat, daughter-in-law of SAD patriarch Parkash Singh Badal, resigned as Minister for Food Processing Industries, saying that her party cannot support anti-farmer legislation. An undeterred Prime Minister Modi termed the three Bills as "historic agrarian reform Bills".

Within an hour of the Bills being passed by Lok Sabha, Modi tweeted: "The passage of historic agrarian reform Bills in the Lok Sabha is an important moment for the farmers and agriculture sector of the country. These Bills will truly free the farmers from middlemen and obstacles." He added, "A lot of power is engaged in confusing the farmers. I assure my farmer brothers and sisters that the system of MSP and government procurement will remain.



BJP president and party MP J P Nadda at Parliament on Thursday. PTI

These Bills are really going to empower the farmers by giving them many more options."

However, the resignation on Thursday would come as a setback to the BJP on multiple counts. Amid the intensifying economic issues, joblessness and tension at the LAC with China, SAD's exit from the Union government would give the Opposition a fresh handle to mobilise forces against the BJP in the Bihar elections.

Until Thursday morning, BJP leaders were arguing that SAD's difference of opinion over the farm Bills would not affect the government or ruling alliance. "We tried to persuade them,

and they may vote against the Bill too. But it is fine. Even JD(U) — our Bihar ally — had a different opinion on issues like abrogation of Article 370 and CAA," said a senior BJP leader. However, the JD(U) is not part of the central government.

Sources also pointed to the absence of a veteran leader like Arun Jaitley, who played a key role in keeping the Punjab partner with the BJP.

Justifying its moves on the legislation front, the BJP argued that "contract farming" is encouraged by many states.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

6 GOVT & POLITICS

DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



BIRTHDAY WISHES

ON PRIME Minister Narendra Modi's 70th birthday, Twitter was full of greetings for him from politicians, global leaders, actors and sportspersons. Russian President Vladimir Putin, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and German Chancellor Angela Merkel were among the world leaders who wished him and lauded his personal contribution to strengthening of ties with their countries. The PM responded to several messages on Twitter, many of them personalised. One response caught the eye. Milind Soman had wished the PM "good health and a good and proactive opposition, to push you to do better for our great country". Tongue firmly in cheek, Modi responded: "Thank you for your birthday wishes and wishful thinking."

FINGERS CROSSED

HARISH SALVE, India's counsel on the Kulbhushan Jadhav case at the International Court of Justice at The Hague, has emerged as New Delhi's choice as Jadhav's representative at the Islamabad High Court. Given the acrimony his name generates in Pakistan, the Imran Khan government is unlikely to give a go-ahead. But South Block is keeping its fingers crossed.

CALL TO COLLABORATE

AT THE G20 meeting of Finance and Health Ministers on Thursday, Union Health Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan pitched for global equitable sharing of Covid-19 diagnostics, vaccines and technologies, saying that the world needs to come together and share information to battle the pandemic and capitalise on programmes like 'Access to Covid-19 Tools Accelerator'. The minister did not miss the opportunity to bat for 'Make in India', adding that it also meant 'Make for the World'.

EXTRA TIME

JUST BEFORE the SAD minister's resignation from the Union government over "anti-farmer" Bills, BJP MPs were waxing eloquent on the benefits of the proposed legislation. Party MP Jagdambika Pal used the opportunity to applaud PM Narendra Modi for his gift to farmers. "Today is the Prime Minister's birthday and I think in future, this day, when we are passing these Bills, would be observed as farmer empowerment day," Pal's long speech, however, did not amuse many BJP MPs. As he went on speaking, rejecting the Chair's instructions to conclude, some BJP MPs were seen standing and urging him to finish. As Pal concluded, many party MPs were seen thumping the desk and thanking him.

Anger in Assam as RS is told state 'studying' Clause 6 report

ABHISHEK SAHA
GUWAHATI, SEPTEMBER 17

THE RECOMMENDATIONS by a high-level panel on implementing Clause 6 of the Assam Accord are "under examination of the state government", the Centre told the Rajya Sabha in a written reply on Wednesday, sparking sharp criticism in Assam against the Sarbananda Sonowal administration for its delay in clearing it.

Clause 6 of the 1985 accord speaks about safeguards to protect Assamese culture. To institute them, a 14-member committee was constituted by the Ministry of Home Affairs. The committee submitted its report to the Assam government in February. The report was to be ratified by the state Assembly before going to the Centre.

Arunachal Pradesh Advocate-General Nilay Dutta, a member of the panel, tweeted: "The clause 6 committee report remains with the Govt of Assam for consideration. Was it ever sent to the Home Ministry GOI? The answer in Rajya Sabha is silent on this aspect. @sarbanandsonowal I am shocked and hurt. At least today, talk to Assam from your heart."

AASU general secretary Lurinjyoti Gogoi, also a member of the committee, said: "It proves they are not committed to implement the recommendations of the committee's report."

Sonowal told reporters Wednesday: "The government will take steps to implement Clause 6 as per the recommendations of the committee."

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

Form bench to track cases against legislators, SC tells High Courts

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

THE SUPREME Court on Thursday asked High Court Chief Justices to constitute a special bench to monitor the progress of trial of criminal cases against sitting and former legislators and to "forthwith" list all such cases which have been stayed and decide whether the stay should continue or not.

"The learned Chief Justices of the High Courts shall... designate a Special Bench, comprising themselves and their designate, in order to monitor the progress of these trials," a bench of

Justices NV Ramana, Surya Kant and Hrishikesh Roy ordered.

The direction came in response to suggestions by Amicus Curiae Senior Advocate Vijay Hansaria in a PIL by Advocate Ashwani Upadhyay, seeking a ban on convicted politicians from fighting elections.

SC in 2017 had ordered the setting up of special courts in each state to try pending criminal cases against legislators. Accordingly, 12 such courts were set up across the country.

The report by Amicus Curiae had said that one of the reasons for the pendency of cases was the stay granted by higher courts.

Addressing this, the Supreme

Court order asked High Court Chief Justices "to list forthwith all pending criminal cases involving sitting/former legislators (MPs and MLAs), particularly those wherein a stay has been granted, before an appropriate bench(es) comprising of the learned Chief Justice and/or their designates".

"Upon being listed, the Court must first decide whether the stay granted, if any, should continue, keeping in view the principles regarding the grant of stay enshrined in the judgment of this Court in *Asian Resurfacing of Road Agency Private Limited v. CBI* (2018)," it said.

The Supreme Court had in that case held that "if stay is

granted, it should not normally be unconditional or of indefinite duration". The apex court said that if a stay is considered necessary, the court should hear the matter on a day-to-day basis and dispose of it expeditiously, preferably within two months, without any unnecessary adjournment.

The order underlined that Covid-19 should not be an impediment to the compliance of the direction, as these matters can be heard virtually.

On suggestions to increase the number of special courts and rationalise the pending criminal cases, the court said it would first seek an action plan from the High Court Chief Justices.

Oppn misleading farmers on Central ordinances, MSP to continue: Khattar

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 17



Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar

ACCUSING THE opposition of misleading farmers on the Centre's farm ordinances, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar Thursday said the state was committed to procuring every single grain of crop at the Minimum Support Price (MSP), adding that there will be no change in the functioning of mandis.

Addressing a virtual press conference, he said that the introduction of these ordinances does not mean that government mandis would be closed. Procurement of crops at MSP will continue and "by no chance will procurement be done below MSP", he said.

Taking a dig at the Congress, Khattar said: "The so-called farmer-friendly leaders are provoking the farmers by misleading them. But the farmers are now beginning to understand the benefits of these ordinances."

He said that if the opposition is so farmer-friendly, then it should ask the Congress-led Rajasthan and Punjab governments to start the procurement of millet and maize like Haryana is doing.

"This time we have decided that Haryana will not be procuring a single grain coming from other states including Rajasthan and Punjab. Whereas grains produced by each farmer of Haryana will be procured by the

state government at Minimum Support Price," said the Chief Minister.

He claimed that these political parties have nothing to do with the interest of farmers. Rather, he claimed, they are deceiving the farmers so as to save their political existence. However, the farmers' especially progressive farmers and farmer organisations have now understood that the state government is committed for the welfare of farmers and procurement will be done at MSP only, he asserted.

Khattar said the Haryana government has consistently taken farmer-friendly decisions—be it giving compensation or launching new farmer welfare schemes like Bhavantar Bharpai Yojana and Meri Fasal Mera Byora.

"Even now the government will not back down in taking any decision in the interest of farmers. If any farmer organisation or individual wishes to give any suggestion or has any query regarding these ordinances then they can come forward to share the same and I assure that their suggestions and grievances will be considered by the government. I appeal to the farmers to remain vigilant about double-standards of the Congress," said Khattar.

'Deeply concerned' by onion export ban: Bangladesh to India

'Had requested India to inform Dhaka of any such move beforehand'

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

IN THE latest strain in ties between New Delhi and Dhaka, onions have taken centre stage.

Bangladesh has officially conveyed its "deep concern" over India's abrupt decision to ban the export of onions. This has been communicated through a note verbale by the Bangladesh Foreign Ministry to the Indian High Commission in Dhaka.

Bangladesh Foreign Minister A K Abdul Momen Thursday said the Indian Ministry of External Affairs is very "repentant" for not informing Bangladesh beforehand while imposing a ban on onion exports.

"I heard that the Indian Ministry of External Affairs is very repentant. Because they didn't know about the sudden ban," he told reporters at his office, soon after his return from Turkey.

Bangladesh expects a positive outcome regarding its request to withdraw the ban on onion export soon, sources said.

Momen said that there was an understanding between the two countries that information would be conveyed in advance when it comes to such steps. It would have been better had Bangladesh been informed about the abrupt decision beforehand, he said.

According to estimates, Bangladesh's monthly requirement of onions is about 2 lakh tonnes. The country has a stock of around 5.6 lakh tonnes of the bulb and import of 11,000 tonnes is under process, authorities in Dhaka said.

Bangladesh has reached out to Turkey to compensate for the onion shortage that may be caused by India's ban.

Earlier, Bangladesh shared its "deep concern" with India at the sudden ban, which comes after discussions in October last year and January this year.

The latest abrupt announcement of the Government of India "undermines" the discussions



Onion vendors at the Mahatma Phule market in Pune. Ashish Kale

that took place in 2019 and 2020 between the two friendly countries on the matter and the understanding shared, the Bangladesh Ministry of Foreign Affairs wrote to Indian High Commission in Dhaka on September 15.

The letter said that the Bangladesh side, during the meeting, had requested India to inform Dhaka "ahead of time" in case of any event necessitating such a restriction.

Bangladesh referred to the commerce secretary-level meeting between the two countries on January 15-16, 2020, and WVIP visit to India in October last year.

Last October, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had lamented India's ban on onion exports.

"I wish you had informed us before suddenly putting a halt in export of onions. I had to tell my cook I have no other option but to have my food without onions. I would request India to please inform us beforehand while taking such an action. After all, we are neighbours," the Bangladesh Prime Minister Hasina had said in Hindi at a programme in India.

To tide over crisis, 40,000 tonnes of onions offloaded in Mumbai, Pune markets

PARTHA SARATHI
BISWAS
PUNE, SEPTEMBER 17

MAHAFFPC, THE umbrella body of farmer producer companies (FPC) in the state, has started offloading 40,000 tonnes of onions in the markets of Mumbai and Pune.

MahaFPC has been offloading the onions in markets which primarily cater to retail consumer centres to prevent any effect in the primary markets, where farmers directly sell their produce, said managing director Yogesh Thorat.

Back in March, when onion prices had plunged, MahaFPC had started procuring onions at the village level under the Price Support Fund for NAFED. Till last week, it had procured 40,000 tonne of the bulb, mainly from Ahmednagar, Pune, Nashik,

Aurangabad, Osmanabad and Solapur districts. "Fifty FPCs had participated in the process and procured onions from nearly 10,000 farmers. The produce was stored in village-level storage structures," said Thorat.

MahaFPC decided to offload the stock once prices started rising, and it is selling the produce in the secondary markets of Pune and Mumbai. "This way, we are insulating the farmers' incomes from a price drop while the urban consumer gets the benefit of price correction," he said.

Meanwhile, the export ban has continued to hit the price of onions, with the average traded price of the bulb falling by Rs 600 per quintal since it touched the year's high of Rs 3,000 on Monday. Following the export ban, which onion farmers have been protesting against, prices dropped to Rs 2,401 per quintal by Wednesday.

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, SEPTEMBER 17

THE JD(U) is looking to contest 115 seats in the Bihar Assembly polls while leaving 128 seats for the BJP, which should accommodate the LJP from its quota, sources said.

The JD(U) and BJP have been treading cautiously on seat-sharing amid aggressive posturing by the LJP.

JD(U) sources told *The Indian Express* that the party had been pressing its claim to contest 115 seats. "In 2010, there was just JD(U) and BJP, hence we did not have many issues over seat-sharing. We were part of the Grand Alliance in 2015 Assembly polls and contested 101 seats. Now that we are again part of the NDA and the senior partner, we are pressing for 115 seats. Let the BJP accommodate LJP and we will take care of Jitan Ram Manjhi's Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) from our share," said a JD(U) source.

At present, JD(U) has 71 MLAs and BJP has 53 legislators. In the 2010 Assembly elections, the JD(U) and BJP had contested on 141 and 102 seats, respectively.



A BJP leader said: "Seat-sharing talks have been going in Delhi between top leaders of BJP and JD(U). It is difficult to say anything now about the numbers of seats. By conventional logic, we should contest as equal partners as we did in the last Lok Sabha polls. Our party had shown a large heart during the Lok Sabha polls by denying tickets to five sitting MPs and giving JD(U) equal seats (17 each) to contest. It is now the JD(U)'s turn to return the favour."

He said the BJP's central leadership had been also in touch with the LJP to resolve seat-sharing issues.

Admitting to hitches over some seats between the BJP and JD(U), the leader said: "We want some of their sitting seats and JD(U) wants some of ours. A lot also depends on the number of seats RJD will contest. The seat-sharing could be announced sometime in October."

NEARLY 6 LAKH DEMANDS FOR WORK GENERATED IN AROUND A MONTH SINCE SYSTEM BEGAN

In first, Jharkhand gets social audit team to boost NREGA work demand

ABHISHEK ANGAD
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

IN WHAT the Jharkhand government says is the first such move by any state, the Rural Development Ministry has started capturing work demand under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) through its social audit unit (SAU), generating nearly 6 lakh demands for work in around a month since the system began in mid-August.

According to officials, this is a big shift in the work demand process—separating demand generating and implementing agencies—and is likely to change the way MGNREGA functions in the state.

Illustrating how much more work demand has been generated, SAU state coordinator Gurjeet Singh said during the corresponding period in the last three financial years, around 2 lakh person days of work was generated—under MGNREGA, a representative from each household is eligible to get 100 days of work each year. "This has jumped to 5.2 lakh person days (this time) due to the pressure of work demand and receipt, which this new system has evolved," Singh said.

Work demands were earlier generated through "Rozgar Sewaks"—there is one in each panchayat of the state—who would go village to village and raise awareness about the concept of MGNREGA, get demands for work, sanction the schemes,



17.11 lakh people have worked under MGNREGA in Jharkhand so far this fiscal. File

and finally make the payments. This was a long and tedious process.

The SAU, under the Rural Development Department, created to "promote transparency and accountability in implemen-

ation" of various programmes, has now been made responsible for generating demands for work.

This, officials say, is easier, because more SAU personnel are out on the field, doing social au-

EXPLAINED Work demand of essence

UNDER MGNREGA, work gets rolling only when a person demands work for any asset creation. The worker then is liable to be paid unemployment allowance in case the government fails to provide him/her work within 15 days. However, the culture of demanding work and getting a receipt—on the time by which work has to be sanctioned—from the authorities could never be streamlined in Jharkhand, as in other parts of the country, due to conflict of interest, as the same team of people was responsible for work demand generation and sanction.

dit of work already done and those underway, and can get more people to demand work than Rozgar Sewaks were able to, given the multiple roles they

had to play. Aradhana Patnaik, the Jharkhand Rural Development Secretary, said work demands started to decline due to a strike

by MGNREGA personnel, including Rozgar Sewaks, for over a month since July-end.

But with many migrant workers returning from other states during the pandemic and the nationwide lockdown, there was a lot of demand for work, she pointed out.

"We were getting feedback that workers want to work but were not able to reach out to the system due to the strike, among other reasons," Patnaik said. "Earlier, the same system was responsible for demand generation as well as providing work—through Rozgar Sewaks. So we innovated and started a system of getting work demand through SAU."

Within 15-20 days, she said, nearly 6 lakh people demanded work under MGNREGA. "This is

a unique initiative of Jharkhand, the first in the country: We have separated demand generation and the implementing agency, resulting in more accountability," Patnaik said.

According to government figures, 17.11 lakh people have worked under MGNREGA in Jharkhand until now in the ongoing financial year, generating 419.71 lakh person days of work.

"The team members of SAU started capturing demands and sent them to a dedicated email and WhatsApp number.... Until now, 5.86,000 workers have demanded work in Jharkhand through this process and officials are facing the heat because failing to provide work will mean payment of unemployment allowance," SAU state coordinator Singh said.

7 EXPRESS NETWORK

BRIEFLY



Prahlad Patel

MADHYA PRADESH

Prahlad Patel tests positive for Covid-19

Bhopal: Union minister Prahlad Singh Patel on Thursday said he has tested positive for Covid-19. The BJP MP from Damoh Lok Sabha seat in Madhya Pradesh said his test report was received on Wednesday night. "I have tested positive. Those who met me on Tuesday should take adequate precautions," the minister tweeted. Patel's ministerial colleagues Amit Shah, Nitin Gadkari, Shripad Naik, Dharmendra Pradhan, Kailash Choudhary, Arjun Ram Meghwal, Gajendra Shekhawat and Suresh Angadi were also diagnosed with Covid-19 recently. **PTI**

KARNATAKA

First-time Rajya Sabha MP dies of coronavirus

Bengaluru: A first-time Rajya Sabha member of the BJP from Karnataka died of Covid-19 at a private hospital in the city on Thursday. Ashok Gasti, 55, had been a surprise choice for a Rajya Sabha seat earlier this year but was not able to attend any session of Parliament on account of the pandemic. He was diagnosed with severe Covid-19 pneumonia, said a statement from Manipal Hospital. "He was critically ill with multi-organ failure and was on life support," said hospital director Dr Manish Rai. Gasti was an OBC leader from north Karnataka's Ballari **ENS**

MAHARASHTRA

Man dies hours after detained for interrogation

Mumbai: A 27-year-old man died on Wednesday morning, hours after the local RCF police in Chembur detained him for interrogation. The family of Sohail Shaikh alias Usman alleged that he was beaten up by the police after they demanded money from him. The police have denied this and are waiting for the postmortem report to decide on the next course of action. Senior Inspector of RCF police station S Nighto said: "The allegations are baseless. His health deteriorated due to blood pressure. He is also addicted to drugs. We have taken an accidental death report in the matter and are waiting for the postmortem report." **ENS**

WEST BENGAL

Bangla nationals caught after crossing border

Kolkata: BSF personnel on Thursday apprehended three Bangladeshis including two women after they illegally crossed the international boundary in West Bengal's Nadia district. Acting on a tip-off, the border guards were keeping a watch near Kumari village in the district. They found five people crossing over from Bangladesh to the Indian side, BSF said in a statement. Three of them were nabbed while two managed to flee. **PTI**

Death numbers still low in India, but no scope to relax in Covid-19 battle

Nearly 1 lakh infections daily, increase in fatality rate can jeopardise move towards normalcy

AMITABH SINHA
PUNE, SEPTEMBER 17

INDIA NOW accounts for 1 in every 6 confirmed cases of coronavirus infection in the world, which is roughly the same as India's share in the global population. The silver lining is that India is so far contributing only 1 in 12 coronavirus-related deaths in the world.

This, of course, is likely to change as more people get infected; the daily numbers are now almost 1 lakh. With a lag of two to three weeks, a proportionate increase in the number of deaths can be expected. Already, more than 1,000 deaths are being reported every day from across the country.

As normal activities resume despite the rising number of infections, the biggest challenge is to prevent the number of deaths from spiralling upward. A rise in the fatality rate can seriously jeopardise the move towards normalcy, and slow down the recovery process. That is why local administrators and health-care workers are being constantly instructed to make every effort to prevent as many deaths as possible.

Many scientists and experts also believe that India's death numbers are under-reported. But there is no reliable estimate on the extent of this suspected under-reporting.

As of now, the case fatality ratio (CFR), or the number of deaths against the number of confirmed infections, is 1.63 per cent. A total of 83,198 coronavirus-related deaths had been reported in India until Wednesday. The number of people who have been infected with the virus at some point is more than 51.18 lakh.

India's CFR is about half of the global number, which currently stands at 3.14 per cent, and has been steadily declining. In fact, India's position looks much better, relatively speaking, if deaths per million population is taken into account. Globally, about 121 coronavirus-related deaths have happened per million population, while in India, this number is only about 60.

However, as scientists repeatedly emphasise, calculating CFR this way, by dividing the total number of deaths by total number of confirmed infections on any given day, is likely to present a somewhat misleading picture.

That is because the epidemic is still evolving, and those dying on any given day are usually not from the group of people who got infected the same day, but rather from the group that got infected two or three weeks earlier. A better estimate of CFR would therefore require a comparison of the total number of deaths with the number of confirmed infections two to three weeks previous to that.

However, in the absence of any uniform lag period between infection and death, a correct estimate of CFR can be had only by tracking the infection timeline of every individual patient who succumbed to the disease. Alternatively, a correct CFR will emerge only after the epidemic has ended.

In India, while Maharashtra accounts for the highest number of coronavirus-related deaths (more than 30,000), it is Punjab that has the highest CFR right now, almost 3 per cent. Punjab has reported more than 2,500 deaths till now, and has about 87,000 people who have been detected positive.

Gujarat, Maharashtra and Delhi are the other states that have CFRs higher than 2 per cent as of now.

TRACKING INDIA'S COVID CURVE

199 DAYS SINCE PANDEMIC BEGAN
CASES: 51,18,253
RECOVERED: 40,25,079
DEATHS: 83,198
TESTS: 6,05,65,728 | DOUBLING RATE: 36.60**



| KEY STATES TO WATCH | TOTAL CASES | SURGE IN 24 HOURS | 7-DAY AVG GROWTH* | DOUBLING TIME** |
|---------------------|-------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| ■ Maharashtra | 11,21,221 | 23,365 | 2.13% | 33.78 |
| ■ Andhra | 5,92,760 | 8,835 | 1.68% | 42.86 |
| ■ Tamil Nadu | 5,19,860 | 5,652 | 1.13% | 63.70 |
| ■ Uttar Pradesh | 3,30,265 | 6,229 | 2.13% | 33.87 |
| ■ Delhi | 2,30,269 | 4,473 | 1.95% | 36.95 |

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

| CASE FATALITY RATIO | POSITIVITY RATE | DAILY IN, DAILY OUT |
|---|---|--|
| 7 DAYS EARLIER: 1.68 NOW: 1.63 | 7 DAYS EARLIER: 8.44 NOW: 8.45 | DETECTED TODAY 97,894 RECOVERED TODAY: 82,719 |

Deaths as a ratio of positive cases (in %); indicator of progress in averting deaths
Positives against number tested (in %); indicator of the spread of disease
Becoming sick vs recovering; more recoveries for 14 days may signal the peak
Data as on September 16, released by Union Ministry of Health, ICMR and states. Often daily numbers include data from previous days. As such, trends based on daily numbers are indicative, not definitive

MAHARASHTRA
As Covid toll soars, govt officials want 100% attendance norm revoked

SANDEEP ASHAR
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 17

WITH 16 people working at Mantralaya, the state secretariat building, succumbing to Covid-19 so far, government officials have threatened to stop work if the condition of 100 per cent attendance is not withdrawn.

As part of its 'Mission Begin Again' guidelines, the state has made 100 per cent attendance mandatory for class A and class B employees from September 1 in government offices. Earlier, it was only 15 per cent.

In a representation to Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Wednesday, the Maharashtra State Gazetted Officers Federation (MSGOF) and the Maharashtra Mantralaya Officers Association (MMOA) has blamed the lack of precautionary measures and the violation of social distancing norms for the surge in the number of cases, while arguing that the decision mandating 100 per cent attendance of class A and class B officials was ill-conceived.

"Around 4,000 to 4,500 employees report to the Mantralaya building on a daily basis. Besides, the number of visitors has also gone up. No SOPs are in place to regulate people's movement in and out of the building. Social distancing is not possible," said Patil, alleging that entrants to the building were not even screened for flu-like symptoms.

To highlight their demand for a roll back, the associations have planned protest meetings across the state on September 21.



Devotees perform tarpan, a ritual to pay respect to ancestors, on Thursday on the occasion of Mahalaya at Jagannath ghat, on the Hooghly in Kolkata. Durga Puja, which usually starts after seven days of Mahalaya, begins a month later this time. Partha Paul

Won't allow Covid to dampen Puja spirit: Mamata takes Mahalaya pledge

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, SEPTEMBER 17

WISHING PEOPLE on the occasion of Mahalaya, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday urged people to help those in need during the current Covid-induced crisis. Though the pandemic had changed everyone's lives, it should not dampen festivities, she added.

"On the auspicious occasion of Mahalaya, I extend my warm

regards to one and all. Although #COVID19 has restricted how we celebrate festivals, we shall not allow it to dampen the spirit of this Durga Puja. To this end and to lighten up every home, I undertake #MahalayaProtishruti [Mahalaya Pledge]," she tweeted.

The Chief Minister's nephew and Trinamool MP Abhishek Banerjee appealed to the party's young cadre to extend help to the needy and distressed people.

"In this time of Durga Puja, I wish all the evil power will be

defeated and good energy will win. As a part of this pledge, I vow to ensure that this Durga Puja no one is devoid of festivities. I urge everyone to come forward, extend a helping hand to those in need and spread joy everywhere," he tweeted.

Mamata Banerjee, meanwhile, also wished people on the occasion of Vishwakarma Puja and Bhadu Utsab. She said, "Vishwakarma Puja wishes to the brothers and sisters who work as labourers and their families. They are our pride. They work tirelessly for the development of the society," she added.

Following the Chief Minister's tweet, her party leaders also promptly pledged to help people in need, using the hashtag "#MahalayaProtishruti".

Fifteen MLAs, including ministers such as Chandrima Bhattacharya, Laxmi Ratan Shukla, Indranil Sen, Shashi Panja, Sovandeb Chatterjee, and Gulam Rabbani made pledges.

administration to clarify that the staff was merely "restraining" the patient. Hours later, Jayanti Ravi, principal secretary (Health and Family Welfare) reached Rajkot to address a press conference and deny allegations by family. Ravi told *The Indian Express*, "He (Paatil) was in a very acute stage of delirium. He had no orientation. He was running around and had taken off his clothes. He even tried to throttle another patient..."

Dr Pankaj Buch, medical superintendent of PDU Hospital issued a video statement saying, the patient had ailments such as diabetes and hypertension.

"According to the opinion given by our psychiatry depart-

Covid patient dies at Rajkot hospital, family says he died due to 'beating' and not infection after video goes viral

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
RAJKOT, SEPTEMBER 17

A VIDEO of paramedics pinning down a Covid-19 patient to "restrain" him went viral on Thursday, four days after he died, leading his family members to allege that he died due to the beating and not the infection.

The patient in the video identified as Prabhshankar Paatil, 38, was shifted to the state government-run PDU hospital on September 8 after undergoing a kidney procedure at Giriraj Multispecialty Hospital in Rajkot where he was found to be infected with coronavirus. In the 55-second video, pur-

portedly of September 9, a paramedic is seen pinning Paatil to the floor by placing his knee on his chest even as others hold his hand and security guards, one of them wielding a baton, look on.

"Didn't tell you not to do it?," the paramedic wearing a white PPE is heard telling the patient while Paatil pleads, "Wait, please wait". The paramedic is then heard saying that cops are coming and as the patient tries to escape, the security guard wielding the baton pushes him down again by placing his foot on Paatil's shoulder, while the paramedic slaps him. He is heard crying, "corona...corona...!"

"Nothing will happen to you due to corona," a female staff is



A video grab of the incident.

then heard telling the patient. Patil died on September 12.

The video went viral on social media on Thursday and local TV channels also aired it, prompting the hospital admin-

After Kerala focus on expats, cases traced to three other states: study

LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

AFTER KERALA reported India's first Covid infection on January 30, in a medical student who had returned from China, the state focused on expatriates and international travellers but the subsequent outbreak originated mainly from three other states, a new genome sequencing study has suggested.

Most of the later cases could be traced to Maharashtra, Odisha and Karnataka, according to the study conducted jointly by the Government Medical College in Kozhikode and two of India's premier science institutes — CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology, and Academy of Scientific and Innovative Research.

A large number of non-resident Keralaites had returned from Maharashtra and Karnataka after the pandemic broke out. So far, Kerala has recorded 1,22,214 Covid cases, with 490 deaths.

The study, published on September 10, covered 200 SARS-nCoV2 samples from a major tertiary care centre in north Kerala, where a significant number of non-resident Keralaites had returned from the Middle East, too.

"The major cluster (identified as K1) encompassed 40 genomes from Kerala (35.4%). The analysis suggests that the cluster K1 was potentially generated from an ancestor from the state of Maharashtra before initial dissemination in Kerala. The timing of the introduction of the cluster was estimated as between May 11 and July 22," the study says.

"The second cluster (K2) encompasses 42 genomes (37.1%) from Kerala and shares 27 genomes from the state of Odisha suggesting ancestry from the state. Timing of the introduc-

tion of this cluster is estimated between Feb 12-May 16. The third major cluster (K3) encompasses 25 genomes (22.1%) from Kerala and shares 46 genomes from the state of Karnataka with introduction around March 3-May 27," it says.

According to the study, a haplotype analysis of the samples suggests that the virus circulating in Kerala is with the D614G variant, which is considered to confer high infectivity.

The study's findings indicate that the state's strategy, of focusing mainly on testing, contact-tracing and quarantining expatriates and international travellers, should have also covered those returning from other states.

"Genome analysis suggests limited inter-state introductions followed by extensive local spread contribute to the majority of the isolates in Kerala in contrast to spread from international travellers, suggesting the testing, tracing and quarantine of international travellers was an effective strategy," it said.

The study also pointed out that the cluster architecture has identified recent but not apparently connected outbreaks spanning multiple districts in the state. The study did not identify the centre from where the samples were taken. "However, the centre caters to a large population and region and has close proximity to an international airport. Secondly, the sampling was limited to a short period of time, thus enabling only a cross-sectional view of the epidemic and precluding an accurate and temporal view of the dynamics of the epidemic in the state. Nevertheless, this provides a unique opportunity to create a snapshot of the epidemic in time and space," the report said.

There are two international airports in north Kerala, one in Kozhikode and the other in Kannur.

Karnataka: Data shows fewer patients dying soon after hospitalisation

JOHNSON TA
BENGALURU, SEPTEMBER 17

THE INTERVAL between hospital admissions and deaths in Covid-19 cases in Karnataka has seen gradual improvement, from an average of two days in July to around six days in early September, according to data provided by the state government in its daily health bulletins.

The details of Covid-19 deaths documented in the state health bulletin show that nearly 45 per cent of the total 6,462 deaths in Karnataka between July and early September occurred within two days of admission in a hospital, while 7 per cent died at home or were already dead when taken to a hospital.

The July-September data shows gradual improvement in the time spent by very ill Covid patients in hospital through August and September in badly affected places like Bengaluru — when compared to July, when nearly 55 per cent of 932 deaths in July occurred within 24 hours of hospital admissions and nearly 10 per cent deaths occurred before patients reached a hospital in Bengaluru.

The interval between hospital admission and Covid-19 mortality in Bengaluru is seen from the data to have increased from an average of one day in July to around six days in early September.

"Earlier we were thinking of treatment only in terms of an infectious disease. Now there is understanding of thromboembolic developments (blood clots) linked to the infection. Changes have taken place after learning from many countries. We are giving blood thinners to prevent thromboembolism after conducting D-Dimer tests. After starting Remdesivir and change of treatment protocol, the deaths have reduced in all hospitals," said Dr C Nagaraja, director of

Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Chest Diseases and a member of the state death audit panel.

A total of 2,068 patients died in Karnataka in July, 3,388 in August and 1,106 till September 10, while 932 died in Bengaluru in July, 936 in August and 342 till September 10.

Statistical analysis of Covid-19 deaths reported in Karnataka between July 14 and September 10 — carried out by a social media user @shananalla and shared by epidemiologist Dr R Giridhar Babu — also suggests gradual improvement of the interval of time between hospitalisation and deaths.

According to the statistical analysis of mortalities in Karnataka, the average time spent in hospitals by patients who have died has been 5.2 days in September, 4.6 days in August and 2.7 days in July. In Bengaluru, the average time in hospital for patients has been 6.2 days in the September 1 to 10 period compared to 6.1 in August and an average of two days in July.

The lengthening interval between admission and deaths for serious Covid cases in Karnataka has been attributed to improvements in care and handling of patients since July.

"With use of steroids and other means, patients are being managed better if they reach hospital in time. With use of steroids, there is a spike in sugar levels and if this is not treated then complications arise after a few days in hospital," said a senior doctor at St John's Medical College.

Apart from better management of patients at the early stages of hospital admission, an increase in ICU beds with oxygen supply after the state government roped in private hospitals in late July has helped ease the number of rapid deaths that occurred through July, experts said.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

Odisha seeks Rs 1,100 cr central aid for flood damage

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE BHUBANESWAR, SEPTEMBER 17. THE ODISHA government Thursday sought assistance of Rs 1,100 crore from the Centre to deal with the aftermath of the recent floods in the state. The aid amount was calculated after a preliminary assessment of damage to crops, houses and other properties.

about 2.25 lakh hectares of agricultural land have suffered damage due to the floods in the last week of August. About 1,20,000 houses, as well as embankments, roads, and public infrastructure, have also been affected. The floods hit nearly 14 lakh people from over 6,000 villages of 19 districts. These numbers were presented at a high-level meeting chaired by state Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy.

TN: Not just PM-Kisan, fraudsters may have targeted other schemes too

ARUN JANARDHANAN CHENNAI, SEPTEMBER 17. THE FINDINGS of a CB-CID probe into the PM Kisan scheme scam in Tamil Nadu suggest that fraudulent elements, most of them backed by local politicians, looted money from several other welfare schemes too. The investigators have also found that some listed beneficiaries, including poor farmers and farm labourers, did not receive any money and had not even heard about the scheme. The fraudsters, the probe found, collected documents from the amount farmers received from the government, the officer said.

and photos of their Aadhaar card and land documents. "They were told that they will be getting Rs 2,000 every alternate month from the Central government. Local politicians played a key role in this," the officer said. Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami has promised action against culprits and said it is the AIADMK government that unearthed the scam. He said the complete amount siphoned off from public funds — approximately Rs 110 crore — will be recovered. Three district collectors told The Indian Express that the process to identify ineligible and fake beneficiaries from the list was proving to be a Herculean task. "Right now, we are busy with recovery from ineligible beneficiaries," said a collector.

TAMIL NADU SLUM CLEARANCE BOARD SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, CHENNAI CIRCLE-I NOTICE INVITING TENDER. Tender Notice No. SCB/522/HD/SE/ICC-1/2020. Construction of 384 Nos. of tenements (G+5 storied) adopting Mivan Technology with internal water supply, sanitary and electrification arrangements with development works at Marudupet Phase-I Village in Thiruvallur Taluk at Thiruvallur District under HFA (AHP).

WINNER OF PRESIDENT'S MEDAL Haryana ADGP's duties curbed on minister's orders

ON THE orders of Haryana Home Minister Anil Vij, all works under ADGP A S Chawla — who had on the eve of Independence Day been selected for the President's Police Medal for distinguished service — have been withdrawn. Vij was not happy with Chawla over the 'Dial 112 Project', a centralised police helpline. "ADGP A S Chawla has been assigned a task to implement (Dial) 112 but for the past one year, that project is at a standstill. He doesn't update me nor has the task been implemented. I issued orders on Wednesday that all works from him be withdrawn," Vij told the media persons.



AS Chawla

DEMAND FIR AGAINST FOREST OFFICIALS

MP villagers protest 'detention, beating' of activists

IRAM SIDDIQUE BHOPAL, SEPTEMBER 17. SEVERAL VILLAGERS have gathered outside Neplanagar police station in Burhanpur district of Madhya Pradesh since Tuesday to protest the alleged detention and beating of two tribal activists by forest officials. The tribals of Neplanagar, about 330 km from Bhopal, have refused to leave until an FIR is registered against the forest officials for alleged kidnapping and wrongful confinement of the activists. The villagers had earlier written to the district collector and superintendent of police demanding action against the forest officials.

for which they were detained when spotted at the court. Burhanpur Collector Praveen Singh Adhacharya said, "We received a written complaint against the forest officials and ordered a preliminary investigation." While the protesting villagers refused to leave until their demands were heeded, Subdivisional Magistrate Vishva Madhwani, who rushed to pacify them, said, "We are trying to explain to the villagers that an inquiry has been ordered and it will take some time before any decision can be taken. They have assembled in huge numbers without social distancing."

TAMIL NADU SLUM CLEARANCE BOARD COIMBATORE CIRCLE FORM OF CONTRACT: "LUMPsum" (TWO COVER SYSTEM) Tender Notice No. SCB/179/DB/2020 Dated: 17.09.2020. Construction of 120 tenements adopting T.D.No: HFA/68A/2019 Type A/R and HFA-68B/2019 (G+3 storeyed) at Anna Nagar Phase - II, Pongalur village in Avinashi Taluk of Tiruppur District under HFA, CER.No.01/CBE/2020-21.

KONKAN RAILWAY CORPORATION LTD. (A Government of India Undertaking) OPEN E-TENDER (SINGLE PACKET SYSTEM) INVITATION NOTICE

Notice No: KR/CO/EL/ROHA-RM/11/2020 dt. 18/09/2020. Name of Work: Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Power, Control Cabling and LED Lighting Arrangement in Place of Existing System Inside Tunnels between Roha to Ratnagiri under Ratnagiri Region of KRCL in the State of Maharashtra. Completion Period: Three Months. Estimated Cost: ₹ 29,87,245/- Excluding GST. EMD: ₹ 3,15,000/- Last Date & Time for Online Submission of Tender: 03/10/2020 upto 14:00 Hrs. Amendments / Corrigendum if any, would be uploaded on IREPS website only.

TRITES THE INFRASTRUCTURE PEOPLE (Schedule 'A' Enterprise of Govt. of India) Notice Inviting e-Tenders

GGM/MSM, invites on behalf of RITES Limited online lump sum bids on single packet system for the following goods:- 1) NIT No: 2020/RITES/MSM/03/MOZ/ABS. Name of Goods: Supply, Installation and Commissioning of Air Brake System (MIBC) for 60 nos. Cape Gauge (1067 mm) Passenger Coaches for export to Mozambique Railways, Earns Money: ₹ 70,00,000/- Cost of Tender Document: ₹ 7,000/- Period of Completion: 24 Weeks, Last Date & Time of Submission of Bids: 03.10.2020 (11:00 Hrs).

NORTHERN RAILWAY NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Name of work and its location: 30-Elect-16-T-R1-20-21-E3 Removing and commissioning of subsersible pumps over Delhi Division. Approx cost of the works in: Rs. 31.58 lacs. Address of the office: Sr. Divil Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi. Earnest Money: Rs. 632000.00. Date & time of submission of tender: 15.10.2020, 12.00 Hrs. Opening of tender: 15.10.2020, 12.00 Hrs. Website & notice board: www.ireps.gov.in & Sr. Divil. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi. 2020/2020

THE GUJARAT CANCER & RESEARCH INSTITUTE (M.P. SHAH CANCER HOSPITAL) N.C.H. CAMPUS, ASARWA, AHMEDABAD-380016

Phone: 079-2268 8012 Fax: 079-2268 5490 Advertisement The Gujarat Cancer & Research Institute invites applications for the following posts: For Non-Teaching Post: (1) Asso. Prof. (2) Asst. Prof. (3) Jr. Lecturer in Nuclear Medicine. Applications are invited for above positions: interested candidates may apply upto 25-09-2020, Friday during office hours. Application form which can be downloaded from our website. For further details please visit our website: www.gcriindia.org. No TA/DA will be admissible for attending interview. No.INF/ABD/646/2020 DIRECTOR

NATIONAL AGRI-FOOD BIOTECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE (NABI) Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology, Govt. of India Knowledge City, Sector-81, Mohali-140306, Punjab, INDIA Website: www.nabi.res.in, Tel: 0172-5221300

e-Notice Inviting Tenders e-Tenders in Two parts (Technical Bid and Price Bid) are invited on the behalf of Executive Director, NABI for the award of Work of Annual Operation and Maintenance Contract of HVAC system of NABI-CIAB campus. The complete details of these tenders will be available on the NABI Website: www.nabi.res.in & CPPP Website: https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app. Any changes/amendments if made in the tender, will be available on NABI website and CPPP website. Bidders may kindly refer the above websites before submitting the bids. Manager-Admin

TAMIL NADU SLUM CLEARANCE BOARD SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (CHENNAI CIRCLE-II) Tender Notice No. SCB/941/D1/SE/ICC-II/2020 NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Table with 5 columns: Sl. No., Name of work / Estimate No., Approximate Value including GST (Rs. in lakhs), EMD (In Rs.), To whom EMD / Tender Schedule cost to be Drawn. Includes construction of 820 tenements, 80 Nos of Tenements, 528 Nos of Tenements, and 272 Nos of Tenements.

The EMD should be drawn as Demand Draft or Banker's Cheque or FDR or irrevocable Bank Guarantee from any Nationalized / Scheduled Banks, payable at Chennai in the prescribed form in favour of the Executive Engineer mentioned in Column (5). The tender documents are available at www.tenders.in.gov.in which can be downloaded from 18.09.2020 to 18.10.2020 upto 3.00 PM. The downloaded tender documents shall be submitted without any alteration, whatsoever it may be, in full shape or otherwise the tender will be liable for rejection.

TAMIL NADU SLUM CLEARANCE BOARD PIU Circle, Salem NOTICE INVITING TENDER Form of Contract : Lumpsum (Two cover System)

Tender Notice No. SCB/1346/SE/PIU Circle/2020 Dated : 17-09-2020. Construction of 388 tenements adopting Type Design No. HFA 68A/2019, 68C/2019 (G+3) including internal water supply, sanitary and electrification arrangements with all development works at Sankarai in Dharmapuri LPA and Dharmapuri District under HFA, CER.No.02/CBE/2020-21.

Table with 5 columns: Sl No, Name of Work, Work Value, GST 12%, Tender value Period of Contract, EMD (In Rs.). Includes construction of 388 tenements, 508 tenements, 504 tenements, 370 tenements, 400 tenements, 312 tenements, 293 tenements, and 293 tenements.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, PMGSY Circle Baramulla NOTICE INVITING e-TENDERS

E-NIT NO: 09/SE/PMGSY/Bla/e-tendering of 2020-21 dated 16-09-2020. Superintending Engineer PMGSY Circle Baramulla on behalf of President of India invites Item rate bids in electronic tendering system for up-gradation of roads under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana for the following works including their maintenance for five years from the eligible and approved contractors registered with J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State Governments.

Wanted Maoist held in MP

Bhopal: A 21-year-old alleged Maoist with bounties against him in three states was arrested by Balaghat police from Samnapur-Banda tala region on the Madhya Pradesh-Chhattisgarh border on Thursday. Police said they received information of movement of Maoists posing as villagers to buy supplies. A team was sent to the market, where they followed two people whose movement seemed suspicious. According to police, the two started running. "One escaped and the other fell into a lake and was apprehended," IG, Balaghat, K P Venkateshwar Rao said.

While the police team was returning with Badal, they were attacked by a group of 10-12 Maoists, they said. "There was retaliatory firing from our side. We managed to get Badal alive," said Rao. ENS

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY ई-निविदा सूचना

मण्डल लेवल प्रबंधक, इवीनियरिंग, उत्तर पश्चिम रेलवे, जोधपुर द्वारा भारत के राष्ट्रिय के लिये एवं उन्की ओर से ई-निविदा के माध्यम से प्रवर्तित नियामक के अन्तर्गत निविदा प्रपत्र में निविदा निम्न कार्यों के लिए क्रमानुसार आमंत्रित की जाती है। (1) ई-निविदा सूचना 2020-21: 77, कार्य का नाम व स्थान: Zone contract Zone-2: Service Buildings RKB Station, Parcel office, HFD Training Centre, Rly. Institute, PRS, ORH, SRH, Sr. SRH, MS Office, PW Office, Loco Office, DRM Office, AOTA Office, BRI Office, water supply complex and other service building at JU under ADEN/HQJU in the year 2020 to 2022. अनुमानित लागत: ₹ 1,89,43,048.80 बायाना राशि: ₹ 2,44,700.00. निविदा सूचना संख्या 2020-21/77 निविदा प्रपत्र करने की तिथि 07.10.2020 को 15:00 बजे तक है। वेबसाइट का विवरण जहाँ पर ई-निविदा देखी व भरी जा सकती है - www.ireps.gov.in 759-DK/20 Please join us on f NWR/Railways

दक्षिणांचल विद्युत वितरण निगम लि., कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत वितरण मण्डल, हमीरपुर, पत्रांक सं.- 1918/ वि.वि.म.ह./ पी-1 (प्रकाशन)/ निविदा/ 2020-21, दिनांक- 16 सितम्बर 2020

अल्पकालीन (ई-निविदा) विद्युत वितरण मंडल हमीरपुर के अन्तर्गत कम्प्यूटर मंडल प्रिन्टर क्रय करने हेतु अनुभवो टेकेदारों से अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा दिनांक 19.09.2020 समय 10.00 बजे से दिनांक-04.10.2020 समय 12.00 बजे तक आमंत्रित की जाती है, जो दिनांक-04.10.2020 समय 15.00 बजे से खोली जाएगी जिसका पूर्ण विवरण ई-प्रोक्चोरमेंट पोर्टल https://etender.up.nic.in एवं निगम की वेबसाइट https://dvvnl.org पर उपलब्ध है। 1. ई-निविदा संख्या-45/SE/EDCH/2020-21: विद्युत वितरण मंडल हमीरपुर में 2 नग कम्प्यूटर क्रय करने का कार्य। "राष्ट्रीय हित में बिजली बचाएँ" हस्ता./ (अशोक कुमार) अधीक्षण अभियन्ता

HC seeks Centre's stand on actor's plea on media reporting in Rhea drugs case

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

THE DELHI High Court on Thursday issued a notice to the Centre and ordered the authorities to take a decision on complaints raised by actor Rakul Preet Singh in her petition regarding alleged defamatory and unsubstantiated reporting against her in connection with the drugs case registered against actor Rhea Chakraborty and others by the Narcotics Control Bureau.

While passing the order, Justice Navin Chawla also said the court hopes media houses would show restraint and abide by the programme code and other guidelines while reporting the matter with regard to Singh.

The notice was issued to the News Broadcasters Association (NBA), Prasar Bharati, and the Press Council of India, seeking their response by October 15, the next date of hearing.

The court was hearing a petition filed by Singh in which she has submitted that the media has started a campaign against her, alleging that Chakraborty named her in the drugs case. Her counsel told the court that Chakraborty retracted her state-



Rakul Preet Singh

ment later but the media continues to connect her to the case.

The court was also told that the reports are leading to cancellation of her endorsement contracts. In her petition, Singh has sought a direction to restrain the media from such reporting and alleged violation of the programme code and guidelines issued by the Centre.

The court earlier asked Singh whether any complaint has been filed with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and asked NBA about the punishment for erring news channels. The Centre, while submitting that the actor was seeking a blanket order, submitted that an order of pre-censorship should not be passed.

However, the court stressed on exercise of restraint by the media in reporting.

Celebs, parties: Bengaluru Police depend on old drug hauls

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, SEPTEMBER 17

TWO MAJOR drug hauls — one in November 2018 and another in August 2020 — lie at the heart of the rapidly expanding investigation by the Bengaluru Police Crime Branch into drug use in the city. It has so far led to the arrest of two high-profile actresses, questioning of many from the film world, as well as several whose claim to fame is throwing high-profile parties, and allegations of political links.

None of the arrested has been granted bail so far. Amidst allegations of rampant drug use roiling Bollywood and Mumbai, the Karnataka government has been citing the action as "unprecedented" and proof of its resolve to crack down on the drug mafia.

However, the police have not managed to make any fresh seizures of drugs from any of the accused.

In November 2018, 1.5 kg of cocaine and 1,930 Ecstasy tablets worth estimated Rs 1.5 crore had been seized after the arrest of

two African-origin dealers and a former software sector employee, Prateek Shetty, 30, the alleged pointsman for peddling the drugs at parties.

The August 2020 haul involved the arrest of Anoop Mohammed, Rijesh Ravichandran from Kerala and Anikha Dinesh from Bengaluru, with allegedly 550 Ecstasy pills and 180 LSD blots worth around Rs 20 lakh in the drug market, by the south zone unit of the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB).

The NCB had shared information with the Crime Branch on the use of psychedelic drugs at high-end parties. However, it is the investigations done in the 2018 case — especially the alleged supply network of Shetty — that have led the police to the recent arrests.

The first person picked up by the Crime Branch, soon after the NCB haul, was B K Ravishankar, 37, an employee of the state regional transport office who is said to be a close friend of actress Ragini Dwivedi. The police said Ravishankar was a key intermediary in the supply of drugs at parties.

Ravishankar reportedly named several people involved in the supply and use of party drugs. On September 4, the Crime Branch filed a fresh case naming 12 persons allegedly mentioned by him, including Dwivedi. "In the course of the probe, a search was conducted at the home of actress Ragini Dwivedi. Preliminary investigations have shown involvement in an international drug racket. Efforts are on to find the missing links," the police said after her arrest.

In the fortnight since, eight others have been arrested, with several, such as party organiser Viren Khanna and bullion trader Vaibhav Jain, named in the November 2018 case as well.

The police alleged that an analysis of the mobile phone and communications of Ravishankar revealed he was in touch with a Senegalese cocaine peddler called Loom Pepper, right until April.

Based on Ravishankar's interrogation, the police also arrested businessmen Prashant Ranka and Rahul Tonse, the latter said to be an associate of actress

Sanjana, as well as Sanjana. Aditya Alva, the businessman son of former minister Jeevaraj Alva and brother-in-law of actor Vivek Oberoi, who is not in the country, has been named in the probe. The police have also questioned actor-couple Digant and Aindrita Ray.

"This is the first time in the country that strong action has been taken against drug use. Drugs are causing harm to students and the youth," Karnataka CM B S Yediyurappa has stated. "We will get to the root of the drug trade in the city. All aspects will be known when chargesheets are filed in these cases," Bengaluru Police Commissioner Kamal Pant has said.

However, with no seizures of drugs from the accused, experts have raised doubts whether cases against them will lead to convictions. "On the face of it the cases may be sensational, but without seizures or evidence of consumption of drugs, these cases may not stand scrutiny in an NDPS (Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances) court," said a senior lawyer dealing with such cases in Bengaluru courts.



The charges are to be nominal and will be applicable in 10-15 per cent of the 7,000 railway stations. File

Rlys to include 'user fee' in train fares for redeveloped stations with high footfall

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

INDIAN RAILWAYS will soon start levying a "user fee" as part of train fares for stations that have been redeveloped and major stations with high footfall in order to generate revenue to provide better facilities for passengers, Railway Board Chairman V K Yadav said on Thursday.

Yadav said the charges would be nominal, and applicable in 10-15 per cent of the 7,000 railway stations.

"We will keep a very small amount for the user charge. We will issue a notification for the user charge for all stations, including those being redeveloped and those that are not. When re-development of the stations is completed, the money will go to the concessionaires, till then that money will go to the railways for improving facilities across stations. It will be an affordable amount, but it is important to levy if we want to provide world-class facilities similar to airports. We want to upgrade all our major railway stations," Yadav said.

"We will not levy it across all our 7,000 stations, but all major stations where passenger footfall is increasing over the next five years. It will be done in 10-15 per cent of all our stations where we expect footfall to increase," he added.

The statement comes in the backdrop of concerns raised over

potential rise in prices of tickets with private entities being allowed to run trains. Yadav said that fares of Indian Railways are highly subsidised and there is a plan to "rationalise" them.

"I believe that competency will ensure that eventually the prices of both passenger and freight fares will decrease in due course," said NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant.

Railways plans to redevelop 50 stations, and monetise its land. The redeveloped hubs will be called 'Railopolis', according to Railways. It will lease the land out for 60 years for commercial purposes.

"We want Railways to drive India's growth story. In countries like Japan and South Korea the growth story was also driven by railway infrastructure. We are confident that going forward Railways will contribute 1-2 per cent towards India's growth," Kant said.

The Indian Railway Station Redevelopment Corporation Ltd (IRSDC), the implementing agency of the station redevelopment project, earlier handed over two railway stations — Habiganj in Madhya Pradesh and Gandhinagar in Gujarat — to private parties for development under public-private partnership plans to complete both by December 2020.

While 94.05 per cent civil work is complete at Gandhinagar station, the project at Habiganj is 90 per cent complete.

Magisterial probe ordered into Sopore 'custody death'

BASHAARAT MASOOD
SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 17

THE JAMMU and Kashmir administration has ordered a magisterial inquiry into the alleged custodial death of a 23-year-old man in Sopore.

Baramulla District Magistrate G N Itoo appointed Baramulla Additional District Magistrate Mohd Ahsan Mir as the inquiry officer and asked him to submit the report within 10 days.

"Whereas allegations are levelled against Sopore police for custodial killing of the subject (Irfan Ahmad Dar)... Whereas there was huge outcry in Sopore and even it was reported in media that the deceased was picked

up by Sopore police... Whereas to find out the truth, it has become expedient to institute magisterial inquiry into the incident," the inquiry order read.

Dar's death had sparked protests in Kashmir, and political parties had demanded action in the matter.

The police said that Dar, a militant overground worker, was arrested on Tuesday afternoon and two hand grenades were recovered from him. They said that he escaped from custody and his body was found later.

However, his family alleged it was "murder in custody". The family also rejected the police claim that Dar was a militant overground worker or that anything was recovered from him.

As NIA questions Jaleel and Kerala CM backs him, UDF walks tightrope over minority votes

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, SEPTEMBER 17

EVEN AS Kerala Higher Education Minister K T Jaleel was questioned by the NIA on Thursday in connection with the probe into the gold smuggling case and Opposition Congress and BJP kept up their demands for his resignation, the protests look set to be a tightrope walk for the Congress-led UDF, which has high stakes in the minority vote-bank.

Kerala is due for Assembly polls next year, and Jaleel has indicated that he is being hunted for having accepted religious texts meant for distribution.

The NIA questioned Jaleel for several hours in connection with the gold smuggling case and his alleged links with arrested prime accused Swapna Suresh, a former executive secretary at UAE



Kerala minister K T Jaleel

consulate, and other accused. The NIA has invoked anti-terror law UAPA in the smuggling case.

Multiple agencies are probing whether Jaleel, also the state Minority Welfare Minister, violated protocol while dealing with a foreign mission. According to investigators, the minister had accepted packets of the Quran and food kits directly from the consulate and ferried the consignment to his constituency — Thavannur, in Malappuram dis-

trict — in a government vehicle.

Although Jaleel has admitted that he had accepted the religious texts from the consulate, the investigating agencies are trying to ascertain whether any contraband was smuggled under the guise of religious books. The Opposition has questioned propriety of a minister taking initiative in distributing religious texts to his community members.

Opposition protests against the LDF government has intensified after the ED had questioned Jaleel last week.

But the minister looked to turn the tables on Congress ally Indian Union Muslim League (IUML), saying that he is ready to send back packets of the Quran if IUML chief Panakkad Hyderali Shihab Thangal wants them not to be distributed. The IUML, he asserted, should do justice to the word "Muslim" in its name.

On Thursday, Jaleel continued

to harp on the same point: "If Panakkad Thangal says distribution of the Quran is not required, I am ready to send back the packets. Are IUML leaders ready to take up that challenge after placing their hands on the Holy Quran? Truth will eventually win."

Addressing the media on Thursday, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan repeated his support for Jaleel: "He accepted the Quran as a minister who handles the Minorities department. How can people complain against accepting the Quran? We can understand Congress and BJP complaining, but on what basis is IUML and its leaders joining hands on the Quran issue and attacking Jaleel? He has not committed any crime." The pro-CPI(M) Sunni Muslim faction, led by Kanthapuram AP Aboobaker Musliyar, has also extended support to Jaleel.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

MONEY LAUNDERING ED files prosecution complaint against separatist leader's wife

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

THE ENFORCEMENT Directorate (ED) on Thursday filed a prosecution complaint against Bilquies Shah, wife of Kashmiri separatist leader Shabir Ahmed Shah, in connection with a money laundering case. The agency alleged that Bilquies received part of funds routed to Shabir Shah by an alleged Jaish-e-Mohammed operative.

"Shabir Shah has been found to be carrying out illicit activities along with his accomplice Mohd Aslam Wani, who is an activist of banned militant organisation JeM (Jaish-e-Mohammad). He was using Aslam Wani as a carrier for collecting hawala money sent by his Pakistan based outfits through hawala operators to deliver the same to him and his wife..." the ED said in a statement.

The agency earlier filed a prosecution complaint against Shah in the same case. It had attached "property, located in posh area of Srinagar, belonging to Shabir Ahmad Shah being held in the name of his wife and daughters".

"Investigation under PMLA revealed that Shabir Shah, without having any legitimate sources of income, had received money for carrying out separatist activities in J&K and had acquired various properties through a maze of dubious transactions. Bilquies Shah w/o Shabir Shah has also received illegitimate money from Mohd. Aslam Wani (carrier of Shabir Shah) on various occasions," the ED said.

In an earlier conversation with *The Indian Express*, Bilquies had denied the allegations and said ED had not found any evidence against her husband or herself.

Shah is currently in jail in connection with an NIA case of terror funding.



Security forces near the encounter site in Srinagar. Shuaib Masoodi

Civilian, three Hizb militants killed in Srinagar encounter

BASHAARAT MASOOD
SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 17

A CIVILIAN was killed along with three Hizb Mujahideen militants in a pre-dawn gunfight in Srinagar on Thursday, with the victim's son claiming that security forces had fired on their vehicle.

Officials maintained that the 45-year-old woman died in "crossfire" during the gunfight, which also left a CRPF commandant injured.

"On a specific input regarding presence of terrorists in Batamalo area of Srinagar, a joint cordon-and-search operation was launched by Srinagar Police

and CRPF in the said area," the police said in a statement. "During the search operation, as the presence of terrorists got ascertained they were given opportunity to surrender, however they fired indiscriminately upon the joint search party, which was retaliated leading to an encounter. In the initial indiscriminate firing by the terrorists, Dy. Commandant CRPF Shri Rahul Mathur and a lady identified as Kounsar Jan got seriously injured."

Police said the woman died instantly while the injured CRPF officer was taken to a hospital.

The woman's son, who was accompanying her when she was shot, claimed that the forces

opened "a burst of fire on their car." "We were travelling in the car at around 4 am when we saw a huge presence of forces. My mother asked me to take a turn and return," he said. "As we started to head back home, they opened a burst of fire."

The gunfight and woman's death sparked protests in the area, with youths pelting stones at security forces.

The militants were identified as Zakir Ahmad Paol of Shopian, Ubair Mushtaq Bhat of Badragund, Kulgam and Adil Hussain Bhat of Chersoo, Awantipora. "They were affiliated with proscribed terror outfit HM..." the police statement said.

PDP leader released from house detention

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 17

PDP LEADER and former minister Naeem Akhtar has been released from house detention.

"After 407 days of detention am informed that I am free to move about. Thank you rulers for small mercies while you inflict



Naeem Akhtar

larger tragedies on our land," Akhtar tweeted on Thursday.

A close aide of PDP chief and former CM Mehbooba Mufti, Akhtar was arrested on August 5,

2019, when the Centre scrapped special status to Jammu and Kashmir and bifurcated the state into two Union territories. While he was first detained under preventive custody, he was subsequently booked under the Public Safety Act in February this year. Akhtar was released in June this year, but was not allowed to move out of his house.

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No. F.A. 238/Estt-I/Vol-II/2013-1450 Dated: Lumami the 18th Sept, 2020

NOTIFICATION
In continuation to the Advertisement No. 01/2020 dated 29th July 2020 the last date of receipt of application for the posts of **Finance Officer, Internal Audit Officer, Hindi Officer, Senior Technical Assistant and Pharmacist** is extended till **29th September, 2020**. Details of the advertisement, other terms and conditions remain the same, which may be seen in the University website www.nagalanduniversity.ac.in.

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Applications are invited by Indian Institute of Handloom Technology, Salem from eligible candidates from the Indian States/Union Territories (Other than Tamilnadu) for admission into First Year and Lateral Entry (direct 2nd Year) B.Tech. Handloom and Textile Technology Programme for the academic year 2020-21.

FIRST YEAR ADMISSION FOR 4 YEARS DEGREE PROGRAMME B.TECH HANDLOOM & TEXTILE TECHNOLOGY
Qualifying and eligibility: A pass in the HSC (Academic) or its equivalent. A minimum of 45% average marks in Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry put together. When the candidates produce grade certificate, they have to produce the actual marks also otherwise only the minimum marks applicable to the grades in the eligible subjects (Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry) will be taken into account. For minimum eligibility, rounding of marks and normalized marks will also not be considered. Improvement marks will also not be considered. Candidate should have a valid score of marks obtained in JEE main 2020 examination.

Admission Criteria: The admission will be based on the merit of rank obtained by the candidates in JEE Main 2020.

LATERAL ENTRY ADMISSION (DIRECT 2nd YEAR) FOR 4 YEARS B.TECH. (HANDLOOM & TEXTILE TECHNOLOGY)
Qualifying examination and eligibility: Candidates who have passed Diploma in Handloom Technology / Handloom & Textile Technology / Textile Technology / B.Sc. with ancillary subject of Mathematics at B.Sc. level or studied Mathematics at +2 level or any equivalent Diploma as prescribed by Directorate of Technical Education, Government of Tamilnadu are eligible to apply. Candidates who have secured a minimum of 45% aggregate marks in Diploma/B.Sc. Degree are eligible to apply.

Selection Criteria: Selection will be based on the merit of percentage of marks obtained by the candidates in Diploma/B.Sc. Degree Course.

Applications: For downloading applications and other details/updates, please visit Web: www.iihtsalem.edu.in. The last date for receipt of application is 15.10.2020. Applications received after the due date is liable for rejection without notice.

davp 41102/11/0002/2021 DIRECTOR

DEPARTMENT OF MEDICAL SERVICES
NEW DELHI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
CHARAK PALIKA HOSPITAL
EMPLOYMENT NOTICE

Applications are invited for a "Walk-In-Interview" at 09.00 A.M. on following dates 24.09.2020 for the Post of Junior Residents (Medical), in Medical Services Department, NDMC:-

Junior Resident: No. of Posts 17

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|-------|------------------|--------------|---------|----------------|
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| SC | ST | OBC | UR | TOTAL |
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davp 38117/11/0016/2021



The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

DATA INSECURITY

Committee to examine digital surveillance is a welcome first step. A robust personal data protection framework is needed

FOLLOWING AN INVESTIGATION by *The Indian Express* which revealed how a Shenzhen-based big data firm, with links to the Chinese government, was systematically tracking over 10,000 prominent Indian citizens, the government, on Wednesday, set up an expert committee under the National Cyber Security Coordinator to examine the revelations and the broader implications of digital surveillance on the privacy and personal data of Indian citizens. Considering that the concerns over data security that lie at the heart of this investigation are also in line with apprehensions that led to the Indian government's decision to ban Chinese apps, this is a welcome development. These issues need to be addressed. However, this is not a specifically Indian concern. US President Donald Trump's stance on TikTok underlines growing concerns across the world, especially in the face of an increasingly aggressive China, over personal data being compromised and finding its way into jurisdictions over which there is no control.

At the core of these revelations is the worry that in an increasingly digital world, large quantities of seemingly unrelated, innocuous data can be amassed, pieced together, and then deployed for other purposes, with the individual concerned having little or no say over the flow of information. While some may raise questions over the usability of the data, the chances of "actionable intelligence" rise manifold as the quantum of data collected multiplies. The sheer scale, both in terms of width and depth, at which the targeted tracking of Indian citizens is being undertaken — from politicians, to bureaucrats, industrialists and civil society — alludes to the possibility of this threat materialising. In a liberal open democracy, such concerns should be articulated and addressed in a transparent manner. The necessary regulation to protect individual rights can be framed after consulting all stakeholders and accountability must be assigned.

While the issue has been raised with Beijing, the government must frame a strategy to deal with the issue of data surveillance at multiple levels. To begin with, norms of cyber hygiene — enforcing strict protocols on what information key government functionaries can share on social media platforms — could be enforced. Careful thought must go into building the institutional capacity required to pre-empt disinformation campaigns which the collected information could be deployed for. After all, the hybrid warfare strategy that incorporates this data seeks to do just that, to create social discord, discredit leadership and undermine institutions. Equally urgent is the task of putting in place a robust personal data protection framework with explicit provisions for seeking consent on data sharing and for examining and monitoring flow of information to third parties.

OUT AND EQUAL

In a young democracy, to pit so-called eternal values against individual liberties does disservice to both society and law

TWO YEARS AGO, the Supreme Court struck down a colonial-era law that had made homosexuality a criminal offence in India — the judgment expanded the idea of constitutional freedom and equality in a substantial way. It is disappointing, then, that the solicitor-general of India chose to oppose a public interest litigation in the Delhi High Court seeking the registration of same-sex marriages under the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 in the name of "our law, legal system, society and values".

In a young nation and a constitutional democracy, to pit so-called unchanging, eternal "values" against the liberties of a citizen does disservice to both society and law — both of which are capable of embracing change. One needs only to look back at the decades-long mobilisation of ideas, experiences and protests — outside the courtroom — that resulted in the decriminalisation of homosexuality to see this long journey. A vibrant civil rights movement, it succeeded in pushing a big swathe of Indian society towards acceptance of queer identities. Before the British had imposed a narrow Victorian framework of sexuality on the subcontinent, homosexuality had existed and been acknowledged as a mode of being — as is evident from religious texts and sculptures — even if it was not celebrated in the mainstream. Over the years, a deepening of democracy and similar movements have pushed Indian laws towards such change, from a woman's right to inherit property to the right to be recognised as guardians of their children. The solicitor-general's argument that the 2018 Supreme Court judgment "merely" decriminalises homosexual life — "nothing more, nothing less" — is a narrow reading of that landmark decision. In off-the-cuff remarks, he also argued that statutory provisions of the law cannot recognise a same-sex union, given that such a marriage makes traditional roles redundant. In cases of domestic violence, he asked, "Who will be treated as a wife?" But laws such as the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 accord protection to live-in partners, irrespective of their marital status. There is no reason to believe that government, civil society and the courts cannot un-knot legal tangles, if any.

They must, in fact, do more and own up to the radical promise of the SC ruling: What is no longer criminal deserves the space to flower and shape its own destiny. Marriage is entwined with emotional as well as material realities. All individuals, straight or queer, being equal in the eyes of the Constitution, it is only natural that the queer community will demand such a legal recognition. To reach that eventual goal, a wider conversation is needed.

OPEN BOOK

By holding up first-time writers, indie publishers, diverse voices, Booker shortlist mirrors a moment of cultural change

THE SHORTLIST FOR this year's Booker Prize takes off from where it signed off last year, when it awarded the Prize to two contenders for the first time since its inception in 1969. This year, once again, it has thrown convention out of the window and opened up Anglophone literature to a world of possibilities that thrive outside of the publishing industry's most favoured combination of white, male, middle-class heterosexual experiences. Of the six shortlisted books this year, as many as four — *Burnt Sugar* by Indian-origin writer Avni Doshi, *The New Wilderness* by Diane Cook, *Shuggie Bain* by Douglas Stuart and *Real Life* by Brandon Taylor — are first novels; four of the shortlisted writers are women; four are persons of colour. From racism to climate change, from the unsung Ethiopian women soldiers of the 1935 Abyssinian crisis to a difficult mother-daughter relationship, further complicated by dementia, the shortlist offers a unique glimpse into the interior, political and social lives of those often under-represented in mainstream literature.

Diversity in publishing also rests with those making critical decisions about who to publish and what to award. The last year has been one of tentative hope. In the US, several leading publishing houses have made progressive changes in management; in the UK, an organisation called Black Writers' Guild has been formed to monitor diversity in publishing. The five-member Booker jury this year is representative, too. It includes award-winning British poet and playwright of Ethiopian origin, Lemn Sissay, academic Emily Wilson and the writer and first black woman publisher in the UK, Margaret Busby, who is also the chair of the jury.

When she announced the longlist in July, Busby had remarked that it was representative of "a moment of cultural change". In taking the onus upon itself to hold up first-time writers, indie publishers and a diverse range of voices, the shortlist has taken another step towards an inclusive future for literature's most popular form.

Pandemic and federalism

Response to Covid-19 shows carving out roles through consensus can address challenges to federal governance



SRINIVAS CHOKKAKULA

INDIA'S RESPONSE TO the COVID-19 pandemic — still a moving target having infected more than 5 million people in the country and claimed in excess of 80,000 lives — reflects the power, problems and potential of federalism in the country's polity. In spite of the rather unilateral response in terms of imposing a nationwide lockdown, the Centre eventually chose to work carefully with the states. And, the most cynical of the chief ministers professed working with the Centre and other states to deal with a variety of challenges posed by the pandemic. In the past few months, the country has witnessed an interesting and remarkably coordinated effort by the Centre and states in addressing a collective challenge. This exigency response will help us a great deal in understanding Centre-state relations as well as in improving mechanisms of federal governance.

The experience offers an opportunity to revisit the recent debate around the federal organisation of powers under the Constitution's Seventh Schedule. It has been argued that such organisation of powers is not cast in stone and the arrangement requires a review. Such an exercise is indeed necessary, but what should be its broad contours? The review should allow the carving out of the roles of the Centre and states to address hitherto disregarded and emerging concerns — a viral pandemic or climate change, for instance.

In one of his columns in this newspaper, Bibek Debroy argued for the need to re-examine the distribution of powers under the Seventh Schedule so as to rationalise the Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSSs) under which the Centre extends support in sectors pertaining to the State List ('Spending issues', IE, September 12, 2019). Why should the Centre spend, Debroy asked, on a state subject like health and why couldn't states contribute to a Union subject like defence? His argument sparked a debate. Also, in this newspaper ('Leaning on the states', IE, September 24, 2019), M Govinda Rao argued that defence is a "national public good" and has to be a Union subject. "The constitutional assignments between the Centre and subnational governments in federations," Rao pointed out, "are done broadly on the basis of their respective comparative advantage". That is why "the provision of national public goods

is in the federal domain and those with the state-level public service span are assigned to the states". The debate seems to have settled on at least three counts.

One, the federal organisation of powers can be revisited and reframed. Two, the CSSs must continue but they should be restructured. In addition to the schemes' rationale of reducing the horizontal and vertical imbalances among states, the Centre is also obligated to address the externalities of the states' developmental efforts under the subjects allocated to them. Three, there is a need for an appropriate forum to discuss the complex and contentious issue of reviewing federal organisation of powers and restructuring of central transfers.

Should such a review chop and change the subjects in the Union, State and Concurrent Lists? A perusal of the country's response to the COVID-19 indicates that the exercise be guided by a more nuanced perspective.

Consider the manner and the content of reconciliation and repositioning between the Centre and states in the course of the response to the pandemic. The Centre's efforts are now primarily focused on achieving economies of scale in vaccine procurement, knowledge production for setting standards and guidelines for the states, and mitigating inter-state externalities. States continue to play the dominant role in the execution of the actual response to the health crisis. In other words, the fundamental principles of comparative advantage prevailed, but they were organised on the basis of certain functional roles and responses.

So, here is the key takeaway. In spite of health being a state subject, the response to collective threats linked to the subject required some kind of organisation of federal responsibilities on a functional basis.

How can such coordination be sustained on a long-term basis? A typical response is to recommend shifting subjects to the Concurrent List to enable an active role for the Centre. This is how the High-Level Group, constituted by the 15th Finance Commission, recommended shifting health from the State to the Concurrent List. A similar recommendation was made earlier by the Ashok Chawla Committee for water.

But is such shifting of subjects from the State to Concurrent List really feasible in these

One, the federal organisation of powers can be revisited and reframed. Two, the CSSs must continue but they should be restructured. In addition to the schemes' rationale of reducing the horizontal and vertical imbalances among states, the Centre is also obligated to address the externalities of the states' developmental efforts under the subjects allocated to them. Three, there is a need for an appropriate forum to discuss the complex and contentious issue of reviewing federal organisation of powers and restructuring of central transfers.

A FRAGMENTED VOTE

Dalit assertion and politics is dependent on dominant parties in Bihar



BADRI NARAYAN

DALIT POLITICS in Bihar has mainly been a politics of negotiation for a "good deal" from mainstream political parties. The "good deal" meant a good bargain from the parties, either in office or in the opposition, in terms of seats in a pre-poll alliance, and share in the government. In return, the transfer of caste and community votes was promised.

This politics of negotiation in Bihar proceeded from the period that Kanshi Ram diagnosed as the chamcha age of Dalit politics. In the post-Independence decades, Dalit leaders in the Congress and Janata Party got to share power as representatives of a caste or community. Dalit leaders such as Bhola Paswan Shastri and Ram Sundar Das rose from the grass roots to become chief ministers in Bihar. Both Shastri and Das belonged to mainstream national parties.

However, Dalit politicians, who were working in national parties, started to form caste-based parties after the 1980s. The phase of social justice politics in Bihar gave these leaders the capacity and space to float their outfits and, thereby, negotiate better bargains with bigger parties. For instance, Ram Vilas Paswan, who was a leading figure in the anti-Emergency movement and the Janata, founded his own party — the Lok Janshakti Party — in 2000. As Mahadalit politics found resonance in recent years, leaders like Jitan Ram Manjhi, a member of the most marginalised Musahar caste, split from the Janata Dal (United) to form the Hindustani Awam Morcha. However, these parties have not shown any allegiance to ide-

ology — they have effortlessly moved from the NDA to UPA and vice versa to bargain for a better share of seats or ministerial berths. Never have these parties left an alliance or joined one on matters of Dalit empowerment or emancipation.

Unlike in UP, Dalit politics in Bihar continue to be dependent on mainstream parties. The Ambedkarite radical consciousness is weaker in the Dalit politics of Bihar and Dalit assertion at the grass roots continues to be weak. The Naxalite movement, which attracted a large number of landless peasants, was the vehicle of Dalit assertion till the 1980s, but the rise of caste and social justice politics led to its marginalisation. The new middle- and upper-class Dalits wedded the slogan of social justice with reservation and employment. This too weakened the Naxalite and communist mobilisations, which were focussed on the issue of land.

Another feature of Dalit politics in Bihar is that only the numerically stronger groups among the 22 Dalit castes have become influencers in politics. They alone managed to get representation in government. Dalits constitute about 16 per cent of the state's population. But only the Dusadh, Chamar, Dhobi, Musahar communities are visible in power politics. The Dusadhs account for 5-6 per cent of the total population of the state and make up 37 per cent of the Dalit population. Chamars are around 6-7 per cent of the state population and form 39 per cent of the total Dalit population. The Mahadalit castes (19 castes) together are around 4-5 per

cent of the state population and are 24 per cent of the Dalits. Musahar, the largest politically-mobilised Mahadalit caste, gained a voice during the Lalu Prasad years. Other Mahadalit castes are numerically small and yet to find visibility in electoral politics.

Most of the Dalit leaders of Bihar command support of only their caste and sub-caste members. Leaders such as Ram Vilas Paswan, Shyam Rajak and Jitan Ram Manjhi claim that they can transfer votes of their caste. Recently, Rajak, industry minister in the Nitish Kumar government, joined the RJD while Manjhi has moved away from the UPA. Chirag Paswan is putting pressure on the NDA leadership for more seats in the upcoming assembly election. However, previous poll results indicate that these leaders cannot transfer more than 40 per cent of caste votes. At his peak, Ram Vilas Paswan commanded 50 per cent. If these leaders still command political traction, it is because they help the alliance project the perception that it supports the social justice agenda.

These leaders have also failed to disseminate democratic ideals within their communities and behave like feudal leaders, almost copies of leaders of dominant communities and parties. Their failure in creating emancipatory conditions for marginal communities has led to the fragmentation of Dalit votes, which in turn has weakened Dalit assertion in Bihar.

What should be an appropriate forum for this purpose? The experience of the GST Council may help here as well. The ongoing friction between the Centre and the states over GST reforms tells us that consensus-building is not a one-time exercise. It has to allow sustained dialogue and deliberation. Is there an institutional space that offers the necessary resilience and credibility? Perhaps it is time to revisit the proposal for an elevated and empowered Inter-State Council.

The writer is MoJS Research Chair — *Water Conflicts and Governance Centre for Policy Research, Delhi. Views are personal*



SEPTEMBER 18, 1980, FORTY YEARS AGO

ASSAM TALKS BEGIN
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE Union government and the Assam leaders seem to have narrowed down somewhat following two informal meetings in New Delhi between Home Minister Giani Zail Singh and leaders of the All Assam Students Union and the All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad. There appeared to be agreement on both sides that the work on identifying foreigners should begin. Deportation and its modalities could be worked out later. While a Home Ministry source described the attitude of student leaders as helpful, the students and the Gana Sangram Parishad men

expressed the hope that these talks would lead to a solution.

EXCISE OR SALES TAX?
VANASPATI AND LIFE-SAVING drugs are being brought under additional excise duty. A committee of chief ministers will go into the question of adding other items to the list of additional excise duty. The Centre will ask the Law Commission to undertake the drafting of a model sales tax law for being adopted by all states to bring about uniformity in the laws. Union Finance Minister R Venkataraman said a bill on the new levy will be introduced in Parliament.

KERALA WOOS INDUSTRY
THE MARXIST-LED KERALA government is assiduously wooing big industrialists. The Chief Minister E K Nayanar had talks with representatives of Birla firms. The CM and his colleagues will attend a conference of industrialists in Bombay on September 29.

DEATH FOR DISSIDENT
A MILITARY COURT martial sentenced the South Korean dissident leader Kim Dae Jung to death on charges of plotting to overthrow the government. The court also found 33 of his followers guilty and sentenced them for terms ranging from two to 30 years.

THE IDEAS PAGE

Faith in the machine

The temptation to let technology monitor unacceptable speech or writing is growing. It speaks of a transfer of a moral function, and an abdication



KRISHNA KUMAR

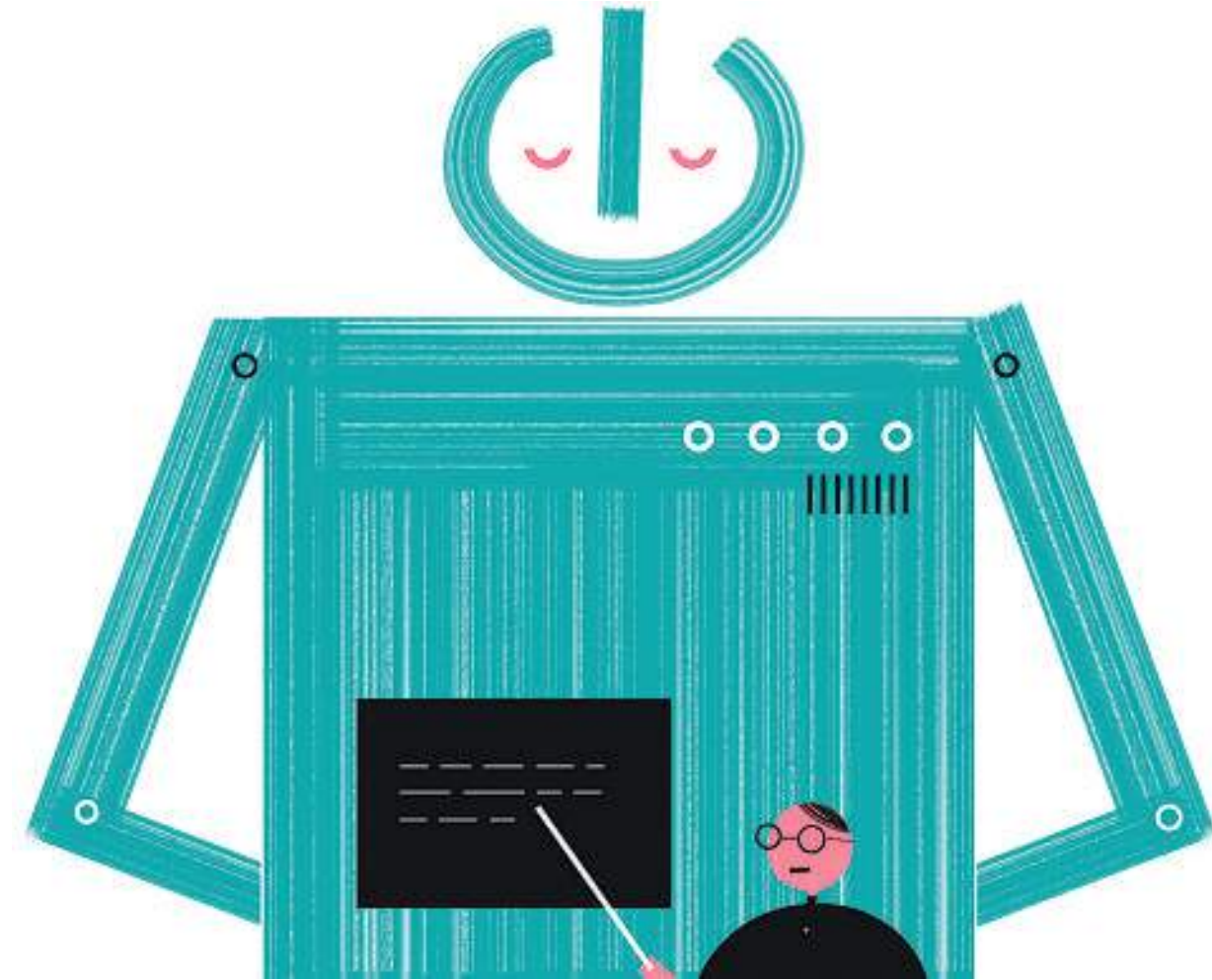
TO EXPECT THAT a social media company will help societies to deal with the public expression of hate is remarkable for two reasons.

First, the expectation outsources the responsibility of controlling the outbreak of a destructive emotion like hatred. It suggests nothing less than the abdication of a role social institutions, including the ones run by the state, ought to play. Second, the idea of letting a social media company deal with the problem implies an enhanced sphere of its operations. Already, that sphere is believed to include canvassing for elections. To assign the reduction or removal of hateful expression to the owners of digital platforms implies letting them figure out, through digital tools, who harbours what emotions and values.

This is, of course, not the first time that mature liberal democracies are posing a readiness to compromise with their commitment to privacy. Erosion of the citizen's right to privacy is no longer newsworthy. In societies like America, and not just China, the citizenry has comfortably bargained several of its older freedoms for cheap conveniences. As a nation, we have been ahead of many others in establishing the right to freedom of all kinds of expression, irrespective of the medium used. In that sense, we have been more tolerant, and after each attempt to suppress freedom, there has been an adequate expression of outrage. But things are changing. The temptation to let technology monitor unacceptable speech or writing has been growing as part of the general dependence on digital devices.

Let us take an example from higher education. Education of the young is believed to be a relevant sphere for the growth of moral awareness. Institutional ethos and considerate pedagogic practices are known to nurture the kind of temperament and values that civic life demands. In higher education, an important value everyone is supposed to learn is that the knowledge one has derived from the writings of someone else needs to be acknowledged. When students write a thesis based on their own research, you expect that they have not stolen — that is, used without acknowledgement — ideas or text from an existing source. Until a few years ago, that trust was cultivated and exercised by the teacher under whose guidance the thesis was written. A software has now replaced the teacher. Under the rules in place now in all universities, all dissertations must submit to this software and get a clearance before the university will accept them for further examination. This requirement is an affront not merely to the student but also to the supervisor. Among the 46 designated spaces where a supervisor is now required to put his signature when a thesis is about to be submitted, there already was one where the originality of the student's effort was certified. That declaration by the teacher will now be confirmed by the mechanical plagiarism check.

The message is clear: The university does not trust the teacher any more. When



C.R. Sasikumar

exactly did this accident occur is not a relevant question. It is not as if there was a sudden flood of plagiarised dissertations at some point, which forced the University Grants Commission to institute the system of plagiarism check before submission. What seems to have happened is that this tool became available in the market and it created the need it could fulfil. The implications of using the tool were never contemplated. Turning to a mechanical device which promised to do a function that teachers were supposed to perform seemed like a good idea. Prevailing stereotypes of teachers must have helped to rationalise the switch over. As one might expect, the transfer of a moral function to technology marginalised the teacher's human agency further.

Something similar happened in schools, but there one can date the beginning. It was sometime during Sheila Dikshit's first term as Delhi's chief minister that an experimental programme to install CCTV cameras in a few schools started. By then, many private schools were already using them. It is not as if these private schools had any doubts about their teachers' devotion to work. The principals justified the cameras in the name of pedagogic quality. I remember a principal joyfully claiming that he can see what teachers are writing on the blackboard. By the time private schools started making their classrooms "smart" with a range of equipment, government schools started to install more CCTV cameras on a large scale. Transparency was the buzzword. It was supposed to deliver the moral value called accountability. Easy demonstration of the school teacher paved the way for surveillance technology to enter every classroom. It has now entered a new stage where par-

Regulation and accreditation now constitute the official diction of public policy in higher education. The newly announced policy in education underlines the role of digital resources in these spheres. It says that the apex regulatory body in higher education will 'use technology to reduce human interface to ensure efficiency and transparency'. As if this is not clear enough, the next sentence says that the 'underlying principle will be that of a faceless and transparent regulatory intervention using technology'.

ents can check a few times how things are going for their child at school.

This story is just one among a hundred wherein social spaces and functions are handed over to technology. In day-to-day general governance, transparency tools have acquired routine roles. In academic institutions, public disclosure of decisions and plans, faculty profiles, financial details, etc., has been going on for some time now.

Educational institutions invest considerable effort and resources to ensure that their websites have a competitive market appeal. Regulation and accreditation now constitute the official diction of public policy in higher education. The newly announced policy in education underlines the role of digital resources in these spheres. It says that the apex regulatory body in higher education will "use technology to reduce human interface to ensure efficiency and transparency". As if this is not clear enough, the next sentence says that the "underlying principle will be that of a faceless and transparent regulatory intervention using technology". The human face has apparently become the object of celebration and suspicion in equal measure in our times.

The hope that faceless exercise of regulatory authority will lend greater impartiality, and therefore more efficiency, to our higher education system is a precious gift of the great faith that digital technology now wields. Perhaps we have entered a new era. It is no longer necessary to work out why a certain value that has eluded us so far will be attained. Once again, ethics are believed to arise from faith.

Kumar is former director, NCERT and author of *The Child's Language* and *The Teacher*

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

The judiciary plays a critical role and it too has a responsibility to reform its own house that continues to be burdened with delays and many other ailments. — DAWN

Movement and the mask

If Prashant Bhushan believes Kejriwal and Anna were propped up by RSS, then I beg to differ



ASHUTOSH

THE PRESENT does not have the luxury of the future to dispassionately probe historical facts and events, from a distance. One can ask: Is nine years long enough time to analyse, from a historical perspective, to pass judgement on the Anna Hazare movement? This question arises at a time when Prashant Bhushan has revived an old debate in an interview with Rajdeep Sardesai.

Bhushan has said that the Anna movement was propped up by the RSS and Arvind Kejriwal might have known about it. This allegation — that the RSS was behind the Anna movement — is not new. It was a charge made by the then Congress government, left intellectuals and a section of liberals. What is new is that the assertion comes from a core member of the movement.

The controversy was ignited by three things. One, the presence of two RSS leaders on the stage at Jantar Mantar, on Day One of the "anshan" (hunger strike); two, a picture of Mother India in the backdrop; and three, raising of slogans like "Bharat Mata ki jai" and "Vande Mataram" by leaders and volunteers. The RSS leaders were asked to leave the stage but the picture of "Mother India" — used by the RSS and its affiliates in their functions — continued to be there.

Arundhati Roy, in an interview on CNN-IBN, said, "You first used a picture of Bharat Mata and then a picture of Gandhi. You had people who were openly members of the Manuvadi agitation. So, you have a cocktail of dangerous things." Historian Ramachandra Guha wrote, "The materials of history thus suggest that the parallel between JP and Anna is less comforting than we suppose. The front organisations of Jan Sangh's successor, BJP, are now playing a much active role in 'India against Corruption'."

Attack from the Congress was more vicious. Digvijaya Singh leading the pack: "Anna and Ramdev were the masks of the RSS", he said. When asked in a press conference if he was a front for the RSS, Anna said "such people should be sent to a lunatic asylum". But what complicated the matter for Anna and his team was the announcement of support to the movement by RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat, on the eve of Anna's August 15 indefinite hunger strike at Ramlila Ground.

This controversy did damage the movement. It created unease in the Muslim community. Shahi Imam Bukhari attacked Anna's anshan through the Imam of Fatehpuri Mosque, Mufti Mukarram, was supportive. The Muslim Personal Law Board also did not support Bukhari but did not openly side with the agitation either. The Deoband, too, maintained a distance. A few Muslims were asked to be present on stage in Ramlila Ground and roza was also broken by them in full public view. This symbolism was a farce.

There is no denying that RSS swayamse-

waks in large number were present at Jantar Mantar and at Ramlila Ground. Many had volunteered for the management of the crowd and other functions. They ran langars to feed the crowd and contributed money. A few later joined the Aam Aadmi Party, became office-bearers, contested elections and became MLAs. They did not disconnect their relationship with the RSS; they continued paying the annual Guru Dakshina which is a sacred function for an RSS volunteer, to pay obeisance to the organisation and ideology.

Unlike other organisations, the RSS does not dissociate from its members when they join other organisations. In fact, at times, they encourage it. During the Janata government, the membership of the RSS by old Jan Sangh leaders became a contentious issue and one of the reasons for the fall of the Morarji government.

So, I don't deny the possibility that the Anna movement was infiltrated by the RSS to exploit it to discredit the Manmohan Singh Government and the Congress. It is similar to what Balasahab Deoras did in 1973 when he instructed the Jan Sangh leaders to whip up sentiments against Indira Gandhi. But I do not believe the Anna movement was propped up by the RSS. If Bhushan believes that it was the RSS that coined the idea of a movement against corruption, organised it and made it successful, and Kejriwal and Anna were mere props, then with great humility, I beg to differ with him.

During the movement, I never felt that Anna and Kejriwal were tilting towards the RSS. Even later, in AAP, Kejriwal never displayed any sympathy for the RSS and Hindutva. In conversations with me he candidly admitted that the RSS and Modi were dangerous for the country. I have never found him indulging in Muslim bashing or anti-minorityism. It is true that people like Kiran Bedi and Sri Sri Ravi Shankar were sympathetic to the BJP. But the leadership of the movement was firmly in the hands of Anna and his number two, Kejriwal. In fact, Kejriwal was the real architect of the movement. It was his idea — he gathered the team and convinced Anna to sit on a dharna in Delhi. Anna was reluctant to begin with.

A mass movement will always have many shades but what is important is the leadership. I can firmly say the leadership was not in the hands of the RSS; they might have tried to influence the decisions but they were never the guiding light. I must also admit that Anna, Kejriwal and his team never had a broad framework, there was no ideological foundation to take the movement to its logical conclusion. They had no sense of history, only hazy ideas. They were inspired by nationalistic fervour but were not communal. They believed in an inclusive movement and politics.

But they were conservative in their outlook and not modernist in the true sense. It is because of this weakness that the Anna movement could not consolidate the mass sentiment it unleashed. And in the end, it was instrumental in easing the path for Narendra Modi. In that way, yes, they are responsible for what India is witnessing today. I am afraid history will judge them harshly. The future will paint a grim picture of their moment.

The writer is a journalist who was formerly with the AAP



VINAY SAHASRABUDDHE

Leadership beyond charisma

PM Modi has changed the discourse and connected with the people

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU had some unique advantages. Considered to be Mahatma Gandhi's political heir, he became the first PM and continued for 17 long years without any challenge. As the first PM of independent India, he had an obvious head start. Besides, his attractive personality and the perception that he will take India to a modern world contributed to the charisma that was gradually built around him. His daughter, Indira Gandhi, also had charisma, a sizable part of which she inherited from her father. Besides her decisive leadership, being the first woman PM of India also contributed to her charisma. Atal Bihari Vajpayee was the other most charismatic PM. Besides his achievements like Pokhran-2 and the Golden Quadrilateral, his inimitable oratory and poetry too contributed to his charisma. However, post-Vajpayee, it can be reasonably argued that the era of charismatic leadership is over. The millennial voter of the 21st century is more business-like in her approach. This approach demands good intent coupled with honest and intelligent efforts. Prime Minister Narendra Modi satisfies these criteria completely. Add to this, his innovative ideas for good governance and his mind-boggling ability to work extraordinarily hard. He has taken the leadership discourse in India beyond charisma.

Since May 2014, PM Modi has established several things. He has shown that non-Congress governments, even after remaining

in power for a full term, can successfully renew and improve on their popular mandate. He is known not just for his decisiveness but also a strong political will emerging from his courage of conviction. Driven by a strong sense of purpose, he has tried to restore the centrality of being result-oriented, something the millennial generation values greatly. He reaches out to the electorate effectively, establishes a strong popular connect and earns a mandate. He then moves ahead, unwaveringly, taking decisions in the national interest, without unduly worrying about their popularity.

To his credit are not just big economic reforms like GST and replacing the Planning Commission with the Niti Aayog, or political reforms like the abrogation of Article 370 and the CAA, but also several seemingly small but effective governance reforms. Advancing the schedule of the Budget Session of Parliament, he seamlessly ensured adequate time for the full utilisation of budgeted funds. Early this year, his government created a new Union Territory merging Daman-Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, an apparently small step that facilitated administrative convenience and huge financial savings. Similarly, converting bamboo from a notified forest produce to a farm produce also had a huge impact as several lakhs of farmers have benefited from this.

Vested interests are the most dreaded enemy of good governance and Modi is out to

break this nexus. For the benefit of farmers, he has freed the trading of farm produce from the iron grip of a handful of dalals. Thanks to a strong network of vested interests, liberalisation of farm produce markets was ignored by past governments.

Similarly, in Railways, where rivalries between different services were harming the common interest, the government has now dissolved them into a common service cadre. PM Modi's government is also actively working towards merging the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha TV channels as two independent channels for one unified Parliament are a luxury.

His courage of conviction is evident in many of his decisions. When it came to gender issues and atrocities on women, he minced no words in asking parents to be mindful of the late-night outdoor activities of boys and not just put restrictions on girls. Again, a year ago, he openly cautioned Indians about the increasing population, asking young couples to think of the prospects of their kids before starting a family. Recently, while addressing educationists, he bluntly observed that in our country, so far we were only taught about "what to think" instead of "how to think", and the NEP is set to change this. Decisions like emphasis on education in the mother tongue without imposing any language on any group, carving out a separate quota for the economically backward and allowing lateral entry for

non-IAS personnel in government are examples of his balanced approach.

Modi is also a great innovator. He introduced the crowd-sourcing of ideas and solutions through the aggressive use of social media. Thanks to him, India is rapidly moving upwards on the global innovation index. Hackathons are now a routine annual national activity. His ideas like the Ek Bharat-Shreshtha Bharat programme to ensure emotional integration, or Mann ki Baat for direct communication with the masses or introducing Swachhta Ranking for cities and towns are a few examples of his out-of-the-box thinking. Also remarkable is his decision to convert the Nehru Memorial and Library at Teen Murti in Delhi into a museum for all prime ministers — a decision in the spirit of democracy.

At 70, with path-breaking reforms in governance, Modi has shown how Indian democracy can deliver. One of the most significant contributions to his credit is snatching representative democracy from the jaws of cynicism. Rarely does one see a leader, pilloried by previous regimes, assailed by the media and ignored by academia — being rewarded by the people for his performance. That is truly moving beyond charisma.

The writer is president, the Indian Council of Cultural Relations, and a Rajya Sabha MP of the BJP

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

OPAQUE AND FALTERING THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Question and Answer' (IE, September 16). The government has faltered in dealing with the pandemic, reviving the economy and pre-empting Chinese aggression. There are a lot many questions which need to be answered on the floor of the House. However, asking uncomfortable questions to the ministers has now become akin to being anti-national.

Vijai Pant, Hempur

EXPAND MGNREGA

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Bend with the wind' (IE, September 17). The drought of jobs has led to increased enrolment in MGNREGA. The government needs to expand its scope, and include agricultural activities in its fold. It is pertinent to note that since non-farm income has been affected due to COVID-19, MGNREGA employment in agriculture and horticulture sectors must be given to mitigate hardships of the home returnees, as it also help farmers.

Rajiv Boolchand Jain, Zirakpur

FREE THE FUND

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Regulatory uncertainty' (IE, September 17). SEBI's decision was uncalled for. Fund houses have different funds for all kinds of risk categories managed by different fund managers. Reshuffling them would not only mean curbing their flexibility but adversely impact

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existing investors as well.

Bal Govind, Noida

INSIDIOUS SUGGESTION

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'SC stops show on 'UPSC jihad': Bid to vilify Muslims with untruths' (IE, September 16). In 2018, Minister of Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi made this official statement: "The Modi Government's policy of development with dignity without any discrimination has ensured that this year for the first time after the independence, record 131 minority communities' youths including 51 Muslims have been selected in civil service.". Is Sudarshan News suggesting that the so-called UPSC jihad is being aided and abetted by the Narendra Modi government?

LR Murmu, Delhi

Classifieds

PERSONAL

My Son's, daughter's correct names is Abhinav Pal, Tanvi Pal instead of Sunny, Tanvi as wrongly-mentioned in my service-record...

It is, for general information that I, YASH GUPTA S/O-RAJEEV KUMAR GUPTA residing at FLAT.No.1002,SHIVALIK-TOWER KAUSHAMBI GHAZIABAD,UP declare that that, name of my,father has-been,wrongly-written,as RAJEEV GUPTA in,my educational-documents...

I,हितो known as Sanjeev Sharma,S/o Hari Ram Sharma,R/o C-1/134,Mayur-Vihar-III,New Delhi-110096,have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Sanjeev Kumar Sharma.

I,हितो known as Nikhil Maheshwari S/O Shri Anurudh Kumar Viyani residing at,H.No.-330, Gali.No.-8,Lalita Park, Park,Laxmi Nagar, Delhi-110092,have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Nikhil Kumar Viyani.

I,Vijay S/O-Late. Balbir Singh Residence-A-02, N-15,Indra Vikas Colony,Dr. Mukherjee Nagar,Model Town,North-West Delhi-09,declare that my,father name in Aadhar-No.987894569881 is Balbir Singh and,in school-certificate Balbir, both name are referred to the same person.

I,Vijay Kumar@Vijay Chaudhary,S/O Balbir Singh R/o-519/2-A,Block-6 Vishwas Nagar, Shahdara,Delhi-110032,have changed my name to Vijay Kumar Dabas,for all purposes

I,Veena, am legally,w/o Rank & Name:Brig.Joginder Mohan(Retd.),Service.No.IC-13634P, R/o 22,Paschim-Marg,Vasant-Vihar,New Delhi-110057,have changed my name,from Veena to Veena Arora.

I,Tarun K Sharma S/O,Vijay Sharma R/O.KCB001007 Klastic, Jaypee Wish Town, Sector-134,VTC:Noida,U.P-201301,have changed my name to Tarun Sharma,for all purposes

I,Surjan Singh Yadav R/O-C-13,Shanti Vihar,Colony Morna, Sector-35, Noida,confirm that in my sons school-record his name has been wrongly mentioned as Prashant Kumar,instead-of Prashant Yadav. My,Son Correct name is,Prashant Yadav.

I,Shshank Mathur,S/o-late Vivek Mathur,R/o-D-1001, Exotica Fresco,Sector-137, Noida,G.B.Nagar,UP,have changed my name from Shshank Mathur to Shshank Mathur.

I,Shashilma Devi,W/o Mahanand Singh R/o-H/No.2093/419,Gali no.-15, Prem Nagar,Patel Nagar,New Delhi-110008,have changed my Son's name Prince Kumar Singh to Prince Singh for,all purposes.

I,Sanjay Kumar,S/O Late.Jagdish Singh,R/O.H.No.RZ-37A,Bajaj-Enclave,Opposite NSIT,Dwarka, Delhi-110078, changed my minor Daughter name,from Sampriti to Sampriti Kriti.

I,RAKESH GUPTA S/O Nathu Ram Gupta R/O HOUSE No. 2418, SECTOR 16, FARIDABAD, HARYANA.121002 have changed my name to RAKESH KUMAR GUPTA

I,Preety Chhonkar,D/O-Late Shri Satish Kumar Chhonkar,R/O-A-116,Vijeta Vihar, Sector-13,Rohini,Delhi-110085,have changed my name from Preeti Chhonkar to Preety Chhonkar.

I,Parveen Bhati S/O Rishi Pal, H.No.95, Ward No.12, Sadullabad, Loni, Ghaziabad, UP-201102,have changed my name to Praveen,for all purposes.

I,Meenakshi Gugnani,D/o Shri Kashmiri Lal Gugnani R/O-H.No.2/11,Nehru-Enclave,Kalkaji-Extn.New Delhi-110019,have changed my minor daughter's name,from Tanya Arora (DOB:14/12/2004) to Tanya Gugnani,for all purposes.

I,Manjeet Kumar,S/O Avanesh Kumar R/O-W-267,Shakurpur Village,Delhi Changed my minor daughter name,from Gaura Devi To Gauri.

I,Manish Kumar Gupta, S/O-Rakesh Kumar, Resi:1/2300-B, Street No.6,Ram Nagar,Shahdara, Delhi-110032,have changed my Name to Manish Gupta, for all Future Purposes.

I,Usman S/o Mohd Hassain R/O-E-13/6A, Haurz Rani, Malviya Nagar,Delhi-110017, have changed my name to Mohd Usman.

I,MDJAWED ANWAR,son of,MD.AKHTAR HUSSAIN,H.NO-R-280/2 FIRST-FLOOR, STREET.NO-6 JOGABAI-EXTN,JAMIA-NAGAR,ZAKIR-NAGAR,DELHI-110025,have changed my minor son's name,from MOHAMMAD AYAAN ANWAR to AYAAN ANWAR.

I,MANOJ KUMAR BHALOTIA S/O RAM KRISHAN BHALOTIA R/O-A-1/701,PRINTERS APARTMENT,SECTOR-13,ROHINI,DELHI-110085, CHANGED MY NAME TO MANOJ BHALOTIA.

I,Jay Sunder Singh,W/o Yugal Kishore Singh R/o-135,Gali.No.04, B-Block, Siddharth Vihar, Vijay Nagar, Ghaziabad, have changed my name to Jay Devi. Jay Sunder Singh & Jay Devi, both are the same person.

I,Jatin Kumar S/o Vijay Kumar Dabas R/o-519/2-A Block-6,Vishwas Nagar,Shahdara Delhi-110032,have changed my name to Jatin Dabas,for all purposes

I,Inderjeet Kaur W/o Late. Gurvinder Singh R/o 23/90 AB GF Tilak Ngr Delhi-18 have changed my name to Inderjeet Mahajan.

I,Golu W/o-Sh.Aasha Ram Anurag,R/O-C-52,Block-C, Sector-25,Rohini, Rithala,Delhi,inform that in my daughter Kranti Anuragi school record my name wrongly-written as Mamta Anuragi instead of correct name Golu.

I,GOWRI SIKARVAAR,D/O ASHOK SIKARWAR, H.No.940, NEAR-MOTHER DAIRY, SECTOR-15 PART-2 GURGAON, HARYANA 122001, changed my NAME TO GOWRI SIKARWAR, permanently.

I,DEBLINA NANDI W/O.AMITAVA NANDI, H.NO.FLAT.No.574, DELHI EPDP,CGHS LTD,SECTOR-4,Pl 19,DWARKA,N.DELHI-110078,changed my name to DEBLINA AUDDY,permanently.

I,Bimlesh W/o Krishna R/O,Khedi,Bhanauta, Gautam Bad Nagar, U.P., Bimlesh & Sushila are the same person,in future shall be known as Bimlesh.

I,Sanjida Mistri W/o Abul Basar Mistri R/O Bademaheshpur, south 24 parganas, kadipurkar,west bengal 743355, have changed my name to Shakuntla Devi Daughter of Balbir Singh and Saroj Devi DOB 16/07/1984, I had the same name and other details before marriage.

I,Army.No-15387368F Hav.Ravindra Kumar Jha Unit-1,Army HQ,SIG REGT C/O.56,APO,New Delhi-110010,inform that in my,Army Service record,my mother name and Date-Of-Birth wrongly-written as Malata Devi and Date-Of-Birth-01.01.1949 instead of correct name Janki Devi and Date-Of-Birth-01.01.1945.

I,Army.No.10315835H Hav.Amit Kumar Gupta,S/o Shankar Parsad Sah,R/O,P-187, Purani Planji-Village Sarojini-Nagar, New Delhi-110023,post-office Sarojini-Nagar declare that in my service-record my son's name wrongly-mentioned as Ansuman Gupta I have changed my son's name,from Ansuman Gupta to Anshuman Gupta, permanently.

I,Amit Uppal,S/O Late Sh.R.C.Uppal,R/O-B-123 Anand-Vihar,Delhi-110092,have changed my minor son's name from Krish Uppal to Kiaan Uppal(DoB-12/11/2003),for all purposes

I,Amit Uppal S/O Late Sh.R.C.Uppal,R/O-B-123,Anand-Vihar,Delhi-110092,have changed my minor daughter name,from Diya Uppal to Aaradhya Uppal(DoB-27/07/2005),for all purposes

I,Amit Kumar Vijayan S/O-Balraj Singh R/O-H.No.179,Village Kirari, Suleman Nagar,C-Block, Suftanpur,Delhi-86,have changed my daughter's name Vanshika Vijayan to Vanshika for,all purposes.

I,AFSANA BANO,D/O-Tahir Khan,w/o-ARUN KUMAR VERMA ,r/o-H.No.137,Street no.11,Budh Vihar, Mandoli Saboli,Delhi-93,have changed my name from AFSANA BANO to KUSUM VERMA for future.

I, mahesh kumar solanki S/o Ram chander Address-Rzg-85,dev-kunj,palampur village raj-nagar-part-1,delhi-110045, changed my name to mahesh kumar.

I,Shiwani D/o Ashok Kumar R/O-D-30,Amkar Colony, Nangloi, Delhi-110041,have changed my name to Shivani permanently.

I,Meenakshi Gugnani,D/o Shri Kashmiri Lal Gugnani R/O-H.No.2/11,Nehru-Enclave,Kalkaji-Extn.New Delhi-110019,have changed my minor daughter's name,from Tanya Arora (DOB:14/12/2004) to Tanya Gugnani,for all purposes.

I,Manjeet Kumar,S/O Avanesh Kumar R/O-W-267,Shakurpur Village,Delhi Changed my minor daughter name,from Gaura Devi To Gauri.

I,Manish Kumar Gupta, S/O-Rakesh Kumar, Resi:1/2300-B, Street No.6,Ram Nagar,Shahdara, Delhi-110032,have changed my Name to Manish Gupta, for all Future Purposes.

I, SARVESH KUMAR,S/O RAMNATH BHAGAT,H.NO.B-106/E-SHEESH MEHAL ENCLAVE,PREM NAGAR-3, KIRARI SULEMAN-NAGAR, ROHINI-110086, changed my name to SARVESH, permanently.

I, Ram Kishan@Ramkumar S/O.Madan Lal,R/O MCF-A-442,Bhagat Singh Colony,Near-Bohra Public-School, Ballabgarh,Faridabad(Haryana a)-121004,have changed my name to Ram Kumar Verma.

I, Raj Kumar S/o Sh Atma Ram R/o 1/34, Ashok Nagar, New Delhi-110018, have changed my name to Raj Kumar Gogia for all future purposes.

I, Ragbir Kaur W/o Gurmeet Singh R/o Village Baddowal, Gurdaspur, Punjab-143505, have changed my name to Dalbir Kaur

I,PARAMJIT ARORA R/O 3G/148, 1ST FLOOR, NEAR POLICE CHOWKI, NIT, FARIDABAD-121001 have changed my minor daughter name from PURVA TO PURVAA ARORA

I, Menaz Ali W/o Shahid Usmani R/o-60-174AB/5C, Milat Street, Khwaspada Sarai Khwaja, Agra-282001,have changed my name to Menaz Usmani.

I, Manpreet Singh s/o late S.Tirlok Singh r/o G-19/12A, Third Floor, Rajouri Garden, New Delhi-110027 have changed my name (DOB:04-07-2005) son's name from Divjot Singh to DIVJYOT SINGH.

I,Amit S/o Ram Chander R/o H.No.-166,Garhi Panna, Bakhtawarpur, Delhi-34,have changed my daughter's name Priyanshi to Khushi for all purposes.

I, Madhu W/o Mukesh Nagpal R/o 5/1 2nd Floor, Front Side, Ashok Nagar, Tilak Nagar, Delhi-110018, have changed my name to Madhu Nagpal

I, Manpreet Singh s/o late S.Tirlok Singh r/o G-19/12A, Third Floor, Rajouri Garden, New Delhi-110027 have changed my name (DOB:04-07-2005) daughter's name from Noorjot Kaur to NOORJYOT KAUR.

I, Karuna D/O Rajkumar R/O H.no.1466A/3, Gali no. 6, Rajiv Nagar, Gurgaon 122001 declare that name of my Father and Mother has been wrongly written as Rajkumar Duggle Chauhan and Sarita Duggle Chauhan respectively in my educational documents. The actual name of my Father and Mother is Rajkumar and Sarita Devi respectively

I, Himanshu Chaudhary, S/o Fakir Chand, H.No.B-109, Gali No.4, Village-Gokalpur, Delhi-110094,have changed my name to Himanshu, for all purposes.

I, Harsh Mohan, R/o 1615, sector 37, Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, u.p.-201301 have changed my name to Harsh Mohan Balooni

I, Hari Om, S/o Ram Kumar Verma, R/O MCF-A-442, Bhagat Singh-Colony, Near-Bohra Public-School, Ballabgarh, Faridabad(Haryana)-121004,have changed my name to Hariom Verma.

I, Amit s/o Ram Mehar r/o H.no.6/A, H.No.-73/2, Gali no.-8B, Swatnagar Nagar, Narela, Delhi-110040 have changed my name to AMIT KUAMR permanently.

I, ASHOK SIKARVAAR/ASHOK KUMAR,S/O MEGH SINGH, H.NO.940, NEAR-MOTHER-DAIRY, SECTOR-15,PART-2,GURGAON, HARYANA-122001,changed my name to ASHOK SIKARWAR, permanently.

I,Rashmi Rani Jain W/O Neeraj Jain R/O Be-194/1, Gali No-3, Hari Nagar, New Delhi-110064 Have Changed My Name To Nisha Jain

I, AKHIL S/O NARESH KUMAR R/O-POCKET-B-7, HNO.160-161,2nd-FLOOR,SECTOR-4, ROHINI,DELHI-110085. HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO AKHIL GARG.

I Ram Ashish Chaudhary S/o Late Sita Ram Chaudhary R/o H.No.Y-696, Gali No.7, Adarsh Enclave, Prem Nagar-2, Kirari Suleman Nagar, Delhi-110086 have changed my name to Jag Lal Chaudhary for all purposes.

I,Rabiya w/o Sadiq Hasan R/O E-11/71, 2nd Floor, Khirki Extension, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi-17, Have Changed My Minor Son Name Mohd Suhail Ansari TO ABDULLAH HASAN. For All future purpose HIS correct D.O.B is 13/10/2010.

I Komal D/o-Prem Sagar R/o-H.No.1048R, Mangolpur, Delhi-110083 have changed my name to Komal Sagar permanently.

I.B.Lohi Das,S/O Sh.B.Tarnia,R/O W-164A,Gali No.2,Lajwanti Garden,New Delhi-110046, have changed name of my daughter, from B.Sirisa to B.Sirisha, for all purposes.

I, Dharminder Kumar,S/o Sh.Beg Raj, R/O-B-35, First-Floor, Sector-1, Avantika, Rohini,Delhi-110085,have changed my name Dharminder Kaushik.

I,Meenakshi Gugnani,D/o Shri Kashmiri Lal Gugnani R/O-H.No.2/11,Nehru-Enclave,Kalkaji-Extn.New Delhi-110019,have changed my minor daughter's name,from Tanya Arora (DOB:14/12/2004) to Tanya Gugnani,for all purposes.

I RAVINDRA SINGH S/O LATE SH. BHAG SINGH R/O B-33, SECTOR Gamma-1,GREATER NOIDA, G. B. NAGAR, U. P. 201310 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM RAVINDRA SINGH TO RAVINDER SINGH FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES.

LOST & FOUND

Lost my Original Transfer Letter No.6325 Date-18-11-2014. Possession Memo, Sanction Map by Authority of Plot-No.B-45 Sector-B-2, Trans Delhi Signature City, Loni, Ghaziabad, U.P.-201103. Finder may Contact-Ankit Rustagi at 25/132, Shakti Nagar, Delhi-110007

I,Ayush saxena,S/O JITENDRA mohan saxena R/O-F.No-G-4/plot.no-C-85 Shalimar-garden ext2,Sahibabad,GZB (UP),have lost my original-certificate class-10th year-2019 RollNo-5399798 CBSE-Dehradun.

LOST & FOUND

I Dipesh Chand S/o Sh. Raghubar Dutt, R/o E-291A, Gali No.8, East Vinod Nagar, Delhi-91 have lost Original General Power of Attorney executed by Sh. Durga Prasad S/o Sh. Trilok Chand R/o 69-B, Aram Bagh, Paharganj, New Delhi in respect of Flat no-175C, Block-44, Sector-73, Noida, U.P. in favour of Smt. Anchal Verma W/o Smt. Sunil Singh, R/O L-801, Jaigriya Sunrise Green, Indraprastha, Ghaziabad, U.P. on 21-05-2010 vide document no. 1179, Bhi no. 4, Vol no. 348, on pages 175-188 Regd. On 21-05-2010 in the office of S.R. Noida. If found contact Dipesh Chand, Mob no. 8800441170.

PROPERTY FOR RENT

Office for rent@Vasant Kunj, 3cabins, BoardRoom, 12workstations, 2toilets, Pantry. 9953214911

PROPERTY FOR RENT

Office for rent@Vasant Kunj, 3cabins, BoardRoom, 12workstations, 2toilets, Pantry. 9953214911

PUBLIC NOTICE

THIS IS TO INFORM PUBLIC AT LARGE THAT MY CLIENT I. VINOD KUMAR MITTAL S/O LATE SH. LAKSHMI PRASAD MITTAL 2 LAKSHMI MITTAL W/O VINOD KUMAR MITTAL BOTH R/O H.NO.210, HARSH MITTAL, PITAMPURA, DELHI-34 HAVE SEVERED RELATION WITH THEIR SON SURAJ MITTAL AND HIS WIFE ANJALI KANKIA MITTAL R/O P-3A, PITAMPURA, DELHI-88 FOR ALL THE PURPOSES DUE TO THEIR MISBEHAVIOUR AND CONDUCT TOWARDS US AND FALSE IMPLICATIONS IN SEVERAL CASES AND SO DISOWNED THEM FROM ALL MY MOVABLE AND IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES. WHOEVER DEALS WITH THEM IN ANY MANNER, SHALL DO SO AT HIS OWN RISK & CONSEQUENCES AND MY CLIENTS SHALL NOT BE HELD LIABLE FOR THAT.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it know to all that my clients Sh. Mr. Kumar S/O Sh. Raji Lal and Smt.Hers Devi W/o Sh.Raj Kumar Both R/O 11804, No.18,Near Main Road, Sindhvi, Near Gauri Wala, Sat Nagar Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110005 hereby declare and disown Smt. Anjali W/o Late Sh. Rajesh Kumar D/o Late Sh. Rajesh Kumar from our all movable and immovable property as they are not obedient towards my clients. In future they also severed all relation with their Anybody deals with them shall be at their/their own risks, costs and responsibility for which my clients shall not be responsible. Now onwards Smt. Anjali W/O Late Sh. Rajesh Kumar & Ms. Divyisha D/o Late Sh. Rajesh Kumar & Ms. Sarini D/o Late Sh. Rajesh Kumar Cease to be their legal heir for all purposes whatsoever.

PUBLIC NOTICE

GENERAL PUBLIC IS HEREBY INFORMED THAT MY CLIENT SHRI RAJ KUMAR DAWAR SON OF LATE SHRI OM PRAKASH VERMA IS ONE OF THE CO-OWNERS/OCCUPANTS OF PROPERTY NO. A/7 SARASWATI GARDEN, NEW DELHI-110015 WHICH IS SUBJECT MATTER OF SUIT FOR PARTITION AND DECLARATION BEARING NO. 2090/16 TITLED AS RAKESH KUMAR (DECEASED THROUGH LRS) VERSUS OM PRAKASH VERMA (DECEASED THROUGH LRS) AND OTHERS PRESENTLY PENDING BEFORE THE COURT OF SHRI HEM RAJ ADJ-06 CENTRAL TIS HAZARI COURTS DELHI AND RIGHTS OF THE PARTIES TO THE SAID SUIT ARE SUBJECT TO FINAL OUTCOME OF THE CASE THEREFORE ANY PERSON DEALING WITH THE AFORESAID PROPERTY SHALL BE DOING SO AT HIS OWN RISKS AND COSTS AND THAT MY CLIENT SHALL NOT BE HELD BY ANY SUCH DEAL IN ANY MANNER.

PUBLIC NOTICE

GENERAL PUBLIC IS HEREBY INFORMED THAT MY CLIENT SHRI AGGARWAL W/O Sh. Anil Aggarwal R/o A - 456, Cottage Enclave, Paschim Vihar, Delhi-85, has been purchasing a property/flat bearing No. 55, COE Employee Co.-Op. GHS Ltd. Paschim Vihar, New Delhi-83 from his Son Mr. Amal Dhangra, S/o Sh. P. Dhangra, R/o 4032, B - 566, Vasant Kunj, Delhi and if anybody has any interest / concern regarding the said property he or she may contact my client at her mobile No. 9540859000, 7982836343 within seven days of date of publishing the present article and later on any objection or interest in the said property of any sort shall not be entertained.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Client, Sh. Hazari Lal @ Hazari, S/o Late Sh. Rishal Singh, R/o House No. 1172, Jangrauna Lane, Shikhar, New Delhi-14, hereby disowns, debars and divests his son Mr. Sunny @ Sonu and his wife Mrs. Kiran Sauri @ Kalki, from claiming or inheriting his movable and immovable properties, and my client has no relations with them of any nature whatsoever. Anybody dealing with Mr. Sunny and/or Mrs. Kiran shall be doing so at their own risk and cost to which my client or his property shall not be answerable or responsible to any extent or in any manner whatsoever.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

मेरी मुकदमा खतीली चार पत्नी श्री सीती वारा, निवासी ए-48, द्वितीय वर, जोड़ी कलानी, आई.टी.एस्टेट, दिल्ली-110092 ने अपनी यादगुस्तु पुत्री चिखिया वारा व पुत्र सिद्ध वारा व हकीमी पुत्री सुनील वारा व पुत्री पुत्र सुनील वारा को अपने सारा सारा संपत्ति, फलत आगुस्तु एवं युद्धवस्तु से वंचना होकर अपनी संपत्ति वारा-आगत संपत्ति से वेदवार कर दिया है एवं नीचाय मे हुक्मे सिद्धी भी अस्तित्वक रूप एवं दीक्षा की करे व लेन-देन मे लिखे मेरे मुकदमाक व हुक्मे सिद्धी को चलाया गया है।

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to all that my clients Sh. Dharamvir Singh S/O Late Sh. Singh Prasad, Late Ramesh Ramwani Devai, both residents of B-36/2, Gali No.1, B-Block, Bhagirathi Nagar, Delhi-110094 debar and disown their daughter namely Shashi Rani from their movable and immovable properties including assets due to her conduct, behavioour and attitude beyond their controls. Any person dealing with her, my clients will not be responsible for the acts, deeds conducted by her in future.

PUBLIC NOTICE

MY CLIENT LAKHWINDER PAL SHARMA S/O LATE SH. MANGAL DASS R/O 119 DDA FLATS, PUNJ CAMP JAHANGIR PURI, DELHI-33 SEVERE ALL RELATIONS AND DEBAR HIS SON MANISH SHARMA FROM ALL ABOVE MENTIONED MOVEABLE / IMMOVABLE PROPERTY DUE TO HIS APROPRIANT & CRUEL BEHAVIOUR. MY CLIENT SHALL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS ANY ACTS, DEBTS AND DEEDS IN FUTURE.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Share Certificate No. 363 dated 31/05/1996 Allotment Letter dated 07.03.1998, Possession Letter dated 10.02.2004 issued by Shree Balaji GHS Ltd. Sector-6, Plot No. 37, Dwarka, New Delhi-110075 in the name of Dr. Manpreet Gambhir for Flat No. C-304 has been reported lost vide FIR No. LR No. 406961/ 2020 dated 11.07.2020. We have been informed that Dr. Manpreet Gambhir expired on 16/04/2018 ref. Death Certificate No. 46800 Dated 18/04/2018. An application for obtaining duplicate Share Certificate, Allotment Letter and Possession Letter has been made by his wife Dr. Neena Malhotra Gambhir considering Renukash Deed dated 13/07/2018. The Society hereby invites claims or objections (in writing) for issuance of duplicate Share Certificate, Allotment Letter, Possession Letter within period of 15 (Fifteen) days from the publication of this notice. If any Claims/Objections are not received during this period the society shall be free to issue the said duplicate documents.

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पब्लिक नोटिस

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

CORONAVIRUS DASHBOARD

COVID-19 VACCINE TRACKER

Masks protect better than a vaccine would: CDC director

DESCRIBING IT as the "most powerful public health tool" against the novel coronavirus, Robert Redfield, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the US, has said face masks offered much better protection against coronavirus infection than vaccines would. The CDC is the US equivalent of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

Redfield was responding to questions from US lawmakers at a Senate Sub-committee hearing. "We have clear scientific evidence they work, and they are our best defence. I might even go so far as to say that this face mask is more guaranteed to protect me against

Covid than when I take a Covid vaccine," Redfield said.

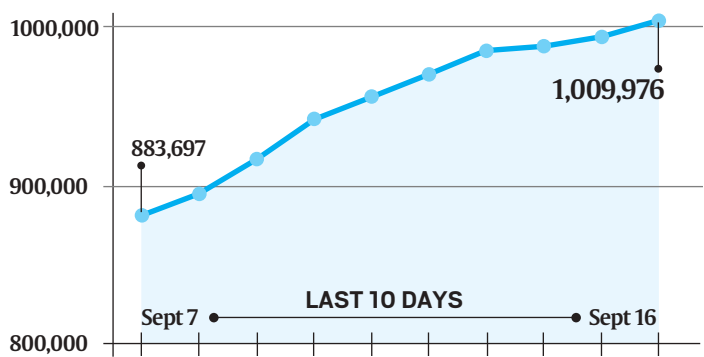
While a coronavirus vaccine is likely to become available by early next year, if not towards the end of this year itself, no one knows as of now how effective these vaccines are likely to be. Scientists and vaccine developers have suggested that the early vaccines might not be the most effective ones, and that we would be lucky if they provide protection to at least 75% of those inoculated.

Redfield urged people to continue wearing masks even after a vaccine becomes available, and said the pandemic could be brought quickly under control if masks were adopted universally.



INDIA ACTIVE CASES

1,009,976



Note: The Sept 16 figure in this graph is based on the government update on Sept 17

INDIA TOTAL CASES
5,118,253

WORLD TOTAL CASES
29,960,718

Source: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, updated at 11 pm on Sept 17

Source: Johns Hopkins University, updated at 11 pm on Sept 17

Killing coronavirus with UV light, without harming people

A STUDY has found that using ultraviolet C light with a wavelength of 222 nanometres (1 nanometre is a billionth part of 1 metre) effectively kills SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19. Ultraviolet light of wavelengths between 200 and 280 nm is known as ultraviolet C light, or UVC. Using 222 nm UVC light is safe around humans, said the researchers from Hiroshima University, who have published their study in the *American Journal of Infection Control*.

An *in vitro* experiment by the researchers showed that 99.7% of the SARS-CoV-2 viral culture was killed after a 30-second exposure to 222 nm UVC irradiation. Tests were conducted



PAPER CLIP

NEW RESEARCH

using a UVC lamp. A solution containing the virus was spread onto a plate. The researchers allowed it to dry before placing the UVC lamp 24 cm above the surface of the plates.

A wavelength of 222 nm UVC cannot penetrate the outer layer of the human eye and skin, so it won't harm the cells beneath. But 254 nm UVC germicidal lamps harm exposed human tissues, and can only be used to sanitise empty rooms.

The researchers suggest further evaluation of the safety and effectiveness of 222 nm UVC irradiation in killing SARS-CoV-2 viruses in real-world surfaces.

Source: Hiroshima University

Should you invest in gold?

Prices rose steadily for over a year, and gold gave good returns. It is advisable to invest on a periodic basis through gold bonds. Many experts feel gold will continue to be strong for some time now.



SANDEEP SINGH & SUNNY VERMA

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

THE RELENTLESS rise in the price of gold over the past year has left investors unsure. While existing investors wonder whether they should exit with significant capital gains on their investments, new investors are unsure whether they should invest at current levels.

On Wednesday, the United States Federal Reserve signalled it would keep interest rates near zero until 2023. If the dollar index remains weak and leads to higher inflation going forward, many feel it would result in gold prices staying firm or even rising — until a Covid-19 vaccine is in sight and the global economy shows signs of recovery.

How have gold prices moved?

Prices started to move upward from May 2019, culminating in an over 50% jump in a little over a year — from \$1,250 per ounce to \$1,900-plus now. In India, gold prices went from around Rs 32,000 per 10 g to nearly Rs 52,000 during the same period, a nearly 62% return. Since gold is an imported commodity, the depreciation of the rupee added to the returns enjoyed by Indian investors.

In dollar terms, gold peaked around \$2,080 an ounce on August 7; the Indian price in market touched Rs 58,000 per 10 g that day, as gold traded at a premium of nearly Rs 2,000 compared to the price on commodity exchange MCX.

Since then, prices have eased around 7% in the international market, and around 10% in the Indian market. The fall has been sharper in India as the rupee appreciated by more than Rs 2 during this period. With the cooling off in international prices from peak levels, the premium on physical gold has now vanished. Demand is expected to pick up in India closer to Diwali.

Why have the prices risen?

The biggest reason for the rise over the last five months has been the pandemic, its impact on businesses and economies, and growing concern about the global recession. Concerns around negative growth rates have



Experts say unless you are buying for jewellery consumption, the investment should be through bonds, a more attractive option than owing physical gold. Partha Paul

pushed central banks and big investors towards gold.

The weakness of the dollar, which has an inverse relationship with gold, has been the other reason for the rise in prices. As central banks including the Fed cut rates and injected huge amounts of liquidity to support the economy, the dollar weakened and gold rose.

Traditionally seen as an asset class that preserves its value, investment demand for gold has been going up in line with rising uncertainty. Expansion in the paper currency typically tends to push up gold prices, with the higher prices being supported by major buying by leading central banks of China and Russia over the last two years.

While gold does not by itself produce economic value, it is an efficient tool to hedge against inflation and economic uncertainties. It is also more liquid when compared with real estate and many debt instruments.

Could prices rise even more?

There is a broad sense among commodity traders and experts that gold may remain strong — this is due to factors including rising Covid-19 case numbers, and the Fed's signal on keeping interest rates low for the next three years.

"Both these factors — no medical solution

for Covid-19 yet, and the Fed's decision to keep rates near zero — are set to keep gold prices firm. The selling pressure in gold will come once a medical solution for Covid-19 is found," said Harshesh V Nair, head of commodity research at Geojit Financial Services.

Some analysts, however, feel gold may not see much of an upside from its current levels. Jamal Mecklai, CEO, Mecklai Financial Services, said two months ago, people felt the dollar was going to collapse, which led to gold shooting up. "Now it has come down. There has to be a fundamental crisis in dollar for gold to rise from current levels, and I don't see that."

So is gold a good investment for you?

While trading in gold may not be a good idea because of the current high prices, experts say retail investors can buy gold periodically. Financial planners say gold should continue to be between 5% and 10% of an investor's overall asset allocation.

"The strategy for retail investors should be to invest on a periodic basis — monthly or quarterly. But one should avoid making a lump-sum investment in gold at this time," Nair said.

Financial advisors say gold should not be seen as a short-term asset. "Gold is a generational asset, and after a couple of decades it

won't matter at what price you purchased it. People are investors but they think like traders even when they are buying a long-term asset," said Amar Pandit, CFA and founder of Happiness Factory, a financial advisory platform.

A cut in interest rates by RBI has led to a decline in interest rates on small savings and term deposit rates of banks. Many analysts argue that gold buying can be initiated around levels of Rs 50,000 per 10 g, which is near \$1,900 per ounce as the spot price that it is expected to hold. Some see gold climbing to Rs 65,000 per 10 g, or around \$2,400 per ounce, by December 2021.

How should you invest in gold?

Almost everyone agrees that unless you are buying for jewellery consumption, the investment must be through sovereign gold bonds. They offer investors price appreciation along with a fixed 2.5% coupon per year in holding them; also, they are in the form of paper or demat and issued in the name of the investor, thus taking care of concerns around security.

While the interest earned on gold bonds is added to the holders' income and taxed according to their slab rate, any capital gains at maturity is tax-free, making them far more attractive compared to owning physical gold.

Gold bonds have a maturity period of eight years but investors have the option to exit after the fifth year. To offer greater liquidity, the bonds are listed on stock exchanges within a fortnight of being issued, and can be traded. However, trading volumes depend upon liquidity in the secondary market.

What if gold prices crash?

Analysts caution that one should hedge against a crash as gold prices, like those of other commodities, tend to move in long cycles. Whenever the recovery picks up (now expected only in late 2021), investors will start allocating more funds to risk assets like stocks, real estate and bonds, and pull out from safe havens such as gold, US dollar, government debt, and Japanese yen. Historical trends show that when equity and risk assets start moving upward, gold typically falls, as was the case from 2011-15.

"An investor should watch levels of \$1,900 and \$1,800 (per ounce) on short and medium term basis. A fall below \$1,800 would indicate the start of a downturn in gold prices. Those should be exit levels or stop-loss levels, depending upon the risk appetite, for investors who enter at current prices," said an expert with over two decades experience in gold trading.

Can eyeglasses shield you against Covid-19?

KABIR FIRAQUE

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

CAN WEARING glasses protect you from the novel coronavirus? A new study suggests that it may, but the findings come with several limitations. The study, from Chinese researchers, is published in *JAMA Ophthalmology*.

How does the study make this suggestion?

It is an observational study on a small group — 276 patients of Covid-19 in Hubei, 155 of them male and 121 female. The study examined how many of them wore glasses for more than 8 hours a day. The count was 16 (less than 6% of the patients) and all of them had myopia. The study authors then compared this with the proportion of people with myopia in Hubei province, which was 31.5% based on a previous study. Since the proportion of myopia in the population was much higher than the proportion of Covid-19 patients who had myopia, the researchers suggested that daily wear of

glasses is associated with less susceptibility to Covid-19 infection.

How significant is this conclusion?

The authors themselves note limitations: ■ It was a single-centre study with a small sample size.

■ The proportion in the population of people who wear glasses was based on previous data, not calculated from current local populations.

■ The myopia rate obtained in previous studies included a small number of people with myopia who did not wear glasses.

JAMA invited an epidemiologist, Dr Lisa L Maragakis of Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, to write a commentary on the research. She has advised caution before concluding that people should wear glasses or other types of eye protection in public to prevent Covid-19.

What are the issues flagged in the commentary?

Dr Maragakis expands on the limitations acknowledged by the study authors and cau-

tions against inferring a causal relationship from a single observational study. She notes that there may be an alternative explanation for the findings, "if, for instance, wearing eyeglasses is associated with another unknown and unmeasured factor associated with the risk of Covid-19".

Also, the investigation took place very early in the pandemic, and the statistics do not include data on handwashing or physical distancing. "This makes it difficult to assess any incremental benefit of eye protection in public settings over and above these basic interventions that are now the mainstay of Covid-19 prevention," she writes.

While she acknowledges that the observed difference in wearing eyeglasses between the Covid-19 patients and the general population is unlikely to have occurred by chance alone, she stresses that it does not indicate a causal relationship.

Beyond the correlation shown, how can eyeglasses be associated with Covid-19?

Since the pandemic began, it has often been speculated whether the eye is a poten-

tial entry point for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19. However, studies so far have thrown up mixed results. One, posted on the website of the US National Institutes of Health, has reported the expression of the human protein ACE2 in parts of the eye (the virus uses ACE2 to enter the human cell). On the other hand, a study in the *Journal of Medical Virology* found no significant expression of ACE2 in conjunctival samples.

In her commentary, Dr Maragakis notes that eye protection — goggles, face shield — are an important part of PPE (personal protective equipment) used by healthcare workers. But public health guidelines on Covid-19 do not recommend glasses for the general public.

Dr Maragakis warns of unintended consequences in concluding that people should wear glasses in public to prevent Covid-19. "Wearing goggles, a face shield, or even eyeglasses might pose an increased risk of touching one's eyes more frequently and potentially contaminating them when removing, replacing, or adjusting the eye protection, especially if a person is not accustomed to wearing them," she writes.

Why three agriculture Bills pushed Akali Dal to quit Union Cabinet

MANRAJ GREWAL SHARMA
CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 17

UNION MINISTER Harsimrat Badal's resignation from the Cabinet signals an unusually strong stand taken by her party, Shiromani Akali Dal, against a move taken by its long-time ally BJP. Her resignation was in protest against three ordinances — The Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Ordinance, 2020; The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement; and The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 — promulgated by the NDA government, which has now tabled Bills in Lok Sabha to replace these.

Akali Dal president Sukhbir Badal has said the party was never consulted on the ordinances, and that Harsimrat, his wife, had told the government about farmers' reservations. Farmers in Haryana and Punjab have been

agitating against the ordinances/Bills. The party has decided to vote against the Bills.

Less than a month ago, the Akalis had been defending the ordinances. Just before a one-day Punjab Assembly session on August 28, Sukhbir Badal had released a letter from Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar saying the practice of procuring grains at a minimum support price (MSP) will remain unchanged. He had accused Chief Minister Amarinder Singh of misleading farmers. Now the two are speaking in one voice against the ordinances.

What explains the Akalis' opposition?

Peasantry forms the backbone of the Akali Dal vote-bank in Punjab. Earlier this week, Sukhbir Badal said, "Every Akali is a farmer, and every farmer is an Akali."

Farmers unions across the state have sunk their political differences to unite against the ordinances. Villagers in the Malwa belt have

warned they will not let any leader who supports the ordinances enter their villages.

The 100-year-old party, which had its poorest ever showing in the 2017 Assembly elections with a mere 15 seats out of 117, cannot risk alienating its core constituency. Political analysts say it's a question of survival for the party that enjoyed two successive terms from 2007 before the 2017 rout. The SAD-BJP alliance secured only 15% of the seats while the Congress recorded its most emphatic win since 1957.

Dr Parmod Kumar from the Institute of Development Communication, a think tank, said the farmers' agitation has come as god-send for the Akalis. "They were in the wilderness and no one thought they would ever oppose the BJP. This agitation has given them a new lease of life. Their outright support for the farmers could also help them dilute the anger against incidents of sacrilege during the Akali tenure in 2015."

What are the stakes involved?

Farmers fear they will no longer get paid at MSP, while commission agents fear they will lose their commission. According to a Punjab Agricultural University study, there are over 12 lakh farming families in Punjab and 28,000 registered commission agents.

A large part of the state's economy rests on funds infused by central procurement agencies such as Food Corporation of India (FCI). The lion's share of wheat and rice grown in Punjab is procured by or for FCI. In the 2019-2020 rabi marketing season, Punjab supplied 129.1 lakh metric tonnes (LMT) of the 341.3 LMT wheat procured for the central pool. In 2018-19, it contributed 113.3 LMT of rice to the total 443.3 LMT in the central pool.

Now, protesters fear the FCI will no longer be able to procure from the state mandis, which will rob the middleman/commission agent/arhatiya of his 2.5% commission. The state itself will lose the 6% commission it

used to charge on the procurement agency.

"The ordinances that allow farmers to sell their produce in the open market deal a blow to the farmers, mainly Jats, the commission agents, who are largely urban Hindus, and landless labourers," said Parmod Kumar.

How does it impact the BJP and its ties with the Akali Dal?

It will strain their ties, already frayed of late amid speculation that BJP may be flirting with a breakaway Akali group led by S S Dhindsa. Also, Sukhbir Badal hasn't shown the persuasive powers of his father Parkash S Badal, who had held the alliance together.

But the Bills will also hurt BJP's largely urban vote bank, which includes the commission agents. It will no longer be able to defend its demand for a larger share of Assembly seats from the existing 23.

On the other hand, the whip by the Akali

Dal against its own alliance government will rile the BJP at the Centre. Ashutosh Kumar, a political scientist at Panjab University, said, "Every Cabinet member is bound by the Cabinet decision. Harsimrat's resignation was inevitable as a vote against the Bills would have violated Art 75."

Is it the first time the Akali Dal has distanced itself from an NDA decision?

In January, the Akalis had supported a resolution in the Punjab Assembly against the central Citizenship (Amendment) Act, after having voted in its favour in Parliament. Later, the party decided against fighting the Delhi Assembly elections over its differences with BJP on this issue.

Earlier this week in Parliament, Sukhbir Badal objected to non-inclusion of Punjabi in the new languages Bill for the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, saying it was a language spoken by locals as far back as the Khalsa Raj.

TOP OF THE WORLD



Donald Trump

AUSTRIA

Govt to Trump: No, we do not live in forests

Berlin: The Austrian government has spoken up to correct US President Donald Trump's claim that people in its country live in "forest cities". Trump recently cited Austria and other European countries as models of good forest management that US states should learn from. He said that "you look at countries, Austria... They live in the forest, they're considered forest cities..." In an article Thursday for the *Independent*, Austria's agriculture minister sought to set the record straight. "In reality, Austria is a country situated in the heart of Europe, where people do not live in the forest, but rather with the forest and in a close, sustainable relationship with the natural environment," Elisabeth Koestinger wrote. **AP**

NEPAL

6.0 magnitude quake shakes Kathmandu

Kathmandu: A strong earthquake of 6 magnitude shook Nepal's capital Kathmandu and surrounding areas on Wednesday, forcing people to rush out of their houses. According to the National Seismological Center, the 6 magnitude quake occurred in the country's Sindhupalchowk district near Tibet border at 5.19 am. The epicentre of the earthquake was Ramche village in the district, 120 km east of Kathmandu. A tremor of 3.8 magnitude was also felt at the same place at 6.10 am, it said. **PTI**

PAKISTAN

Psych exam for Pak doc charged with terrorism

Minneapolis: A psychological exam has been ordered for a Pakistani doctor and former Mayo Clinic researcher accused of telling paid FBI informants that he pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group and wanted to carry out lone wolf attacks in the US. Muhammad Masood has been indicted on one count of attempting to provide material support to a foreign terrorist organisation. He has been in custody since his March 19 arrest at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. **PTI**

SRI LANKA

Court summons captain of tanker that caught fire

Colombo: A Sri Lankan court on Thursday issued a notice to the captain of the oil tanker that caught fire off the country's eastern coast to appear before it on September 28. The Colombo chief magistrate court's order comes a day after Attorney General Dappula de Livera staked a claim of \$1.8 million for the costs incurred on dousing the fire on board the Panama-registered tanker that went up in flames on September 3. **PTI**



WILDFIRES SCORCH US WEST COAST

A firefighter in the Cascadel Woods neighbourhood of Madera County, California. More than 30 people have died due to wildfires in the Western US over the past two months, with hundreds of homes destroyed and thousands of people evacuated. **AP**

Pak to elevate Gilgit-Baltistan to full-fledged province: Report

SAJJAD HUSSAIN

ISLAMABAD, SEPTEMBER 17

PAKISTAN HAS decided to elevate Gilgit-Baltistan's status to that of a full-fledged province, a Pakistani media report on Thursday quoted a senior minister as saying.

India has clearly conveyed to Pakistan that the entire union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, including the areas of Gilgit and Baltistan, are an integral part of the country by virtue of its fully legal and irrevocable accession.

According to a report in the *Express Tribune*, Minister for Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan Affairs, Ali Amin Gandapur, on Wednesday said that Prime Minister Imran Khan would soon visit the region and make the formal announcement to elevate Gilgit-Baltistan to the sta-

tus of a full-fledged province with all constitutional rights.

Gandapur said Gilgit-Baltistan would be given adequate representation on all constitutional bodies, including the National Assembly and the Senate.

"After consultation with all stakeholders, the federal government has decided in principle to give constitutional rights to Gilgit-Baltistan," the minister told reporters.

India has said the Government of Pakistan or its judiciary has no locus standi on territories illegally and forcibly occupied by it.

India completely rejects such actions and continued attempts to bring material changes in Pakistan occupied areas of the Indian territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Instead, Pakistan should immediately vacate all areas under its illegal occupation, the Ministry of External

Affairs said in May while protesting Islamabad's efforts to bring material change in Pakistan occupied territories.

Gandapur also said that work on the Moopondass Special Economic Zone would begin under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

The CPEC, which connects Gwadar Port in Pakistan's Balochistan with China's Xinjiang province, is the flagship project of Beijing's ambitious multi-billion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

The CPEC is a collection of infrastructure and other projects under construction throughout Pakistan since 2013. Originally valued at USD 46 billion, the projects were worth over USD 60 billion as of 2017.

India has protested to China over the CPEC as it is being laid through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. **PTI**



Imran Khan

Pak to introduce legislation to curb cases of rape, child abuse

SAJJAD HUSSAIN

ISLAMABAD, SEPTEMBER 17

PAKISTAN PRIME Minister Imran Khan has said that his government will soon introduce a three-tier legislation providing for registration of sex offenders, exemplary punishment for rape and child abuse and effective policing.

Khan made the announcement while addressing a joint sitting of parliament after passage of a number of Financial Action Task Force-related bills on Wednesday.

"Such incidents ruin the lives of victims and their families also have to suffer," he was quoted as saying by the *Dawn* newspaper.

Khan was referring to the gangrape of a French-Pakistani woman in front of her three children near a highway in Lahore on September 9 which sparked widespread outrage.

One of the suspects wanted in the case was arrested on Monday arrested and confessed to his crime. Noting that the main suspect in the gang-rape case was a history-sheeter, Khan said that global data indicated that such criminals were repeat offenders and therefore maintaining their data was important.

He said the legislation would also contain provisions for registration of sex offenders. **PTI**

As US official visits Taiwan, China warns of consequences

AMY QIN

TAIPEI, SEPTEMBER 17

A SENIOR US envoy arrived in Taiwan on Thursday to attend a memorial service for former President Lee Teng-hui, in the Donald Trump administration's latest move to bolster its support of the island in defiance of threats from Beijing.

The Taiwanese foreign ministry said that the envoy, Keith Krach, under secretary for economic growth, energy and the environment, was the highest-level official from the State Department to visit the island in decades.

China, which claims self-governed Taiwan as its territory and opposes formal exchanges of any kind, responded to the news of Mr Krach's visit on Wednesday by sending two anti-submarine aircraft into the island's air defence identification zone, according to the Taiwanese defence ministry. The planes were warned off by the Taiwanese air force, the ministry said.

The State Department said that the focus of Mr. Krach's visit was the memorial service for Mr. Lee, who led Taiwan from dictatorship to democracy, though the Taiwanese government said that the American envoy would also discuss economic issues. Mr. Krach will meet with President Tsai Ing-wen on Friday.

Tsai Shih-ying, a legislator from the governing Democratic Progressive Party of Taiwan who is on the foreign affairs and national defense committee, said, "Right now, the focus is to let China know that Taiwan will not bow to the threat of force."

"The second priority is to let China know that not only will Taiwan not bow, it has many powerful allies that will not let China just act blindly without thinking," he added.

Last month, the United States announced that it was establishing a new economic dialogue with Taiwan focused on technology, health care, energy and other sectors. Taiwan hopes talks will result in a free-trade agreement with the United States.

The Trump administration has also stepped up military support for Taiwan in recent years through increased arms sales.

US Undersecretary for Economic Affairs Keith Krach arrives at Taipei, Taiwan on Thursday. **Reuters**

EXPLAINED

Another attempt by Trump to isolate China

CHINA VIEWS Taiwan's president as a dangerous separatist. The US, like most countries, has official relations with Beijing, not Taiwan. However, Keith Krach's visit reflects a growing effort by the Donald Trump administration to counter China's attempts in recent years to isolate Taiwan on the global stage.

For Taiwan, the trip is an opportunity to demonstrate stronger ties with Washington as relations with Beijing become increasingly tense. China has recently stepped up military activities in the narrow strait that separates the mainland from the island and has also become more belligerent in its rhetoric.

On Wednesday, Reuters reported that the US government planned to sell as many as seven major weapon systems, including mines, cruise missiles and drones, to Taiwan. The island's defence ministry called the report a "media assumption".

China has reacted angrily. On Thursday, a Chinese Foreign Ministry official in Beijing said that Mr. Krach's visit undermined relations between Beijing and Washington and warned that China would respond "as necessary".

In an editorial about the report of the new arms sale, *Global Times*, a nationalist tabloid owned by the Chinese Communist Party, said, "Once the People's Liberation Army dispatches troops to reunify the island of Taiwan, the military equipment from the US will be

nothing but decorations."

Since the beginning of the year, China has stepped up its military activities around the island. Chinese fighter jets have crossed the median line in the Taiwan Strait and flown into the island's air defence identification zone with increasing frequency. The Chinese military has also recently conducted a spate of anti-ship ballistic missile tests, which experts said were intended as an explicit warning to the US.

The US, too, has also increased the transit of American warships through the Taiwan Strait. But Washington has so far stopped short of saying clearly that it would defend the island if the People's Liberation Army staged an invasion or a blockade, despite pressure from some administration officials to do so. **NYT**

UK defends planned Brexit deal breach as Biden slams move

JILL LAWLESS

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 17

THE BRITISH government struggled Thursday to overcome American opposition to its plans to breach the Brexit withdrawal agreement with the European Union, after Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden became the latest US politician to express alarm.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson's move to break parts of the EU divorce deal relating to Northern Ireland has triggered fears it could undermine the 1998 Good Friday peace accord that ended decades of violence between Irish nationalists and British unionists.

"We can't allow the Good



Joe Biden

Friday Agreement that brought peace to Northern Ireland to become a casualty of Brexit," Biden tweeted. "Any trade deal between the U.S. and U.K. must be contingent upon respect for the Agreement and preventing the return of a hard border. Period."

Britain and the EU jointly promised in the Brexit agreement to ensure there are no customs posts or other obstacles on the Northern Ireland-Ireland border. The open border is key to the stability that underpins the peace settlement.

British Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab is in Washington this week, and has been trying to assuage American concerns that a pending government bill would undermine Northern Ireland peace, if passed by lawmakers.

He is meeting US politicians including House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who has warned that Britain won't secure a much sought-after trade deal with the United States, if it undermines the peace accord. **AP**

TRADITIONAL GATHERINGS TO BE MUTED, SYNAGOGUE PRAYERS LIMITED TO SMALL GROUPS

Under lockdown, Israel faces bitter start of Jewish New Year

ILAN BEN ZION

JERUSALEM, SEPTEMBER 17

EATING APPLES dipped in honey on Rosh Hashanah is a Jewish tradition to symbolise a sweet start of the New Year. But in Israel, bitterness prevails on the eve of the holiday as the country faces a second nationwide lockdown to stem a raging coronavirus outbreak.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government has imposed a three-week lockdown, beginning on Friday afternoon - just hours before Rosh Hashanah starts. Israel's first lockdown, in March and April, put a damper on Passover, the Jewish spring holiday marking the deliverance of the ancient Hebrews from slavery in Egypt.

Now, the Jewish High Holidays look to be similarly subdued.

Israel has seen new daily cases of Covid-19 skyrocket in re-

cent weeks, climbing to more than 5,000 on Wednesday - one of the highest per capita infection rates in the world. Since the pandemic began this year, it has recorded more than 169,000 cases, including 1,163 deaths, as of Wednesday, according to Health Ministry figures.

Religious and secular Israelis alike mark Rosh Hashanah with festive holiday feasts with family and friends. They pack synagogues, often spending hours in prayer, especially during the fast of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, which falls later this month.

But this year, traditional family gatherings will be muted, synagogue prayers will be limited to small groups and travel restrictions will leave many roads deserted. Some of the liberal streams of Judaism, particularly in the US, are turning to technology to help connect people.

In Israel, movement during the lockdown will be restricted to

An ultra-Orthodox Jewish man prays ahead of the Jewish new year at the Western Wall in Jerusalem's old city. **AP**

within 500 metres (yards) of one's home. Gatherings are limited to 10 people indoors, and 20 outside, restricting the number of faithful who can attend synagogue services. Bars, restaurants, and cultural venues will be shut, but many ritual baths and other religious facilities will remain open.

Israelis have been frustrated

since the gains made with the first lockdown - when the virus seemed to have been brought under control - were erased within weeks, with authorities unable to stem the spike that followed. Weekly protests have drawn thousands to Netanyahu's Jerusalem residence, with demonstrators de-

manding his resignation over his handling of the virus, the pandemic's fallout and his corruption trials.

The lockdown rules have also deepened the rift between secular and religious Jews in Israel. A proposal to lock down only on communities with high outbreaks - mainly ultra-Orthodox areas where initial restrictions were ignored, allowing infections to surge - was scrapped, apparently following pressure from ultra-Orthodox leaders, before Netanyahu announced the nationwide lockdown.

Many Jewish worshippers elsewhere in the world will have to forgo synagogue services due to social distancing rules, hold prayers and hear the traditional sounding of the shofar - a ceremonial ram's horn - on street corners or at home.

The Chabad-Lubavitch movement of Hasidic Judaism has recruited thousands of volunteers to blow the shofar at

public squares and street corners worldwide.

"The unique circumstances that leave millions outside the synagogue doors this year contain also the silver lining of helping them rediscover, reintegrate and celebrate the holiness of the true center of Jewish life - the Jewish home," said Rabbi Zalman Shmotkin, spokesman for Chabad-Lubavitch.

An Israeli online application is helping pair shofar blowers with those who want to hear the horn in their neighborhoods.

In the US, more liberal Jewish streams have produced alternatives for congregants who use Zoom, Facebook and other digital platforms during the High Holidays.

The Union for Reform Judaism, North America's biggest Jewish group, created the Reflection Project, a virtual experience designed to help people connect with spirituality through a series of activities. **AP**



Alexei Navalny

Novichok-tinged bottle found in Navalny's room, say colleagues

VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV

MOSCOW, SEPTEMBER 17

COLLEAGUES OF Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny said Thursday that a bottle of water with a trace of the Novichok nerve agent was found in his hotel room after his poisoning.

Navalny fell ill on a flight from Siberia to Moscow on August 20 and was flown to Germany, where he was kept in an induced coma for more than two weeks as he was treated with an antidote. Members of his team accused the Kremlin of involvement in the poisoning, charges that Russian officials have vehemently denied.

The Kremlin has bristled at calls from German Chancellor Angela Merkel and other leaders to answer questions about the poisoning, urging Germany to provide evidence of his poisoning.

On Tuesday, Navalny posted a picture of himself from his bed in Berlin's Charite Hospital, hugged by his wife and children. "I still can't do almost anything on my own, but yesterday I managed to breathe on my own for the entire day," he added in the post. **AP**

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Petitioner

GENERAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to General Public that the company proposes to make the application to the Central Government under section 13 of the Companies Act 2013, seeking confirmation of alteration of Memorandum of Companies of the company in term of special resolution passed at Extra Ordinary General Meeting held on Wednesday, 09th day of September, 2020 to enable the company to change its Registered Office from "NCT of Delhi" to "State of Haryana".

Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed change, may deliver either on MCA portal (www.mca.gov.in) by filing investor complaint form or cause to be deliver or send by registered post of his/her objections supported by an affidavit stating the nature of his/her interest and ground of opposition to the Regional Director at the Address B-2 FLOOR, PARYAVARAN BHAWAN, CGO COMPLEX, NEW DELHI - 110003, within 14 (fourteen) days from the date of publication of this notice with a copy to the applicant company at its registered office as mentioned above.

For and on behalf of **Raheja Developers Limited**
Sd/ Sanjana Rana
Director (DIN-03028637)

Place: New Delhi
Date: 18-09-2020

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE

| SR. No. | NAME OF BOARD/CORP./A UTH | NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER | OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME) | AMOUNT / END (APPROX.) IN RUPEES | WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH | NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL |
|---------|--|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---|
| 1 | MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE ELLENABAD | REPAIR OF RDADS IN HUDA R-3 AT ELLENABAD | 12.09.2020 19.09.2020 | 2.43 CRORE | https://etenders.hry.nic.in/nicpep/asp | 94682-83877 |
| 2 | MUNICIPAL COUNCIL BAHADURGARH | CONST. OF MAIN ROAD & VARIOUS STREET/ROADS OF GANPATI DHAM IN BAHADURGARH | CLOSING DATE 24.09.2020 | END 4.32 LACS | ETENDERS.HRY.NIC.IN | 9350496582 NAVEENDHANKHAR.ME@GMAIL.COM |
| 3 | HVPNL, HISAR | DISMANTLEMENT, REPAIR & CONSTRUCTION OF BOUNDARY WALL AT 66KV S/STN COLONY PALWAL | CLOSING DATE 05.10.2020 | 5.41 LACS | www.hvpln.org.in | 0172-2583789 pro@hvpln.org.in |
| 4 | HVPNL, HISAR | SUPPLYING AND SPREADING OF GRAVAL IN EXISTING SWITCH YARD AND REPAIR OF EXISTING CABLE TRENCHES AT 66KV S/STN, TACRU | CLOSING DATE 05.10.2020 | 7.91 LACS | www.hvpln.org.in | 0172-2583789 pro@hvpln.org.in |
| 5 | HVPNL, HISAR | PROCUREMENT OF 66 KV LIGHTENING ARRESTERS/POLYMER HOUSING | 19.09.2020 19.10.2020 | 12.93 LACS | www.hvpln.org.in | 0172-2583789 pro@hvpln.org.in |
| 6 | HARYANA STATE WAREHOUSING CORPORATION | ENGAGEMENT OF TRANSPORTERS FOR TRANSPORTATION OF JUTE GUNNY BALES FROM VARIOUS JUTE MILLS OF WEST BENGAL TO DIFFERENT DESTINATIONS IN THE STATE OF HARYANA. | 16.09.2020 27.09.2020 | - | etenders.hry.nic.in | SECRETARY |
| 7 | MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE, NANGAL CHOUHARY | ROUGH COST ESTIMATE FOR BID REMEDIATION OF OLD LEGACY WASTE OF MC NANGAL CHOUHARY SITUATED NEAR KRISHNAWATI RIVER DUMPSITE. + 1 OTHER WORK | CLOSING DATE 21.09.2020 | 24.46 LACS | https://www.etenders.hry.nic.in | 9813397504 secymcnc@gmail.com |
| 8 | UHBVN ROHTAK | A/MTC OF HVPNL NRB ASSET 132 KV S/STN. CENTRAL STORE UHBVN, ROHTAK | CLOSING DATE 05.10.2020 | 3.55 LACS | https://etenders.hry.nic.in | xenciviluhbvnrhtak@gmail.com |
| 9 | UHBVN ROHTAK | A/MTC OF NRB AT MULTI STOREY OFFICE COMPLEX AT BAHADURGARH | CLOSING DATE 05.10.2020 | 2.90 LACS | https://etenders.hry.nic.in | xenciviluhbvnrhtak@gmail.com |
| 10 | UHBVN ROHTAK | A/MTC OF NRB AT MULTI STOREY OFFICE BUILDING AT JHAJJAR | CLOSING DATE 05.10.2020 | 2.40 LACS | https://etenders.hry.nic.in | xenciviluhbvnrhtak@gmail.com |
| 11 | UHBVN ROHTAK | A/MTC OF NRB AT 132 KV S/STN. HVPNL, GOMANA ROAD PANIPAT OCCUPIED BY CP MODEL TOWN S/D/TH UHBVN, PANIPAT | CLOSING DATE 05.10.2020 | 2.32 LACS | https://etenders.hry.nic.in | xenciviluhbvnrhtak@gmail.com |
| 12 | UHBVN ROHTAK | A/MTC OF NRB AT 33KV S/STN DAHAR (PANIPAT) | CLOSING DATE 06.10.2020 | 1.50 LACS | www.uhbvn.org.in | xenciviluhbvnrhtak@gmail.com |
| 13 | UHBVN ROHTAK | A/MTC OF NRB AT 33KV S/STN FARMANA (SONEPAT) | CLOSING DATE 06.10.2020 | 1.54 LACS | www.uhbvn.org.in | xenciviluhbvnrhtak@gmail.com |
| 14 | UHBVN ROHTAK | A/MTC OF NRB AT 132 KV S/STN. MADLAUDA (PANIPAT) | CLOSING DATE 05.10.2020 | 3.05 LACS | https://etenders.hry.nic.in | xenciviluhbvnrhtak@gmail.com |
| 15 | HARYANA TOURISM CORP. LTD. | SELECTION OF CREATIVE CONSULTANT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THEME PARK SITA AT JYOTISAR, KURUKSHETRA, HARYANA | 21.09.2020 12.10.2020 | END 5 LACS | www.etenders.hry.nic.in | EXECUTIVE ENGINEER |
| 16 | HOUSING BOARD HARYANA, C-15, ANAS BHAWAN SECTOR-6, PANCHKULA | CONSTRUCTION OF 312 NOS. EWS GROUP-B (THREE STOREYED) FLATS FOR B.P.L. CATEGORY INCLUDING INTERNAL PH & EI SERVICES IN HOUSING BOARD COLONY, SECTOR-04, FARIDABAD (ON RISK & COST OF M/S NAVRANG INFRASTRUCTURE INC.) CORRIGENDUM IF ANY WILL BE AVAILABLE AT WEBSITE HTTPS://ETENDERS.HRY.NIC.IN + 2 OTHER WORK | 24.09.2020 14.10.2020 | END 10.28 LACS | https://etenders.hry.nic.in | 0129-2276030 xenhbfoc1@gmail.com |

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in

ADMISSION OPEN

For B.E./ B.Tech. & B.Arch Courses for Academic Procedure Session 2020-21

Scan the QR code or type the link to be directed to the website for online admissions Register / Login to fill the form Fill the required information and submit the form.

Online Portal : www.onlinetesthry.gov.in

SH. MANOHAR LAL CHIEF MINISTER, HARYANA

Availability of B.E./ B.Tech & B.Arch Admission Brochure from 14.09.2020

Eligibility B.E./ B.Tech (4 years course) is 10+2 (Non-Medical) with 45% Marks. Basis of Admission Rank of JEE (Main) 2020.

B.Arch. (5 years course) is 10+2 (Non-Medical). Basis of Admission Valid NATA Score/ JEE- Main Paper- 2 of 2020 .

ADVANTAGE HARYANA

- State of Art Infrastructure
- MoUs signed with Industries
- Campus Placement
- NAAC/ NBA Accredited Technical Universities & Institutions
- Organizing sports and cultural activities
- Vibrant Campuses
- Good Environment
- 75% area in NCR
- Good Connectivity
- Qualified Faculty

PROMOTIONAL SCHEMES for B.Tech Course

- 10% seats reserved for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS's)
- 25% horizontal reservation for girl students
- Benefits to Economically weaker section in admissions through Tuition Fee Waiver (TFW) of AICTE
- Benefits to Haryana Govt. School Toppers (HGST) in Admission

PLAN FOR PLACEMENTS

- Quality education, smart class rooms, well equipped laboratories & Workshops and industries interaction
- Emphasis on communication and technical skills
- Need based industries oriented curriculum visits of students to the industries at different intervals
- Centralized placement cell in addition to institutes

Toll-Free Number: 1800-137-3735

e-Mail. : onlineadmissionhelp@gmail.com | Brochure available at : www.hstes.org.in

Department of Technical Education, Haryana
Bays. no 7-12, Sector 4, Panchkula, Haryana



GOLD

₹52,463



RUPEE

₹73.66



OIL

\$43.21



SILVER

₹69,242

Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market; gold per 10 g, silver per 1 kg; Brent crude as of 2200 IST

SENSEX: 38,979.85 ▼ 323.00 NIFTY: 11,516.10 ▼ 88.45 NIKKEI: 23,319.37 ▼ 156.16 HANG SENG: 24,340.85 ▼ 384.78 FTSE: 6,050.98 ▼ 27.50 DAX: 13,157.41 ▼ 97.96

International market data till 1900 IST

1.48 LAKH COVID CLAIMS WORTH ₹1,430 CRORE SETTLED BY INSURERS

Irdai working on 2 insurance schemes for MSMEs, another for dwelling units

GEORGE MATHEW
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 17

AFTER BRINGING out specialised insurance cover for the Covid-19 pandemic, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) is planning to come out with standardised insurance schemes for dwelling units and Covid-hit micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) segment.

Irdai Chairman Subhash C Khuntia said two standard schemes are being worked out for MSMEs. One is for micro units and another one for small units. As of now, only 5 per cent of MSMEs are covered

by insurance. India has 6.33 crore MSMEs, majority of which are micro-enterprises. "Another standard product is being worked out for dwelling units," he said.

In India, only 0.9 per cent of the dwelling units are insured whereas in the US, it is around 90 per cent. People suffer huge economic losses when some catastrophe happens. This risk can be covered by insuring the property, as per the insurance regulator.

"Irdai is keen on a standard product for dwelling units as the same product will be sold by all the companies. It will become easier for policyholders to pick such products as they don't have to go through voluminous policy

EXTENDING TENURE OF COVID POLICIES

■ Irdai Chairman Subhash C Khuntia said the regulator will consider extending the tenure for Covid policies from March 2021

■ He said that 2.38 lakh claims for coronavirus have been filed by the policyholders as of now

documents to find out terms and conditions. Hopefully, more and more people will protect their

homes," Khuntia said at the CII Insurance and Pensions Summit. According to Irdai data, insurance companies shelled out an average of Rs 96,621 per person on claims made by insured Covid-19 patients. Khuntia said that 2.38 lakh claims for coronavirus have been filed by the policyholders as of now. Of these, 1.48 lakh claims amounting to Rs 1,430 crore have been settled by the insurers.

The insurance watchdog had come out with standard health products called Arogya Sanjeevani and Covid-19 specific products — Corona Rakshak and Corona Kavach — two months ago. Under the Corona Kavach plan, around 28 lakh lives have been covered

since its launch on July 10, 2020.

"We will consider extending the tenure for Covid policies from March 2021," Khuntia said.

Irdai said standard products are launched by the regulator to further increase penetration of insurance in India, which is just 3.76 per cent of the gross domestic products (GDP) compared to the world average of around 7 per cent. The regulator is also looking to introduce risk-based solvency for insurance companies in the next three years and allow video-based KYC process. Irdai also wants insurers to improve the persistency ratio — or continuation of policies — for the 13th month and five years.

Over 50% equipment in BSNL mobile networks Chinese: Govt

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

MORE THAN 50 per cent of mobile network equipment used by state-run Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) comes from two Chinese companies, namely Huawei and ZTE, while 10 per cent of the mobile network equipment used by Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) is supplied by Chinese vendors, the government informed the Rajya Sabha on Thursday.

"Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), has 44.4 per cent of its mobile network equipment from ZTE and 9.0 per cent from Huawei. Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL), has 10 per cent of its mobile network equipment from Chinese equipment manufacturers," Minister of State

Meanwhile, 10% of mobile network equipment used by MTNL is supplied by Chinese vendors

for Communications Sanjay Dhotre said in his reply.

State-run BSNL and MTNL only have 2G and 3G networks as of date. After a border skirmish with Chinese soldiers in the Galwan valley region of Ladakh, which killed 20 Indian soldiers, the government moved to cancel the participation of Chinese companies from tenders and projects in India.

As part of the same strategy, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) had on June 17 asked both the state-run telcos to cancel their tender for the roll-out

of 4G. A reworked tender, to be floated later, was likely to contain provisions spelling out the ban on Chinese telecom gear vendors. The tender, however, has not been floated till date.

Among the private telcos, while Reliance Jio Infocomm has not deployed "any telecom equipment from ZTE and Huawei in its network", Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea (Vi) follow a "multi-vendor" strategy which includes procuring equipment from Chinese vendors as well, Dhotre said in his reply to the Rajya Sabha.

Though the government has not banned telecom service providers from purchasing gear from Chinese telecom equipment vendors, it has in place "comprehensive security conditions" for such vendors as part of their licensing norms, Dhotre said in his reply.

BRIEFLY

Hotelier, jeweller in J&K searched

New Delhi: The Income Tax Department has conducted raids on a prominent hotelier and a jeweller based in Jammu & Kashmir on charges of alleged tax evasion, the CBDT said Thursday.

Probe into 'duty circumvention'

New Delhi: The Directorate General of Trade Remedies has initiated a probe into an alleged circumvention of the anti-dumping duty imposed on the imports of axle for trailers from China. PTI

SBI inks MoU with Aus bank

New Delhi: State Bank of India (SBI) in Australia has inked a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Australian digital Bank Volt Bank for serving Indian migrants in the Australian market. ENS

Happiest Minds lists at 111% premium

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 17

SHARES OF Happiest Minds Technologies Thursday made a strong debut on exchanges with the share more than doubling on the listing day. The company's shares, which opened at Rs 351, surged to a high of Rs 395 on the BSE, compared to the issue price of Rs 166 and closed at Rs 371 during the day.

The company's market capitalisation on the listing day was Rs 5,448 crore. The stake of promot-

MARKET CAPITALISATION

₹5,448 cr

■ The company's market capitalisation on the listing day was Rs 5,448 crore. The stake of promoters who hold around 53 per cent of the capital is worth around Rs 2,800 crore.

ers who hold around 53 per cent of the capital is worth around Rs 2,800 crore. The IPO was subscribed 151 times.

Bankers pitch stressed domestic assets to foreign investors

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

INDIAN LENDERS are marketing domestic stressed assets to foreign investors noting that the current economic scenario would offer "fantastic valuations" to potential foreign investors besides access to a dedicated workforce and a large domestic market.

At a conference organised by FICCI, SBI Chairman Rajnish Ku-

mar said while the number of distressed assets in India may not be as large as many expect, it was still a significant market that foreign investors should take note of. He said SBI would be willing to join hands with potential investors acting as their local partners.

Sunil Mehta, CEO, Indian Banks' Association, said the market for distressed assets in India offered a very good investment proposition with assets available at low valuations.

Vistara becomes 1st Indian carrier to offer in-flight WiFi connectivity

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

OVER THREE years after it was first envisaged, an Indian airline will start offering in-flight WiFi internet connectivity Friday onwards. Full-service carrier Vistara said it will begin offering the service onboard its international flights between Delhi and London operated by its Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner aircraft.

"As an introductory offer, the service will be available free of cost to all Vistara customers for a limited period. Vistara plans to soon introduce the service on its Airbus A321neo aircraft as well, subject to regulatory approvals ... During the limited period of the free offering, Vistara will gather information on system functionality and feedback on the overall customer experience to further fine-tune the service. The airline will announce the tariff plans for the service in due course," Vistara said in a statement.

Personal bankruptcy: SC rejects SBI appeal against Anil Ambani

INDUBHAN
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

THE SUPREME COURT on Thursday dismissed the appeal of State Bank of India (SBI) seeking vacation of the stay granted by the Delhi High Court on personal bankruptcy proceedings initiated by the bank

against Reliance Group chairman Anil Ambani.

SBI's case is that it had granted credit facilities to Reliance Communications (RCOM) and Reliance Infratel (RIL) in 2015 and the same were personally guaranteed by Ambani pursuant to a deed of personal guarantee of September 23, 2016, furnished by him. FE

US firm files lawsuit against HDFC Bank

Mumbai: US-based Rosen Law Firm has filed a class action lawsuit against HDFC Bank on behalf of its shareholders, alleging that the lender had misled its investors.

The company has sought damages from the bank and sought a trial by jury, according to a copy of the complaint available on Rosen's website. FE

Petrol sales up in Sept, 1st time since lockdown

KARUNJITSINGH
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 17

PETROL SALES rose 1.7 per cent in the first half of September, growing for the first time since Covid-19-related lockdowns began in March, as per official sales data from the three leading state-owned oil marketing companies. Diesel sales, however, fell 6.2 per cent compared to sales in the first half of last September.

Petrol sales for the first 16 days of September stood at 1,041.4 thousand metric tonnes (TMT), up from 1,024.5 TMT in the year-ago period.

SP Group sends notice to Tata Sons, seeks damages

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 17

THE SHAPOORJI Palleonji Group has sent legal notices, seeking damages from Tata Sons and its board members for "illegally blocking" the Mistry family's bid to raise funds by pledging Tata Group shares.

The legal notice, sent on September 15 via the SP Group lawyers Desai & Diwanji on behalf of Sterling Investment Corporation and Cyrus Investments, has given them three days to respond failing which legal action seeking damages would be initiated.

GST cut for auto sector unlikely

New Delhi: The Finance Ministry seems to be having second thoughts on whether to accede to a growing demand from the auto industry for goods and services tax (GST) rate cuts, given the host it might burn in the revenues. Instead of asking for GST relief, Indian auto companies must try and lower costs by reducing assorted royalty payments to foreign parents and use the resultant room to drive sales via price cuts, a Ministry official said, on condition of anonymity. FE

PARADIP PORT TRUST

e-TENDER CALL NOTICE
TD/TM/GEN-225 (Vo/III)/20/2519
dtd.14.09.2020

Name of the work: "Allotment of 10 (Ten) nos. of Manual Iron Ore/Ten Pellet Plots."

License Fees: Rs.2,32,93,908/-
Wharfage Fees: Rs.6,13,707/-

Last date & time of submission of bid: 05.10.20 up to 17:00 hrs
Date and time of opening (technical bid): 06.10.2020 up to 16:00 hrs

Refer our website for details: <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>.
PPT/PR/216/20-21 Date 14.09.2020
Traffic Manager

Government of Tamil Nadu
Tirumangalam Municipality
Ro. No: 223/2020/21 Date: 14.09.2020

NOTICE INVITING REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION (THIRD CALL)

Notice inviting RFQ for Construction of a New Bus Stand Infrastructure Project for Tirumangalam Municipality, Tamil Nadu, on a PPP Mode (DBFO) Basis, including financial management and maintenance for a period of 22 years.

Inviting authority: The Commissioner, Tirumangalam Municipality, Tirumangalam - 625706, Tamil Nadu.
Phone: 04569-280757, Email: comr@tirumangalamtn.gov.in

- The Government of Tamil Nadu is keen to improve the intercity bus transport infrastructure in the State of Tamil Nadu. As a part of this effort, it is proposed to develop state-of-the-art bus terminals, in the State on public-private partnership basis. These terminals would be operated and maintained at a pre-determined quality standard, rendering cost effective and efficient services to the users.
- The Tirumangalam Municipality (the Authority) has authorized by the Municipal Council for construction, development, and management of new Integrated Bus Terminal Infrastructure Project, design, build, finance, operate and transfer (DBFO) mode of PPP ("Project"), in accordance with the terms and conditions, to be set forth in a concession agreement, to be entered into.
- The estimated Project cost is Rs. 21.72 crores
- The said Project is for the Concession Period of 22 years, including the right to develop, design, finance, construct and maintain the Commercial Facility and Amenities, to undertake the marketing, booking and allotment of built up area therein and to demand, charge, collect, retain and appropriate the User Charges and the Premia there from.
- The Authority accordingly invites Applications from the eligible bidders, to be shortlisted for the issue of Request For Proposal (RFP) Documents.
- Approved by the prospective Bidders, who are interested in bidding for the above-mentioned project, will be held on 21.10.2020 at 11.00 hrs at Municipal Office, Tirumangalam.
- The Eligibility Criteria and other terms and conditions are given in RFQ.
- The RFQ may be obtained the address given above during office hours, on payment of Rs. 10000/- (Rupees Ten thousand only), through Demand Draft, drawn in favour of Commissioner, Tirumangalam Municipality payable at Tirumangalam as processing fees.
- The RFQ may also be downloaded from 21.09.2020 from the Official Website: <https://tenders.gov.in>.
- The last date for submission of RFQ is 15.09.2020 on 18.11.2020.

DIPR-3468/Tender/2020 Commissioner (I/c), Tirumangalam Municipality.

TAMIL NADU SLUM CLEARANCE BOARD, MADURAI CIRLE
NOTICE INVITING TENDER

FORM OF CONTRACT : " LUMPSUM" (TWO COVER SYSTEM)

Tender Notice No. SCB/780,781,782,783,784 & 785/08/2020 Dated: 17.09.2020

In favour of the Executive Engineer, Madurai Division, TNSCB, payable at Madurai for S.No.1 and in favour of the Executive Engineer, Tirunelveli Division, TNSCB, payable at Tirunelveli for S.No.2 to 6. The tender documents may be obtained from the office of the Superintending Engineer, Madurai Circle, TNSCB, 169, K.K. Nagar Main Road, Madurai - 20 on written requisition along with cost of the tender documents to a value of Rs. 17,700/- (Non-refundable) upto 3.00 PM on 17.10.2020

Conditions for participating in the tenders may be seen from the website www.tenders.tn.gov.in.

The undersigned reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reasons therefor.

169, K.K. Nagar Main Road, Opp. Jawagar Hospital, Madurai 625 020. DIPR/3465/TENDER/2020 Superintending Engineer, Madurai Circle.

| S/No | Name of Work | Tender Value Period of contract Rs.in Lakh | EMD (in Rs.) |
|------|--|--|-----------------|
| 1. | Construction of 64 tenements (G+3) adopting T.D.No.22/2017 including internal water supply, sanitary and electrification arrangements including development works at Avanapuram, Madurai Corporation in Madurai District under HFA, Vertical-III (AHP) of PMAY, CER-Madurai No.1/HFA/2020-21 | 582.70 15 Months | 3,01,400/- |
| 2. | Construction of 288 tenements (G+3) adopting T.D.No.22/2017 including internal water supply, sanitary and electrification arrangements including development works at Kumarapuram in Aravimanchi TP/Kumarapuram Villages of Kanyakumari District under HFA, Vertical-III (AHP) of PMAY, CER-Madurai No.2/HFA/2020-21 | 2389.60 15 Months | 12,05,000/- |
| 3. | Construction of 64 tenements (G+3) adopting T.D.No.22/2017 including internal water supply, sanitary and electrification arrangements including development works at Esanthenangalam Village of Kanyakumari District under HFA, Vertical-III (AHP) of PMAY, CER-Madurai No.3/HFA/2020-21 | 531.74 15 Months | 2,75,900/- |
| 4. | Construction of 344 tenements (G+2) adopting T.D.No.31/2017 including internal water supply, sanitary and electrification arrangements including development works at Uthamapuram in Uthamapalayam Taluk Theni District under HFA, Vertical-III (AHP) of PMAY, CER-Madurai No.4/HFA/2020-21 | 3394.70 12 Months | 17,08,000/- |
| 5. | Construction of 376 tenements (Twin Type) adopting T.D.No.37/2018 including internal water supply, sanitary and electrification arrangements including development works at Melkaiyalar in Aundipatti Taluk Theni District under HFA, Vertical-III (AHP) of PMAY, CER-Madurai No.5/HFA/2020-21 | 3443.20 12 Months | 17,32,000/- |
| 6. | Construction of 252 tenements (G+2) adopting T.D.No.31/2017 including internal water supply, sanitary and electrification arrangements including development works at Valasolur Road in Bodinayakanur Taluk Theni District under HFA, Vertical-III (AHP) of PMAY, CER-Madurai No.6/HFA/2020-21 | 2364.40 12 Months | 11,93,000/- |

SBI
Platform Engineering-II Department, State Bank Global IT Centre,
Sector-11, CBD Belapur, Navi Mumbai - 400 614.

CORRIDGENDUM-II

Please refer to RFP No. SBI/GITC/Platform Engineering-II/2020/2021/707 Dated: 19/08/2020 for Centralised Procurement and Price Discovery of Application Performance Monitoring Tool Licenses. 'Corridgendum-II' has been published. Please see 'Procurement News' at Bank's website www.sbi.co.in or <https://bank.sbi>.

Sd/-
Deputy General Manager
(PE-II)

THE GUJARAT CANCER & RESEARCH INSTITUTE
(M.P. SHAH CANCER HOSPITAL)
N.C.H. CAMPUS, ASARVA, AHMEDABAD-380016
Affiliated B. J. Medical College, Ahmedabad

Phone: 079-2268 8012 Fax: 079-2268 5490

Advertisement

The Gujarat Cancer & Research Institute invites applications for the following posts:

For Non-Teaching Post: (1) Asso. Prof. (2) Asst. Prof. (3) Jr. Lecturer in Nuclear Medicine

Applications are invited for above positions: interested candidates may apply upto 25-09-2020, Friday during office hours. Application form which can be downloaded from our website. For further details please visit our website: www.gcriindia.org. No TA/DA will be admissible for attending interview.

No.INF/ABD/646/2020 DIRECTOR

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU
Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department
Notice Inviting Tenders for supply of Ordinary Portland Cement (OPC) 43 Grade for the year 2020-21

- For full details, visit www.tntenders.gov.in
- e-Bids are invited by the Project Director, DRDA of all Districts of Tamil Nadu state under two cover system, for supply of (OPC) 43 grade Cement for the year 2020-21.
- The bid documents can be downloaded free of cost from www.tntenders.gov.in from 21.9.2020 to 20.10.2020.
- Common date and time for downloading of Bid document, submission and opening:

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| (i) Last Date and Time for downloading | : 20.10.2020 |
| and Online Submission of Bid Documents | Upto 3.00 PM |
| (ii) Date and Time of online opening of Bid Documents | : 20.10.2020 |
| | 4.00 PM onwards |

DIRECTOR,
Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department.

DIESEL LOCOMOTIVE WORKS, VARANASI - 221004

Bid No.: E-42/2020-21 E-Tenders Date: 14.09.2020

E-tender are invited for and on behalf of the President of India for the supply of following items. Only e-offer will be accepted for which vendors must have class-II Digital Signature and registration of IREPS. The details of tender are in the following sequence: S.No.: Tender No., Due Date, Description and Quantity; S.N. 1, 07201749, (01.10.2020); Short Description: Adhesive for Bonding Gaskets, PL No.: 34192234, 177 Liter; S.N. 2, 07200186, (30.05.2020); Short Description: PP Components Kit, PL No.: 29176694, 544 Set, S.N. 3, 07201774, (05.10.2020); Short Description: PU Paint Kit, PL No. 77070173, 114 Set, S.N. 4, 04201507B, (05.10.2020); Set of Bracket, Part No. 29615338, 272 Set, S.N. 5, 04201136, (05.10.2020); Fuel Tank Assy, Part No. 11034555, 12 Nos., S.N. 6, 04201021, (21.10.2020); Axle Box Assy, Part No. 11022693, 12 Set, S.N. 7, 04201063A, (05.10.2020); Radiator Compartment, Part No. 11545641, 30 Nos., S.N. 8, 05201029A, (12.10.2020); Latching Push Button Carder Lighting RL No. 29700697, 301 Sets, S.N. 9, 10201043B, (05.10.2020); Roller to PL No. 16210074, 17525 Nos. Note: Details terms and conditions can be seen and Hard version also on website www.dlw.in and www.dlw.in/railways.gov.in

www.lrop.gov.in and tender can fill up on the same website. Corridgendum Notice: Date: 14.09.2020, S.No.: 1, Tender No.: 05193076C, Bid No.: 38, Existing due date: 15.09.2020, Revised due date: 30.09.2020, S.No.: 2, Tender No.: 05201031A, Bid No.: 38, Existing due date: 15.09.2020, Revised due date: 30.09.2020, Corridgendum Notice: Date: 14.09.2020, S.No.: 1, Tender No.: 06201113, Bid No.: 38, Existing due date: 15.09.2020, Revised due date: 30.09.2020, S.No.: 2, Tender No.: 06201113, Bid No.: 38, Existing due date: 15.09.2020, Revised due date: 30.09.2020, Corridgendum Notice: Date: 14.09.2020, S.No.: 1, Tender No.: 06201113, Bid No.: 38, Existing due date: 15.09.2020, Revised due date: 30.09.2020, S.No.: 2, Tender No.: 06201113, Bid No.: 38, Existing due date: 15.09.2020, Revised due date: 30.09.2020. Note: All other terms and conditions of the tender will remain unchanged.

PRODLWS-47 PCMM

www.dlw.in Website: www.dlw.in/railways.gov.in

The Brihanmumbai Electric Supply & Transport Undertaking
(Of The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation)

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Tender Notice No. 79

No. 79/CS (HQ)/BAU, Sabour Dated: 17/09/2020

Sealed tenders are invited through registered post/speed post/courier services only from Reputed/Registered, Supplier/Dealers/Firms/Company/Enterprises for the "Automated Rainout Shelter for screening of drought stress tolerance under C.R.A. Programme". Sealed envelope containing full information along with supporting documents must reach in the office of the undersigned on or before 13/10/2020 upto 4.00 P.M. and the same will be opened on 14/10/2020 at 3.30 P.M. Details are available on www.bausabour.ac.in.

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Phone No: (0674) 2380608

No. 11920 Dtd.: 16.09.20

SHORT TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tender are invited from Manufacturer / Authorized Stockist / Authorized Distributor for supply of Inj. Remdesivir (100mg) to CDS, OSMCL, Bhubaneswar, which can be downloaded from the "notification" section of OSMCL's official website <http://osmcl.nic.in>. The sealed tender should reach to the undersigned on or before 24th September 2020 to upto 11 AM.

It is further to this tender shall only be uploaded in OSMCL Website and no publication shall be made in the Newspapers.

Sd/-
Gm Operations (D & S)
OSMCL, BBSR
OIPR-10112/11/0029/2021

IPL 2020 SHORT STORIES | AJINKYA RAHANE

Waiting for the second innings

Rahane has had a forgettable time of late. Can the upcoming IPL help him get back into the groove?

VISHAL MENON & DEVENDRA PANDEY
SEPTEMBER 17

FOR A player once considered India's best all-format batsman after Virat Kohli, the last few years have been less than stellar for Ajinkya Rahane. He is holding on to a place in the middle order in the Test team, but last played white-ball cricket for the country in February 2018. To make matters worse, the 32-year-old has experienced diminishing returns in the longest format as well.

His last assignment before the world went into lockdown produced a mere 91 runs from four innings in New Zealand. However, it seemed a case more of a cluttered mindset than any apparent technical discrepancy.

Fear of failure and losing his Test spot seemed to be weighing heavily on Rahane's mind. He seems a shadow of the batsman who scored more overseas Test hundreds in his first 10 Tests than managed by Sachin Tendulkar, VVS Laxman and Rahul Dravid.

As he gears up for the Indian Premier League – now in Delhi Capitals after a dozen years with Rajasthan Royals – Rahane will hope the enforced break will have given him a chance to reassess his game and recharge his batteries.

Taking too much responsibility

Sometimes, being too tightly strung as an individual and wanting to succeed too badly gets in the way of success.

Former Mumbai coach and Rahane's one-time room-mate Vinayak Samant is someone who has seen Rahane develop as a player, even before he came into the national side. "Sometimes, he has a habit of thinking too much. I remember when he made his debut for Mumbai more than a decade ago, he was putting too much pressure on himself. His thinking was on the lines that 'I have to take responsibility on my shoulders and take the team to victory.' Sometimes, these things backfire and he was a complete flop in his first five matches. Once he started to relax



Ajinkya Rahane last played ODIs for India in February 2018. File

As he gears up for the Indian Premier League – now in Delhi Capitals after a dozen years with Rajasthan Royals – Rahane will hope the enforced break will have given him a chance to reassess his game and recharge his batteries.

from home. But last season, I felt he was playing his shots too early. Probably, somewhere he was in two minds."

Left in the lurch

Maybe, all the talk about his scoring rate – by former skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni – and getting dropped after a solid one-day series in South Africa in 2018 is still taking a toll on Rahane's mindset. That was after he was constantly in and out of the side, and shuffled around as an opener, one-down and then in the middle order. His T20I career has seen just 20 games, the last of which came four years ago against the West Indies.

None other than captain Kohli had heaped praise on Rahane after that South Africa tour, and it looked like India had zeroed in on their No.4 batsman for the 2019 World Cup in England. "Very happy for Jinks (Rahane). Jinks is a top-class player. We understood fast bowling was going to be a big factor in this tour. He was superb; he took on

MEN FOR ALL SEASONS

After a dozen uninterrupted appearances at the IPL, these regulars boast cent percent attendance and the eternal promise of a plucky 13th year of reinventions. Featuring IPL's most prominent mainstays, an Express countdown to India's big sports reopening Saturday night.

the fast bowlers," Kohli had said after the series win.

Someone who has helped him with his game over time thinks Rahane probably is too nice a guy to question his omission from the playing XI.

"It's a mystery why he doesn't play ODIs despite him performing whenever given chances. Sometimes, I feel he needs to speak up. He is a reserved guy who doesn't like to argue with anyone but a time comes when one has to start asking questions. He is the vice-captain of the (Test) team and needs to show that in the dressing room by talking," one of his mentors told *The Indian Express*.

"He was about to get dropped for a Test match against Sri Lanka in Delhi despite being the vice-captain. He was fine with it until one of his Mumbai teammates questioned the team management about his exclusion.

He (Rahane) has given an impression that if the team management wants, they can drop him and he will take it happily. It's good to say 'I'm ready to make a sacrifice for the team' but one has to understand hard reality. Public memory is short. He should have been in the World Cup team. But Rahane never questioned his omission."

It took him more than a year to articulate his disappointment about missing the World Cup. "I was actually thinking I will be there in the World Cup batting at No. 4, but it is gone now. I don't think too much about it (the World Cup), but yes, especially when I was playing county cricket when the World Cup was happening... as a player everyone wants

to be a part of the World Cup team, especially when you know you have worked really hard, and your record in the past was really good."

Fresh start a good start?

Ahead of this IPL, Rahane's career is at a crossroads. He would like to remind selectors about his white-ball prowess, especially with the two T20 World Cups and a 50-over World Cup scheduled over the next three years. It will be a reboot for him with a new franchise. Interestingly, it was Sourav Ganguly – the current BCCI president and the franchise's mentor till last year – who was instrumental in getting Rahane on board. Ganguly's endorsement may restore much-needed confidence in him.

The long break due to the pandemic may work in his favour too. In his first virtual press conference for the Delhi Capitals, Rahane said he had not picked up a cricket bat in five months. Visualisation exercises, meditation and spending time with daughter Arya helped him through the period in isolation. The key would be to shed the baggage of the past, and enjoy his batting again.

But it remains to be seen whether Rahane manages to book a permanent spot for him in the Delhi Capitals playing XI. Prithvi Shaw and Shikhar Dhawan are likely to be the opening pair and with skipper Shreyas Iyer and the dynamic Rishabh Pant in the set-up – not to mention overseas players like Alex Carey, Shimron Hetmyer and Marcus Stoinis – the veteran may have to warm the dugout in at least a few games.

Even though he has expressed his willingness to bat in the middle order, batting down the order in the 20-over format comes with its own set of challenges. In the past, Rahane has had his best time as an opener in T20 cricket.

The team management may consider him surplus to requirements later in the order, and the innings, when batsmen are required to find the boundary and stands on a regular basis. If that happens, it will be interesting to observe whether Rahane takes it on the chin, 'for the team', or speaks up about the disappointment.

Quarantine period cut down for Australia, England players

SHAMIK CHAKRABARTY
KOLKATA, SEPTEMBER 17

ENGLAND AND Australia cricketers are expected to be available for their respective Indian Premier League (IPL) franchises right from the start of the tournament. This follows a reduced 36-hour quarantine period, instead of six days, for the 21 cricketers who are coming to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) from the United Kingdom (UK) at the conclusion of the limited-overs series between England and Australia.

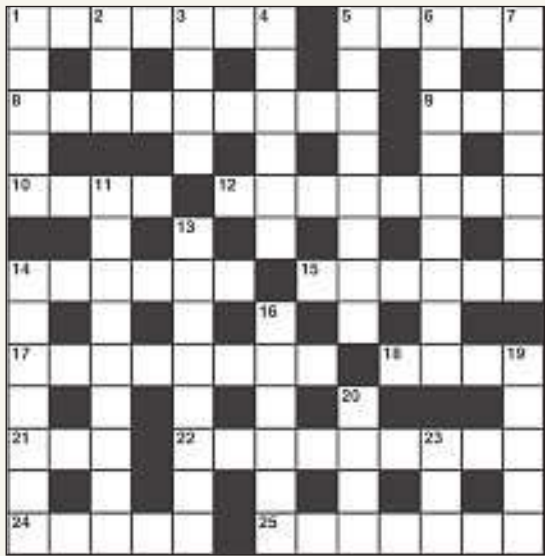
A franchise CEO, however, informed that players going to Abu Dhabi will have to undergo a six-day quarantine period. It means that Kolkata Knight Riders' (KKR) Eoin Morgan, Pat Cummins and Tom Banton will have to be in isolation for six days. For the players to be based in Dubai, an official of a franchise told *The Indian Express*: "They (England and Australia cricketers) will be available for the first match if they test negative in the tests to be done tomorrow (Friday) and remain in isolation from the time they land in Dubai till the 19th morning."

According to BCCI sources, as the players are coming from one bio-bubble to another, they have been allowed a reduced quarantine period. The players had to undergo Covid tests before boarding the flight in England, while another round of RT-PCR tests would be done upon their arrival in Dubai.

CSK have Australia seamer Josh Hazlewood and England allrounder Sam Curran. Delhi Capitals have Australia allrounder Marcus Stoinis and his compatriot, 'keeper-batsman Alex Carey and allrounder Daniel Sams. Australia's Glenn Maxwell provides the x-factor for Kings XI Punjab, while England's Chris Jordan is one of their death-bowling options.

KKR have England's Eoin Morgan and Tom Banton, and the team's most expensive buy, Australia's fast-bowling allrounder Pat Cummins. Rajasthan Royals have Australia's Steve Smith as their skipper, and England's Jos Buttler, Jofra Archer and Tom Curran as their key players. Royal Challengers Bangalore have Australia's Aaron Finch, Adam Zampa, Kane Richardson and Josh Phillip, and England's Moeen Ali. Sunrisers Hyderabad have their talisman and captain, Australia's David Warner and England's Jonny Bairstow.

CROSSWORD 4227



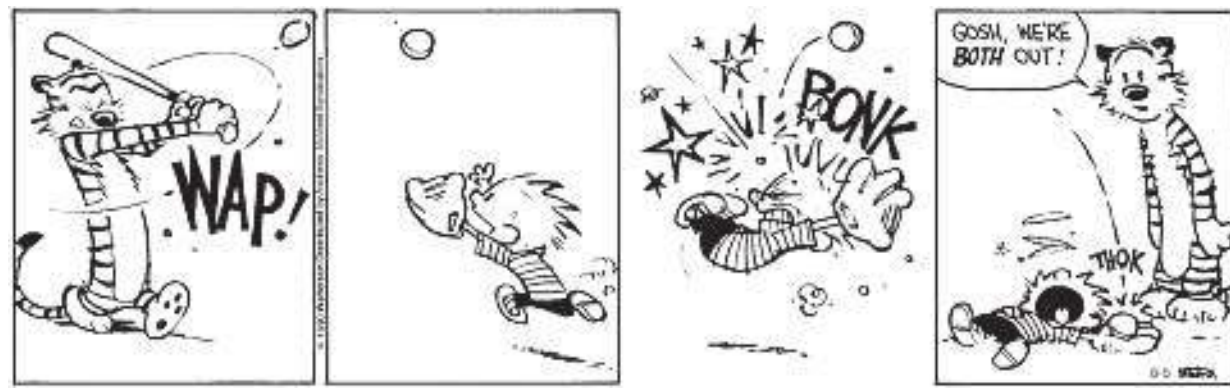
- ACROSS**
- Warning advice to an introvert (4,3)
 - A word for currency's ups and downs (5)
 - Church and state divided by uncommon hatred (9)
 - Ready for collection (3)
 - A resounding comeback (4)
 - A game involving more of us (8)
 - Cold tart (6)
 - Brings back games and increases keenness (6)
 - What scores of young people are in? (8)
 - Voyage any skipper would try to avoid (4)
 - Take food from the attendant (3)
 - Distressed wine lover naturally a glutton (9)
 - How music may be distinguished? (5)
 - Unusually bold use of lookalikes (7)
- DOWN**
- Money is a bait that takes many in (5)
 - Absent in error (3)
 - Warning that a man is about to cry (4)
 - Swing round to attack or start running (4,2)
 - Endure - strange to relate (8)
 - Not to pay a cheque results in disgrace (9)
 - Settler distributes mail (7)
 - African who provides a warming drink about ten (9)
 - Given, and ideally shouldn't be paid back (8)
 - Bird after a piece for another (7)
 - Leased out or shut up (6)
 - Please cut down the excuses (5)
 - A state of pure chaos (4)
 - I will be briefly unwell (3)

Solutions Crossword 4226: Across: 1 Protract, 5 Hasp, 9 Found, 10 Seaside, 11 Missionaries, 13 Lotion, 14 Sexton, 17 Express train, 20 Inkwell, 21 Untill, 22 Garb, 23 Gradient. Down: 1 Puff, 2 Oculist, 3 Rediscovered, 4 Castor, 6 Ailbi, 7 Pressing, 8 Parade ground, 12 Altering, 15 Thistle, 16 Ostler, 18 Poker, 19 Flat.

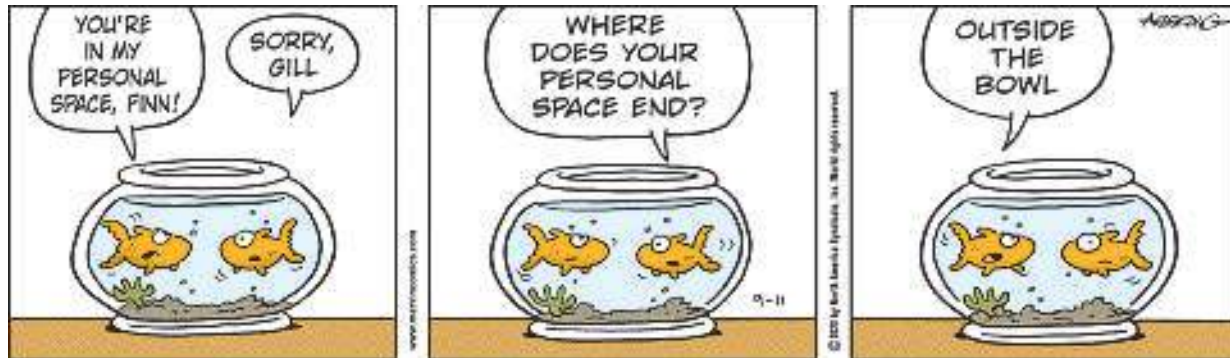
OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)
As the week draws to a close, partners seem even less disposed to agree than when it began. Yet so much of interest is being said that it would be a shame if you noticed only the insults and arguments. A passionate Moon restores your sense of pride, so if other people can't get on, that is their problem!

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)
It is unlikely that anyone will be interested in apologising for recent hurts or withdrawing grievous allegations. Yet the manner of your response is a question for you alone to decide. You will shortly be off on a new path at home, one which could change your life for ever – and in more ways than one!

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
Mercury, your planetary ruler, may be the bringer of wisdom. Yet there is an irresponsible side to this celestial body, and it is this which is dominant today. There will be little inclination to compromise, so why don't you stay away from controversial questions?

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
This is no time for the thin-skinned and sensitive amongst you. The sensible members of your sign will be withdrawing into the safety of their protective shells, hiding in their personal emotional bunkers. If there's anything you want to do, in any area of life, from climbing Mount Everest to flying to the Moon, from daily routine, to your wildest dreams, do it now.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)
Partners may be perfectly well-intentioned, but that doesn't excuse them from responsibility for some of life's biggest blunders. It is difficult to remember a time when the planets were less inclined to agree or see sense. However, there is one simple solution: keep smiling and remember that a sense of humour is vital.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)
Today is frankly far from dull. You will be better placed to extract the unusual, interesting and stimulating snippets from the disputes and arguments which seem to be raging amongst friends, partners and colleagues. However, gentle Taurus influences suit your earthy Virgoan temperament and see you through unscathed.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)
While you may feel under considerable personal pressure, these are just the sort of conditions in which your stronger qualities should come out. You really must now use all your considerable experience as a diplomat and fixer, to restore a level of peace and understanding.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)
Without in any way appearing to score points, you can now afford to say what has been on your mind for some time. It is possible, though, that nobody will take any notice, or even understand your message. And, if that is the case, why don't you just bide your time and keep your secrets?

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)
Clarity and honesty in your dealings with partners and colleagues over the next few days should ensure that you are not out of pocket. However, you must now rethink your financial plans. In love, partners could be excessively sentimental, yet sometimes you'll find their refusal to face the future deeply irritating.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)
You must speak your mind and get a number of frustrations off your chest. Yet, at the same time, you should be prepared for other people to say things which you may not want to hear. This is the price you must pay for honesty. Unfortunately, you have still to find out that the truth as you see it, is not the truth as partners see it!

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)
A deeply challenging planetary set-up indicates that an emotional tie remains a source of anxiety. Your work may suffer, as may your health, if you allow such fears and worries to continue. This is, by the way, an ideal moment for dealing with health matters, including your spiritual well-being.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)
There is no knowing exactly how current trends are to continue. However, your aim must be to create that sense of justice, integrity and fair-play which other people so conspicuously lack. As from tomorrow, you'll be in a new, bright, decisive mood, so smarten up and get ready. Partners will expect the best!

JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given clue.
Many a treasure besides Ali Baba's is unlocked with a _____, Henry van Dyke (6,3)

MNAEE ALSTBY
DEULR ISVYKV

SOLUTION: ENEMA, RULED/LURED, STABLY, SKIVVY
Answer: Many a treasure besides Ali Baba's is unlocked with a verbal key.

SUDOKU 4235

Difficulty Level 2s
Instructions
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.
Difficulty Level
1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|---|--|
| 6 | 4 | 8 | 1 | | | | | |
| | 5 | 3 | 1 | | | | | |
| 1 | 5 | | | 4 | 7 | | | |
| | 7 | 3 | 2 | 9 | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | 4 | |
| | 4 | 7 | 6 | 8 | | | | |
| 6 | 2 | | | 3 | 8 | | | |
| | | 6 | 5 | 3 | | | | |
| | 9 | 8 | 7 | 5 | | | | |

SOLUTION SUDOKU 4234

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 3 | 2 | 7 |
| 3 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 9 |
| 9 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 1 |
| 6 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 2 | 4 | 5 |
| 2 | 5 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 1 | 8 |
| 4 | 7 | 8 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 6 | 9 | 3 |
| 5 | 9 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 6 |
| 7 | 3 | 1 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 2 |
| 8 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 9 | 7 | 4 |

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| | | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|---|--|
| NORTH DELHI Krish (GT Karnal Road) 9999149577 Fairdeal (Budh Vihar) 7290009371 Sava (Azadpur) 47088888 DD Motors (Narela) 9999003888 T.R. Sawhney (Saraswati Vihar) 9582263509 D.D. Motors (Peeragarh) 9999003888 T.R. Sawhney (Badli) 9999324333 Rana Motors (Prashant Vihar) 9711507777 D.D. Motors (Wazirpur) 9999003888 Krish (Pitampura) 9999159577 Rana Motors (Tis Hazari) 9873477744 | SOUTH DELHI Rohan (Mathura Road) 9560036262 T.R. Sawhney (Amar Colony) 9999563333 Competent (Lajpat Nagar) 8377007979 AAA Vehicleleads (Malviya Nagar) 9971500011 Prem Motors (Mahlpalpur) 8745887458 Rohan (Chhatrapur Metro Station) 011-66764444 D.D. Motors (Okhla Ph-1) 9999003888 Bagga Link (Kotla) 8826892666 Rana Motors (Safdarjung) 26712222 | CENTRAL DELHI Magic Auto (Karol Bagh) 8929266145 Competent (C.P.) 9582797749 T.R. Sawhney (I.P. Station) 999399157 | WEST DELHI Rana Motors (Janakpuri) 011-47911111 D.D. Motors (Mayapuri) 9999003888 Magic Auto (Janakpuri) 8929266146 T.R. Sawhney (Rajouri Garden) 9873781333 Competent (Najafgarh) 9582797763 Magic Auto (Dwarka Sec-13) 8929266144 AAA Vehicleleads (Mundka) 9560445555 Competent (Dwarka) 9582797763 Magic Auto (Palam Dabri Road) 8929400501 T.R. Sawhney (Naraina) 9999137164 Competent (Shivaji Marg) 9582797748 | EAST DELHI Bagga Link (Patparganj) 9818199370 T.R. Sawhney (Gokulpuri) 9999399150 Magic Auto (Preet Vihar) 8929400502 Fairdeal (Bhajanpura) 7290009372 Fair Deal Cars (Shahdara) 9910894050 | |
| DELHI Competent (Gazipur) 8377007977 | INDIA Fairdeal Cars (Sec-10) 9999700944 Rohan (Sec-1) 9873501288 Vipul (Sec-18) 8800091555 Vipul (Sec-63) 0120-4824000 | GREATER NOIDA Rohan (Udyog Vihar) 9811800980 Competent (Sec-12) 9582797711 | GURGAON Prem Motors (32nd Milestone) 8750487504 Rohan (Sec-54) 4845400 Prem Motors (JMD Sikanderpur) 8750987509 Vipul (UdyogVihar) 4395700 Pasco (Sec-18) 4012000 Competent (Subhash Chowk) 9582797739 | RANA MOTORS Rana Motors (SCO Plot No-322 Sec-29) 4260000 Pasco (Silverton Sec-50) 7835003300 | FARIDABAD Vipul (Ballabgarh) 9717073300 Rohan (Palwal) 01275-304100 Fairdeal Cars (Piyali Chowk) 9582139824 Vipul (Mathura Road) 9999994707 |
| TCS Autoworld (Neelam Chowk) 0129-4252525 | Auto Nation (Mathura Road) 9899596002 | Platinum Motocorp (Farrukhnagar) 9205192634 | Platinum Motocorp (Pataudi) 9953345311 | Platinum Motocorp (Narnaul) 9053088437 | Platinum Motocorp (IMT Chowk) 9953345312 |
| Regent Auto (Meerut Road) 7065191234 | Rohan (Hapur) 0122-2313204 | Motorcraft (Modi Nagar) 8057692222 | Rohan (Mukund Nagar) 9650100045 | Motorcraft (Sahibabad) 9650972222 | T.R. Sawhney (Mohan Nagar) 9582263544 |
| PASCO Pasco (Alipur) 8683000956 Pasco (Tauru) 8683000929 Pasco (Punhana) 8683000929 | REWARI Auto Vibes (Kosli) 01259-275300 Auto Vibes (Bawal) 7082100280 Auto Vibes (Bawal) 7082010000 | ROHAN Rohan (Delhi Road) 05732-281900 | | | |

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Mr. Sanjay Mehndiratta (SM) started working at the age of 15 in the year 1985 at a toy shop and at the age of 16, he borrowed Rs.500/- and started trading in toys. He used to go twice a day to Sadar Bazar, Delhi and buy a bag full of toys and come by DTC bus and supply it to local shops. He would get bristles in his hands but didn't give up. At the



age of 18, in the year 1988, he formally started trading firm and took loan of Rs.25000/- from PNB where he still continues with sizable credit facilities for manufacturing units at Bhiwadi in the name of Toy Zone Impex Private Limited. Today, Toy Zone has become largest MSME unit in toy manufacturing sector.

In 1996, for the first time SM went to China for import of toys. He has seen the journey of China from becoming a marginal toys player to the largest manufacturer and supplier of toys to the entire world. The size of Chinese toy industry at that time was not much bigger than that of size of Indian Industry is today.

He shares his experience of more than 35 years in toys sector as trader, importer and manufacturer. In ensuing paras, he brings forth the reasons of growth of China in the toy sector, challenges faced by India and

steps needed to fulfil ambition of Hon'ble Prime Minister to make India Toys Hub for the world.

When China grew in size, it didn't face competition from any single country but when India has decided to make its presence felt on the global platform, it shall be getting all the tough competition from China who are not only number one controlling more than 60% of the global market but are also having very strong financial muscle to take all the ethical and non-ethical steps to defeat India's ambition to grow and take a sizeable pie of the

world market. India has to strategize accordingly keeping these facts in mind.

India has around 3500 units manufacturing toys worth Rs.3500 crores which means that most of the units have capacity/turnover to produce toys for far less than Rs.1.00 crore per annum as there are number of units producing toys in the range of Rs.5-55 crore. Journey of our nation is very long and full of challenges to meet the 75% gap of domestic market and take a pie from the world market.

HOW THE CHINESE INDUSTRY GREW SINCE SM STARTED VISITING CHINA FROM 90'S

In 90's there were not many manufacturing units. There were around 400-500 units in Shantou (Chenghai) like cottage industry where every house was engaged in one or the other activity to produce toys or toy components. Automation was not much and dependence was on the availability of the cheap labor in abundance. During all these years, he observed the following:

1. Total number of units have grown from 400-500 units to more than 10000 units at the same place. The size of the units has increased from cottages to full-fledged factories and each factory running into acres of land.
2. Cheap labour has been replaced by automation of processes.
3. Large number of tool-rooms equipped with latest technology machines capable of producing moulds and machines have been set up in the cluster.
4. There are many assembly units which do not produce any part of toy but buy all the parts from different manufacturers & assemble and sell the finished products.
5. Focus of most of the units is

world market with each set of units focusing in particular territories.

6. Most of the units are not selling directly to the overseas customers but are selling to big sales houses located at big toys market spread in very large area. A customer need not go to many places but is in a position to buy all the products under one roof.
7. They have developed secondary market for machines and moulds which give the liberty to the units to switch immediately in case they don't find the business attractive enough to continue and at the same time others are there to grab the opportunity. This gives them strength to take up the new risks and business.
8. As the units are not required to produce all the parts and components, they have the ability to increase the scale of their operations without making large investment in plant & machinery. As a result, the size of finished toys producers runs into acres of land.
9. There is no dearth of skilled & efficient labour and most of the

operations / processes have been automated. This has brought down the manufacturing cost considerably.

10. Most of the units being operated in a single large cluster. This reduces the probability of shut downs due to fault in machines, moulds or tools as all kind of repair/replacement services are available within the cluster in a very short time to attend to the problems.

WHAT HAS HELPED CHINESE INDUSTRY TO GROW TO THE CURRENT LEVELS

The industry could grow to these levels because the Chinese government has been providing the following support to the units:

1. Cheap and adequate finance is available to the units. A unit is required to contribute only 10% of the project cost and finance for the remaining

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amount is available.

2. Land has been provided at very cheap rates to the manufacturing units.
3. All the required approvals are available under one roof where officials of all the concerned department are sitting with the entrepreneur and in a single day decision is made.
4. The businesses have the freedom to open and shut the units as per the demands of the business and also can reduce or increase the labour required for the desired level of operations without any obligations. The labour laws are very liberal.
5. Special category has been accorded to the toy sector.
6. Subsidization of operations by way of handsome duty draw backs on the exports made.
7. GST rate on toys is only 6%. This enables the exports even sell at less than their cost price and still the operations are profitable for them.
8. Manipulating foreign exchange rates for domestic currency in its favor
9. Overseas players have been provided with plethora of incentives to invest in the sector.

STRUGGLES OF INDIAN TOY INDUSTRY

Indian toy industry has been struggling because of the following reasons:

1. Fragmented nature of the industry with no toys clusters;
2. Small size of individual units due to lack of adequate capital/availability of debt capital and cost/time involved in getting the debt capital;
3. Lack of availability of skilled labour/trained manpower;
4. Non-availability of basic infrastructure;
5. Inadequacy of ancillary units, well-equipped tool rooms and machines at competitive prices
6. Lack of strict compliance/monitoring of quality parameters;
7. Lack of process automation among the manufacturing units;
8. Lack of consciousness among the manufacturers to produce quality products;
9. Capital and Labour intensive nature of the industry;
10. Lack of understanding among the end users to

differentiate between good quality and low priced, low quality products harmful for the children;

WHAT IS REQUIRED TO DISPLACE CHINA FROM BEING NUMBER 1

India has a very large pool of cheap labour, educated youth power and all the basic infrastructure. As such, there is no reason that with focused approach, it cannot replace China. As submitted above, India needs to strategize keeping in view the challenges which it is likely to face from China. Indian Government and Industry will have to work very hard in tandem to achieve its goals. Steps required to attract new manufacturers and scale up of operations by existing manufacturers to make India a toy hub:

1. Setting up of specialized

ADVERTORIAL

courses relating to toys sector in engineering and designing streams in the existing colleges / universities or setting up specialized toy specific degree and diploma courses. Separate stream for Toys manufacturing in ITIs

2. Developing/training labour under Skill India programme for toy sector
3. Incentive and support to existing units to expand and relocate in clusters. As these units are already into business and can scale up the operations and meet the growing demand for domestic market
4. Groom and train the existing units for exports
5. Incentives to exporters to enable them to have level playing field in the international market and ability to compete with China
6. Single-window clearances within the definite given time frame to be adhered to strictly.
7. Liberal labour laws
8. Organizing workshops and awareness programmes for the manufacturers and staff for adhering to quality standards
9. Setting up of toy sector specific Quality testing labs
10. No cost/reimbursement basis toys testing and approvals by BIS
11. Developing number of category special and multi-category toys cluster within close vicinity. Size of each cluster should enable at least 400-500 units in each cluster.
12. Setting up of very large tool room facilities by the Government within the cluster to enable the manufacturers to save on the cost of setting up of tool rooms.
13. Incentives for setting up of component and parts and other ancillary units.
14. Creation of large exhibition and marketing hubs within Toys Clusters
15. Providing of cheap land and finance to the manufacturers

with long moratorium and long repayment period for setting up the projects.

16. Front end and back end subsidies to successful manufacturers.
17. Subsidized rate of power with no minimum fixed charges
18. Interest subvention to the manufacturers for setting up/expansion facilities
19. Re-imbursment of GST
20. Re-imbursment of fees and cost paid for getting BIS certification for 7 years
21. Zero duty imports for machines, moulds, equipments, components and material

WITH THE HELP OF THE GOVERNMENT NOT ONLY THEY CAN STRIVE TO BECOME NUMBER ONE BUT ALSO INDUSTRY CAN PROVIDE

1. Employment to Divyangs having difficulty in speaking and hearing (We believe they are God-gifted super powers as they have ability to concentrate without being affected by the noise around them).
 2. Engage prisoners in assembly of components if permitted by the Government (This is being done in China)
 3. Employment to women to the extent of 50% of the total employees
 4. Engage old-age home residents in assembly of components
- With the support of the Government, there is no doubt among the Indian players that they can make the country proud and replace China from the number one position in next 8-10 years.

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