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'Orang Katha' (in Assamese and English) follows the adventures of Gaurav, a dhoti-clad, T-shirt donning one-horned rhinoceros, who is a resident of the Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park — declared a tiger reserve in 2016 — occupying 78.8 sq km spread over two districts of Assam: Darrang and Sonitpur.

Unniyappams are a popular snack and ritual food

Here's what end-to-end encryption means

In this episode of our sports podcast, we talk about the controversy around umpire Nitin Menon and why it is unreasonable to expect umpires not to make mistakes

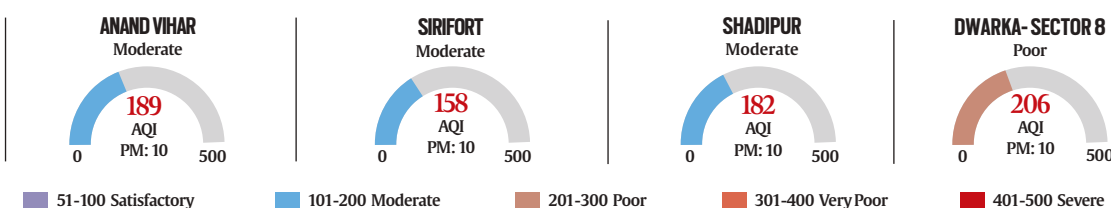
While Mothaliya said the motive was yet to be ascertained, Dalit activists as well as the victim's family alleged the murder was over a property case that Maheshwari was fighting.

According to the FIR, registered based on a complaint by the victim's wife, Minaxibher Maheshwari, "No lawyer was ready to take the case of the community hall, and my husband did... He tried in vain several times to lodge an FIR (related to the dispute) in the police station. Because he had the files, the rural party used to threaten to kill my husband."

3 THE CITY



0-50 Good



KEJRIWAL SAYS WILL BE ON A PAR WITH DEVELOPED NATIONS

Govt targets 24x7 water supply to cut dependence on pumps, overhead tanks

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 26

STATING THAT water supply in Delhi will be on par with developed nations, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Saturday said his government has started the process for 24x7 water supply to the city by appointment of a consultant for improving the water network, which is "not good" at present.

The CM, in a virtual address, said water being supplied to the city was being done at low pressure, because of which residents have to install pumps and store water in overhead tanks: "We have to end all of this. Just like other capital cities around the world get 24-hour water supply on full pressure, without the requirement of tankers and water pumps, we will do that in Delhi too. We will make water supply in Delhi just like it is in developed nations."



Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal addressing a webcast on Saturday. ANI

Kejriwal said the Aam Aadmi Party had promised before the Delhi assembly elections that in the next five years, it would ensure 24x7 clean water supply in each household. "We have started that process. In a Delhi Jal Board meeting on Thursday, we began the process of appointment of a consultant who will give us suggestions on what we need to do

to provide 24x7 water to each household," Kejriwal said.

He was referring to the 'one zone one operator' scheme that was approved in a DJB meeting on Thursday, for the implementation of which a consultant will be appointed. Under the scheme, the city will be divided into at least seven zones, with each zone having one private contractor. This

EXPLAINED The scheme

UNDER THE 'One Zone-One Operator' scheme, private contractors will be appointed for 10 years in each zone for providing services such as installation of water and sewage connections, and fixing leaks in the water and sewage network. A single contractor will be responsible for all services in one zone, officials said. DJB staff will continue to supervise work done by the contractor, check quality maintenance, and retain power for billing and levying fines, which would not be hiked, officials said.

contractor will be responsible for operation and management of the water and sewerage network of the area for a period of 10 years.

The CM emphasised that the DJB's services were not being privatised, and that the process for appointment of a consultant would have been initiated in March or April had it not been for the Covid outbreak. "Some opposition colleagues wrongly believe that this is privatisation. We are not doing any privatisation and I believe privatisation of water should not be done at all," the CM said.

He added that the consultant being appointed would advise the Board on the latest technology that can be used to improve the water supply system. "A lot of water is currently wasted in Delhi, its management is not good and there's no accountability of the system. The consultant will tell us about how to improve the management and accountability of water so that it is not wasted,"

Kejriwal said.

As part of the scheme, the contractor would provide services such as installation of water and sewage connections, and fixing leaks in the water and sewage network in each zone, which DJB officials have said is a precursor to 24x7 water supply and clean Yamuna.

Ankit Srivastava, technical advisor to the DJB, had told *The Indian Express* earlier: "For 24x7 supply, we need proper household water connections, and for clean Yamuna we need sewage lines so that sewage does not enter the river... Jal Board had a supervisory role earlier and will continue with that."

Kejriwal said that 930 million gallons per day (MGD) of water is supplied to 2 crore residents of the city at present, which needs to be augmented, and talks are underway with states including Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand for obtaining more water from them.

Need time to discuss stubble burning, CM writes to Javadekar

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 26



Kejriwal said he wanted to discuss a new solution by the Indian Agricultural Research Institute to tackle the issue

CHIEF MINISTER Arvind Kejriwal Saturday told Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar in a letter that he has been seeking an appointment with him for two days to discuss stubble burning and the air pollution caused by it, but in vain.

Kejriwal said smoke from stubble burning would start affecting air quality in the next few days, and he wanted to discuss a new solution the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) has developed to tackle it. "For the past two days, I have been requesting to meet you, but maybe you are very busy and therefore could not meet me," the letter states. "You might think, why do I want to meet you now, as it is very late. Why did I not meet you earlier? The reason is that a few days ago, we got in touch with scientists from IARI. They said they have developed a simple and inexpensive solution to stubble burning. They have been doing research on this for a few years," the letter added.

Later in the day on Twitter, quoting a tweet from AAP's official account which contained a photo of Kejriwal's letter, Javadekar said, "Arvind Kejriwalji, we spoke on the phone. The Centre has taken many crucial steps due to which pollution has reduced in Delhi. And I have also told you about holding a meeting of ministers from the states concerned."

Kejriwal also attached a letter that IARI director AK Singh sent him on September 23, which details the new solution the institute has developed. This solution is a microbial-based technology named the 'Pusa Decomposer' capsules that can rapidly degrade paddy straws in

Woman booked for abetment after husband she accused of assault kills himself in jail

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GHAZIABAD, SEPTEMBER 26

A WOMAN who complained of domestic abuse against her 49-year-old husband is now facing abetment charges after he allegedly committed suicide in prison, Ghaziabad Police said. The man, Shamsher, allegedly hanged himself from the ceiling of a police cell in Vijay Nagar station on Wednesday after he had been arrested for allegedly assaulting his wife.

Two days after the incident, Shamsher's brother approached police with a complaint alleging the woman is responsible for his death. The family alleged her complaint had triggered the sui-

cide, and she was eventually booked under Section 306 (abetment) of the IPC.

"We have received a complaint from the deceased's family and the FIR has been filed. It has been alleged that her actions drove Shamsher to the extreme step. Questioning will take place. The woman has not been arrested. Further action can only be taken once the investigation is complete," said Abhishek Verma, SP City.

A probe under the Circle Officer has, meanwhile, found SHO Devendra Bisht and constables Mohar, Amit Kumar and Harsh Tiwari negligent of duty. The police officers have been suspended pending a magisterial probe.

The man's post-mortem report has deemed the cause of death as inconclusive. While police continue to treat the death as a suicide in custody, officials are awaiting the viscera report for further clarity.

"The post-mortem report has listed the cause of death as inconclusive. It is possible that he died of shock or any other reason since there were no injury marks on his body. We will get more information when the viscera sample report comes back to us. Since he was found hanging, prima-facie it is a suicide," said Verma.

Around 3 pm on Wednesday, a call was made to Dial 112 from Mawai Masjid in Sector 9 Vijay Nagar alleging Shamsher was assaulting his wife and children in

a drunken state. Two police officers from Dial 112 team reached the spot and apprehended Shamsher, following which he was taken to Vijay Nagar police station in the vicinity.

Police said at around 4.30 pm, Shamsher hanged himself inside the police cell using his own shirt. Police took him to MMG District Hospital, where he was declared dead on arrival.

Locals said Shamsher drove a tempo and ran a grocery store in the neighborhood. "We had heard a ruckus and saw that Shamsher was beating up the kids. We told him not to do it. Then two policemen came and asked him his name and took him away," said Munni, Shamsher's neighbour.

Govt hospital doctor 'assaulted by patient'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 26

A SENIOR resident doctor at the Delhi government's Maharishi Valmiki Hospital was allegedly assaulted by a patient and her attendant on being asked to wear masks. In a letter to the medical superintendent of the hospital, the Resident Doctors' Association (RDA) has demanded immediate action against the duo under the Disaster Management Act.

Dr Rahul Jain (33) said: "We have filed a police complaint through the hospital's medical superintendent. The patient's family started misbehaving when I refused to treat them as they did not have masks on. I have suffered minor bruises and abrasions."

DCP (Outer North) Gaurav Sharma said, "We have registered a case against the woman after

the doctor complained that she misbehaved with him and also manhandled the staff. We are conducting an enquiry."

The hospital medical superintendent did not respond to calls and messages seeking a comment. Police said the woman alleged the doctors delayed the admission process and treatment. She also alleged the doctors misbehaved with her. "We will take action after the enquiry," said a senior police officer. Dr Jain denied the allegations.

The RDA also claimed the family started beating up the doctor and threw a stool in anger. "They wanted their procedure to be performed on a priority basis. They were requested by Dr Jain to come by turn. As they did not wear masks, they were requested to do so... The stool was aimed at his head which he luckily dodged."

नीलामी सूचना

सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि ग्राम पंचायत चलेटा खंड इंडरी, जिला नूंह (हरियाणा) की तस्किया जोहड़ को मछली पालन के लिए दिनांक 29.09.2020 को सुबह 10 बजे स्कूल पर 8 वर्ष के लिए मछली पालन हेतु पट्टे पर छोड़ रही है। अतः इच्छुक बोलीदाता मौके पर खुली बोली लगाकर बोली का लाभ उठाएँ। शर्तें निम्न प्रकार हैं।

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ITER-India, Institute for Plasma Research Opportunities for Indian Industries

Live Webinar-9th October 2020

ITER, "the way" is one of the largest experimental efforts underway in the south of France at Cadarache with an aim to demonstrate nuclear fusion as a clean green source of unlimited energy. With integrated challenges of science, engineering and technology, the ITER project is making significant progress under the aegis of ITER Organization, France and participating member nations. ITER-India is the Indian agency for delivering the Indian contribution in this mega-science project.

In continuation to the orientation event held in December 2019, a webinar is being organized by ITER-India in support with ITER Organization, scheduled on **09 Oct 2020 (Friday) from 1400 hrs (02:00 PM)** in order to:

- (a) To enhance awareness and promote the participation of Indian industries in ITER procurements.
- (b) Provide information about plentiful opportunities in the domain of engineering, construction, manufacturing & services available at ITER project.
- (c) Provide an insight on the entire procurement process of ITER Organization.

For details on the event, registration and participation in the webinar, please visit www.iter-india.org.

Guard dies after being hit by van

New Delhi: A 45-year-old security guard, who worked at a clothing store in Connaught Place, died after he was allegedly hit by a delivery van near Hazrat Nizamuddin Friday.

Police said the deceased, Ajay Kumar Singh, was on his way to the store on his cycle when the van hit him near Shamsan Ghat at Lala Lajpat Rai Marg around 9 pm Friday.

DCP (Southeast) R P Meena said, "We got a call about the accident. The accused, Satender Singh, was apprehended from the spot and a case was registered against him."

According to police, during questioning, Satender said he was speeding and didn't see the guard. He hit the cycle and rammed a divider, police said.

Police said Ajay is survived by his wife and three children. **ENS**

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Current Vacancies														
1.	Asst. Driller (Trainee)#	T&S Gr.C	Rs. 31,852.56	7	7	1	0	0	15	2	-	-	Not identified for PwBD	Not identified for PwBD
2.	Jr. Scientific Assistant Gr. II	T&S Gr.D	Rs. 29,460.30	7	3	0	5	0	15	2	1 (HH)	1	OA, OL, HH	S,BN,SE, RW,MF
TOTAL				14	10	1	5	0	30	4	1			

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Candidates can apply through **ONLINE mode** only by logging into CMPDI website www.cmpdi.co.in between 26.09.2020 at 9:30 am to 25.10.2020, 12.00 pm. The last date for receiving the Application Form along with application for special assistance, if any, is **25.10.2020**.

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CRUCIAL DATES & EVENTS

30.09.2020	Opening of Help Desk and commencement of Registration
24.10.2020	Last date of Registration and Submission of EMD
27.10.2020	Bidding of Residential and Institutional
28.10.2020	Bidding of Industrial and Commercial
29.10.2020	Bidding of Function Site and EHS

For details of Plots and procedure, kindly visit our e-auction website www.ddaauction.co.in or click the e-auction link available on our site www.dda.org.in and download the same through "E-AUCTION OF PROPERTIES" link available at home page of e-auction portal. Intending bidders may register themselves / their firms online at the above site through "Registered with us" link. Kindly note that digital signature of all the intending bidders are mandatory to participate in e-auctioning of DDA. A help desk has been opened at the Nagrik Suvidha Kendra, Ground Floor, 'D' Block, Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi to help the intending bidders to understand the process of e-auction. For obtaining digital signatures and registration / training of prospective bidders and for any other clarification on e-auctioning, please contact our help desk No. **011-49424365/8800991846/8800378810 from 11.00 am to 5.00 pm (all working days)** or ddaauction@gmail.com.

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For further details contact: Commissioner (LD), Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi-110023.

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4 THE CITY



TOTAL CASES	Total		Vacant	
	HOSPITAL BEDS	15,818	8,985	
	VENTILATORS			
	1,319	483		
	Daily cases	Recoveries	Deaths	Tests
Sep 25	3,827	4,061	24	59,134
Sep 26	3,372	4,476	46	57,688
Total	29,717*	2,32,912	5,193	28,73,338

*Total active cases

BRIEFLY

Launch of permanent Lok Adalat

New Delhi: A virtual Permanent Lok Adalat (PLA) or e-PLA for BSES Rajdhani Power Limited (BRPL) customers, particularly those living in West Delhi, was inaugurated at Vikaspuri by Delhi High Court's Justice Hima Kohli, in the presence of other members of the High Court and the PLA Saturday. The new virtual PLA at Vikaspuri is the first in the city exclusively for BRPL customers. Cases can be filed by customers via the BSES website or email, and will be settled via virtual hearings.

Man arrested for stealing pistol and jewellery

New Delhi: A 29-year-old Nepalese national has been arrested for allegedly stealing a 78-year-old man's pistol and jewellery from his house after spiking his food with sleeping pills. The incident took place at Chattarpur Enclave in December last year. The complainant, a businessman, owns several properties in Delhi, Noida and Meerut. The accused, Dhirender Sahi, had used a similar modus operandi and stole Rs 1.5 crore from another house in Sabji Mandi.

DUSIB to get housing for slum dwellers

New Delhi: CM Arvind Kejriwal announced Saturday that the DUSIB would provide in-situ housing to slum dwellers of Princess Park at Dev Nagar near Karol Bagh, and the residents will be temporarily shifted to already constructed houses by the DUSIB at Sector 16-B Dwarka. The Delhi government will construct 784 houses at Dev Nagar for Rs 102 crore.

Stephen's interviews to go online

New Delhi: St Stephen's College will begin conducting interviews online for admissions to its undergraduate programme from September 28, the college announced Saturday.

Delhi Police chief launches open gym

New Delhi: SN Shrivastava, Commissioner of Delhi Police, inaugurated a wellness centre, open gym and yoga park at Dwarka sector-23 police station Saturday. The amenities will be made available to police personnel and their family members. **ENS**

46 DEATHS, HIGHEST IN 80 DAYS

New 5-month study suggests Covid antibodies may last over 60 days

ASTHA SAXENA

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 26

A LONGITUDINAL five-month study jointly conducted by Max Super Specialty Hospital, Saket, and the CSIR-Institute for Genomics and Integrative Biology has suggested that antibodies against Covid-19 can stay longer than 60 days, providing immunity against the virus.

The findings of the study, titled 'SARS-CoV-2 antibody seroprevalence and stability in a tertiary care hospital-setting', available as a preprint in the MedRxiv journal, are in contrast to a recently published study that showed such antibodies lasting less than 50 days.

For the study, the hospital tested and followed up with 780 people — 448 healthcare workers and 332 individuals who visited the hospital for Covid test-



A health worker collects swab samples to test for Covid-19 at a mohalla clinic on Saturday. *Praveen Khanna*

ing from April to August.

Dr Sujeet Jha, principal director, Endocrinology, Diabetes & Metabolism, at the hospital, said, "This is the first such preliminary report from India which provides evidence that the antibodies against SARS-

CoV-2, once developed, could persist in the body for more than 60 days. The follow-up of seropositive individuals is still ongoing and further results would provide a clearer understanding of immune response against Covid-19 infection. This

would be useful for vaccine development."

According to the study, half of the patients tested at the hospital were found to be carrying antibodies against the virus. The researchers found 16.5% cumulative seroprevalence among healthcare workers and 23.5% among the individuals visiting the general flu-clinic.

"Nineteen individuals who were followed up for at least 40 days had persistent antibodies while 12 individuals sustained antibodies for 50 follow-up days, the study found. There were four individuals who were successfully followed for more than 60 days and showed sustenance of antibodies," said Salwa Naushin, a PhD scholar at CSIR-Institute for Genomics and Integrative Biology.

The study showed that 67% of seropositive cases were asymptomatic, suggesting that

antibodies can appear in individuals without them having any idea of even being exposed to the virus. Seroprevalence among hospital workers increased from 2.3% in April to 50.6% in July.

"This hints at the importance of asymptomatic carriers in estimating the disease burden in a population...this study was conceptualised with an aim to estimate seroprevalence in a hospital and general population and determine the stability of antibodies in healthcare workers," said Dr Shantanu Sengupta, senior principal scientist, CSIR-Institute for Genomics and Integrative Biology.

Meanwhile, Delhi reported 46 deaths due to Covid-19 on Saturday — the highest in 80 days — taking the death toll to 5,193. Daily positivity rate fell a little to 5.85% while the death rate, based on the last 10 days, was recorded at 0.94%.

Haryana employment policy in force from November 1

SAKSHI DAYAL

GURGAON, SEPTEMBER 26

THE HARYANA Enterprises and Employment Policy, 2020, will come into force from November 1 this year, said Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Saturday.

Speaking to media representatives in Gurgaon after chairing a closed door meeting with entrepreneurs to seek their suggestions regarding the draft of the new policy, Khattar said, "The best possible policy will be formulated by incorporating suggestions received from entrepreneurs. It is the effort of the Haryana government to ensure the state is prosperous and the youth of the state are able to secure employment opportunities in industries."

"Entrepreneurs... recommended bringing about skill upgradation in the youth and creating the attitude and behaviour required for working in such a setting. To this end, directions have already been given to the Vice-Chancellor of Shri Vishwakarma Skill University to create a short-term course for behavioural attitude," he said.

According to a press release, the CM pointed out that unemployment among youth associated with agriculture has increased considerably since cultivable land has reduced in the state. To solve this problem, he said the youth need to be given more employment opportunities in agro and other industries.

Khattar also said entrepreneurs should give priority to youth from Haryana, and they are free to hire other people if qualified persons are not found.

Asked about the farmers' protest in the state, Khattar said, "The interest of farmers are paramount for the state government. The Prime Minister has planned to double income of farmers by 2022, and the three farm bills will prove to be effective... Congress is spreading confusion among farmers under a political agenda..."

29 dengue cases so far, Gurgaon crosses last year's tally

SAKSHI DAYAL

GURGAON, SEPTEMBER 26

GURGAON HAS already crossed last year's numbers in terms of dengue cases this year, with officials saying the district has recorded 29 cases so far, as opposed to the 22 cases that had emerged last year. There have, however, been no fatalities yet.

"Apart from the 29 cases that have emerged, there are over 100 suspected cases of dengue in the district, and three confirmed cases of malaria as well," said district epidemiologist Dr Ram Prakash Rai.

Figures shared by the health department reveal Gurgaon had recorded 15 cases of malaria last year. In 2018, 93 cases of dengue and 30 cases of malaria had emerged in the district; in 2017, there were 66 cases of dengue and 48 cases of malaria.

This year is exceptional due to the coronavirus pandemic, which is also simultaneously wreaking havoc in the district, with almost 20,000 recorded cases so far. Officials from the health department insist they

are well equipped to deal with vector-borne diseases alongside the Covid pandemic.

"Cases of dengue and malaria have emerged but we have to manage the work alongside because Covid may continue for a long time. The issue of manpower is not really there since the staff involved with vector-borne diseases usually consists of multipurpose male workers, while in Covid there are more female workers like ASHA workers and ANM workers," said Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Virender Yadav.

"Furthermore, like every year, we are also getting help from the Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG). We do the work of urban fogging and sanitisation through the MCG, and rural fogging is done through the sarpanchs and panchayats of villages, whom we give the medicines for the purpose," he said.

Officials said 16 teams have been formed to carry out fogging across the district. Each team consists of 3 workers and a supervisor. Gambusia fish, which consume larvae of mosquitoes, are also being introduced into johads, lakes and ponds, said officials.

'Espionage' case: 'Associates' ran a low-key pharmacy

ARANYA SHANKAR

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 26

THE DELHI Police Special Cell has alleged that journalist Rajeev Sharma, arrested over an alleged espionage racket, was given "a huge amount of money" by two associates through "shell companies", among them, 'MZ Pharmacy' at Mahipalpur.

When *The Indian Express* visited the shop last Tuesday, it was found shut, with neighbouring shopkeepers saying they had little interaction with the duo or knowledge of their activities.

A Chinese woman Qing Shi and Nepalese national Sher Singh, alleged to be Sharma's associates in leaking defence-related information to Chinese intelligence and arrested in the case, had rented the shop around a year back, said owner Gulshan Sehrawat (34). They had not paid rent for the last three months. Those working in nearby shops said they never sensed wrongdoing, but added that customers were rarely seen at the pharmacy.

"I had rented the shop to them about a year ago. Before that, the same shop (MZ Pharmacy) was in the same market in a different place for around 6-7 years. My interaction was only with the Nepalese man. I knew about the Chinese woman, but never spoke to her," said Sehrawat.

"They told me they run a pharmacy, and even now medicines are kept stocked inside their office. I think they primarily exported medicines, which is why there weren't customers. I never sensed anything amiss. Rent was smooth until three months ago when they said they couldn't pay because of Covid," he said.

Last Tuesday, shutters were down at the stairs leading up to the first floor office of MZ Pharmacy. Desk and chairs were visible through the glass wall.

Mihir Kumar Jha (54), who



MZ Pharmacy was found shut during a visit last Tuesday

works at the adjoining Gupta Bros Chemist, said, "When the shop opened a year ago, we thought it would harm our business, but we noticed there were no customers. Only packages left and came. We had no interaction with them."

Raj Kumar (45), housekeeping staff at the Vodafone store situated just below MZ Pharmacy, also said the duo never interacted with anyone. "I have seen them come in a scooty. The man was fluent in Hindi and the woman also spoke a little bit. We never saw any customers but couriers were sent."

The green board which read MZ Pharmacy also had two phone numbers printed on it. While calls to one of the numbers kept dropping instantly upon dialling, the other said "incoming call is not available on this number".

MZ Mall, the second company named by police, is also registered at the Mahipalpur address as on March 3, 2019. When *The Indian Express* visited the spot, only the office of MZ Pharmacy was found and no board indicating the presence of MZ Mall was seen.

Shareholder details for MZ Mall state that Cheng Zhang owns 99.99% stake in MZ Mall, while the remainder is owned by Singh. Police had earlier said "Zhang and his wife were running MZ Pharmacy and MZ Malls under fake names" and live in China.

MESSAGE LOST

People pass by graffiti raising awareness about the need to wear a mask, at Shaheen Bagh Saturday. *Praveen Khanna*

No strong push for public schooling in India, says Sen on new edu policy

SUKRITA BARUAH

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 26

REFERRING TO what he saw as a lack of emphasis on strengthening public education in the country, economist Amartya Sen said during a discussion on the New Education Policy (NEP) that this differentiates India from the trajectories of other countries which had looked at further developing themselves in the past.

"India stands out as a country in which the ratio of private schooling is much higher than in most countries... This high ratio is not only bad for equity, it is bad for incentive in a way that is seen as a favour instead of a right to be claimed by all citizens... The issue of efficiency (of education) and that of public and private schooling are closely related. That point was well understood by any country that was ambitious about progressing — Europe in the



Economist Amartya Sen was speaking during a panel discussion on the New Education Policy

18th Century, Japan during the Meiji Restoration, Korea, Taiwan and later on, China... the need for a network of public schools covering the entire population," he said, underlining that inequality in society not getting reflected in the efficiency of education is a critical issue.

Sen was speaking at a panel discussion on the NEP hosted by Pratiche Institute, of which he is the chairperson.

The gap between private and public schooling in India was elaborated by development economist A K Shiva Kumar who stated that in 2016, half the children in secondary education in India were in private schools, calling the unregulated growth of private schools in the country a worrying development.

"The NEP avoids this particular problem by pretending it doesn't exist... The children left behind in government schools are the ones who are from disadvantaged backgrounds... Among those in private schools, 50% children are being sent to schools which charge less than Rs 500 per month... It is difficult to imagine the limited facilities and quality of teaching in these schools... There are only ten countries in the world where there is a higher proportion of

children studying in private schools... The NEP is silent on this subject," he said.

Referring to the Covid situation as an "education emergency", he stated that the learning gaps between children in low and high fee private schools is likely to widen with remote learning.

"With the loss of income, there will be a migration to government schools... the NEP should have explicitly mentioned strengthening the government school system," said Shiva Kumar.

Both Sen and literary critic Ganesh Devy also criticised the emphasis on the "ancient" in the NEP.

While Devy stated that the emphasis seeks to unwind "a history of progression on ideas, society, and its needs", Sen said there is "a comprehensive neglect of an entire 1,000 years of history known as the medieval" as well of years of India as a "British dominated society".

TRADERS WAIT FOR TOURISTS TO RETURN

Crowds return to Connaught Place, but not business as usual just yet

ASHNA BUTANI

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 26

WITH CAR parks fully occupied, families and friends strolling by, and commuters walking in and out of Rajiv Chowk Metro station, it looks like business as usual at Connaught Place. However, those who work in the upscale market area tell a different story.

Shyam Sunder (57), an auto driver, waits for customers outside Metro gate number 7 — the only gate open as part of Covid protocol — all day, spending his

free time calculating how much money he owes people.

"I have done this work for over 25 years but never been in a situation like this. Earlier this week, I had to pay board examination fees (Rs 1,500 each) for my twins, a boy and a girl, who study in a government school and will sit for their Class X exams. I also purchased a phone on EMI so they can attend online classes. I took a loan of Rs 4,000. I do not earn more than Rs 200-250 a day," he said.

Even though people visit the market nowadays, he said, most

come in their cars. Since tourists are not around, hardly anyone uses autos.

Atul Bhargava, president of New Delhi Traders Association, said, "Business improved a bit in August but went down in September as Covid cases are rising. Things will only get better once we come out of this."

Shopkeepers echoed a similar concern. At Palika Bazaar, which has now been open for around two months, a number of vendors tried to get the attention of every prospective buyer. "Earlier, we would not get time



to breathe, there were so many customers. Now, we barely get two-three customers a day. We are waiting for tourism to restart," said Sonu Kumar (25), who has a tattoo parlour and accessory shop.

Many people are seen in masks, but very few wear them properly. Incidentally, CP is the market where the most number of challans are issued daily, said

At least 50 people are issued Covid-related challans in CP every day. *Express*

police. A police officer from the Connaught Place police station said, "At least 50 people are issued Covid-related challans in the area every day."

Outside bigger stores, posters such as 'buy 1 get 2 free' have been put up. Tapan Ghosh, manager of the Skechers shoe store, said, "Most stores have continued their end-of-season sale just to get customers to buy products. For stores of this size, rent and electricity is a huge burden."

Similarly, Park Avenue too saw few customers walking in during the day. Manager Raj

Kumar (30) said, "Our sales are somewhere around 30-35% of the usual. Even though the Metro has increased footfall, only one gate is opened so that has not impacted the entire market." However, he was hopeful about the festive season generating some profit.

Sachin Sonkar (35) a mobile cover seller, echoed the same: "I thought that reopening the Metro will bring in business. But people don't want us to touch their phones anymore. It isn't possible for us to sell our products this way."



New Delhi



CENTRE ADVANCES PROCUREMENT DATE; STIR CONTINUES IN PUNJAB

Punjab, Haryana paddy procurement ‘starts’

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 26

THE GOVERNMENT Saturday ordered the immediate commencement of paddy procurement in Punjab and Haryana owing to the early arrival of the harvest in mandis, advancing the kharif marketing season by almost a week in the two states that have seen the most vocal protests against the contentious farm reforms.

Food Secretary Sudhanshu Pandey said the government has taken the “extraordinary” step to help farmers. “... Orders have been issued and State procurement agencies and FCI have been mobilized fully to start operations in view of early paddy arrivals in Mandis,” he tweeted.

Later, in a statement, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution said: “The Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) 2020-21 for paddy / rice is already scheduled to commence in all the procuring States w.e.f. 1st of October, 2020 and State Procuring Agencies including FCI are in a state of readiness...”

“However, in view of early arrival of paddy in the ‘mandies’ of Haryana and Punjab, Government of India has approved the commencement of procurement operations for paddy / rice immediately in both these States from today i.e. with effect from 26th September, 2020 to ensure that farmers are facilitated in selling produce at Minimum Support Price (MSP) expeditiously,” the statement said.

“Orders for commencement of procurement operations for paddy /rice from 26th September, 2020 in Haryana and Punjab have been issued,” it added.

The move comes at a time farmers, particularly those in Punjab and Haryana, are protesting against The Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020; The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020; and The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2020. Their primary objection is to the first Bill, which provides for the creation of a “trade area” outside the existing APMC Mandis.

While there is no mention of the MSP mechanism in any of the three Bills, farmers fear that if the mandi system comes to an end, MSP will soon follow. The government maintains that the MSP system will continue.

“We have declared Rabi MSP before sowing of crops and the kharif crop is due in a few days, which will be procured on MSP. The PM has said MSP will continue, so why does anyone need to worry? And MSP has nothing to do with these bills. The bills deal with trade outside the mandi premises,” Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar told *The Indian Express* earlier this week.

The government fixes the MSP of 22 “mandated agricultural crops” and the ‘fair and remunerative price’ for Sugarcane based on the recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices.



A demonstration against farm Bills in Amritsar on Saturday. Rana Simranjit Singh

Punjab farmers continue to block tracks, extend rail roko till Sept 29

RAAKHI JAGGA
LUDHIANA, SEPTEMBER 26

PROTESTING FARMERS in Punjab Saturday extended their ‘rail roko’ agitation, that began Thursday, by three days till September 29 following which the Ferozepur Railway Division decided not to run trains on Sunday. Earlier, farmers had decided to block trains till September 26.

“We have decided not to operate trains on September 27 as farmers are still squatting on some rail tracks in Punjab,” Divisional Railway Manager Rajesh Agrawal

said. Further decision will be taken on Sunday evening as per prevailing circumstances, he said.

A group of 31 farmer outfits in Punjab have already announced an indefinite ‘rail roko’ protest from October 1 in protest of the passage of three farm Bills in the Parliament. The call for the ongoing was given by the Kisan Mazdoor Sangharsh Committee (KSMC) after which 20 trains were partially cancelled and five short terminated till September 26 by the Railways.

The farmers continued to squat on the tracks in different parts of the state raising slogans

against the BJP-led Union government while demanding the roll-back of the Bills. In Amritsar, a group of protesting farmers went shirtless to express their anger against the farm Bills.

KSMC president Satnam Singh Pannu said, “We have been on roads for more than 20 days now. Earlier, we blocked bridges on Sutlej and Beas river and now we have blocked the train tracks. We have left our houses to save our fields, the labourers and the ahtiyas. Now we will increase rail roko points at Jalandhar, Mukerian and few other places in Doaba and Majha regions”.

Punjab stubble burning starts, set to hit Delhi AQI

ANJU AGNIHOTRI CHABA
JALANDHAR, SEPTEMBER 26

WITH THE arrival of paddy harvesting season, 385 farm fires — lit to burn out stubble after the crop is harvested — have already been reported in Punjab, leading SAFAR to issue a warning that air quality in the national capital is likely to dip to ‘poor’ by Monday.

Sofar, 385 farm fires have been reported in the past six days in 11 out of 22 districts of Punjab, mainly from Amritsar and Tarn Taran districts in Majha region. Harvesting of an early variety of Basmati rice had started two weeks back in the state.

In the corresponding period last year, 202 farm fires were recorded, while in 2018, there were only 15 stubble burning incidents recorded during the paddy harvesting season between

September 21 to September 26. According to information available with the Punjab Remote Sensing Centre (PRSC) in Ludhiana, 88 field fires were reported in Punjab on Saturday.

“Farm fires have begun in Amritsar, Punjab, and neighbouring border regions and are likely to influence the city’s air quality,” SAFAR said.

Meanwhile, the Punjab government has not only appointed

nodal officers to check stubble burning, but also distributed around 75,000 machines over the past three years to manage stubble.

“We have sensitised farmers and they must understand their responsibility too as custom hiring centres of the stubble management machinery have also been set up across the state,” said Director, Punjab Agriculture, Dr Sutantar Kumar Atri.



385 farm fires reported in 11 districts of Punjab. PTI file

DEMAND FOR BODOLAND TERRITORIAL COUNCIL-LIKE SYSTEM IN UT

Leh delegation meets Shah, may end boycott of Ladakh hill council polls

NIRUPAMA SUBRAMANIAN
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 26

THE CENTRE’S scramble to end an election boycott call by political parties in Ladakh culminated on Saturday with a delegation of political representatives flying to Delhi from Leh for a meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah to discuss their demand for a Bodoland Territorial Council-like arrangement in the Union Territory (UT).

“We set out our demands and gave our version. We have been told that the Home Ministry will make a statement tomorrow,” Chering Dorjay Lakrook, former minister in the PDP-BJP government in the erstwhile state of J&K, said.

Dorjay said the decision to end the boycott of October 16 Leh Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) elections would depend on Sunday’s announcement. “We are hoping for a positive outcome,” he said. The three-member delegation — comprising Dorjay, former MP Thupsten Chewang, and Thiksay monastery head Rinpoche Nawang Chmaba Stanzin — met with Shah, and Ministers of State for Home G Kishen Reddy and Kiren Rijiju. While Dorjay quit BJP earlier this year, Chewang had left the party in 2018.

The simmering demand in Leh for a hill council with legislative powers since the time Ladakh and J&K were declared separate UTs boiled over earlier this month when all parties came together to declare a boycott of elections to Leh LAHDC. The last elections to the Council were held in 2015, and the five-year term of the present council expires on November 2.

The schedule for filing nominations began on September 2, and the last date is September 28. After scrutiny on September 29,



Union Ministers Amit Shah, Kiren Rijiju and Kishan Reddy at the meet with representatives from Leh on Saturday. Twitter

EXPLAINED

What Bodoland council enjoys

UNLIKE LAHDC, Bodoland Territorial Council, set up in 2003 after a peace agreement with Bodo Liberation Tigers, has legislative powers and jurisdiction over a notified area: Bodoland Territorial Region. It derives its powers through the Sixth Schedule, which was amended for the purpose. The Sixth Schedule protects tribal populations in a non-tribal state, while Leh district of Ladakh is mostly tribal.

the last date for withdrawal of nominations is October 1.

But after the September 19 notification of the poll process, representatives of 12 political parties in the region, including BJP and Congress, and Buddhist and Muslim religious organisations jointly called for a boycott. Not a single nomination has been filed yet.

“We had a very good meeting with the Home Minister. He gave us a lot of time, and reassured us that he will give us much more than Sixth Schedule,” Dorjay said.

The boycott call was made by the apex group of People’s Movement for Sixth Schedule, an umbrella group of political parties and religious organisations, including the all-powerful Leh-based Ladakh Buddhist Association. They are demanding an autonomous hill council under

the Sixth Schedule, modelled on the lines of Bodoland Territorial Council in Assam.

The demand came up after last year’s constitutional changes in J&K, and was amplified by a student group called Students Organisation of Unified Ladakh.

Since the changes of August 5, 2019, while Leh finally got its wish that Ladakh should become a UT, unlike the UT of J&K that got a Legislative Assembly, there is no Assembly for Ladakh. Except for the sole MP, Ladakh suddenly found itself disempowered.

“Earlier, we had the protection of (Articles) 370 and 35A. We want similar protection for Ladakh’s state land and private land, and for our identity and language, and jobs,” said Dorjay. Ladakh’s population, under 2011 Census, is 1,34,000, the majority of them Buddhist.

Curing mental health through the Integrative Science of Psychology and Spiritual Healing

ADVERTORIAL



The success story of Vishwas Healing Centre.

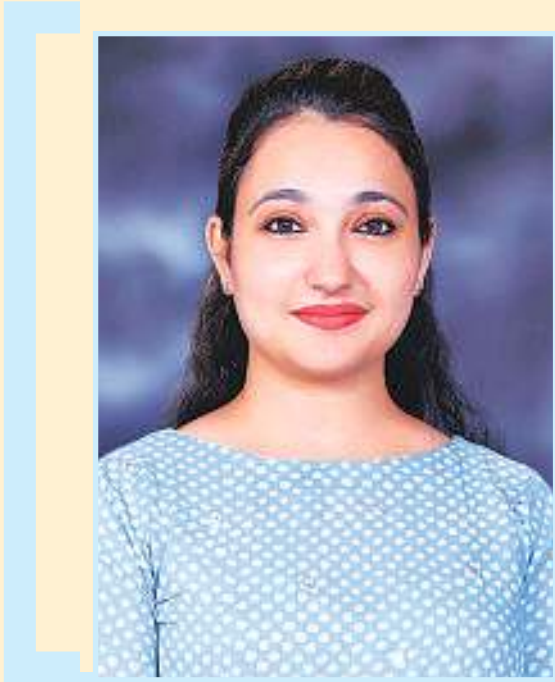
The journey for Dr. Pooja started at the age of 15 when she started learning psychology and spiritual healing simultaneously. Eventually, she realized that the two domains are highly interconnected at the roots as both these genres look into the subconscious level of mind. Initially, there were some challenges which she faced while convincing people in the beginning. Contrarily, she finds herself fortunate enough having no troubles later ever in her life again.

The keys to her success are her art and dedication which aided her in integrating the two fields in such a beautiful and meaningful way that she never looked back. She believes, “every client has enriched me, and I always enjoyed my work. As a result, I never found my job challenging rather it became a creative task for me.” Her intensive counselling skills, understanding, and the permutations and combinations of varied therapies by using the applications of psychology and spiritual healing have grabbed her high customer satisfaction.

Indeed, her innovation and dedication towards her work has fetched her great success. She feels honoured to share that her success rate at work is 99.1%. The conviction for her work originated back in the days when she was learning these two distinct branches, hence the success of her work somewhere lies in the self-implications of the knowledge. This conviction happens to be the turning point of her life. She believes both psychology and healing have proven to be prosperous for not only her, but for her clients too.

What contributes to anxiety and depression?

The reasons for anxiety and depression



*Asserting the wonders of the Integrative science of Psychology and Spiritual healing, **Dr. Pooja Anand Sharma**, Founder, Vishwas Healing Centre, believes that when it comes to curing mental health, there is an endless hope to cure it through an integrative approach. Generally, people with mental health issues do not understand their problems, especially the ones which are hidden. The beauty of both Psychology and Spiritual healing is to discover those embedded issues and bring them on the surface to be cured. Fortunately, with 18 years of rigorous practice, she has not only cured but has brought change to so many lives. Psychology is indeed logical but there is also a magic in spiritual healing which can only be felt. Such magical concepts are beyond explanations. She and Vishwas Healing Centre have proven the credibility of integrated science of psychology and spiritual healing.*

are person-specific. Firstly, there is no single factor that triggers anxiety or depression, rather there are multiple factors which accumulate to generate such mental conditions. However, such mental conditions, in general, result of poor lifestyle, lack of philosophy in life, lack of spiritual bend, etc.

One can easily notice habits like, overthinking, comparison with other, self-criticism, negative self-talk, which exaggerate the conditions of feeling low, especially when it comes to anxiety and depression. For instance, poor lifestyle hinders a person’s goal. Due to this, a comparison with successful people initiates in the back of our mind, and the person starts to feel even more negative about self. This leads to self-criticism and overthinking, which further creates obstacles in the life of this person, not only at the mental level but also at the physical level. This simply means a person consequently finds himself or herself in a vicious cycle of negativity and this does not let the person get rid of anxiety or depression. This is the time, when a person must approach a wellness expert like Dr. Pooja to find the direction and come out of this negativity.

How do you decide which individual gets which treatment?

Since every individual is different from another, the healing process also differs from person to person. At Vishwas Healing Centre, it’s always about individualized techniques and therapies and so “not everything is for everyone.” We believe that individualized therapies work best since every person goes through a unique set of experiences in life, with every mind reacting differently towards a given situation. What might work for ‘Person A’ might not work for ‘Person B’.

Some require simple solutions such as minute changes in their daily routines, while others may need intensive therapies like REBT, Dream Analysis, CBT, Hypnosis, Alternate Healing Therapies, etc. Also, there is a vast range of capacity of different individuals; it is easier for some clients to handle rigorous therapies while many prefer to choose simpler therapies. Furthermore, certain allergies and personal needs are well taken care of while implementing any sort of medication.

Hence, a sound analysis and counselling go behind a person’s mental condition at Vishwas Healing Centre, and then and only

then a therapy is recommended. The intensity of therapy and approaches are well thought out and designed specifically for each client. Integrated approach of healing includes standard line of treatment complemented with therapies, ranging from counselling, acupressure, to healing.

Why is pre-marital counselling important these days?

Today, our youth is very much confused about relationships. Youngsters have a fear of commitment and this fear jeopardizes their thought process regarding relationships in the long term. Moreover, a significant lack of patience can be observed among the couples. Currently, it seems that youngsters don’t attach much meaning to relationships. Since every good and stable relationship needs a strong foundation, pre-marital counselling is a boon for those couples.

In pre-marital counselling, Vishwas Healing Centre attempts to make people aware about the importance of marriage and commitment towards it, the roles and responsibilities in a marriage, and the illusion of expectations that deter a person from going into a marital relationship.

These sessions mainly aim at improving communications between partners, set realistic life goals, and develop conflict-resolution skills. It is a type of therapy that helps prepare young couples for a bond like marriage.

What is this “men emotional health” that you have been working on for several years now?

“Men emotional health” is all about educating men about women and their sensibilities. At Vishwas Healing Centre, we are strictly against any gender chauvinism and seek gender equality by all means. The idea of this course lies in the evolution of the society. Around a couple of decades ago, an evident shift was observed in the society. Due to the differences in the roles and responsibilities of either sexes, there has always been a fight for empowerment. On the one hand, women empowerment has been wrongly associated with fake feminism and, on the other hand, the society lags educating men on how to handle such empowered women. Consequently, we come across men and women being stuck in conflicts for their superiority illusions.

This has created a disparity in our society

today. Unfortunately, this disparity has led to an increasing divorce rate in the country. So, “men emotional health” aims at educating men to understand these empowered women effectively to lead a happier and healthier life. We need to make men mentally and emotionally aware regarding their partners. One of the biggest advantages of this session is that men get to understand themselves and their emotional needs too. With a deeper understanding of self and the partner, men could successfully eradicate the increasing conflicts and false chauvinism practices.

How has COVID-19 affected your practice?

COVID-19 has shaken the lives of people but we at Vishwas Healing Centre believe that we were fortunate enough to contribute towards relieving the people from stress and depression by one means or the other. Dr. Pooja tells, “we promptly came into action as soon as the pandemic broke out. People were in a miserable state and there was a state of fear and panic throughout the world. Hence, we immediately released videos and posts on social media to relieve people. Of course, a digital dimension came into role, where I posted motivational videos, conducted free talk hours for 6 weeks daily that was open for all and aimed to enable folks to deal with stress and anxiety, and also held several online workshops at national and international level, ‘smile therapy’ is one perfect example. These videos, posts, online workshops and activities helped the people to plan further for any further uncertainty and preparing people for the upcoming changes because of the pandemic.”

Although, there were few minor challenges in the beginning; just like the teachers and educators who are teaching online or the doctors who are providing online consultations, Dr. Pooja also faced few of these challenges. But as mentioned earlier, there is no looking back for her. Despite the challenges, she and Vishwas Healing Centre did a marvellous job at controlling the situation. She further adds, “we at Vishwas Healing Centre, even under the adversity, look for the best of opportunities. It is only a matter of looking for the shiny silver line on a cloudy day.”

6 SUNDAY STORY



Will this matter in November?

They have always leaned Democrat, but this time, with just over a month to go for US polls, the Indian American vote is showing the friction of politics in India. Republicans have the advantage of Trump and Modi's public courtship; Democrats the onus of their Kashmir stance. **KARISHMA MEHROTRA** on what this — and the Kamala Harris factor — could mean in a race that is entering the final lap



WE HAVE a friend in the White House, and we would like that to continue," says Dinesh Agarwal. One of the founding members of the Overseas Friends of BJP (OFBJP), Agarwal, a Penn State professor, has been a Democrat voter for the 45 years that he has lived in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. But, now, he's switching from Blue to Red, and will be voting to re-elect President Donald Trump on November 3.

"My wife is upset with me, and so are my children," Agarwal says, adding that heated debates are also going on among OFBJP founders over email. "That's the case in many Indian families now. More and more, traditionally democratic Indian Americans, especially of my generation, are moving towards Trump."

The numbers seem to confirm that. Results of a survey by the Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Data led by Professor Karthick Ramakrishnan, released on September 15, show that a little over a quarter (28%) of the Indian Americans are planning to vote Republican come Election Day — a huge increase from the 16% who voted for Trump in 2016. Correspondingly, while 84% Indian Americans had voted for Barack Obama in 2012 and 77% for Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton in 2016, just 66% say they support Joe Biden.

If the undecided voters split down the same ratio, 30% of the Indian American vote could go to the Republicans.

The AAPI survey also found that the main driver of the Republican boost among Indian Americans were men. In 2016, 71% of the Indian American men had voted Democrat while 21% had voted Republican, in comparison to the 83% to 11% break-up for women. In 2020, as many as 41% of the men are estimated to vote Republican, and 57% Democrat, even as women are expected to stay steadfast behind the Democratic Party (83%), as compared to Republican (17%). (The numbers also indicate that, like others among the highly polarised American electorate, almost all Indian Americans have decided whom to vote for.)

"When people talk about uncles and aunts starting to vote for Trump, it's more like just the uncles," Ramakrishnan says.

The tipping factor

Having doubled since 2000, Indian Americans are now the second largest immigrant group in the US and the fastest growing ethnic group among the American electorate. While there has always been a small segment that has voted Republican, largely because it is seen as a party that favours lower tax rates, the majority of the community has traditionally been viewed as favouring Democrats for their pro-immigration stance.

"Do you think there is evidence that Democrats should be worried about Indian

American voter attrition?" South Asia Carnegie Fellow Milan Vaishnav asked Democrat Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi, who is on the Indians for Biden National Council advisory board, at the release of the AAPI survey. Krishnamoorthi's reply was "absolutely", adding that the Democrats must reach out to Indian Americans, "especially in battleground states" — which include Pennsylvania, Michigan, North Carolina and Florida, estimated to hold a fourth of the roughly two million Indian American voters.

American presidential politics heavily depends on state-level dynamics, which can sway the Electoral College. In 2016, Trump had won all the 16 Michigan electoral votes, by a razor-thin margin of 13,000 individual votes, even though Democrats have snagged the state since 1992. Moreover, as per some researchers, the small margins by which Clinton lost many of the oscillating states in 2016 matched the number of Indians who didn't vote that year. Krishnamoorthi calls these undecided Indian American voters in swing states "the tipping factor".

While the growing support for Trump among Indian Americans might seem counterintuitive in light of his tough anti-immigration stance and curbs on visas, it is explained by politics back home. Many Trump voters identify with the Narendra Modi government's stress on nationalism, and its bid, even if ham-handed, to settle divisive issues like Kashmir, terrorism, and illegal immigration, which cast an inordinately large shadow on NRI politics.

Says Vaishnav, "The Indian-American polarisation dynamic in the US is even more complicated because it's not just from what's happening in the four corners of this country, but it's borrowing from what's happening in India."

The turning points

The prominent reasons most Indian Americans cite for shifting Republican all relate to either Democrats' criticisms of Modi's actions or Trump's relationship with the Indian PM.

Two of those turning points came in quick succession towards the end of last year.

In October 2019, in response to a question on Kashmir, Senator Kamala Harris, now Biden's Vice-Presidential candidate, said: "We have to remind the Kashmiris that they are not alone in the world... There is a need to intervene if the situation demands."

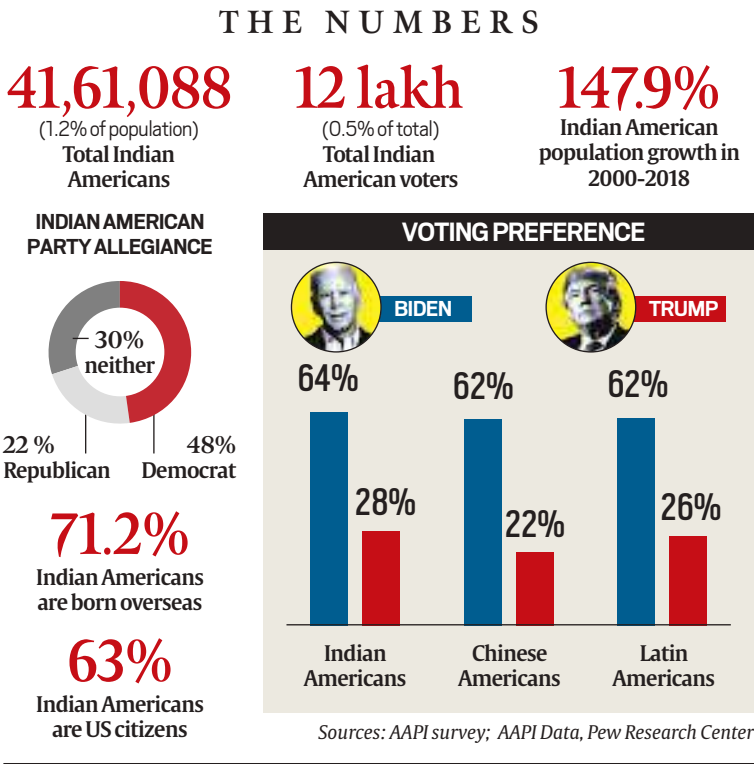
Soon after, in December 2019, Indian American Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal introduced a resolution in the US House of Representatives "urging the Republic of India to end the restrictions on communications and mass detentions in Jammu and Kashmir... and preserve religious freedom for all residents". Jayapal, the first South Asian American woman in the US House, said India's actions in the region were "harmful to our close, critical bilateral relationship".

Later that month, on a visit to Washington DC, India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar refused to meet the US House Foreign Relations Committee because Jayapal was a part of it. "I don't think (Jayapal's resolution) is a fair understanding of the situation," Jaishankar said. Harris condemned this stand, as did another prominent Democrat, Elizabeth Warren. "It's wrong for any foreign government to tell Congress what members are allowed in meetings on Capitol Hill," Harris tweeted.

Then, in February this year, as India witnessed widespread protests over the



(Top) PM Narendra Modi and President Donald Trump at the Howdy, Modi! event in Houston on September 22, 2019; Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden (centre) with the family of running mate Kamala Harris (second from left) in Washington. ANI/PTI



Citizenship (Amendment) Act that is seen as making religion the basis for fast-tracking the immigration process, several American city councils in predominantly liberal bases passed resolutions against the legislation.

The anti-CAA protests were followed by the worst Hindu-Muslim riots in Delhi's history since Partition, coinciding with Trump's high-profile visit to India, with the Modi government rolling out the red carpet. Bernie Sanders, one of the front-runners for the Democratic presidential nomination at the time and seen as representing the party's progressive face, tweeted that Trump's refusal to comment on the violence (the President said it's "up to India") was "a failure of leadership on human rights".

"We've given the Democrats an earful. People are very mad, including me," says Bharat Barai, a long-time Democrat from Indiana (a battleground state) and a BJP supporter. In the 1990s, Barai had opened his home to Modi, then a party worker, during a trip to the US. He has also hosted over the years senior BJP leaders L K Advani and Prakash Javadekar. After the US decided not to give Modi visa following the 2002 riots, Barai had met influential US Congressmen to get it reversed.

"What business do American cities have in affairs of another sovereign democratic country? Would you like India's Parliament to pass resolutions about America violating the rights of Blacks and Hispanics? This smells of colonialism in the name of human rights. They think that India being a poor country they can get involved. We want you (the US president) to be a bridge between India and the US, not to be the mother-in-law of India," Barai bristles.

The 71-year-old adds that he sees himself as an independent who has voted mostly for Democrats in the past. He even likes

Biden, he says, and points out that his daughter is working for the Democratic campaign. "I had approached Biden when I was lobbying Congressmen on the India-US nuclear deal. No Democratic senator had signed on, and he agreed to be the first. I have good relations with him. But I am also pissed off at his Muslim agenda page. I don't know how I am going to vote now."

What Barai is referring to is Biden's 'Agenda for Muslim-American Communities', which makes a reference to Kashmir as well as the CAA and the National Register of Citizens (NRC), another contentious proposal of the Modi government. Stating that "restrictions on dissent" weaken democracy, the agenda says measures like the NRC and CAA "are inconsistent with the country's long tradition of secularism and with sustaining a multi-ethnic and multi-religious democracy".

In contrast to this, Trump has been courting the Indian Americans since his first presidential bid, and recognised Modi's influence early. In 2016, he told a New Jersey rally by the Republican Hindu coalition, "I'm a big fan of Hindu, and I'm a big fan of India." Trump was a prominent presence at the Howdy, Modi! event in Houston in September 2019, applauding as a fawning crowd celebrated the Indian PM in blitzzy Bollywood style.

The Republican Party's campaign videos have used visuals of Howdy, Modi!, as well as the corresponding Namaste Trump event held for the US President in Ahmedabad by the Indian PM in February this year. The BJP, however, has cautioned its members in America to not use the party's name in any electioneering and do so in their individual capacity — it was criticised for not showing similar discretion in 2016 and potentially jeopardising Delhi-Washington ties.

"Trump is invested in the relationship with

EXPLAINED

The swing

INDIAN AMERICANS are now the second largest immigrant group in the US and the fastest growing ethnic group among the American electorate. The community has traditionally favoured Democrats for their pro-immigration stance. However, this time, there is an estimated 12% swing towards Trump.

Modi and you are seeing the returns. The question is can he take a 28% Indian American vote and make it even more in the next 40 days," says M R Rangaswami, founder of the well-known political and philanthropic network of the Indian diaspora, Indiaspora.

Wake-up call for Democrats

On September 22, at a virtual fundraiser event, a few prominent Indian American businessmen chided Biden on the stand he has taken on issues concerning India, says Sunil Puri, an Illinois real estate developer and former member of Obama's White House presidential commission on Asian Americans. Puri says he asked the Democrat leader specifically about his 'Agenda for Muslim Communities', telling him: "Joe, do you even know that you're making all these comments about (Article) 370 and Kashmir?" He says Biden promised to look into the matter, even as they pressed him to present an agenda for Hindu Americans.

Biden went on to criticise the Chinese aggression against India at the border.

As the Democrats realise that the community is feeling betrayed, they are banking on the dynamic, young and articulate Kamala Harris, with her mixed Jamaican and Indian origins, to swing the pendulum back. Since the 77-year-old Biden picked her as his running mate, following her own failed presidential nomination bid, Harris has often talked about her Indian mother and how she was her role model.

In a video that went viral, the 55-year-old cooked *masala dosas* with another Indian American success story, actor Mindy Kaling, as the two reminisced about growing up in similar households. Much has been made of Harris's use of the Tamil word "*chittis*" at the Democratic National Convention.

While he admits the Trump campaign made early gains into the Indian American vote, Shekar Narasimhan, who founded the AAPI Victory Fund to garner support for Democratic candidates, sees Harris making a difference. "Republicans are exploiting the fact that the Democrats are in principle for human rights. Yes, many Democrats have expressed concerns about Kashmir, Article 370, the CAA. But it seems to be affecting primarily the older uncles, and some of the fears of the drift of Indian Americans to Trump are greatly exaggerated. Especially as Harris has made a move to lean into her Indian heritage," he says.

Chanda Parbhoo, the founder of a Texas Democratic organisation called SAAVE (South Asian Americans for Voter Education Engagement and Empowerment), also acknowledges running up constantly against arguments that "If you like Modi, you gotta like Trump". Parbhoo has been trying to counter this by disassociating the two. In phone calls with Texan South Asians, she says, she harks back to her own Gujarati roots to underline that she understands Modi's importance. "We really need to concentrate on what affects our country and not pay attention only to what's happening an ocean away," she keeps asserting.

However, Parbhoo adds, it all boils down to Kashmir. "People say that India needs to be supported there, or the country will crumble."

She was surprised when during Modi's trip to Houston in 2019 she had to take down some of her Facebook posts on the Indian PM as matters heated up in her organisation's group.

It's "unfortunate" that some Indian Americans are "buying into the optics of the Trump administration and not looking at its actions", says Neha Dewan, the National Director of the organisation 'South Asians for Biden', which is officially recognised by the Biden campaign.

Democrat leaders like her and former US Ambassador to India Rich Verma remind voters about Obama's ties with India (he is the only US president to have travelled to India twice while in office), Trump's revoking of India's preferential trade status, and the overwhelming green card applications backlog. "He's stabbing India in the back while courting Indian Americans at Howdy, Modi! rally," Dewan says.

Verma has emphasised that Biden, as Vice-President under Obama, set the target of \$500 billion in two-way trade between India and the US, and that the Obama-Biden administration signed new defence sales and trade records with India and worked with the country on the Paris Climate Agreement.

At a seminar on Harris and the Indian American electorate at Princeton University on September 18, Western Washington University Political Science Professor Dr Bidisha Biswas referred to the fact that Indian politics was at "an inflection point" to underline the importance of her candidature. "As Indian Americans look to shape US-India relations, having Kamala Harris there as vice-president could really influence how that journey builds," she said, arguing that Harris gave a chance for Indian Americans "who are troubled by Prime Minister Modi's policy (but) are very vociferous supporters (of his)" to matter in Washington's relationship with Delhi. In contrast, she said, "Trump doesn't care either way."

New vs old immigrant

Indian Americans are not the only ones deeply divided as the Trump presidency polarises the US. However, unlike other racial demographics, the defining aspect of Indian American fissures is not age, but whether they were born in the US. According to AAPI data, those born overseas are 15% more likely to vote Republican this time compared to 2016. Among those born in the US, the shift is much less: 7%.

Sampat Shivangani, a delegate to the Republican National Convention, is clear about this difference. "It's not that I like Trump's personality, but I like that he is standing for India. Meanwhile Kamala avoids claiming she is Indian American. My views are India-centric, 'Who is good for India?'. My daughter says she hates Trump, but then I say, 'Do you like India?'. The younger people who never saw India, they are Democrats. But whether we like or dislike Trump, we like our Motherland."

This leads to a jagged age correlation. Among Indian Americans, 81% between ages 18 and 34 are Democrat supporters. This drops to 56% in the 35-49 age group, before rising again to 72% among those 50 and above. Corresponding Republican support is 17%, 43% and 28%.

Incidentally, a majority of Indians immigrate to the US in their 20s and 30s — carrying over nostalgia for the Motherland that is translating into Republican support.

"I was struck during the Howdy, Modi! event that people of my parents' generations were so excited, waiting in line to see Modi, while their kids were out protesting," remarks Vaishnav, who is set to release multiple surveys on the Indian American electorate in October. His family came over from Gujarat in the late 1960s.

However, Vaishnav points out, the 50,000-plus who packed that stadium in Houston might be a dwindling proportion. "I have a long-term hypothesis that the Indian American community that the government of India has come to know, today's aunts and uncles, are not the same as the next generation," he says. Noting that 1.5 lakh Indian Americans become eligible to vote every year, Vaishnav says, "These new voters might not be interested in India at all."

Across
THE AISLE



PCHIDAMBARAM

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The Agriculture Minister told Parliament that the new laws have absolutely nothing to do with MSP. That is literally true! Yet, he said that the government will ‘guarantee’ MSP to the farmers. It was a bizarre promise. How will the government know which farmer sold what produce to which purchaser? If the intention was to make MSP mandatory in every private transaction, why did the Bills not contain a clause that the price paid to the farmer by the purchaser shall not be less than the notified MSP?

I FOUND the following data (somewhat outdated) from the National Sample Survey (*see table*).

PERCENTAGE OF FARMERS SELLING TO VARIOUS AGENCIES

Crop*	Local Private Trader	Mandis	Government Agency /Coop	Processor
Paddy	65.94	19.46	9.49	1.70
Wheat	58.42	34.78	6.79	0.27
Maize	69.21	29.66	0.56	0.28
Mustard	54.61	45.83	0.44	0.22
Chana	52.82	46.80	0.38	0.00
Soyabean	52.15	46.72	1.36	0.11
Urad	73.96	25.45	0.80	0.00
Arhar	50.78	47.88	0.22	0.00
Groundnut	65.75	27.83	3.82	0.00

*Sold in July-Dec 2012 or Jan-June 2013

Notwithstanding the Agriculture Produce Market Committees (APMC) Acts of various states operating for a few decades, most farmers sold their produce to *local* private traders. In the cases of paddy and wheat, nearly 60 per cent of the farmers fell in this category. Official data show that only 1.24 crore paddy farmers (in 2019-20) and 43.35 lakh wheat farmers (in 2020-21) availed of MSP.

APMC: MERITS AND DEMERITS

The reasons are obvious. Eighty-five per cent of farmers have small holdings — less than one hectare — and have lit-

tle surplus to sell. Distant APMC market yards are not an economically viable option: the cost of bagging, loading, transporting and unloading the few bags of grain, waiting at the APMC, paying the fees, and collecting the price in two days are beyond the means of small farmers. The local trader is a dependable partner to buy the produce at the farm gate and pay at once, even if the price is lower than the MSP.

APMC market yards are, however, important players in states like Punjab and Haryana where the marketable surplus is huge. Of the two states’ production of paddy and wheat, 75 per cent is procured by government agencies. In other states, it has been argued by some scholars that the market yards are inadequate in number and too distant for the farmers. For example, in Tamil Nadu, there are 283 market yards in 36 districts, an average of eight per district, and the total turnover in 2019-20 was just Rs 129.76 crore. There are 326 market yards in Maharashtra and, on average, the farmer must travel 25 kilometres.

Undoubtedly, the APMC Acts restrict free trade in agricultural produce, but the market yards serve as safety nets.

In Punjab and Haryana, the fees collected at the market yards contribute significantly to the state’s revenues which are applied to develop agricultural and rural infrastructure. Nevertheless, I hold the view that the APMC Acts must, in course of time, yield in favour of free trade enabled by multiple, easily accessible markets.

CONGRESS MANIFESTO VS BJP BILLS

That is what the Congress manifesto promised in 2019. It promised to “promote Farmer Producer Companies/ Organizations to enable farmers to access inputs, technology and markets” and to “establish farmers’ markets with adequate infrastructure and support in large villages and small towns to enable the farmer to bring his/her produce and freely market the same.”

The soul of the Congress’s promise was the establishment of thousands of markets in the country. Such markets may be established by the state government, the local panchayat, a cooperative society or a private licensed operator. They will be lightly regulated and it will be stipulated that in every transaction in the market a price *not less than* MSP shall be paid. The proposal to repeal APMC Acts would be a natural sequel to the establishment of multiple, easily accessible markets.

On the contrary, what the Modi government has done is to weaken the safety net (of MSP) and dilute public procurement. Farmers are protesting on the streets because they fear that the MSP will be done away with. State governments are worried that Public Procurement and PDS will be jeopardised. Once the three pillars of food security are undermined, the food security system that is being created under the National Food Security Act, 2013, will collapse.

The Modi government’s laws do not

create thousands of alternative markets. Instead, they will allow contract farming and open the door for the entry of corporates and, eventually, cartels.

Against such powerful purchasers, the small/medium farmers would not have equal bargaining or contracting power and the convoluted dispute resolution mechanism, under the new laws, will ruin the farmer.

ANOTHER EMPTY PROMISE

The Agriculture Minister told Parliament that the new laws have absolutely nothing to do with MSP. That is literally true! Yet, he said that the government will ‘guarantee’ MSP to the farmers. It was a bizarre promise. How will the government know which farmer sold what produce to which purchaser? If the intention was to make MSP mandatory in every private transaction, why did the Bills not contain a clause that the price paid to the farmer by the purchaser *shall not be less than the notified MSP*?

Just as demonetisation was a disaster and economic mismanagement since 2017-18 is a continuing catastrophe, the two farm Bills that will become law will debilitate the Indian farming community and the agricultural economy. They also dealt a blow to states’ rights and federalism. Apparently, the Modi government believes that it can fool all the people all the time.

Fifth
COLUMN

TAVLEEN SINGH

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Vultures all

DID YOU watch the vultures’ feast on our news channels last week? It made me sick, but no matter which channel I turned to for news, I was forced to watch the feeding frenzy. Forced to watch gangs of so-called reporters reporting from ‘ground zero’ on every move that famous Bollywood stars made after being summoned by the Narcotics Control Bureau.

I am outside her hotel in Goa. Now I am tracking her on her way to the airport. That is her Mercedes car. This is an exclusive shot. Speculation, innuendo and half-truths were used to attack women whose guilt is unproven. These ‘reporters’ did not hide their schadenfreude. And, they made it clear that they believed NCB officials were doing a fine job. They praised them for trying to stop big traffickers from bringing drugs into India. They did not ask why the NCB has so far not been able to catch a single big trafficker in decades.

What worried me most was that they did not ask why the NCB was leaking private conversations to news channels. They did not ask if it was wrong for the Indian State to permit its officers to cross all the borders of privacy. These ‘reporters’ were so drunk with their power to smear Bollywood’s biggest stars that they could not be bothered with such things as fulfilling their primary role, which is to curb the powers of the State. If they had, they would have noticed that in the times of this pandemic when the State already has more power than it should to interfere in our private lives, it is the duty of the media to try and stop it from crossing boundaries.

They forgot that in a democracy like India the right to privacy is not a privilege but a right. Even for Bollywood stars. As someone who was sickened by this vultures’ feast, I consider it my duty to ask the questions that I did not hear asked, except by a couple of anchors on English channels who seemed to become as sickened by what they saw as I am.

The question that troubles me deeply is why the NCB thought it was within its rights to make public private conversations taken from WhatsApp chats. Had these conversations been between our own Pablo Escobar and some other drug lord there would be some merit in making these WhatsApp chats public. But, between a famous actress and her friend?

If the NCB thinks that these conversations will stand up as evidence in a court of law then it should be in that court that we should have first heard them. To make them public was wrong and makes the NCB’s motives suspect. Did they want the world to know that some of the biggest stars in Bollywood were being summoned by them? Did they want the media feeding frenzy that they knew would ensue? What did they want to achieve?

Such suspicions arise because BJP spokesmen popped up on every prime-time show to make it clear that at the highest echelons of the government of India there was support for this ‘cleanup’ in Bollywood. Some of these spokesmen adopted tones of deep disapproval as they pontificated on how people who were role models for India’s youth should not indulge in breaking the law. When it was pointed out that in most cases the only evidence that they did actually break the law were WhatsApp chats, they said, as if they had inside knowledge, that the NCB was hauling actresses in for questioning because it hoped through them to get to the big dealers. Really?

If this is what is happening then the NCB is behaving like an amateur sleuth. Does it not know how many layers separate the big international drug traffickers from the lowly dealers who operate in Mumbai?

In any case what is most worrying about the NCB’s activities is that they seem to believe that they have the right to trample roughshod over the right to privacy of people who have not so far been caught with an illegal quantity of drugs.

The only reason they have been summoned to the Bureau’s offices for questioning is private conversations on private cellphones that happened long ago and whose context we do not know. It is hard to believe that these conversations would persuade a judge to send Deepika Padukone, Sara Ali Khan or Rakul Preet Singh to jail, but what has been achieved is their public humiliation.

If any of them at some point finds the courage to take on the mighty Indian State, they would be well within their rights to sue the NCB for criminal defamation. What would be easier and less dangerous is to take some of our primetime anchors to court for libel. But, as we know, the libel law in India is weak and it takes so long for justice to be done that by the time the ‘law takes its course’ people have often forgotten the crime.

As a veteran member of the media, what I would like to put on record is that the vultures’ feast at which I saw people who call themselves journalists partake turned my stomach. Shame on all of you. Shame on the owners of these news channels. Shame on them for allowing their channels to be used as weapons of the State.

inside
TRACK

COOMI KAPOOR



MISSING IN ACTION

The short, stormy Monsoon Session of Parliament was noteworthy for the number of prominent missing MPs. Even Prime Minister Narendra Modi appeared in the two Houses briefly at the beginning and end of the Session. Amit Shah stayed away throughout because of health reasons. Rahul Gandhi sought leave of absence to accompany his mother for her much-delayed annual check-up to the US. Sonia Gandhi’s appointment with doctors was fixed in advance and Priyanka Vadra could not escort her mother since she was in quarantine after a domestic help in her household contracted Covid-19. Other missing MPs included Manmohan Singh, Ambika Soni, P Chidambaram, Kapil Sibal and Minister Ram Vilas Paswan. But the absence from India which has triggered the biggest buzz is not of a politician, but a leading Mumbai industrialist who has been in UK for a while.

POLITICAL DOUBLESPEAK

The Opposition played into the ruling party’s hands by creating ugly scenes in front of the Deputy Chairperson of the Rajya Sabha, providing the government with an excuse not to have a division on the farm reform Bills. Contrary to the impression that the NDA was running away from a head count because it lacked the numbers, the ruling party had a clear majority, even if its normal supporters, the Akali Dal, TDP and BJD deserted. The Bills had the tacit backing of the NCP, Shiv Sena, AIADMK and YSR Congress, but because of political reasons, they did not want to be seen voting in favour of the Bills for fear of alienating some of their constituents. The BJP also benefited thanks to the large number of absentees from the Opposition because of the Covid scare. Nine Trinamool Congress Rajya Sabha MPs stayed back in Kolkata and at least four elderly Congress MPs took permission from their parties not to attend.

NOT SO TWEET

Pollster Prashant Kishor holds such sway in West Bengal that Trinamool veterans are getting restless. Kishor’s band of young, inexperienced hired hands assumes that it can even select candidates for next year’s

Assembly polls. His Internet army has taken over the social media accounts of Trinamool leaders and is busy tweeting in their names. Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar smelt a rat when Rajya Sabha MP Dinesh Trivedi abused him in uncharacteristically foul language on Twitter. Dhankhar tweeted back that he suspected the handiwork of mercenaries from Kishor’s IPAC organisation. Similarly, Trivedi’s tweet in Hindi, charging Prime Minister Modi of ignorance on agriculture, is suspect since Trivedi tweets generally in English.

ENEMY WITHIN?

In the recent Congress party re-organisation, many of the 23 party seniors who signed the letter to Sonia Gandhi asking for introspection into the party’s functioning were unceremoniously downgraded. However, one signatory who bucked the trend was Mukul Wasnik. He was appointed to the powerful six-member committee which takes decisions in Sonia’s absence, along with Ahmed Patel and K C Venugopal. Wasnik was also made general secretary in charge of Madhya Pradesh and a member of the CWC. Now some of his suspicious co-signatories wonder whether he was actually the enemy within.

DEFENSIVE TACTICS

The suggestion that the Enforcement Directorate too get involved in the case of journalist Rajeev Sharma, arrested on charges of spying for China, is surprising since until now only the Delhi Police was in charge of the probe, with inputs from the Intelligence Bureau. Some suspect the inquiry could go the way of the probe into Sushant Singh Rajput’s death, where the Narcotics Control Bureau has completely sidetracked the CBI investigations and launched a witch-hunt against Bollywood for alleged drug abuse. It is apprehended that the ED could end up harassing defence analysts who have adopted an independent line on the Indo-China border dispute.

BOSS’S THANKS

Generally those nominated for the coveted post of Executive Director of the World Bank are from the PMO or Finance Ministry and are favourites of the powers that be in Delhi. In a refreshing departure, Rajesh Khullar, Principal Secretary to the Haryana Chief Minister who was not even empanelled but has done admirable work at the grassroots, has been selected. Khullar’s appointment is thanks to the proximity of his boss Manohar Lal Khattar to Narendra Modi. Khullar was Khattar’s right hand man the last five years.

History
HEADLINE

HARISH DAMODARAN



THE INSTITUTION of ‘mandis’ is as old as markets where wholesale trading in primary produce has been taking place since time immemorial.

APMCs or Agricultural Produce Market Committees are of more recent vintage and the creation of Sir Chhotu Ram. In 1939, the legendary farmer leader, as Development Minister in the provincial government of his Unionist Party, got the Punjab Agricultural Produce Markets Act passed. It provided for the constitution of “market committees” having two-thirds farmer representation to oversee the functioning of mandis and curb malpractices by traders. This was complemented by another law that made the use of false or non-standard weights and scales in mandis a cognizable offence.

Thus, “mandis” became “APMC mandis”. In course of time, almost all states enacted their own APMC Acts to regulate mandis and outlaw any wholesale transactions in farm produce outside these market yards or “notified areas”. At last count, there were over 7,300 APMC mandis, both principal and sub-market yards, across India.

The origin of MSPs or minimum support prices is even newer. Its progenitor was an American, Dr Frank W Parker, who was the chief agriculturalist of a USAID (US Agency for International Development) mission to India and adviser to the Ministry of Food and Agriculture.

In a letter dated February 1959 to the then minister Ajit Prasad Jain, Parker pointed to the problem of low crop prices faced by farmers during harvest time. It deterred them from investing in good seeds, fertilisers and other productivity-boosting inputs. “One of the greatest economic incentives for production is a satisfactory and dependable level of prices,” he wrote, while recommending that the government “establish minimum or support prices for all major crops at least one year before harvest”.

But the man to have implemented Parker’s idea was C Subramaniam, who took over as Food and Agriculture Minister in June 1964. Like Chhotu Ram, a

The men behind APMC, MSP and procurement



(From left) C Subramaniam at an AICC session; Sir Chhotu Ram on a 1995 stamp; portrait of Frank Parker at PAU, Ludhiana. Express Archives/India Post, Gol/Gurmeet Singh

Jat, he too hailed from a peasant community, of Kongu Vellalar or Gounder, in western Tamil Nadu.

Subramaniam was clear that the adoption of Green Revolution technology — particularly the planting of the new semi-dwarf high-yielding varieties responsive to fertiliser and water application — required not only declaring MSPs in advance, but also ensuring farmers were paid these through effective government procurement.

One of the first things Subramaniam did was seek approval for the policy of an incentive price for farmers. There was heated debate over the paper he had prepared for the Cabinet. The opposition came from Finance Minister T T Krishnamachari, who was predictably concerned over the attendant fiscal and inflationary consequences. Ultimately, Subramaniam’s view prevailed, thanks to

support received from Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri. For a country leading a ship-to-mouth existence — cereal imports totalled over 19 million tonnes (mt) in 1965-66 and 1966-67, both drought years — there was little alternative.

Subramaniam was also instrumental in the founding of two major institutions, both in January 1965. The first was the Agricultural Prices Commission, which was renamed as the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices or CACP in 1985. It was tasked with recommending MSPs based on a detailed study of cultivation costs. The MSP was fixed for the first

time for wheat at Rs 54 per quintal in 1966-67 and hiked to Rs 70 and Rs 76 in the following two crop years.

The second one was the Food Corporation of India (FCI). Its role was to organise countrywide MSP-based procurement operations. In 1968, the FCI procured 6.8 mt of foodgrains, which rose to 13.3 mt by 1975-76. Much of this was done from APMC mandis during the few months of the post-harvest glut period when prices usually crashed.

Many harvests have passed since then. Between 1970-71 and 2019-20, the MSPs of wheat and common paddy have gone up from Rs 76 and Rs 51 per quintal to Rs 1,925 and Rs 1,815, respectively. In 2019-20, the FCI and state agencies procured a whopping 90.22 mt — 38.99 mt of wheat and 51.23 mt of milled rice — whose aggregate MSP value was roughly Rs 2,15,000 crore.

The APMC mandis may not have measured up to Chhotu Ram’s expectations; middlemen have found ways around to continue to keep farmers under their thumbs. But farmers, especially in Punjab and Haryana, know the value of the institutions that the Jat icon and Subramaniam bequeathed. They have shown it in the protests against the Narendra Modi government’s recently enacted laws that ostensibly aim to liberate them from mandi intermediaries. The APMCs, MSP and FCI are lifelines for them, while the *arhatiya* is n’t quite an implacable class enemy.

The one man less remembered today is Frank W Parker. The Punjab Agricultural University campus at Ludhiana has a 96-room guest house named after him. Parker House more recently also served as a Covid quarantine facility for students and NRIs returning back home.

My ISOLATION

A WEEKLY WINDOW INTO LIVES OF INDIA’S NEWSMAKERS AND THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON THEM

I’m still targeting Tokyo Olympics... once this is all over

What precautions are you taking to stay Covid-free?

I stay at home as far as possible. I hardly meet outsiders.

Have you got yourself tested for Covid-19?

Yes, twice.

What has your routine been like in self-isolation?

My daily routine remained the same. I train twice a day; morning and evening. I do more household work than before. I cook, clean, and spend as much time possible with my children. I have also been participating in online projects, webinars and video shootings sometimes.

I also attended the Monsoon Session of Parliament.



Illustration: Suvajit Dey

Just a few days before the first phase of the coronavirus lockdown was imposed in March, ace boxer *Mary Kom, 37*, defeated Irish Magno of Philippines to seal her place in the Tokyo Olympics. The six-time world champion and Rajya Sabha MP says she has been training hard at home and wants to train more once the pandemic is past

What kind of gloves and mask do you use?

I use what my husband buys for us.

While interacting with people at work, what precautions do you take?

I have been avoiding crowds and visitors. While interacting with people, I make sure I keep a distance. And the mask is a must.

How long have you gone without seeing your family?

I am fortunate that I have been with my family since the first phase of the coronavirus lockdown was implemented.

Do you take any specific precautions while you travel?

Since March, I have cancelled all my

travel plans.

How much time do you spend in front of a screen?

I am not sure, but it is definitely much more than earlier. My screen time has increased almost five times.

How do you keep your mind off the pandemic?

I just try and stay busy with various activities, mostly chores and my training.

What is the first thing you want to do when the pandemic is past?

There are a lot of things on my wish list. I am still targeting the Tokyo Olympics, and so the first thing I would do is to get involved in training completely, with as much sparing as possible.

THE SUNDAY EXPRESS, SEPTEMBER 27, 2020

8 ECONOMY

INDIA GOT \$83 BN AS MONEY SENT FROM WORKERS ABROAD LAST YEAR

Covid-19, oil price shock may lead to remittances falling 20% this year: Expert

ANIL SASI

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 26

INDIA IS likely to see a fall of at least 20 per cent in remittances from overseas workers this year, the biggest projected drop since at least 1980, according to Dilip Rath, World Bank lead economist on migration and remittances.

India, the world's top recipient of remittance transfers and a leading supplier of labour to West Asia, got \$83 billion as money sent from workers abroad last year — or nearly 3 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product — significantly higher than the \$49 billion that came into the country by way of Foreign Direct Investment in 2019. Kerala and Punjab are two of

the largest remittance recipients among Indian states, and are likely to bear the brunt of the fall in remittance flows, while others such as Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu could also be hit, Rath, who heads the global migration think tank KNO-MAD, told *The Sunday Express*.

"Since Kerala and Punjab are two of the largest remittance recipients, a large number of households in these states are likely to experience disruptions to their financial lifelines, affecting their ability to consume, afford healthcare, and education. We do not have state-level data on remittance flows and it is difficult to be precise. In fact, other states like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu also have large numbers of migrants abroad and

E. Ripple effect likely

THE DIP in foreign remittances will have a direct impact on household savings and consumption expenditure, which is likely to add to the Covid-linked stress on the economy, and prolong the recovery process.

probably receive large amounts of remittances," Rath said.

World Bank data projects that flows of remittances from Europe and the United States are likely to

be weaker than those from the six GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) countries.

According to Fitch Ratings, the pandemic and oil price shock have driven sharp economic contractions and fiscal deteriorations worldwide, including in the Gulf region. Migrant workers are likely to bear the brunt of job losses, and the sectors in which they work are likely to be particularly affected. Construction pipelines are being truncated due to spending cuts and the hospitality sector is struggling from the fall in global tourism. Remittances to the Asia-Pacific region will drop 12 per cent in the second half of 2020 compared with the same period last year, Fitch Ratings said in a report.

While oil prices have staged a

partial recovery from the lows it hit in April, the impact of Covid-19 on the global economy and consumer behaviors has reduced long-term world oil demand by 2.5 million barrels per day, according to S&P Global Platts Analytics.

Given that the GCC region is particularly vulnerable to falling oil revenues as the Covid-led recession gets more prolonged, job cuts are likely to impact foreigners first in that region.

The fall in remittances, according to Rath, will add to the fiscal difficulty of states as households will either not have the additional income through remittances or will receive lower amounts. Therefore, he said, with consumption curtailed, there will be both direct and indirect impact on tax revenues of states.

Remittance dip: Kerala to seek nod to issue 'diaspora bonds' to tap into savings of non-residents

ANIL SASI & LIZ MATHEW

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 26

KERALA, WHICH has close to 2 million migrant workers in the West Asian region and is among those worst hit on account of the Covid-19 -linked drop in global remittances, is gearing up to seek regulatory approvals shortly to issue 'diaspora bonds'.

While the state government, in collaboration with the World Bank, has been toying with the idea of issuing these specialised bonds, the pandemic has only added to the urgency to launch the bonds. These bonds will tap into the savings of non-resident Keralites, a majority of whom are in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, where their deposits in banks earn near-zero per cent interest.

"KIIIF will issue the bonds... They will have to take necessary clearances from RBI, etc. The pandemic has only added urgency to the bonds," Kerala Finance Minister T M Thomas Isaac told *The Sunday Express*. KIIIF, or the Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board, is a statutory body under the state government's Finance Department and has issued a tender inviting a consortium of lead managers for the

WILL HELP TO MOBILISE FINANCIAL RESOURCES

■ These bonds will tap into the savings of non-resident Keralites, a majority of whom are in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, where their deposits in banks earn near-zero per cent interest.

■ The diaspora bond will help in mobilising financial resources for development in Kerala.

proposed issue.

"The World Bank is actively engaged with the government of Kerala to build resilience to natural disasters since the great floods of 2018. The (Kerala) government... this year issued an order designating KIIIF as the nodal agency to issue a diaspora bond. There was also a decision to issue the diaspora bond in rupee terms and to market it among non-resident Keralites and non-resident Indians, most of whom are in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries," according to Dilip Rath, World Bank lead economist on migration and remit-

tances.

The diaspora bond will, alongside mobilising financial resources for development in Kerala, will also build a long-term bridge to its diasporas abroad, who are a key stakeholder in the state's development efforts, Rath said.

While remittances data by states in India is not generally available, Rath said that going by Kerala migration surveys and World Bank staff estimates, remittance flows to Kerala in 2018 was estimated at \$13 billion and around \$14 billion in 2019.

Kerala and Punjab are two of the largest remittance recipients among Indian states, where a large number of households rely on remittances and a drop in inflows are likely to result in disruptions to their financial lifelines, affecting their ability to consume, afford healthcare, and education.

India, the world's top recipient of remittance transfers, took in \$83 billion as remittances from workers abroad last year, and is projected to see a 20 per cent drop in remittances this year.

Kerala, which accounted for over 15 per cent of India's total inflows, could be among the worst impacted states on account of the drop in global remittance inflows.

BRIEFLY

Scrip-wise reporting in I-T returns

New Delhi: The Finance Ministry on Saturday said there is no requirement of scrip-wise reporting in the I-T returns form for day trading or short-term sale/purchase of listed shares.

Maintenance of vehicle documents through IT portal

New Delhi: The government on Saturday said maintenance of vehicular documents, including driving licences and e-challans, will be done through an information technology portal from October 1, 2020.

Trai drops probe against Vi on priority plan

New Delhi: Trai has decided to drop proceedings against Vodafone Idea Ltd (now re-branded as Vi) in priority plan matter after the telco withdrew contentious claims on faster speed and modified its offering.

REC gets nod to raise borrowing limit

New Delhi: REC on Saturday said its shareholders have approved a proposal to raise the overall borrowing limit to Rs 4.5 lakh crore.

Forex reserves rise \$3.37 bn to record high

New Delhi: The country's foreign exchange reserves increased by \$3.37 billion to touch a life-time high of \$545.038 billion in the week ended September 18, the RBI data showed. **PTI**

AMID COVID-19

'CFO optimism about financial conditions falls to record low'

The optimism level among chief financial officers about the country's financial and macro-economic conditions during Q3 this year has witnessed a decline of 15 per cent and touched a record low level, as per a Dun & Bradstreet survey



15%

decline on a quarter-on-quarter basis to 74.2 during Q3 2020, bringing the Dun & Bradstreet Composite CFO Optimism Index to a record low.

METHODOLOGY:

The survey covered nearly 350 CFOs, who were asked a set of questions regarding the financial performance of their companies and the overall macroeconomic scenario for the corporate sector in the forthcoming period

REASONS:

- The steady rise in total infected cases
- Spill-over effects of the lockdown measures have undermined the optimism levels

■ Psychological impact of Covid is having a bearing on the confidence levels of both businesses and consumers alike

■ Lack of space for demand stimulus, coupled with subdued consumer demand have constrained the pace of economic activity

LOWEST IN 7 YEARS

As per the survey, the macroeconomic scenario sub-index value at 87.5 is the lowest in nearly seven years, as the index was at its lowest value of 77.5 during Q4 2013. The financial performance sub-index is at its lowest value of 67.1 during the third quarter this year

Source: Dun & Bradstreet/PTI

OUTLOOK:

The percentage of CFOs expecting an increase in the

operating margin (21 per cent) and liquidity position (20 per cent) of their companies is the

lowest ever. Besides, CFOs indicating a need for raising short-term funds (22 per cent)

and long-term funds (15 per cent) is also at the lowest level, as per the survey

More AI pilots move HC against airline over contract termination, salary dues

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 26

A GROUP of senior Air India commanders and co-pilots have filed a petition in Delhi High Court against the airline for terminating their contracts and not paying their salaries and flying related allowances since April 1 this year.

According to the petition, a copy of which was reviewed by *The Sunday Express*, the pilots who have filed the petition had retired and were appointed by Air India on a contractual basis. The pilots, whose contracts were terminated by the airline following a Covid-related suspension, have claimed that "management could terminate the contract of the petitioners only on account of unsatisfactory discharge of duties, unsatisfactory conduct, dishonesty, fraud or other act which in view of the Company was contrary to its interest but not otherwise".

"It is submitted that even in case of the discontinuation of service, the management is required to give either one month's

At least five other pleas have been filed in the Delhi High Court by various Air India pilots who were suspended and subsequently terminated by the airline on account of Covid-related stress

notice or an amount equivalent one month's fixed consideration," the pilots noted in their petition.

At least five other pleas have been filed in the Delhi High Court by various Air India pilots who were suspended and subsequently terminated by the airline on account of Covid-related stress being faced by the aviation sector.

For the earlier batch of petitions, Air India has already filed a reply saying that it has terminated the services of over 40 pilots, who tendered resignations but later withdrew the same, as substitutes for them were engaged.

Will govt have ₹80,000 crore for distribution of vaccine, asks SII CEO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

PUNE, SEPTEMBER 26

ADAR POONAWALLA, chief executive officer of Serum Institute of India (SII) which is producing the potential coronavirus vaccine developed by Oxford University, asked on Saturday if the government will have Rs 80,000 crore available to buy and distribute the vaccine.

"Quick question; will the government of India have 80,000

crores available, over the next one year? Because that's what @MoHFW_INDIA needs, to buy and distribute the vaccine to everyone in India," he tweeted.

This is the next "challenge" we need to tackle, he said, also tagging the prime minister's office. "I ask this question because we need to plan and guide, vaccine manufacturers both in India and overseas to service the needs of our country in terms of procurement and distribution," Poonawalla added.

NPPA caps price of liquid medical oxygen, medical oxygen cylinders

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 26

TO ENSURE availability of medical oxygen in the country at a reasonable price amidst the Covid-19 pandemic, the national drug pricing regulator NPPA has capped the price of medical oxygen cylinders and liquid medical oxygen for six months, the government said on Saturday.

The present situation of Covid-19 has resulted in increased demand of medical oxygen up to almost four times from 750 MT per day to around 2,800 MT per day, the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers said in a statement.

The issue related to availability, including pricing of oxygen, has been under the continued consideration of Empowered Group 2, Government of India.

CAG HAD TAKEN EXCEPTION TO 'SHORT-CREDITING'

'No diversion of GST cess funds: FinMin'

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 26

THE FINANCE Ministry on Saturday asserted there was no 'diversion' from the GST compensation cess fund during FY18-FY19 as reported by sections of the media, adding, "even the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) hasn't said so". According to a ministry source, there was only temporary retention of the excess cess in the Consolidated Fund of India under Article 266 of the Constitution, pending reconciliation, which usually happens by the end of June in the subsequent financial year.

The source pointed out that, "the amount collected under compensation cess fund have been regularly and fully distributed to states as per their dues and budgetary provisions and by the

As per a source, there was only temporary retention of the excess cess in the Consolidated Fund of India

end of July 2020 everything has been accounted for and released".

The CAG in its audit report placed in Parliament recently highlighted 'short-crediting' of cess collections totalling Rs 47,272 crore to the GST Compensation Fund during FY18-FY19, and said this was in violation of the GST Compensation Cess Act, 2017.

The auditor further noted that "the amount by which the cess was short-credited was also retained in the Consolidated Fund of India and became available for use for purposes other than what

was provided in the Act."

Noting the finance ministry's defence, presented to it in February 2020 that the proceeds of cess collected and not transferred to the designated public account would be transferred in subsequent year, the CAG said short crediting of cess collected during the year led to overstatement of revenue receipts and understatement of fiscal deficit for the year. "Further, any transfer in the subsequent year would become an appropriation from the resources of that year and would require parliamentary authorisation," it noted.

The CAG also took exception to the finance ministry transferring the cess proceeds to the compensation fund as 'grant in aid', rather than as 'other fiscal services', as the compensation is the state's 'right' not a 'grant in aid'. **FE**

TOTAL MOTOR BIZ PREMIUM

₹22,253 cr

■ According to data released by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai), total motor business premium fell to Rs 22,253 crore in the five months ended August 31, 2020 from Rs 26,406 crore in the year-ago period.

were break-in insurances and were due for renewals. At Digit, we had seen a 500 per cent growth in policy issuance especially in the two wheeler segment."

However, with relaxation by the state governments, this effect faded away in October 2019 itself. Now with the pandemic and lockdown restrictions in select cities, the renewal ratio of this business is expected to remain low. "Apart from this due to the MV Vehicle Act, the minimum claim size has increased and we expect it to automatically increase by 5 per cent each year," Agarwal said.

"Lesser people have renewed their vehicle insurance this year... customers are of the opinion that the vehicle may not be used for some time in the future due to lockdown or the ongoing Corona scenario. And this majorly happened in Q1. Q2 seems better than Q1 for sure. Brand new vehicle sales took a huge hit in Q1 and have started to pick up now," said

Sajja Praveen Chowdary, Motor Policy Head, BusinessBazaar.com.

"From August 1, IRDAI has asked to discontinue the 3+3 and 5+5 motor policies for brand new vehicles. As a result the ticket size of insurance policies for brand new vehicles has taken a bit of hit and this impact will be seen in the coming months as well," Chowdary said.

The month of September is also expected to show a drop as last year a lot of people purchased due to MV Act and fines. This year many customers from this segment aren't renewing their policies is the absence of policing on that front.

IRDAI data reveals that health insurance premium income rose 12.97 per cent to Rs 22,903 crore in the April-August period, overtaking auto business as the largest insurance segment. Crop insurance business rose 21.83 per cent to Rs 10,819 crore. The total premium garnered by the general insurance segment rose to Rs 73,968 crore from Rs 71,406 crore a year ago despite the pandemic.

In the crop insurance segment, state-owned Agriculture Insurance Corp (AIC) has reported a 39 per cent increase in premium income to Rs 4,681 crore during the five-month period. India's largest insurer New India Assurance did not participate in the crop insurance business during the period and reported nil premium income.

Anil Ambani tells UK court he leads disciplined, not lavish lifestyle

PRESSTrust OF INDIA

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 26

RELIANCE GROUP chairman Anil Ambani has told a UK court that suggestions of his lavish tastes are speculative because his lifestyle is "very disciplined" as he gave evidence in a dispute involving a loan agreement with three Chinese banks.

"My needs are not vast and my lifestyle is very disciplined," Ambani told the London court.

Asked about his fleet of luxury cars and other references to his lavish lifestyle as the counsel for the banks cross-examined him, the Reliance Communications chief dismissed them as "speculative" media stories.

Around 3,500 US cos sue over Trump-imposed tariffs on Chinese goods

REUTERS

WASHINGTON, SEPTEMBER 26

ABOUT 3,500 US companies, including Tesla Inc, Ford Motor Co, Target Corp, Walgreen Co and Home Depot have sued the Trump administration in the last two weeks over the imposition of tariffs on more than \$300 billion in Chinese-made goods.

The suits, filed in the US Court of International Trade, named US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and the Customs and Border Protection agency and challenge what they call the unlawful escalation of the US trade war with China through the imposition of a third and fourth round of tariffs. The legal challenges from a wide variety of companies argue



US President Donald Trump in Jacksonville, Florida, on September 24. Reuters

the administration failed to impose tariffs within a required 12-month period and did not comply with administrative procedures.

The companies challenge the administration's "unbounded and unlimited trade war impacting billions of dollars in goods imported from China by US importers.

US tightens exports to China chipmaker SMIC, citing risk of military use

REUTERS

SHANGHAI/WASHINGTON, SEPTEMBER 26

THE UNITED States has imposed restrictions on exports to China's biggest chip maker SMIC after concluding there is an "unacceptable risk" equipment supplied to it could be used for military purposes.

Suppliers of certain equipment to Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corporation will now have to apply for individual export licenses, according to a letter from the Commerce Department dated Friday and seen by *Reuters*.

The latest move marks a shift in US policy from earlier

this year, when applicants seeking "military end user" licenses to sell to SMIC were told by the Commerce Department that the licenses weren't necessary, according to three people familiar with the matter.

SMIC said it had not received any official notice of the restrictions and said it has no ties with the Chinese military.

"SMIC reiterates that it manufactures semiconductors and provides services solely for civilian and commercial end-users and end-uses," SMIC said.

"The Company has no relationship with the Chinese military and does not manufacture for any military end-users or end-uses."



MEANWHILE

MINE-SNIFFING RAT GETS BRAVERY AWARD

The medal awarded Friday lauded the “lifesaving bravery and devotion to duty” for work detecting land mines in Cambodia. Its recipient: a rat named Magawa. Magawa is the first rat to receive the award—a gold medal bestowed by the People’s Dispensary for Sick Animals, a British charity. The rat has discovered 39 land mines and 28 pieces of unexploded ordnance.

TOPOF THE WORLD



A bust of Alfred Nobel at the Stockholm Concert Hall, where the ceremony is held. *Reuters*

SWEDEN

Less glitz, but Nobel Prizes will go ahead amid pandemic

THE WINNERS of this year’s Nobel Prizes will miss out on a swanky gala in Stockholm surrounded by royalty and Sweden’s glitterati, but 2020 will at least not be added to the war years when no awards were given. “When we were thinking about this in March and April this year, we were worried that it wouldn’t be possible to award any prizes at all,” Lars Heikensten, head of the Nobel Foundation that administers the prizes founded by dynamite inventor Alfred Nobel, told Reuters. Yet as the coronavirus pandemic rapidly enveloped much of the world earlier this year, that was far from certain. This year’s prizes will be announced starting October 5. **REUTERS**

HUNGARY

Banks, telecom services briefly hit by cyberattack

SOME HUNGARIAN banking and telecommunication services were briefly disrupted by a powerful cyber attack on Thursday launched from computer servers in Russia, China and Vietnam, telecoms firm Magyar Telekom said on Saturday. The event was a distributed-denial-of-service (DDoS) attack, a cyber attack in which hackers attempt to flood a network with unusually high volumes of data traffic in order to paralyse it. **REUTERS**

BELARUS

Minsk: Dozens of protesters held

BELARUSIAN SECURITY forces detained dozens of protesters on Saturday as crowds rallied in central Minsk accusing President Alexander Lukashenko of rigging last month’s election. One group of women chanted “Our president is Sveta!” — referring to opposition politician Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya who they say won the vote — before riot police dragged many of them into vans. Other protesters were arrested nearby. Belarus has been rocked by mass street protests since Lukashenko’s claim of a landslide victory in an August 9 vote. **REUTERS**

Trump selects Amy Coney Barrett to fill Ginsburg’s seat on US apex court

Nomination of conservative favourite will kick off unprecedented scramble to confirm her before polls

PETER BAKER & MAGGIE HABERMAN
WASHINGTON, SEPTEMBER 26

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump has selected Judge Amy Coney Barrett, 48, the favourite candidate of conservatives, to succeed Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and will try to force Senate confirmation before Election Day in a move that would significantly alter the ideological makeup of the Supreme Court for years.

Trump plans to announce Saturday that she is his choice, according to six people close to the process who asked not to be identified disclosing the decision in advance. As they often do, aides cautioned that Trump sometimes upends his own plans.

But he is not known to have interviewed any other candidates and came away from two days of meetings with Barrett this week impressed with a jurist he was told would be a female Antonin Scalia, referring to the justice she once clerked for. On Friday night, Barrett was photographed getting out of her car outside her home in South Bend, Indiana.

“I haven’t said it was her, but she is outstanding,” Trump told reporters who asked about Barrett’s imminent nomination



If confirmed to the Supreme Court, 48-year-old Amy Coney Barrett would shift the centre of gravity on the bench considerably to the right, giving conservatives 6 of 9 seats. *Reuters*

at Joint Base Andrews outside Washington after several news outlets reported on his choice.

The President’s political advisers hope the selection will energise his conservative political base in the thick of an election campaign in which he has for months been trailing former Vice President Joe Biden, his Democratic challenger.

The nomination will kick off an extraordinary scramble by Senate Republicans to confirm her for the court in the 38 days before the election on November 3, a scenario unlike any in American history. While other justices have been approved in presidential

election years, none has been voted on after July.

In picking Barrett, a conservative and a hero to the anti-abortion movement, Trump could hardly have found a more polar opposite to Ginsburg, a pioneering champion of women’s rights and leader of the liberal wing of the court. The appointment would shift the centre of gravity on the bench considerably to the right, giving conservatives six of the nine seats and potentially insulating them even against defections by Chief Justice John Roberts, who on a handful of occasions has sided with liberal justices. **NYT**

To conservatives, she has ‘perfect combination’ of attributes for the SC

ELIZABETH DIAS & ADAM LIPTAK
SEPTEMBER 26

IF JUDGE Amy Coney Barrett is confirmed to the Supreme Court, she would be the sitting justice with the least courtroom experience, but one viewed as a home run by conservative Christians and anti-abortion activists.

“She is the perfect combination of brilliant jurist and a woman who brings the argument to the court that is potentially the contrary to the views of the sitting women justices,” said Marjorie Dannenfelser, the president of an anti-abortion political group.

Liberal groups have been sounding the alarm over Barrett for two years because of concerns over how she might rule on abortion and the Affordable Care Act.

In the world of conservative judges, she has particularly strong credentials. Barrett began clerking for Justice Antonin Scalia 22 years ago, and her fel-

low clerks are quick to say she was his favourite. She graduated from Notre Dame Law School and joined the faculty in 2002, earning praise from colleagues as an astute scholar and jurist.

A devout Catholic, Barrett and her husband, Jesse Barrett, a former federal prosecutor who is now in private practice, have seven children.

She became an instant celebrity among the religiously conservative grass-roots in 2017, when Democratic lawmakers questioned her public statements and Catholicism during her confirmation hearing for the Seventh Circuit. “You have a long history of believing that your religious beliefs should prevail,” Senator Dianne Feinstein, Democrat of California, told her. “The dogma lives loudly within you.” The expression “the dogma lives loudly within you” was emblazoned on mugs and T-shirts in Catholic circles as a point of pride and defiance of what many on the right have called anti-Catholic bigotry. **NYT**



26 DIE IN UKRAINE MILITARY PLANE CRASH

A twin-turboprop Antonov-26, belonging to the Ukrainian air force, crashed and burst into flames Friday night while coming in for landing at the airport in Chuhuiv, about 400 kilometres east of Kyiv. The aircraft was carrying a crew of seven and 20 cadets of a military aviation school. 26 people died in the crash, with just one person surviving. The cause of the crash has not yet been determined. *AP*

Suspect in Paris knife attack admits he wanted to go after Charlie Hebdo: police

MATTHIAS BLAMONT
PARIS, SEPTEMBER 26

THE MAN believed to have attacked and wounded two people with a meat cleaver on Friday is cooperating with the police and said he had targeted weekly satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo*, a police source told Reuters.

The attack took place in front of a building where Islamist militants gunned down employees of *Charlie Hebdo* in 2015 because of the republication of cartoons depicting Prophet Mohammad.



2 people were injured in a knife attack near the former office of Charlie Hebdo in Paris on Friday. *Reuters*

It coincided with the start this month of the trial of 14 alleged accomplices in the *Charlie*

Hebdo attack. The gunmen behind that attack killed 12 people.

A judicial source said the suspect’s custody had been extended on Saturday morning. According to French law, he faces a formal investigation at the end of the process.

A suspected accomplice of the attacker was released in the early hours of Saturday while another person close to the suspected attacker and who could have been his former roommate in a hotel north of Paris has been arrested.

By midday Saturday, seven

people remained in custody including the suspected attacker.

Police quickly detained the man suspected of carrying out the attack next to the steps of an opera house about 500 metres away.

The suspected attacker was from Pakistan and arrived in France three years ago as an unaccompanied minor, Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin said.

A second suspect was detained moments after the attack and prosecutors were trying to establish his relation to the attacker. He was released free of charge, the source said. **REUTERS**

UNABLE TO FORM NON-PARTISAN GOVT

PM-designate of Lebanon resigns in blow to French plan

EDMUND BLAIR & RAYA JALABI
BEIRUT, SEPTEMBER 26

LEBANON’S PRIME minister-designate quit on Saturday after trying for almost a month to line up a non-partisan cabinet, dealing a blow to a French bid aimed at rallying sectarian leaders to tackle the worst crisis since the nation’s 1975-1990 civil war.

Mustapha Adib, former ambassador to Berlin, was picked on Aug. 31 to form a cabinet after President Emmanuel Macron intervened to secure a consensus on naming him. Under the French roadmap, the new government would take swift steps to tackle corruption and implement reforms needed to trigger billions of dollars of international aid to fix an economy that has been crushed by a mountain of debt.

The nation took a further knock when a huge explosion on Aug. 4 at Beirut port ruined a swathe of the capital.

Adib, a Sunni Muslim based on the sectarian system of power sharing, announced he was stepping down but said Lebanon must not abandon the French plan or squander Macron’s goodwill.

“I stress that this initiative must continue,” he said after meeting President Michel Aoun, a Christian. He wished his successor well in the “hard task” of forming a government.

Adib had sought to form a government of specialists in a nation where power is shared between Muslims and Christians and political loyalties tend to follow confessional lines. Politicians had promised Paris



Mustapha Adib

EXPLAINED
Sectarian concerns come to the fore

MACRON’S PLAN after the Beirut port blast initially had the support of a majority of Parliament, but as soon as PM-designate Adib began the task of trying to put a government together, sectarian interests derailed the process. The plan was to have a cabinet chosen not on the basis of sectarian politics, but on expertise in different fields. However, powerful sectarian groups such as Hezbollah and Amal insisted that they be allowed to name several ministers, including the finance minister, leading to the failure of Adib’s efforts to build a technocratic cabinet.

they would have a government by mid-September. But Adib’s efforts stumbled over how to make appointments, particularly the post of finance minister, who will have a key role in drawing up an economic rescue plan. **REUTERS**

US moves to restrict stay of Chinese journalists to 90 days

LALIT K JHA
WASHINGTON, SEPTEMBER 26

THE TRUMP Administration is seeking to restrict the stay of journalists from China in the US to just 90 days with the provision of another extension for a similar duration, according to a federal notification.

The move came amidst worsening of bilateral ties over a range of issues like the coronavirus pandemic, trade, Beijing’s increasing grip on Hong Kong and alleged human rights abuses against minorities in the Xinjiang province.

The proposal of the Department of Homeland Security is part of the fixed time limit on visas of students, researchers and foreign journalists in the US.

While the time limit for foreign journalists in general has been restricted to 240 days and another extension of a similar period, those for a journalist from China would be issued a I visa by the United States just for 90 days, as per the federal notification issued on Friday.

Stake holders have 30 days to respond to the federal notification before it can be enforced.

Foreign nationals travelling on a passport issued by China or Hong Kong would be issued I

visa — which is the category for a foreign journalist — may be admitted until the “activities or assignments consistent with the I classification” are completed, not to exceed 90 days, the notification said.

Passport holders from Macau Special Administrative Region have been given exception.

The extension for Chinese journalists is also for 90 days only.

Foreign journalists and their dependents would have to leave the country immediately on expiry of their I visa or denial of their extension application.

Previously, foreign journalists were admitted in the US for the duration of their employment.

In March, the State Department asked Chinese media outlets to reduce their number of staff in the US.

Four Chinese State-run media outlets — Xinhua News Agency, China Global Television Network, China Radio International and China Daily — were asked to reduce their total staff of 160 Chinese nationals to 100.

In June, the US designated four top state-run Chinese media houses as “foreign missions”, terming them as “propaganda” outlets “controlled” by the ruling Communist Party of China. **PTI**

SHAMSEA ALIZADA’S STORY IS A REMINDER OF ADVANCES IN GIRLS’ EDUCATION IN AFGHANISTAN, AND THEIR VULNERABILITY

Her study centre was bombed, she still topped national university exam

FATIMA FAIZI & MUJIB MASHAL
KABUL, SEPTEMBER 26

SHAMSEA ALIZADA’S story could so easily have ended when she was just 15.

A coal miner’s daughter whose family had moved all around Afghanistan seeking safety and the chance for her and her siblings to get a good education, Alizada was among the lucky who evaded the suicide bombing that killed dozens of her fellow students at a Kabul tutoring centre two years ago.

But if it was luck that saved Alizada, now 17, it was resilience and hard work that made her a national inspiration when it was announced on television Thursday that she had achieved the highest score out of nearly 200,000 students on Afghanistan’s national university entrance exam. Her mother saw it and gave her the happy news personally.

“I thought she was kidding. But when I entered the room, I saw the brightest smile on my mother’s face,” Alizada said. “I have seen her smiling, but yesterday’s smile was something else. Her smile was a gift and made my

day. It was better than gaining the highest score in the country.”

A generation ago, she would probably never have gotten the chance. Under Taliban rule, girls were prevented from going to school. It is the success of Alizada and young Afghans like her that have provided one of the few bright spots in the decades of war and unrealised Western goals since: More girls are not only going to school, they are also starting to translate that into social mobility.

It is not lost on her or her family that their joyful moment is also a critical one for their



Shamsea Alizada, 17, received the highest score in Afghanistan on the national university entrance exam. *NYT*

country. Negotiators for the Afghan government and the Taliban are engaged in talks seeking an end to the war, trying to shape a power-sharing government that can keep peace.

Around the country, Afghan women are worried that it could also mean a return to repression. “We have been through a lot,” Alizada said. “I hope the Taliban let the Afghan women live their dreams. We don’t want to be limited.”

Alizada was a junior student at a tutoring centre that prepared underprivileged Afghans for the country’s competitive

university entrance exam when a suicide bomber walked into a lecture hall packed with more than 200 older students and detonated his explosive vest.

Half of the students in the room were killed or wounded, and Alizada lost friends and young women she looked up to. A centre that incubated a universal dream — a good education as the ticket out of poverty and oppression — was turned into a scene of carnage, the algebra equations on the whiteboard covered in blood.

That kind of violence keeps ending young, hopeful Afghan lives every day, curtailing the

dreams of women and minorities even before the Taliban can start imposing terms. Extremists in Afghanistan, in essence, control both sides of that equation — keeping up the violence to help their position in talks now, while holding to their goal of a return to an unbending Islamic rule later.

The Taliban’s negotiators have remained vague on where exactly they stand on women’s education now, offering little detail but to say that they respect women’s right to education and work “according to Islamic Shariah” — a caveat many women fear leaves their gains vulnerable. **NYT**



SPOTLIGHT

The Pied Piper

On social media, our children are not the consumers, they are the products on sale

BOOKS

- Review of S Jaishankar's *The India Way: Strategies For An Uncertain World*
- Review of Karishma Upadhyay's *Parveen Babi: A Life*



MARILYN KINGWILL

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE FOR PROTEST

Long before Belarus's streets erupted in anger, a theatre group had been exiled for its dogged resistance to the Lukashenko regime. Why the Belarus Free Theatre remains a voice of dissent

Dipanita Nath

ON JANUARY 3, 2011, troops in Belarus surrounded the international airport in Minsk, from where a group of theatre artistes was to travel to the US. Natalia Kaliada and Nikolai Khalezin, founders of the company, Belarus Free Theatre (BFT), had been arrested and warned several times for creating works critical of President Alexander Lukashenko yet their new production, *Being Harold Pinter*, featuring testimonies of political prisoners, was scheduled to be performed in New York. All the president's men were at the airport to stop the duo but they never showed up to collect their boarding passes. "We had left two days before. We were smuggled out of the country in an operation that involved three types of transportation. It was 20 minutes past midnight, as revellers celebrated the passing of 2010 into 2011, when I saw Belarus for the last time," says Kaliada. BFT is one of the most wanted theatre groups in the world, the only one in Europe banned on political grounds. Kaliada and Khalezin have been declared enemies of the state on national television, accused of spreading public disorder and now live in exile in London. "The notion of artists struggling against an oppressive state is always inspiring... But theatre professionals also praise BFT for consistently producing work that is moving and powerful, and not agitprop," said Larry Rohter in *The New York Times* in 2011. BFT, which celebrates its 15th anniversary this year, has created 46 plays that have been performed in over 40 countries to five-star reviews by prominent critics. In Belarus, attending their shows is illegal but the group performs every single day of the year in secret locations such as warehouses, cafes, private homes and forests, with a 50-seat venue selling out in less than half-hour. Their admirers include British playwright Tom Stoppard, former Czech president and playwright Vaclav Havel and Harold Pinter. "Our plays are about peaceful resistance because we are deeply inspired by the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi," says Kaliada. The philosophy of non-violence is integral to Belarus, whose brutal past bleeds into every family history. More than a quarter of the population was decimated by the Nazis and mass murders continued under Joseph Stalin. The fall of the Soviet Union in 1988



KOLYA KUPRICH

AGAINST THE GRAIN

(Top) Natalia Kaliada and Nikolai Khalezin, founders of Belarus Free Theatre; an underground performance of one of their plays in Minsk

brought a few years of freedom before Lukashenko, elected president in 1994, turned Belarus into "the last true dictatorship in central Europe". Today, cities, towns and even small villages in Belarus have risen against Lukashenko through peaceful marches. The protesters allege that the August 9 election was rigged to ensure that the president, who has been in power for 26 years, stays on. In the capital, Minsk, almost 7,000 people were detained on the first day. Since then, thousands of people, especially women and students, have been marching as riot police greet them with water cannons, prison vans and rubber pellets. As protests continued for the second month, Kaliada took time out for a Zoom interview from a secret address in London. Excerpts:

What price have you paid for dissent?

My younger daughter was three when police came to our home and she asked them, 'Have you come to arrest my mum?' She is 20 now and she is still afraid when somebody knocks at the door. I tell her, 'You are in

London now and all this happened in your childhood. We have been trying to create an illusion of safety while we are living a nightmare.' She said, 'I can't help it. I remember every single KGB raid and all the police raids.' I know that fear is now a part of her life.

How did you come into theatre?

My family is from theatre and I wanted to become an actor. But my father, Andrei, was president of the Belarusian State Academy of Arts and he said he could not let me in because people would think it was corruption. My father's sense of ethics was unbelievable. I worked as a diplomat but found my way into theatre to resist the dictatorship of Lukashenko. My husband (Khalezin), who was a famous journalist and editor-in-chief of three major newspapers, and I were among those who decided to establish BFT.

How do you combine art with activism?

We didn't have money, only the bodies of actors. So, it was necessary to understand what actors could tell with their bodies to

the audience. We create spaces for different forms of art such as multimedia, music and photography as well as economy and politics. We need to make our audience think, because when people are able to think for themselves and not what politicians want them to think, they become strong enough to provoke regimes.

Do you run the risk of your stories becoming too localised in Minsk?

Most of our shows are not only about Belarus but about the world. The plays deal with refugees, climate change and death penalty but we use Belarus as an entry point. We travelled to illegal refugee camps in Morocco before the European refugee crisis happened and created a show titled *Red Forest* (2014), about a girl who is forced to flee her village and give birth to her baby in the Sahara. Young critics loved it but older viewers said, "This is far-fetched. The refugee crisis will never come to us." Politicians never immerse themselves in people's conditions, that is why they do not understand or feel the

reality. Artists are the best x-ray machines of society because we scan it without any political agenda.

Did the pandemic impact your plays?

We say that we were the first theatre group to rely on the internet to direct and create art. Since my husband and I are in London and our 12-member troupe is in Minsk, we create and rehearse shows over Skype and Zoom. In June and July, we presented a new show, *A School for Fools*, based on an experimental novella by Sasha Sokolov (one of the most important 20th century Russian writers). It was broadcast live, with actors in Minsk performing in their bathrooms, kitchens and bedrooms.

What do you feel about the rise of the strongman leader across the world?

Since 2005, we have been warning the world that if one dictator is not stopped, another, more sophisticated one will come up. What we are seeing is that in different countries, dictators use the democratic systems of the government but with autocratic resolve. Dictatorship is contagious. If Trump continues to stay in power, it will be a big disaster, not only for the US but the world at large.

What are the signs of a democratically-elected regime turning fascist?

I was a teenager when the Soviet Union collapsed. It was an exciting time, as businesses started to develop and there was a lot of support for the arts. When I graduated from university, Lukashenko was in power. Let me illustrate what changed with an example. When my daughter was very young, we went to a bookstore where there was a portrait of Lukashenko. We knew him as a person who had arranged the execution of businessman Anatoly Krasovsky, whose body was never found. My daughter said, 'Why is there a portrait of a man who killed Anatoly?' The whole bookstore looked at me and I thought they would tear me apart. Suddenly, an elderly woman looked at us and said, 'At least a child tells the truth.'

With unprecedented protests in Belarus, do you see an end to your struggle?

My sister and I have been practising *sahaja yoga* since I was 16. She would always say, 'Be in the present and not in the past or the future.' In the protests in Belarus, our solution is to stay in the present. When the future comes, we will respond accordingly.

MAKING FRIENDS & FILMS

The producer behind Chaitanya Tamhane's award-winning films

Suanshu Khurana

VIVEK GOMBER'S friends describe him either as insane or brave. "But they mostly stick to 'insane'," says the actor-producer. One of these friends is filmmaker Chaitanya Tamhane, whose two award-winning projects, *Court* (2014) and *The Disciple* (2020), have been produced by 36-year-old Gomber.

Tamhane is puzzled by Gomber's dedication to another person's work. "It's not like he will get much of his money back. But my work and I exist only because of him," says Tamhane, who often refers to Gomber as "my father". "He was weeping in the audience when I won at Venice the first time," says Tamhane. Gomber has a more prosaic explanation for his decision to produce a project. "I love Chaitanya but my resolve to produce a film always comes from the script," says Gomber, over the phone from Mumbai, where he is based.

Gomber moved to Mumbai 16 years ago in order to become an actor. Since the age of 10, he had shuttled between Singapore, where his banker father was based, and Jaipur, where his mother was a high-court judge. He watched Amitabh Bachchan films, all the while nurturing his own dreams of acting, even after he joined the Singapore Army on his parents' suggestion in 1997. Two years later, he moved to the US to study fine arts at Emerson College in Boston and came to Mumbai in 2004. Gomber met Tamhane in 2008, when they were both active in Mumbai's theatre circuit. Gomber was so impressed by Tamhane's passion and eye for detail that he offered him Rs 15,000 a month to help him earn a living from projects he cared about. A few years later, he again put his money where his friend's heart was. "My father had just passed away and left me some



BUDDY FLICKS

Vivek Gomber

money," says Gomber. He was also certain no one else would produce a film like *Court*.

The film won a number of awards and was India's Oscar entry in 2015, but the two years after were tough. "I didn't get any work and nothing really changed," says Gomber, who has worked in films such as *Morning Fog* (2006) and *The President is Coming* (2009), before playing lawyer Vinay Vora in *Court*. He went on to work with filmmaker Ere Gowda on his Kannada film *Balekempa* (2018), which was on the list of 10 most notable films at International Film Festival Rotterdam that year. It was withdrawn from Mumbai Film Festival 2018 after Gowda was accused of sexual harassment.

The success of *Court* didn't make it easy for Tamhane and Gomber to fund their next venture. Gomber, who had set up a production company called Zoo Entertainment Pvt Ltd., asked Tamhane to continue writing. When the script of what would be *The Disciple* was ready, he read it and was hooked. "It's a luxury to create something that you believe in. Which is what made me agree to do it again with *The Disciple*," he says.

Gomber has a small role in *The Disciple* but it's taken a long time for his acting career to take off. The release of one of his last assignments, Rohena Gera's award-winning film *Sir*, was delayed due to the pandemic. But Indian viewers can watch him in Mira Nair's adaptation of *A Suitable Boy*, in which he plays Arun Mehra, the protagonist's older brother, and in Alankrita Shrivastava and Bornila Chatterjee's web-series *Bombay Begums* — both will be on Netflix India soon.



GETTY IMAGES

On social media, our children are not the consumers, they are the products on sale



IMAGINE
BY SHELJA SEN

I DON'T SEE any point in living any more. I am completely worthless!" This was the conclusion 13-year-old Sania was forced to make about her life and identity when a group of children from her school wrote abusive, sexually-violent messages to her in an Instagram chat. This cyberbullying campaign had started a few months ago when Sania had openly challenged a boy who had made leering remarks on her body. "Though I have blocked all of them, I am checking my Insta page every few minutes. I am going mad but I cannot focus on anything else!"

French intellectual thinker Michel Foucault discussed how modern power operates on social control by inciting us to evaluate and police ourselves perpetually. Social media platforms use this with devious expertise by indoctrinating us into this self-surveillance by constant comparison with others — "I did not get many likes for this post, maybe people do not like me"; "Look at her skin and look at mine!". They trick us by constantly pitching us against each other so that we are locked in the pentagon of Ps — proving, performing, posing, pretending and perfection.

How are our children's minds being colonised? In our attention economy, where or what we focus on builds or brings down multi-trillion dollar industries. In this context, our children's minds are fertile territories to attack and conquer. They are being dished out a dazzling amount of dopamine (feel-good neurotransmitter) at irregular intervals, through likes, shares and comments to keep them quietly engaged like zombies while their minds are speedily being colonised and harvested. Let's take the example of the Instagram influencers who promote a lavish lifestyle or

looks. How has this idea been exported across the world? What does it deceive our young ones into believing about themselves? Who benefits from it?

Are we using social media or is it using us? Some time back, I googled information on intermittent fasting and imagine my surprise when my Instagram and Facebook started pitching me ruthless advertisements on it, showing me how "overweight, flabby" women could be transformed to "slim, supple" bodies. Now, imagine a vulnerable teenager struggling with the awkwardness of their bodies and these advertisements being thrown at them as bait — hook, line and sinker! Except, it is our kids that are sinking while the big sharks go for the kill.

Would you give your kids a packet of cigarettes and say, "Use it with care?" Tech companies spend millions of dollars of their budget on what I would call, "design to kill." Their goal is simple — make products that entertain and give instant gratification, that a person constantly craves and that never loses its appeal. They are not thinking of our children, their mental health and well-being. This is the main reason that the late Steve Jobs and many other innovators from Silicon Valley do not let their own children near social media because they understand the damaging impact. They should know as they have designed them to be so!

How is our young people's mental health at stake here? "If a tree falls in a forest and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound?" You would have heard this philosophical question. I have another tongue-in-cheek version of it. "If you have not posted and documented sparkling events in your life on social media, did they actually happen?" It could be cooking or eating a fancy meal, going for a holiday, win-

ning a prize — if you have not put it up on your newsfeed or your story, then would the world know that you exist and do you actually exist? Is your life really good enough, are you Insta-worthy enough if there is no audience? What if this audience is fickle and brittle, like most audiences can be, and they do not like what you present to them or maybe they turn against you? What do these mind games (that social media is designed on) do to the shaky and fragile self-worth of a young person who is fed on the mantra, "You are as good as people think of you on Instagram!"

Our kids are not the consumers; they are the products! We were promised wonders of social media that got us into using them in the first place — staying connected, building communities, appreciating each other's work. But at what cost? It is threatening the very values it is touting. Facebook (which has bought over Instagram and WhatsApp) which has almost three billion subscribers across the world is more powerful than any government. The recent Netflix documentary *The Social Dilemma* (and, previously, *The Great Hack*, 2019) did a lot to expose the underbelly of this tech company's multi-trillion mega-monster.

And the worst thing is that we are not even aware of how we are being controlled and manipulated. As the computer scientist and ethicist Tristan Harris, put it, "How do you wake up from the matrix when you don't know you are in the matrix?"

Collective wisdom on using social media and not letting it use us: Are we being a little irrational in expecting the young to stand up to the power of the digital behemoths? Nevertheless, I got down to doing what I love to do — asking young people and their families on what steps could be taken collectively to tame the monster. Here are some really inno-

vative ideas they shared:

Be a creator and consume selectively: What gives you a sense of joy, brings value to your life and makes you more creative? If there is an app that helps you do that, then choose to use that mindfully. For example, you might be a photographer or artist and you want to showcase your art on Instagram or your music on YouTube.

Education on social media in schools: Sania made a compelling argument about how schools and parents should get together to make sure that no children use any social media until high school, "And that, too, only after they understand how it can lead you down a rabbit hole." If we cannot hold these tech giants accountable, then at least we can demystify their operations of power to our children so that they can make more informed decisions and use it effectively.

Dumb down your phone or computer: Remove social media and random apps on your phone, make access to social media inconvenient on your desktop so that the temptation to do a "quick peek" does not even arise.

Out of sight out of mind: Keep it inside a locked cupboard or give it to somebody to hide away. Delete apps like Instagram and only install when you are using them.

Build substitutes for your fidgety fingers: We humans love to fidget with our fingers and the tech designers use this against us very sneakily. Start finding substitutes such as doodling, strumming a guitar, knitting, whenever you feel the urge to go down the rabbit hole of no return.

Let me admit that I am not a Luddite giving *gyaan* on the evils of digital networking. I have my struggles with emails and WhatsApp that tug at my additive fingers. We all realise that social media is here to stay — we can't get rid of the beast and the best we can do is to tame it through collective action and demanding ethical accountability.

Dr Shelja Sen is a narrative therapist, co-founder, Children First, writer, and, in this column, she curates the know-how of the children and young people she works with. Write to her shelja.sen@childrenfirstindia.com

DOWN IN JUNGLELAND



Ranjit Lal

Ranjit Lal is an author, environmentalist and bird watcher

Rise and shine

No matter where you are, the hours of dawn can be magical and beautiful

EVERY DAWN is magical and it doesn't matter where you are — the city, the countryside, a forest, the mountains, a beach or on the banks of a lake or river. It is more magical than sunset and dusk simply because, now, the world is waking up afresh, brand new and distilled, and not shutting tiredly down for the night.

I remember the sunrises in Mumbai: our home overlooked the whole of central and east Mumbai and the first blue-grey of the sky would gradually lighten to pearl grey and pink. Below us, the great city would stir — people's voices floated up from the tenements at the base of the hill, drowsy but scrubbed schoolchildren clustered at their bus stops as the sun heaved itself up, turning blinding gold. If you were on the beach (facing west), you'd see the first peach-gold rays set fire to the frothy white wave tops as the fishermen pushed their heavy boats out or brought them in (depending on the conditions), the women and kids waiting quietly on the beach. As the sky lightened from a deep Prussian to powder blue, the sun would shoot its rays through the coconut groves, lighting up the beach, which was still deserted for miles. All too soon, you'd feel the first trickle of sweat down your back and begin heading home.

Here in Delhi, I've noticed that all the gravestones in the Nicholson Cemetery next door, face east and it is impossible to see the sunrise because of all the trees. But I'll never forget the pair of besotted barn owls in the Qudsiya Bagh next door, doing the best *surya namaskar* ever — smooching on a freezing foggy January dawn, while their three woolly babies watched.

On an overnight trip to Tullatpur *jheel*, we set out well before dawn and settled on a promontory beside the lake. It was too dark to see any birds but we could hear them: the plaintive squeaks of the ubiquitous black-winged stilts and other waders as they probed the shallows: fishing by feel, not by sight (their beak tips are especially sensitive). Up ahead in the dark, we heard the restless rustle of a huge flock of cranes as they stirred, sensing the coming dawn. Even before the sun was up, they readied for take-off, sounding exactly like a major air terminal stirring. On the lake, the thousands of migratory ducks would murmur restively and float in circles —



RANJIT LAL

TWILIGHT RAGA

A whole orchestra of birds performs at sunrise

their heads still buried deep in their wings, fast asleep. They'd only stir around midday. Bharatpur (the Keoladeo National Park) was usually fogged over on winter mornings — amidst the gleam of water you could make out the shapes of the ducks and coots. Suddenly, the water would tremble and it would sound like a giant had begun gargling: coots scooting across the water in panic as a marsh harrier did her rounds. Then, through the fog, a flock of bar-headed geese would fly low past you, honking, and splash down in the *jheel* — how they navigate in these conditions is anyone's guess.

In Gir, we set off well before daylight — here the colours were a dusky biscuit and beige. You can just make out a leopard, drinking at a trough. A little way ahead, from the dark, the hoarse coughing roar of a lion, establishing its territory and setting out on patrol, makes your hair rise. The same roar would not have the same effect in bright daylight.

In another forest near Naukuchiatal, you set out when it's still too dark to see any bird. The dark-blue sky begins to lighten and a bird calls tentatively. It is joined by another and, soon, a whole orchestra is going at full volume as the forest rings with birdsong, leaving you mesmerised. In the mountains, even if you're too lazy to get out of bed, it can be enthralling as the first long sweet notes of the blue rock thrush break the stillness and silence. Soon, it's joined by mellifluous bulbuls and white-eyes and even an enthusiastic tailorbird who gives two hoots about talent. Far down the mountain road, you hear the guttural mutter of a diesel engine labouring up the hairpin bends and changing gears and you know that the world, too, is waking up. But in the mountains, it's worth hauling yourself out of bed and going out. Every leaf, every web, every petal, every dragonfly's wing is pearled with dew in this bejewelled garden. Stretched ahead, you can barely make out the peaks of the mighty Himalayas until, suddenly, a peak is touched with pale peach gold. Then another, and another — the colours still pastel and not the brittle beer-bottle gold of sunset. These magical moments are gone far too soon as the sun gains strength and the dew vanishes.

Dawn and sunrise feel like a new beginning, as if you are starting life all over again, having discarded any rancour, anger, envy and bitterness from before. As for that vanished treasure chest of dewdrops — worry not. It'll be there again tomorrow, reminding you that there are some things you can't take with you but which you must appreciate.

In the Shadow of the Taj

As its most famous tourist attraction reopens after six months, a look at how Agra fared during the lockdown and what the future holds

Divya A

UNTIL MARCH 17 this year, the one-kilometre-long road known as Tajganj, which stretches between the Taj Mahal and the Shilpgram car parking would be swarming with people. As crowds of mobile camera-wielding tourists made their way towards India's most popular attraction, they would be accosted by guides, photographers and hawkers. Owners of souvenir shops would stand by the road, soliciting customers, and every café promised the best rooftop view of the white marble monument which has serenely watched over the city for 400 years.

The scene was very different on September 21, when the Taj Mahal reopened after six months of being closed because of COVID-19. Normally, the Taj gets between 20,000 and 30,000 visitors a day. Now, the number is capped at 5,000. International flights haven't resumed, so foreign tourists — who contribute a significant chunk to the revenue — are absent, while the migrant workers employed at various establishments haven't returned.

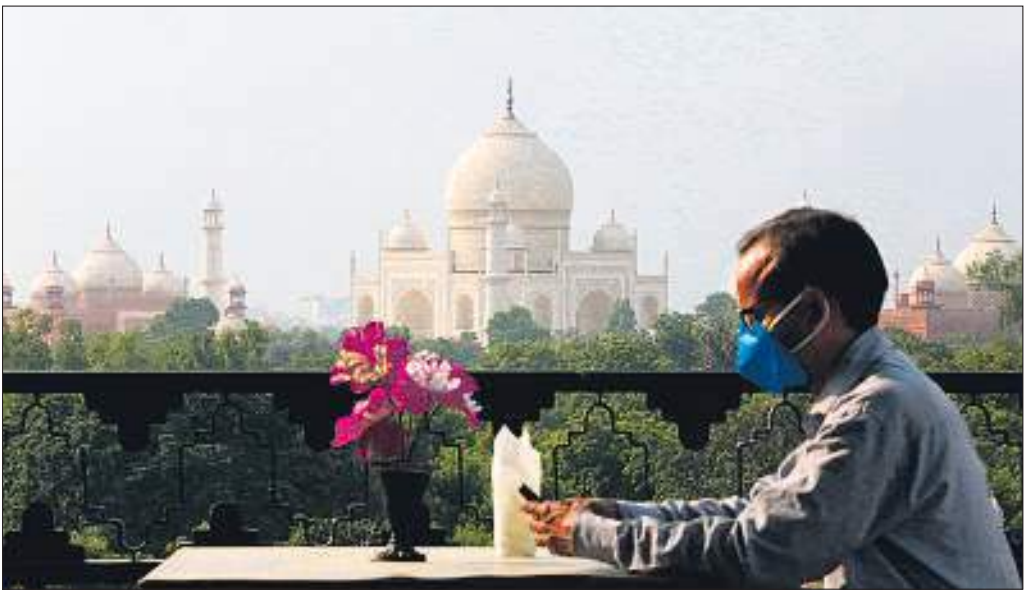
Things have changed in Agra over the 188 days that the Taj was closed. The city has about 650 hotels, 3,500 guides and over a thousand photographers, not to mention the rickshaw-pullers and tonga-wallahs, shops selling

miniature replicas of the Taj, Agra's famous petha and *juttis*, and cafés and homestays. More than half of the city's population is financially dependent, directly or indirectly, on the Taj Mahal. Over four lakh people in Agra (where, in the 2011 census, the total population was 15.9 lakhs) earn from tourism, says secretary of the Agra Tourist Welfare Chamber, Vishal Sharma. According to Sharma, the closure due to the pandemic has resulted in losses amounting to over Rs 2,000 crore. When the Taj Mahal shuts down, so does Agra.

The handful of tourist guides near the barricades on the day of the reopening are disappointed that the only visitors are locals and mediapersons. "For us, the Taj will open the day foreigners start coming," remarks Mubeen Khan, 37. It is telling that where one would normally hear

snatches of conversations in many languages — Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Spanish — all that can be heard now is Hindi, spoken in dejected tones. Foreign tourists are unlikely to return until April 2021 at least, says Manu PV, secretary of the Association of Tourism Trade Organisations India. Many small businesses would have gone under by then.

Vasant Kumar Swarnkar, superintending archaeologist at the Archaeological Survey of India's Agra Circle, says, "The economy of the city has suffered by 30 per cent. It has had a ripple effect on neighbouring towns and vil-



PHOTOS: RENUKA PURI



ON HOLD

(Clockwise from top) A rooftop café in Tajganj; one of the many souvenir shops near the Taj Mahal; a petha shop close to the monument

lages from where people had come to Agra for livelihood — the taxi drivers, hotel staff, hawkers, and even the artisans who used to work day and night to create marble replicas of the Taj."

Rohit Arora, 32, who has been working as a photographer at the Taj Mahal for 10 years, says that he has earned nothing during the last six months. Earlier, he made about Rs 25,000 a month. "I have been thinking of switching

to some permanent job, but the Taj draws me back. I hope it sustains me, too," he says.

Further away, at Noori Darwaza — the hub of the petha industry where more than 700 cottage units employing 25,000 people — most shops remain shut. Gopal Sharma, owner of New Panchhi Petha, says, "We are just preparing sweets for local consumption or for despatch to Allahabad through railways. Earlier, when the Taj was open, we couldn't keep count of the quintals we sold. Now, we are just preparing a quintal at a time and still waiting for it to sell out."

Most of the cafés wear a desolate air; visitors are few, and much of their staff is yet to return. Ram Prasad from Barabanki, who works at the sought-after Taj View Rooftop café as a server, says, "Even if people come to see the Taj, I don't think anyone will be comfortable to sit and eat with abandon." Before walking away, Prasad pulls out a torn empty wallet, and pleads for some money. All he wants, he says, is some tea and biscuits so that he can finally eat something.



EXPRESS ARCHIVE

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru with the Dalai Lama in May 1964

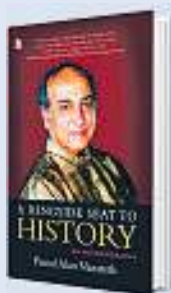
The Remains of the Day

A rare glimpse into the early years of India’s foreign service and its steady transformation since

Shyam Saran

THE PROFESSION of diplomacy is all about multi-tasking and crisis management. A diplomat has to be like Janus, too. He has to engage with foreign interlocutors with widely differing temperaments. But interfacing with the high and low of his own motherland may often require more diplomatic finesse than when serving abroad. It is this complex challenge that is reflected in Alan Nazareth’s immensely readable autobiography, *A Ringside Seat to History*. He has interwoven a narrative of personal and professional encounters with humour, pathos and an abiding faith in a larger humanity. Most of us in the foreign service end up as cynical creatures with a deep scepticism about the human condition. There is not even a single strand of cynicism in the author’s recounting of history he has been witness to and, indeed, been a participant in.

There are several memorable anecdotes in the autobiography. The call on Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru as a fresh entrant to the foreign service in March 1959, when the then foreign secretary Subimal Dutt came in to inform the PM that His Holiness the Dalai Lama had entered India after his dramatic escape from Lhasa, surely counts as an early instance of witnessing history. Nazareth’s relentless pursuit of J. Dharma Teja, whose shipping empire was enmeshed in allegations of fraud, reads like a detective story. This is an early example of how business and politics feed on each other and is a tradition that continues to this day but with more astronomical sums involved. Having served in Myanmar, I enjoyed reading the chapter ‘Spiders, Tree Spirits and a ‘Jewellery Crisis’’. I can testify to the continuing hold of superstition and a pervasive belief in spirits in that country and how it can infect even transient foreigners. The author’s account of the revenge of the spiders, whose home among the dense foliage in the housing compound had been thoughtlessly hacked down, resonated with me. I confess to having paid several visits to the sacred Shwedagon Pagoda to ask for a variety of boons and for help in overcoming both personal and professional crises though none as serious as the author faced. I recall having an ancient iron safe in the ambassador’s office, with no key to be found, which had to be literally melted open.



A RINGSIDE SEAT TO HISTORY: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY BY PA NAZARETH Konark Publishers 280 pages ₹800

Inside were several pouches of gold and jewellery left behind by Indians fleeing Ne Win’s socialist Burma which are mentioned in the chapter.

The other chapters cover Nazareth’s assignments in Africa, Latin America and the US and cover a tumultuous period in the history of several countries but also of India’s engagement with them. India’s envoys had access to the highest level of leadership but there were coups and counter coups which required extraordinary nimbleness and constant vigilance to safeguard India’s interests and to stay out of harm’s way oneself. Some close calls have been recalled with an admirable sense of humour. The reader also gets to enjoy, though vicariously, the many encounters with celebrities, among them Mother Teresa, Zubin Mehta and Morarji Desai.

As an autobiography, the book recounts several bitter-sweet events in the author’s personal life. His unabashed and deeply moving accounts of his early romance and long years of loving partnership with his wife, Isobel, the sense of acute loss on the death of his daughter Seema and the relief and joy at the miraculous recovery from cancer of his son, Anand, are truly moving. After retirement, Nazareth has devoted himself to the propagation of Gandhian ideals and his book *Gandhi’s Outstanding Leadership* (2006) has won international acclaim and has been translated into several languages. What struck me was a deep and abiding faith in the power of prayer to heal and to succour that runs through these accounts. This did shake the cynic in me.

A Ringside Seat to History reflects a more informal milieu in which the foreign service functioned in its early years. The service was extraordinarily small and almost familial in its intra-service relationships. There was easy familiarity among colleagues, and, sometimes, deeper bonds were formed in the course of one’s career. That ambience is slowly diminishing. Nazareth’s autobiography gives us a rare glimpse into those early years of the service and its steady transformation since.

Former foreign secretary MK Rasgotra’s foreword is a fitting tribute to the author and his valuable contributions to India’s foreign relations. This is ample recommendation to savour this engaging autobiography.

Shyam Saran is a former foreign secretary and senior fellow, Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi

The World is What it Is

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar’s book holds answers to vexing questions about the Modi government’s worldview and astute analysis about China’s motivations

KP Nayar

THE VAST majority of diplomats write books for other diplomats. With a felicity acquired from writing cipher telegrams in their careers, they make it appear that sharing their experiences in awe-inspiring chancelleries is an act of generosity towards the larger strategic community.

After Henry Kissinger, the current External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar is the only diplomat in my recollection to have written a book for the people. In *The India Way: Strategies for an Uncertain World*, the author admits as much, probably without realising that such an exercise is a rare milestone in writing on international affairs.

“This is an effort to contribute to that endeavour, encouraging an honest conversation among Indians, without discouraging the world from eavesdropping.” In doing so, Jaishankar dramatically recalls a scene from the Satyajit Ray film, *Shatranj ke Khilari* (1977), where two aristocrats are playing chess, blissfully unconcerned that their kingdom in Awadh is being steadily overrun by forces of the British East India Company.

“What we require is a dispassionate debate that rises above competitive politics.” The book’s value for the *aam aadmi*, who has no interest in how laboriously a comma that would have arguably damaged India’s vital interests was changed in a United Nations document, is this: “I put aside the temptation of bringing in any aspects of a memoir, believing that they are better written by those who are no longer operational,” writes Jaishankar.

This book came about from the author’s fellowship at Singapore’s Institute of South Asian Studies after retiring as foreign secretary in 2018. Because Jaishankar was elevated 16 months later, from chief implementor of India’s foreign policy to conceptualiser of that policy as external affairs minister, answers to many vexing questions about the Narendra Modi government’s worldview can be found in this book.

As the longest-serving Indian ambassador in Beijing, Jaishankar puts his finger precisely on why China is behaving the way it does with the rest of the world. Since *The India Way* was written and readied to be sent for printing before the ongoing tensions between New Delhi and Beijing in Ladakh, such analysis has enduring value. It is not any expanded soundbyte on the Line of Actual Control. Of equal value is the author’s hard-nosed recounting of why India cannot match China’s actions.

“The one society that has elevated dissimulation to the highest level of statecraft...is



EXPRESS ARCHIVE

China. Unlike in India, there is neither guilt nor doubt in dissembling; in fact, it is glorified as an art. China’s extraordinary rise has drawn heavily on its cultural attributes.”

From a practitioner of diplomacy for 43 years, one senses nostalgia in the book for a time when there was consensus in India on foreign policy. “Competitive politics is so visceral that perhaps the only continuity is that those in opposition can be counted on to oppose. This makes it very much harder to reconcile the gaps between narratives and intent.”

From the horse’s mouth, as it were, it is clear from the book that there will be no rapprochement with Pakistan in the foreseeable future. “Pakistan can only be treated as a normal neighbour when its behaviour corresponds to one. Till then, India will have to show a mix of fortitude, creativity and perseverance of a degree that would impress even Arjuna.”

The book’s big surprise is the author’s laudatory references to the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) because the presumption has been that Jaishankar is not a NAM



THE INDIA WAY: STRATEGIES FOR AN UNCERTAIN WORLD BY S JAISHANKAR Harper Collins 240 pages ₹699

ALL THE KING’S MEN

S Jaishankar greets Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Home Minister Amit Shah at his swearing-in ceremony in May 2019

fan. Writing about the circumstances that gave birth to NAM, the book reads: “This allowed India the leadership opportunity to build its own constituency and brand through the 1950s.”

In the present context, it adds: “Hedging is a delicate exercise, whether it is the non-alignment and strategic autonomy...or multiple engagements of the future. But there is no getting away from it in a multipolar world.”

A critical external affairs risk in a resurgent India is that of overreach. Even in the bad old days, it manifested in an ill-starred ‘peace-keeping’ operation in Sri Lanka, a military intervention in the Maldives and the well-thought-out militarisation of the Siachen glacier.

A book which can correlate the past to the present and point to the future can be a useful tool for policymakers and analysts. The risk of overreach was evident when India seriously considered a White House request in 2002 to send troops to Iraq. From time to time, such temptations resurface as in the options for Afghanistan.

It is comforting to read Jaishankar cautioning against misadventures. “As these memories recede and calls for deployment abroad recur from time to time, it is imperative that India carefully weighs the compulsions with its costs.” A serving external affairs minister cannot be more explicit on

record, but it is as good as a foreign-policy doctrine.

The book is dedicated to two persons. Jaishankar’s father, K Subrahmanyam, whose legacy as the guru of Indian strategic thought, will last many generations. The other is retired diplomat Arvind R Deo. For this reviewer, the dedication to Deo has a personal aside.

Thirty years ago, when diplomats faded into obscurity after retirement and did not write articles as they do now, I persuaded Deo to write for a newspaper I was then editing. He was probably the first retired diplomat to regularly appear in print in a mainstream Indian newspaper. JN Dixit followed some years later.

Deo disappointed readers as a columnist because of his firm belief that it was his sacred duty to take India’s diplomatic secrets to the grave. As my neighbour to this day, his accounts of Indian diplomacy have been thrilling and insightful. In private conversations, he was Indian diplomacy’s version of Hindu sage Narada, as Deo was nicknamed in South Block in his time. The book’s two dedicatees deserve the honour for their contribution to foreign policy in the Indian way.

The reviewer is a strategic analyst who specialises in foreign policy

Stars and Darkness

An empathetic account of actor Parveen Babi’s journey from a luminous diva to one consumed by the demons of her mind

Shubhra Gupta

IN JULY 1976, a *TIME* magazine cover created ripples in India. Gracing it was an up-and-coming Hindi film actor, resplendent in a pearl-festooned bustier, her sleek jet-black hair framing a face that audiences in India were just beginning to recognise. It was Parveen Babi, who along with her contemporary Zeenat Aman, redefined the Hindi film heroine. Unlike the conventional goody-two-shoes leading ladies that the industry had been used to, the “westernised” Babi accomplished openly, led a bohemian lifestyle, and admitted to having lovers. Being free, frank and open, the gossip press couldn’t have enough of her, and she was never far from the headlines.

To make the cover of *TIME* so soon into her career was a major accomplishment. The cover story on the Bombay film industry was a detailed if condescending look at one of the biggest cinema behemoths in the world. Still, for a major global magazine to take serious cognisance of “singing-dancing” Bollywood was significant.

In Karishma Upadhyay’s biography, *Parveen Babi: A Life*, we get the backstory of how that cover came about. Sanjay Khan and wife Zarine, amongst Babi’s first filmi friends, took her under their wing after Khan signed her on for a film opposite himself. It was Khan who took credit for the cover, saying he recommended her name to one of the editors of the weekly; soon after, in an interview to the *India Today* magazine, a delighted Babi said, “these things happen to me.”

There are several such delicious anecdotes in Upadhyay’s meticulously researched, smoothly-put-together volume of



PARVEEN BABI: A LIFE BY KARISHMA UPADHYAY Hachette 320 pages ₹599

the life and times of Parveen Babi, who burnt bright for a short while before being consumed by the demons of her mind. The book has come at a timely juncture, when public discourse around Sushant Singh Rajput’s death by suicide is finally able to focus on the real issue, that of the enormous, often insurmountable burden of celebrityhood. Some people can deal with the constant see-sawing of fame and failure; others, who have fragile minds to begin with, crumble under the pressure.

The preface says that the book is the result of three years of work, with over a hundred interviews. It shows in the painstaking build-up that we get, from Babi’s youthful years in Ahmedabad, to her splashy arrival in Bombay and rapid ascent to an envious position where she was on the wish list of almost every A-list producer, and the relationships that made and unmade her. Upadhyay, a Mumbai-based film journalist, navigates with ease the slippery slopes of Bollywood, and through the people that she speaks to, we get a compelling portrait of a person struggling constantly with both sunshine and shade, never quite knowing which way to go.

The men, who were major influences in her life, are all here: Danny Denzongpa, who kept up friends, took her under their wing after Khan signed her on for a film opposite himself; Kabir Bedi, who left his wife Protima to live with Babi for a tumultuous period before moving on; and Mahesh Bhatt, who also abandoned his family to move in with Babi, and then made a U-turn because he couldn’t live with her “insecurities and obsessiveness”. Details of her platonic but intense, and, ultimately, problematic relationship with new-age philosopher UG



EXPRESS ARCHIVE

ALONE UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

The book on Parveen Babi has come at a time when the enormous burden of celebrityhood is under the scanner following the death by suicide of another Bollywood actor, Sushant Singh Rajput

Krishnamurti, whom she met through Bhatt, are also here. She would run to him whenever she thought she needed refuge, but she also resented him telling her not to return to Bombay. Was he looking out for her, trying to shield her from the harsh media scrutiny she would invariably run into, or was he trying to control her?

There are no clear answers, but you are never left in any doubt that Babi was slowly, steadily unravelling, heading to a tragic, lonely end.

One of the main characters in Bhatt’s 1982 semi-autobiographical *Arth*, the jealous, possessive wife of the protagonist, was based on his troubled relationship with Babi. The actress, who had by this time already suffered a couple of breakdowns and left Bombay only to come back to start over again, was diagnosed with schizophrenia. By this time, her well-known obsession

with Amitabh Bachchan, with whom she worked in a number of hit films (*Majboor*, 1974; *Deewaar*, 1975; *Amar Akbar Anthony*, 1977; *Shaan*, 1980; *Kaalia*, 1981), had also reached a point of no return: those who wanted to “kill her” included Bachchan’s name.

The one thing I missed in Upadhyay’s book was her own assessment of Babi’s work, which would have given it more context. Always known for her striking looks and ability to learn her lines super fast, Babi wasn’t considered to be much of an actor, but her presence in the movies at the time she blossomed — in the ‘70s and ‘80s — changed Bollywood’s notion of what a leading lady could do: be full-on, unapologetically sexy and own her sexuality.

But that aside, the story of the sparkly-sad Parveen Babi is told with clarity and empathy. It left me moved.

● ● ●
The men who were major influences in her life are all here — Danny Denzongpa, Kabir Bedi and Mahesh Bhatt
● ● ●

ADVERTORIAL

Spectrum of Hope

An initiative by RED*
Read. Engage. Deliver.

Stay positive, stay hopeful

Fretting over Covid-19 and panicking won't help. One needs to maintain a positive attitude and fight negativity

AS THE world suffers incessantly from the rage of coronavirus and its deep impacts, both economic and social, people continue to remain behind closed doors to make themselves isolate. In the midst of continuous global lockouts, it is imperative to keep a tab on our mental health. With no end in sight to COVID-19, people have been going through a roller-coaster ride of emotions since the time coronavirus-imposed lockdown was implemented.

However, you're not alone — the entire globe is feeling the same. Today, it's important to maintain sanity for the sake of you and your family's health. These trying days will subside for sure, but until then you have to maintain a positive outlook. Negativity will only make your behaviour morbid filled with

trepidation and anxiety. The way out from all this is by imbibing positivity in your thoughts, actions and speech, which will lead to an overall change in your behavioural aspects to help you tide over these tumultuous times.

To break the train of negative thoughts, first of all, you need to fall into your regular routine — by sleeping and waking up on time, doing your usual chores and finding time for yourself to break the shackles of monotony. Remember, depression starts to have a hold on you unless you keep yourself occupied. There are many new activities you can try and indulge in nowadays, including upskilling yourself professionally, learning to cook or draw, reorganising your home, engaging in fitness activities like yoga, meditation etc.

Fretting over the disease and panicking won't help at all. COVID-19 is not going to shut us for life. Relax. Take a deep breath and, most importantly,

don't lose hope! Till then be indoors, follow social distancing and stay positive. This too will pass. Better safe than sorry.

ADVERTORIAL

Spiritual Tarot- A faithful mirror to your soul

IN THESE times of great change and uncertainty for humanity, the sacred language of Spiritual Tarot can help you to navigate your personal journey with greater clarity and self-awareness.

Shining a light onto the subtler aspects of any situation or process, with love and compassion the symbology of the tarot can help us explore deeper into ourselves and bring healing to unresolved scenarios on the emotional or psychological plane, while also offering us supportive guidance on our actions in different aspects of our lives.

A reading can open up channels to a more expanded perspective, helping to reveal what is behind a specific challenge or energy blockages you're experiencing, to explore different options for decision-making or to bring greater awareness to your actions in a particular situation.

Acting as a faithful mirror, "Spiritual Tarot" can also help you better understand your inner landscape and the



processes you may be experiencing, or simply to explore and discover more about yourself on this magical journey of self-knowledge that is life. If you are interested in a reading and have any questions, please do get in touch.

Sushmieta Gulabanni
(Numerologist, Tarot Reader & Spiritual Coach), M - 8595890489.
Online consultation available.
E - aalmareadings@gmail.com
W - aalmareadings.com

ADVERTORIAL

Jan Vikas Samiti

JAN VIKAS SAMITI (JVS), registered under Societies Registration Act, 1860 in 1998 has been working for the integral development of the marginalized sections of the society, particularly of women, children, scheduled caste and persons with disabilities. JVS implements programmes on the following thematic areas: Rehabilitation of Children and Youngsters with Disabilities, Women Empowerment, Community Health, Livelihood Promotion, Skilling Youth and Social Inclusion. The vision of JVS is the formation of an inclusive and humane society based on the values of equity, justice, and freedom. Major programmes are:

Women Empowerment and Promotion of Sustainable Livelihood: With 835 Self-Help Groups, JVS promotes women leadership and facilitates sustainable livelihood activities, like manufacturing and marketing of washing power, leg-gings, floor cleaner, nutritional supplement, sanitary pads, LED bulbs, etc..

Inclusive Development of Children and Youngsters with Disabilities: In partnership with Liliane Fonds, the Netherlands and 66 partner organizations in North and North East, JVS works for the overall development of 6330 children and youngsters with disabilities.

Inclusive Education (Samaveshi Shiksha-Samaveshi Samaj): The goal is to capacitate local NGOs to become resource centres for Inclusive Education in North East and Uttar Pradesh.

Tele-Rehabilitation of Children with Physical Disabilities: More than 325 children with physical disabilities from 5 states are being rehabilitated through this programme.

Inclusive Skill Training Programmes: Rural youth including persons with disabilities are being trained in Food & Beverage Services Management and Computer and Accounting skills and facilitated for employment.

Other programmes are: Muskan Rehabilitation & Resource Centre, Community Based Screening for HIV/AIDS, Community Mobilization for Safe Motherhood and Secured, Hygienic and Healthful Living for Girls.

JVS Response to COVID-19
With the support and collaboration of like-minded institutions and NGOs, JVS started relief work for people affected by the lockdown due to the pandemic COVID-19 by providing cooked food as well as dry ration kits, including rice, wheat flour, cooking oil, pulse, salt, potato, onion, biscuits, soap and face mask on March 25, 2020. Until 03 June 2020 JVS reached out to 20,331 families, including returnee migrants and families of persons with disabilities in Varanasi and Jaunpur districts of Uttar Pradesh and another 13 states. The campaign was financially supported by hundreds of individuals and organizations from within the country as well as abroad. Besides, in collaboration with Vishwa Jyoti Gurukul, Varanasi JVS undertook a survey of 3937 migrant youth in Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh) and Kaimur (Bihar) to understand their employment and livelihood related skills. A month long campaign was organized to make people aware of COVID-19, whereby a total of 50097 individuals in Varanasi, Jaunpur and Mirzapur districts in Uttar Pradesh and Kaimur district in Bihar were covered.



ADVERTORIAL

ME PRABHAAV

Reach the Unreached

PRABHAAV Foundation is an NGO working at grass root level registered in 2011, under the societies registration act xxi 1860 and NITI Aayog. Prabhaav's team is led by visionaries like Ms. Parul Kumar and Ms. Vandana Lakhanpal supported by a couple of like-minded friends from diverse educational backgrounds, aiming at directly touching thousands of lives through their various projects on road safety, environment, art & culture and health. Our motto is that a society will grow only when people move ahead and adapt themselves to the changing times.

Development and sustenance is a multifaceted process, and involves aggressive participation of people. Co-Existence is always the first step towards creating a strong Eco-System. We strive to implement various CSR projects professionally and thank our Corporate partners for their strong support as they help us in touching individuals from various sections of the society. Prabhaav Foundation has impacted more than 6.4 Lakh people.

Road Safety: Making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. India lost 1,40,000 people due to road accidents in 2018, accounting for more than 11% of deaths worldwide and resulting in an annual GDP loss of 3%. A new MVAA was enforced in September 2019 attempting to make Indian roads a safer place for both pedestrians and drivers. We have collaborated with ICICI Lombard, IRF, PVR and NDTV in understanding the importance of safe roads and have been conducting Road Safety Trainings & Workshops - PAN India. More than 40,000 Parents, Students, Teachers and Drivers have been trained so far.

Environment: To Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystem, sustainable, manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. We work as effective earth saviors by maintaining green spaces and finding solutions for debris wastes management.

Art & Culture: To preserve the culture of India refers to many diverse elements, such as various Indian religions, philosophies, cuisines, languages, dance, music and films leaving a profound impact across the ionosphere of a greater India and the World. We



Ms Vandana Lakhanpal
Co - Founder

Ms Parul Kumar
Co - Founder

at Prabhaav, curate events for promoting and preserving our age-old Indian culture.

Covid-19: The nationwide lockdown imposed by the Government of India resulted in lives of millions of migrant laborers, daily wage workers, rag-pickers, house-helpers, street vendors coming to a standstill. The woes to access basic services without daily income led the low-income communities to slip into high-risk communities. Their inability to access one full square meal for a family, have increased their movement in and out of their shelter in search of food, leading to increased chances of being infected. We supported these individuals by distributing more than 5 lakh meals.

Health: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all from all ages. India has a rich, centuries old heritage of medicine and health sciences. Our history is traced to the vedic times which dealt in holistic treatment. India with a total population of 1,324, 171,000 with a per capita expenditure on health of Rs. 267. Out of 169 nations, India stands at 120th position in the world with regards to health conditions as the total expenditure on health at 4.75% of the GDP. Our focus areas being Sanitation, Eye Care, Menstrual Hygiene, Vector-borne Diseases, and any other Emergency situations like Covid-19 when our organization conducted widespread awareness campaigns in line with NITI AAYOG and AAYUSH MINISTRY in large number of communities in Delhi-NCR and Haryana.

Prabhaav Foundation
Address: A-9, Green Park Main, New Delhi-110016, Contact: 011-41036265
Email: info@prabhaavfoundation.org
Web: www.prabhaavfoundation.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/mepprabhaav
Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/prabhaavnngo/?hl=en



ADVERTORIAL

Transforming Lives through education



"When we educate a boy, stresses **Mr. K C Pant**, Rasta's CEO, we educate just one individual; when we educate a girl, we educate a future mother and future generations". This is the ideology followed by Rasta when it helped Iram.

I was in 2002 when Iram was just 4 years old when she came to Delhi from Kotwar a place in Uttarakhand. Her family managed to get a one room set in Delhi on rent to stay. Atiqur Rahaman, Iram's father is a carpenter remained sick and without work. Her mother Shabnam is a homemaker and is also not capable to work due to her fractured hand.

Rasta spotted Iram and her sister Sabnoor in 2010 during a rally on "Girl Children" and lost no time in motivating them to get admitted in Non-Formal Learning Centre of Rasta. Iram and her sister made steady progress in studies and passed 10th class through National Institute of Open Schooling. Iram is now the only bread earner in the family and employed in a private firm in Indrapuram and earning around Rs.10,000/- per month. Now Sabnoor is married and living happily with her spouse.

Shabnam has four more children, 3 daughters and 1 son, who were also motivated to join Rasta Learning Center and later Government School as well. They are now attending remedial classes at Rasta. Motivating Iram to study led to schooling of all children of the family.

Iram is just one example of the many girls in the slums, who got motivated and enrolled in Rasta's School. Thus Rasta school has transformed many lives of girls who were deprived of schooling.

Rasta has just celebrated its Silver Jubilee last year.

Rasta has educated more than 28000 children and helped to settle more than



Mr KC Pant, Rasta's CEO

8200 children. Rasta has developed need based teaching learning material (TLM) for classes 3rd and 4th in 3 subjects - Hindi, English and Maths. Rasta trained 500 teachers of government schools and civil societies and worked with the Govt. Schools to improve the quality of education by following joyful and innovative teaching methods. Vocational skill has been imparted to more than 1200 girls and women. Successful job placements secured for more than 340 girls after training them for Basic Computer Skills, Soft Skills like good manners, how to appear for an interview, Spoken English & Basics of Management.

Community Health i.e. Preventive, Promotive and Curative is another important programmatic core area of Rasta. Rasta is an implementing-partner of Delhi Government (DSACS) for TI (HIV/AIDS) Migrants program and Mahila Panchayat Programme of Delhi Commission for Women. Rasta has also conducted research studies for agencies like Room to Read, Save the Children-India, UNICEF etc. During the lockdown following the outbreak of Covid-19, Rasta has fed poor people, and distributed dry ration and care kits to many families with the help of our partners and well wishers.

Presently, Rasta is grooming the lives of more than 27000 people directly and 2 lakh people indirectly in locations of Delhi and Haryana and Uttar Pradesh through different community-based projects with the support of different partners from Government, Corporates, Foundations, Trusts, Public Sector Undertakings, NGOs and Individual Donors.



RASTA
E 75, LANE NO 1, GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR, WEST VINOD NAGAR, NEW DELHI - 110 092
PH. : 22472280/22478418, **FOUNDER** - K.C.PANT (KRISHAN CHANDRA PANT), **MOBILE** : 9868268418
FACE BOOK PAGE - https://www.facebook.com/ngorasta, Instagram rasta.ngo
TO DONATE : Long into www.rasta.org.in and Donate

Classifieds

PERSONAL

I, ASHOK TEKCHAND KHATRI/ ASHOK TECKCHAND KHATRI/ ASHOK T KHATRI,S/O TEKCHAND KHATRI, H.NO 5/180, FIRST FLOOR, SUBHASH NAGAR NEW DELHI-110027 changed my name to ASHOK KHATRI, permanently. 0040549561-5

I,Vishwa Mitter/Vishwa Mitter Arora/Vishwa Mitter/Vishwa Mitter Arora,S/o Sahib Chand Arora,R/o-2175,Gaur Arjun-Nagar,Shadi Khampur,Patel-Nagar, Delhi-110008,have changed my name to Vishwa Mitra Arora. 0040549740-2

I,Surinder Mohan and Surinder Kohan,S/o Ved Prakash Bhagat R/o-H-1403,Parteek Laurel, Sector-120,Noida,are one and the same person and henceforth I shall be known as Surinder Mohan,for all purposes. 0040549740-5

I,Sanskriti D/o Krishnendu Kumar R/O-16014 Walnut, Mahagun Mywoods, GaurCity-2,Sector-16C, Greater-Noida West,UP-201318,have changed my name as Sanskriti Kumar. 0040549735-9

I,Sakuntala Devi W/o Sombir R/O H.No.305 L.I.G-Flats Sanjay Enclave, Jahangirpuri Delhi-110033,have changed my name to Sakuntala Devi. 0040549735-7

I,Sadhana Singh W/o-Sathrugan Singh Tomar,R/o-Kh-1315,Gali No.11,Block-A,Saroop Vihar, Village-Kadipur, Alipur, Delhi-110036,have changed my name from Jaya Devi to Sadhana Singh,for all purposes. 0040549735-1

I,Sachin Kumar Gupta S/o-Sh.Satish Kumar Gupta,R/o-UH-7,Gandpati Heights Apartment, Mata Road,Gurgaon,Haryana,have changed my name from Sachin Kumar Gupta to Sachin Mishra for all,future purposes. 0040549735-2

I,SANTOSH DHAMIJA W/O PREM SINGH DHAMIJA R/O H.NO.433,LIG FLATS,SANJAY ENCLAVE,JAHANGIRPURI,DELHI -110033.CHANGEDMY NAME TO SANTOSH DEVI DHAMIJA. 0040549740-1

I,Rahulraj Kaushik,S/o Karan Dev Kaushik,R/o-407,Second-Floor, Chand Nagar,Tilak-Nagar,New Delhi-110018,have changed the name of my minor son Aryan R. Kaushik aged-14 years and he shall hereafter be known as Aryan Rahul Kaushik. 0040549745-12

I,Narendar Kumar S/o Raghubir Singh Yadav,R/o-D-19, Swarn Nagri, Greater Noida U.P., have changed my name to Narendra Kumar Yadav for,all future purposes. 0040549723-2

I,KAPIL S/O HARBANS KUMAR R/O E-293,J.J.COLONY,RAGHUBIR -NAGAR,TAGORE-GARDEN,DELHI-110027.CHANGED MY NAME TO KAPIL JOHAR. 0040549735-3

I,Rekhha w/o Dharamvir R/o-C-222,Main Market, Badarpur, New Delhi 110044, have changed my name to Rajni after-marriage. 0040549745-13

I,Ipsita Paul,Wife of S.K Paul,R/o-761,B.K.S-Marg Gole-Dak-Khana,New Delhi-110001,have changed my name,from Ipsita Paul to Ipsita Saha Paul,for all,future purposes. 0040549735-6

I,Bhuvnesh Bhagat and Bhuvnesh Bhagati,W/o Surinder Mohan R/o-H-1403,Parteek-Laurel, Sector-120,Noida,are one and the same person and henceforth I shall be known as Bhuvnesh Bhagat,for all purposes. 0040549735-10

I,BRIJ BHUSHAN S/O RAM KUMAR GOEL R/O D-6,PRITHVI RAJ ROAD,ADARSH NAGAR,DELHI-110033.CHANGEDMY NAME TO BRIJ BHUSHAN GOEL. 0040549735-5

I,BJENDER KUMAR S/O RUP CHAND JAIN R/O H.NO.133-134,UPPER- GROUND-FLOOR,POCKET-17,SECTOR-24,ROHINI, DELHI-110085.CHANGEDMY NAME TO BRIJENDER KUMAR JAIN. 0040549735-4

I,Abdul Rahman S/o Moharam Ali R/o-S-1087,F,J.J.Colony, Mangolpuri, Delhi-83, my father name Wrongly,Mentioned Mohd Ali in Disability Certificate his correct name is Moharam Ali. 0040549735-8

I, sangeetha Kumari D/O Ram Sharan Mahto, R/O A-4/152, New Kondli, delhi - 110096 have changed my name to Sanggeta Mahto. 0070715347-1

I, hitherto known as Satish Kumar S/o Shankar Lal R/o-C-742,Mangolpuri, Delhi-83,have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Shaurya Singh 0040549723-1

I, Sunita W/o Ravi Kumar R/o H.No. F-460 Village Ghitorni, Near Harijan Mohalla, New Delhi-110030, have changed my name from Madhu to Sunita for all future purposes. 0040549774-1

I, Beena Devi W/O Abhay Kumar R/O I-1/73, Sector-16, Rohini Delhi-110089, have changed my name to Veena Kumari. 0040549745-3

I,Sumit W/o-Vijender Singh R/o, Sahabad Mohammadpur Bijwasan, Delhi-110061, have declare the Sumit and Sumit Devi both are the, name of same person. 0040549745-5

I, Sharda Prasad S/o Ram Dev Mishra R/o Plot No-13A, Sethi Enclave, Mohan Garden, Uttam Nagar, Delhi-110059 changed my name to Sharda Prasad Mishra 0070715353-1

I, Seema Singhal W/o Narender R/o AK-55, 2nd Floor, Gurudwara, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi-110088 changed my name to Seema for all future purposes 0070715348-1

I, Radha Rani, W/o-Ravikant, R/o-Plot.No.16, Gali.No.4, Saboli-Road,Sanjay-Colony, MamoorPur,Narela, Delhi-110040,that my name mistakenly entered,in my daughter Sanjana school-record,as Geeta instead of Radha Rani 0040549749-3

I, Radha Rani, W/o-Ravikant, R/o-Plot.No.16, Gali.No.4, Saboli-Road,Sanjay-Colony, MamoorPur, Narela, Delhi-110040,that my name mistakenly entered,in my daughter Saloni school-record,as Geeta instead of Radha Rani 0040549749-4

I, Pushapa Devi W/o Sharda Prasad Mishra R/o Plot No-13A, Sethi Enclave, Mohan Garden, Uttam Nagar, Delhi-110059 changed my name to Pushpa Mishra 0070715355-1

I, Purnima tiwari,W/O upendra tivari,R/o harola sector-5 Noida (UP) 201301,have changed my name to Purnima devi. 0070715350-1

I, Preet Singh@ Preet Singh Bhasin, S/o Sh. Ravinder Singh, R/o A-2-9, Rajouri Garden, New Delhi-110027 have changed my name to Preet Singh for all future purposes. 0040549692-1

I, Neelam devi,W/O Sunil Pandey Muniji, R/O-H.No-A-157, Roopvihar, Mubarakpur dabas, Delhi-110081.Mistekly WRONGLY-written Vimla devi and Vimla Pandey in some documents.But my correct-name is Neelam devi as per documents. 0040549745-9

I, Narendar Singhal S/o Om Parkash Jain R/o AK-55, 2nd Floor, Gurudwara, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi-110088 changed my name to Narendar for all future purposes 0070715349-1

I, MAYANK PATHAK S/O DEVENDER PATHAKResiding at H-NO-561, JANTA-FLATS NEAR IDEA TOWER, G.T.B-ENCLAVE DELHI-110093, HAVE changed my name to MAYANK KUMAR SHARMA. 0040549745-1

I, LOKESH S/O RADHE SHYAM/R/O,H.No-34/932 DDA-FLATS KALKAJI DELHI-110019, have changed my name to LOKESH Kumar. 0040549745-11

I, Kummara Muthyalappa S/o Kummara Anjaneyulu R/o H.No-324/3C, BHJL Township, RC Puram Mandal, Ramachandrapuram, Medak, AP-502032, have changed my minor son's name from Kummara Mithyash Kumar aged 12 years to Kummara Megha Shyam forever 0070715346-1

I, Konyala Mahipal Reddy S/o Gopalreddy R/O-2-52, Hanuman Temple, Chitkul, Medak, Telangana-502270, have changed my name to Nanreddygari Mahipal Reddy 0070715345-1

I, K CH KN Srinivas Alias Kakaraparthi Chenna Kesava Narasimha Srinivas S/o Krishna Bhavana Kakaraparthi R/O Eswara Dharani Apartment, 7 9 13 Flat A3, Ramaraoepeta, Kakinada (Urban), Gandhinagar (KKD), East Godavari, AP-533004, have changed my name to Kchkn Srinivas 0070715365-1

I, Jalil Ahmad S/o Mr. Munir Ahmad R/o H.No.A-288, 1st floor,Gali No.9, Village Wazirabad, Delhi-110084,my correct name is Jalil Ahmad, infrom that Jaleel Ahmad and Jalil Ahmad are the same and one person. 0040549716-1

I, Harjit Singh S/o Harmam Singh R/o-29/86, 1st-Floor, West Patel Nagar, Delhi-110008,have changed my name to Harjeet Singh Juneja 0040549749-1

I, Dhruv Chaudhary S/o Tarsem Kumar R/o-14/107, Subhash Nagar, Delhi-110027 have changed my name to Dhruv Kumar 0040549749-2

I, Balwan S/o Devender R/o-T-162 Jain Colony Part-I, (Matiyala)Uttam-Nagar, New.Delhi-110059, have changed my name to Balwan Malik, for all future purposes. 0040549745-4

I, Atul Kumar Tyagi, S/o-Lt. Satya Pal Singh R/o,J-92-B, Third-Floor, Lajpat Nagar-II, New.Delhi-110024, have changed the name,of my minor Son Krishna to Krishna Sharma for, all purposes. 0040549745-6

I, Anil Agarwal,S/o-Nand Lal Agarwal,R/o-H.No.B-53, Law Apartment,Karkardooma, Delhi-110092, have changed, the name of my minor Son Vedant Agarwal to Vedanth Agarwal for, all purposes in future. 0040549745-8

I Shushant Hindoja S/o Kuldeep Kumar Hindoja R/o C-301Pawitra Apartment Vasundhra Enclave Delhi 110096, have changed my name to SUSHANT HINDUJA S/O KULDEEP KUMAR HINDUJA 0040549732-1

I Nisha alias Radha W/o Sh. Krishan Lal R/o Plot No.3, Maksudabad Colony, Najafgarh, New Delhi- 110043 have changed my name to Radha for all purposes.

I, Pal S/o Charan Singh R/o 752 Mohalla Jatav Badli Samai Pur Delhi-110042 changed my name to Shri pal for all future purposes 0070715351-1

I Chaman Gaur S/o Sh. Jai Bhagwan Bhardwaj R/o WZ-153, Gali No.2, Shri Nagar Rani Bagh, Shakur Basti, Delhi-110034 have changed my name to Kabir Gaur for all purposes.

I, KUM. INDU BALA KHANDELWAL, W/O NANDKISHOR MAMODIYA,H.NO X/2043, RAJGARN-EXTENSION STREET,N-2, GANDHI-NAGAR DELHI-110031.changed my name to. INDU MAMODIYA. 0040549745-2

I, Adarsh Kaushik, D/o-Lt. Des Raj Sharma, W/o-Atul Kumar Tyagi,R/o-I-92-B, Third-floor, Lajpat Nagar-II,New.Delhi,have changed my name to Adarsh Sharma Kaushik for, all purposes. 0040549745-7

I, Sumit Wadhawan S/o Sh. Satish Chander Wadhawan, R/O-C-720 Vikas Puri, New Delhi-110018, have lost my original certificate 10th & 12th class, 10th Roll no.6145701, 12th Roll no.6241905, CBSE DELHI. 0040549684-1

I, Parijat Gurha S/W/D/O Rajni Gurha have lost my original Share Certificate, Allotment Letter and Possession Letter belonging to Flat No.93, 7th floor, Akriti Apartments, Plot No.62, I.P. Extension, Delhi-110092. Finder contact 9953197682 0040549728-1

I, Sumit Wadhawan S/o Sh. Satish Chander Wadhawan, R/O-C-720 Vikas Puri, New Delhi-110018, have lost my original certificate 10th & 12th class, 10th Roll no.6145701, 12th Roll no.6241905, CBSE DELHI. 0040549684-1

I, Neelam devi,W/O Sunil Pandey Muniji, R/O-H.no-A-157, Roopvihar, Mubarakpur dabas, Delhi-110081.Mistekly WRONGLY-written Vimla devi and Vimla Pandey in some documents.But my correct-name is Neelam devi as per documents. 0040549745-9

I, Narendar Singhal S/o Om Parkash Jain R/o AK-55, 2nd Floor, Gurudwara, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi-110088 changed my name to Narendar for all future purposes 0070715349-1

I, MAYANK PATHAK S/O DEVENDER PATHAKResiding at H-NO-561, JANTA-FLATS NEAR IDEA TOWER, G.T.B-ENCLAVE DELHI-110093, HAVE changed my name to MAYANK KUMAR SHARMA. 0040549745-1

I, LOKESH S/O RADHE SHYAM/R/O,H.No-34/932 DDA-FLATS KALKAJI DELHI-110019, have changed my name to LOKESH Kumar. 0040549745-11

I, Kummara Muthyalappa S/o Kummara Anjaneyulu R/o H.No-324/3C, BHJL Township, RC Puram Mandal, Ramachandrapuram, Medak, AP-502032, have changed my minor son's name from Kummara Mithyash Kumar aged 12 years to Kummara Megha Shyam forever 0070715346-1

I, Konyala Mahipal Reddy S/o Gopalreddy R/O-2-52, Hanuman Temple, Chitkul, Medak, Telangana-502270, have changed my name to Nanreddygari Mahipal Reddy 0070715345-1

I, K CH KN Srinivas Alias Kakaraparthi Chenna Kesava Narasimha Srinivas S/o Krishna Bhavana Kakaraparthi R/O Eswara Dharani Apartment, 7 9 13 Flat A3, Ramaraoepeta, Kakinada (Urban), Gandhinagar (KKD), East Godavari, AP-533004, have changed my name to Kchkn Srinivas 0070715365-1

I, Jalil Ahmad S/o Mr. Munir Ahmad R/o H.No.A-288, 1st floor,Gali No.9, Village Wazirabad, Delhi-110084,my correct name is Jalil Ahmad, infrom that Jaleel Ahmad and Jalil Ahmad are the same and one person. 0040549716-1

I, Harjit Singh S/o Harmam Singh R/o-29/86, 1st-Floor, West Patel Nagar, Delhi-110008,have changed my name to Harjeet Singh Juneja 0040549749-1

I, Dhruv Chaudhary S/o Tarsem Kumar R/o-14/107, Subhash Nagar, Delhi-110027 have changed my name to Dhruv Kumar 0040549749-2

I, Balwan S/o Devender R/o-T-162 Jain Colony Part-I, (Matiyala)Uttam-Nagar, New.Delhi-110059, have changed my name to Balwan Malik, for all future purposes. 0040549745-4

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BRIEFLY



Yogi Adityanath.

UTTAR PRADESH Driver held for 'hate messages' against CM

Lucknow: The Uttar Pradesh police received hate messages against Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on its 112 emergency helpline number, officials said on Saturday. A case was registered at the Hazratganj Police Station after the threatening text messages were received on Wednesday. DCP (Central) Somen Barma said. A truck driver, Amarpal, hailing from Etawah was arrested from Bara Birwa area here in this connection, the officer said. The accused is being questioned and further investigation is on. **PTI**

Can use phone to navigate while driving: govt

New Delhi: The use of mobile phones will be now allowed while driving, but only for navigation, as per a notification by the Centre to amend the Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989. This rule will come into effect from October 1. The passing of the Motor Vehicles Amendment Act, 2019 required notifying these amendments to the rules, which was done on September 25. One of the provisions pertains to monitoring the record of drivers electronically. The amendments make way for use of various IT tools to better enforce traffic rules and reduce "harassment of drivers". **ENS**

MAHARASHTRA Tiger claims seventh victim in Chandrapur

Nagpur: A tiger in Chandrapur district's Rajura area claimed its seventh human victim over the past year on Saturday, evading three teams out to capture it. "Called RT1, the male tiger first killed cattle in the Virur forest range and later killed a man working in a farm, about a kilometre away," Divisional Forest Officer Arvind Mundhe said. Identifying the victim as Govinda Madavi (65), Mundhe said the incident took place at around 4 pm. "Two of our teams were on its trail. Before we could reach the spot, it's moved towards Rajura and on the way, pounced on Madavi," Mundhe added. **ENS**

J&K LeT 'associate' held in Kupwara, arms seized

Srinagar: Security forces nabbed a militant associate linked to Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) in Kupwara district and recovered arms and ammunition from his possession on Saturday, police said. Based on a specific input, a cordon and search operation was launched by the security forces in the orchards of village Mandigam Kralgund in the north Kashmir district's Handwara, a police spokesperson said. During the searches, a militant associate identified as Akeel Ahmad Parry, a resident of Mandigam Kralgund, was arrested, he said. **PTI**

VIRTUAL BILATERAL MEET WITH RAJAPAKSA

High priority for Lanka ties, says PM as he flags fishermen, Tamil issues

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 26

IN ACCORDANCE with the neighbourhood first policy and SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) doctrine, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said India will give a "special and high priority" to its relationship with Sri Lanka.

Modi made the remarks during his first virtual bilateral summit with his Sri Lankan counterpart Mahinda Rajapaksa, during which both sides, with an eye on China's proactive moves in the Indian Ocean region, agreed to continue and further strengthen their mutual cooperation on personnel exchange and training and maritime security.

After the two leaders' meeting, a senior official in the Ministry of External Affairs said that the "ongoing infrastructure and connectivity projects were discussed and Prime Minister Modi expressed his confidence that the government in Sri Lanka will take early and decisive steps for their early implementation..."

The two leaders are learnt to have discussed the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) between India and China

PM Narendra Modi and his Sri Lanka counterpart Mahinda Rajapaksa during their virtual meeting on Saturday. **PTI**

EXPLAINED Eye on China, India engages Rajapaksas

AFTER MAHINDA Rajapaksa's win in Sri Lanka's parliamentary polls, the Rajapaksa brothers—with Gotabaya Rajapaksa at the helm as President—have once again regained influence and authority in the island nation. Now, New Delhi has moved fast to engage with the brothers. Saturday's summit is a continuation of India's engagement with Sri Lanka, a critical neighbour which has also been wooed by Beijing.

as the troops from both sides have been in a stand-off for more than four months, sources said.

At the meeting, Modi said, "We are giving special and high priority to our relationship with Sri Lanka in accordance with my government's neighbourhood

first policy and SAGAR doctrine."

Both leaders also acknowledged the progress made in information sharing and cooperation in counter-terrorism efforts as well as in dealing with regional drug trafficking.

Both sides discussed work-

PEN TO PAPER

■ Island-wide engagement through High Impact Community Development Projects for 2020-25

■ Construction of 10,000 housing units in plantation areas

■ Solar projects under a \$100-million line of credit from India

■ Early establishment of an air bubble to resume travel

■ Assistance of \$15 million for promotion of Buddhist ties

■ India to facilitate visit of Buddhist delegation from Sri Lanka in inaugural flight to Kushinagar

"An additional request for a bilateral currency swap arrangement worth around \$1 billion by the Sri Lankan side remains under discussion. Technical discussions on Sri Lanka's request for debt deferment are going on," MEA Joint Secretary (Indian Ocean Region) Amit Narang said after the talks.

Narang said both leaders also exchanged views on reconciliation in Sri Lanka. "Prime Minister Modi called on the new government in Sri Lanka to work towards realising the expectations of Tamils for equality, justice, peace and dignity within a united Sri Lanka by achieving reconciliation nurtured by implementation of the Constitutional provisions. He emphasized that implementation of the 13th amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution is essential for carrying forward the process of peace and reconciliation," Narang said.

The two leaders exchanged views on fishermen-related issues. "They agreed to continue and strengthen the ongoing constructive and humanitarian approach to address this issue through existing bilateral mechanisms and instructed relevant officials on both sides to this effect," Narang said.

Raut meeting with Fadnavis in Mumbai hotel sets off speculation

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 26

FORMER MAHARASHTRA chief minister Devendra Fadnavis and Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut's meeting at an upscale hotel in Mumbai on Saturday prompted speculation in the state's political circles.

Both leaders, however, said the meeting was to discuss modalities of an interview that Raut is planning with the BJP leader as a part of a series of interviews on political leaders for Saamana, a Sena mouthpiece.

Leader of Opposition in the state Council, Pravin Darekar, said, "Fadnavis and Raut meeting had nothing to do with state politics. Raut had approached Fadnavis for an interview for Saamana newspaper. While he agreed, Fadnavis laid a condition that the entire interview should go unedited. Therefore, before the interview, an informal meeting was held as discussed."

Raut, too, said he met Fadnavis for an interview. "When I interviewed NCP chief Sharad Pawar, I had said I will also interview Rahul Gandhi, Amit Shah and Devendra Fadnavis," said Raut, who is also executive editor of Saamana.



Sanjay Raut

NCB questions actors Deepika, Sara, Shraddha for over 5 hours

MOHAMED THAVER AND SRINATH RAO,
MUMBAI, SEPTEMBER 26

THE NARCOTICS Control Bureau (NCB) questioned actors Deepika Padukone, Shraddha Kapoor and Sara Ali Khan and Padukone's manager Karishma Prakash for over five hours on Saturday as part of its investigations into a purported "drug nexus" in Bollywood. The agency also made its 20th arrest in its investigation into the alleged supply and consumption of drugs in the Hindi film industry, taking former Dharmatic Entertainment executive producer Kshitij Prasad into its custody on Saturday.

Senior NCB officials claimed that Prasad, an Executive Producer at Dharmatic

Entertainment - a sister concern of Dharma Productions, a production house owned by Karan Johar - was in touch with major drug peddlers in Mumbai. "Some of these peddlers have already been arrested while the others are yet to be caught. Prasad has told us that he used to procure drugs for his own consumption. We are investigating whether he also used to supply those drugs to others," said an official.

Mutha Ashok Jain, Deputy Director General, South West Region, NCB, said that Prasad will be produced in court on Sunday.

Prasad was arrested in FIR 16/2020 of the NCB's Mumbai Zonal Unit. Earlier this month, the agency had informed the court that it had decided to file a second FIR "to uproot the drug citadel in Mumbai, especially in Bollywood". The agency had pre-

viously arrested actress Rhea Chakraborty, her brother Showik and 17 others under this FIR and seized small quantities of hashish, LSD dots and marijuana.

However, the NCB is yet to make a single arrest or recover narcotic substances in FIR 15/2020, which its Delhi Zonal Unit filed against six people Chakraborty on the basis of Whatsapp chats purportedly discussing drugs provided to it by the Enforcement Directorate.

On Saturday, Jain said that the three actresses were questioned in connection with both FIRs. "Statements of four people were recorded today. I cannot comment on what they said. Their statements will be submitted to the court," he said.

Jain said that the agency will now review the arrests and seizures it has made before de-

ciding who to question next. "The actresses have denied taking drugs. We may serve them a summons for further questioning if we find new evidence. Their questioning is over for now," said an NCB official.

Padukone and Prakash, an employee of KWAN talent management agency, were questioned at Evelyn House, a VVIP Guest House owned by the Mumbai Port Trust in Colaba while Kapoor and Khan were questioned at the NCB's office in Ballard Pier. all four women were questioned for close to five hours.

Jain also said NCB's probe was not linked to a party thrown by Johar last year and which was attended by several top actors, including Padukone. On Friday, Johar had issued a statement denying allegations that drugs were consumed at that party.

(Clockwise, from left) Actors Shraddha Kapoor and Sara Ali Khan at the NCB zonal office; and Deepika Padukone's manager Karishma Prakash at the agency's guest house. *Pradeep Das/Ganesh Shirsekar*

Atmanirbhar Bharat not to close doors to the world: Rajnath

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 26

DEFENCE MINISTER Rajnath Singh on Saturday said the government does not want to shut itself to the world through its push for Atmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India) but wants international defence companies to manufacture here.

Speaking at an event on Jana Sangh founder Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, Singh said "self-reliance is very important in the field of defence", as a country that depends on imports for its defence needs will "never be strong and self-respecting". He said "being self-sufficient in the defence sector is linked to the self-respect and sovereignty of our country".

Singh said India's entire system is a symbol of openness, and that "self-sufficient India is the name of opening new doors with an open mind" He said, "Our doors are not closing, but are opening further - the only thing is, manufacture in our house. If you want to make it, then make it in this country."

The minister questioned the rationale behind importing equipment that are made in India, or can be easily made domestically. Mentioning the government's slogan "vocal for local", he said, "We will not only get things made easily in India, but with this encouragement, things will start to be made in India that are not made today."

J&K L-G Manoj Sinha visits Rajnath Singh. **PTI**

Among policy decisions taken by the government recently to encourage domestic defence manufacturing, he mentioned raising the FDI limit through automatic route to 74 per cent, compared to 49 per cent earlier.

The other decision he mentioned was the 'no-imports' list announced by him for 101 weapons and platforms. That decision "has led to manufacturing opportunities of Rs 52,000 crore in a year", he said.

Singh also announced that the government will introduce a new Defence Production and Procurement Policy soon. The government had floated its draft earlier this year and sought feedback from stakeholders.

"The foundation of India's future rests on the strength of a self-reliant India. From the battlefield to the farms, India should achieve its ability to fulfill its needs," he said.

Earlier in the day, Singh had met Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, who had visited him.

Cong no-confidence motion against BSY govt defeated

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, SEPTEMBER 26

THE 15-MONTH-OLD B S Yediyurappa-led BJP government in Karnataka Saturday defeated a no-confidence motion initiated by the Congress. The Opposition party had alleged corruption, mishandling of the Covid-19 situation and law and order incidents which resulted in deaths of five persons in Mangaluru and Bengaluru while bringing in the motion.

The debate on the motion, stretching late into Saturday night, was marked by a heated argument between Leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah and the Chief Minister over allegations of corruption by members of Yediyurappa's family.

Yediyurappa offered to step down if the Congress proved its charges. The opposition party had made the allegations on the basis of a sting operation carried out by a television channel.

Congress's Siddaramaiah presented a transcript of an audio conversation that discusses alleged payment of bribes by a contractor to a government official. He also presented details of Whatsapp conversations released by the channel on bribes for clearing contracts.

Siddaramaiah said the audio

transcript showed someone called Vijayendra (which is the name of the chief minister's younger son) telling a representative of the channel that a government official had been taking bribes in the name of the Chief Minister.

The Whatsapp conversations discussing payment of various amounts occurred between a contractor and an individual linked to the government, the former chief minister said.

Siddaramaiah demanded Yediyurappa's resignation and a probe by a judge of the Supreme Court or an SIT monitored by the Karnataka Chief Justice.

"I do not know who is this Vijayendra, and who is this Sashidhar. Let the government conduct an inquiry to find out. Till the inquiry is conducted Yediyurappa should not continue as chief minister," said the Leader of the Opposition.

"If you prove these allegations I will quit politics. If these allegations are wrong then you must quit," the Karnataka chief minister replied.

The opposition Janata Dal (Secular) did not support motion. Several BJP MLAs who did not turn up for the six-day assembly session also attended the discussions on the no confidence motion, resulting in a clear majority for government.

Bring policy to cut dependence on groundwater: Centre to states

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 26

THE CENTRE has asked state governments to bring a suitable water pricing policy to reduce the agriculture sector's overdependence on groundwater. This advice has been rendered in the new guidelines notified by the Jal Shakti Ministry on September 24 to regulate and control groundwater extraction in the country.

"States/UTs are advised to review their free/subsidized electricity policy to farmers, bring suitable water pricing policy and may work further towards crop rotation/diversification/other initiatives to reduce overdependence on groundwater," say the guidelines that came in force with effect from Thursday.

The ministry's advice regarding a water pricing policy assumes significance as it was not part of the earlier draft guidelines issued on December 12, 2018, which were struck down by the National Green Tribunal. In those guidelines, the Centre had provided a 9-point indicative list of demands, including various water saving methods. However, there was no mention of reviewing the policy of free/subsidized electricity or water pricing policy.

Describing the agriculture sector as the "backbone of the Indian economy", the guidelines say, "As per Minor Irrigation Census 2013-14, 87.86% of wells are owned by marginal, small and semi-medium farmers having land holding up to 4 hectares (ha). Around 9.18 % of wells are

owned by medium farmers having land holding 4 - 10 ha and 2.96% of the wells are owned by big farmers having land holding more than 10 ha.

"Considering the number of groundwater abstraction structures, regulation of groundwater in the agriculture sector through a 'command and control' strategy will prove to be an arduous task," the guidelines say.

While the Centre has left it to states to take action, it itself has exempted agricultural activities from the requirement of obtaining a No Objection Certificate (NOC) for groundwater extraction.

"Agriculture sector shall be exempted from obtaining No Objection Certificate for groundwater extraction," say the guidelines.

Village with highest polling station gets its first tap water connection

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, SEPTEMBER 26

A REMOTE hamlet in Spiti which has the distinction of having the world's highest polling station has now got its first tap water connection, according to officials of the state Jal Shakti Vibhag.

Tashi Gang, a village of six households which lies at around 4,650 metres above the mean sea level, was provided water connection under a gravity scheme from a water source up the hill a few days ago, said Kaza executive engineer Manoj Negi.

"Spiti is a remote region, but within Spiti, Tashigang is one of the remotest inhabited places. Village residents used to fetch water from springs and other sources in the area using jerry cans but now a functional household tap

After the installation. *Express*

connection has been installed in all the six houses using those same water sources," he said.

Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat also tweeted about the installation, congratulating the state officials.

Tashi Gang lies around 14 km away from Kibber and has a population of around 50 people. The

connection is expected to benefit the residents at least during the non-winter months. Water pipes and taps often get frozen in Spiti during winters, when residents rely on natural springs and other sources.

Earlier this year, Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur said that under the Jal Jeevan Mission, the state has set a target of providing tapped water to all households in Himachal by August 2022. Around 7.5 lakh out of 16.7 lakh households in the state already have tap connections, and the state has fixed a target of covering 2.44 lakh more houses during 2020-21, he had said.

He had also requested the Centre to provide Rs 990 crore under the scheme keeping in view the tough geographical conditions of the state.

Served 40 years for this: Bengal BJP leader after being dropped

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, SEPTEMBER 26

West Bengal BJP leader Rahul Sinha on Saturday expressed his discontent after being dropped as party's national general secretary during an organisational reshuffle and wondered if this was the "reward" for serving the party for 40 years.

"Served @BJP4India for 40 Years as the Warrior and today just to include @AITCofficial Leaders, I have been asked to Left the Post of the Party," Sinha tweeted along with a 50-second video. He said that he was dropped to make way for former TMC leaders and that he would reveal his next course of action in 10-12 days.



BIHAR
Met Nitish to thank him, says Bihar ex-DGP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
PATNA, SEPTEMBER 26

FORMER BIHAR DGP Gupteshwar Pandey met Chief Minister Nitish Kumar in Patna on Saturday, fuelling speculation that the IPS officer's move to take VRS was propelled by the intention of joining politics. Pandey, who stepped down as the state police chief less than a week ago, however, insisted that he visited the state headquarters of the JD(U) to "thank" Nitish for the trust reposed in him. Although the IPS officer, who took VRS less than six months before he was scheduled to superannuate, has chosen to keep his cards close to the chest, sources said he is likely to join the JD(U) and get a poll ticket from one of the Assembly segments in his native district of Buxar. Reports said that Pandey might be considered for Valmiki Nagar Lok Sabha seat, where a by-poll has been necessitated by the death of sitting JD(U) MP Baidyanath Mahto.

Mathura: Civil suit seeks removal of mosque from 'Krishna birthplace'

ANANTHAKRISHNAN
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 26

UPPING The claim over the ostensible "birthplace" of Lord Krishna in Uttar Pradesh's Mathura, a group of devotees and the minor deity have moved a civil court, seeking removal of a mosque which they allege was built after a part of a Hindu shrine was razed on orders of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb in the 17th century. In the suit filed before the Civil Judge, Mathura, the plaintiffs said that "every inch of land", measuring 13.37 acres, "of Katra Keshav Dev (as the place is known historically) is sacred for devotees of Lord Shree Krishna and (the) Hindu community". The petitioners have sought "removal of encroachment and superstructure illegally raised" on it "by Committee of Management of alleged Trust Shahi Masjid Idgah with the consent of Sunni Central Board of Waqf". The deity and the "Janm Asthan (birthplace)" – the petitioners – are represented by next friend Ranjana Agnihotri, a Lucknow-based advocate. The other petitioners are devotees Pravesh Kumar, Rajesh Mani Tripathi, Karunesh Kumar Shukla,

1991 law says no judicial review of religious places after Ayodhya

THE SUIT gains significance as the Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991, enacted in September 1991 at the height of the Ayodhya temple movement when the P V Narasimha Rao government was in power, had said that barring the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute, which was already in court, the religious character of a place of worship as it existed on August 15, 1947 will continue to be the same. However, the law's

Constitutional validity is under challenge in a separate petition before the Supreme Court.

The petitioners have contended that the Act is unconstitutional, as it bars the right to seek judicial review, which is a basic feature of the Constitution and outside the legislative competence of Parliament. The Mathura petition states that provisions of the 1991 Act is "not applicable in this case" but does not elaborate on it.

land, the petition stated. The plea contended that "in fact the original karagar (prison) – i.e. the birthplace of Lord Krishna – lies beneath the construction raised by" the mosque trust and the "fact will come out before the court after excavation". The petitioners alleged that the mosque trust and the Sangh "entered into a compromise and created artificial karagar" in order to "hide said fact from the public due to political reasons". They alleged that the Sangh and the Trust management "played fraud upon the Court, the plaintiff Deities and devotees with a view to capture and grab the property".

The plaintiffs contended that they have the "right under Article 26 of the Constitution to regain, hold and manage the property belonging to, owned and possessed by deity Lord Shree Krishna Virajmaan...situated within the area of Temple Complex in Katra Keshav Dev, City and District." On the history of the place and the dispute, they said that Raja Veer Singh Deva Bundela of Orchha "built/renovated" the temple of Shree Krishna there in 1618. The plea stated, "it is matter of fact and history that Aurangzeb...being staunch follower of Islam had issued orders for demolition of large number of Hindu religious places and temples including the temple standing at the birth place...in 1669-70. "The army of Aurangzeb partly succeeded to demolish Keshav Dev Temple and a construction was forcibly raised showing the might of power and said construction was named as Idgah Mosque". They pointed out that Aurangzeb's order finds place in the Official Court Bulletin (Akhbarat) of January-February 1670, which was translated from Persian to English by late historian Jadu Nath Sarkar. The demolition is also recorded by Italian traveller Nicola Manucci who worked in Mughal court, in his book "Storia do Mogar" or Mugal India 1653-1708, the plea mentioned. FULL REPORT ON

www.indianexpress.com



THE DAY THE MUSIC DIED

The wife and son of singer S P Balasubrahmanyam, Savitri and S P Charan, at his funeral at the family farmhouse in Thamaraiakkam village of Thiruvallur district on Saturday. Balasubrahmanyam died on Friday. PTI

13 killed in rain, landslides in Meghalaya over 5 days

TORA AGARWALA
GUWAHATI, SEPTEMBER 26

AT LEAST thirteen people were killed in rainfall-related incidents across Meghalaya since September 22, disaster management authorities said on Saturday. According to a district-wise cumulative report issued by the State Disaster Management Authority, five people remain missing while a total of 985 people in 37 villages across East Khasi Hills, West Khasi Hills and Ri Bhoi districts have been affected because of the continuous downpour over the past week. The rainfall has abated since Saturday morning. Among the victims are two women cricketers who were

killed in a landslide on Friday which struck their homes in lower Lumparing Dhoibi Ghat, situated in the Laban area of East Khasi Hills district. Three others from the area are still missing. The district's Deputy Commissioner, Isawanda Laloo, said, "Two bodies – that of Razia Ahmed and Feroza Khan – were retrieved from the debris, while three others remained missing. Rescue efforts are on to find them." Razia represented Meghalaya at the national level, confirmed the village headman of Laban. "A complete report is awaited after which we will move the government for ex-gratia for the families," said Laloo, adding that other residents in the vicinity had been evacuated to safety.

UTTARAKHAND
Notice to MLA over 'tarnishing' govt's image

Dehradun: The Uttarakhand unit of the BJP on Saturday issued a showcause notice to its Lohaghat legislator Puran Singh Fartyal, accusing him of "tarnishing the image" of the Trivendra Singh Rawat government and the party organisation by moving an adjournment motion in the Assembly session this week. Fartyal had in the Assembly moved an adjournment motion, alleging corruption in the allotment of a tender related to a road project. In the notice issued by state general secretary Kuldeep Kumar, it has been said that Fartyal, at several occasions, gave statements against the state government and the party organisation in the media, which tarnished the image of both. "Despite being an MLA of the ruling side, you moved adjournment motion in the Assembly under rule 58 of the Assembly business procedure. Your this behaviour comes in the category of indiscipline," reads the notice. ENS

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
e-Procurement Notice
INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

1. The Executive Engineer HPPWD Kohthal, Distt. Shimla H.P. on behalf of Governor of H.P. invites the online bids on item rate, in electronic tendering system, in 2 Cover System for the under mentioned work from the eligible and approved contractors/Firms registered with HPPWD Department.

Sr. No	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	EMD	Cost of Tender	Time	Eligible class of Contractor
1.	C/O Govt. Senior Secondary School, Building at Mahasu in Tehsil Kohthal, Distt. Shimla, H.P. (S1- C/O 1st floor of building portion over existing ground floor)	Rs. 36,49,367/-	Rs.82,300/-	Rs.1500/-	12 Months	Class-C

Tender document and other instructions can be downloaded or viewed online from the portal <https://tenders.gov.in> by the firm/individual registered on the website which is free of cost.

Key Dates:

1.	Date of Online Publication	05.10.2020 11:00 HRS
2.	Document Download Start and End Date	05.10.2020 11:30 HRS upto 27.10.2020 17:30 HRS
3.	Document Download Start and End Date	05.10.2020 11:30 HRS upto 27.10.2020 1800 HRS
4.	Physical Submission of EMD and Cost of Tender Document	28.10.2020 upto 10:00 HRS
5.	Date of Technical Bid opening	28.10.2020 11:00 HRS
6.	Evaluation of Technical Bid followed by Opening of Financial Bid	Date to be announced

Executive Engineer
Division Kohthal, HPPWD Kohthal
Distt. Shimla H.P.
on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh

Government of Jammu and Kashmir
Sher-I-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences,
Department of Materials Management (Imports Section)
Soura, Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir - 190011
E-mail: amioimports@skims.ac.in, Fax No: 0194-2403404

e-NIT No: SIMS-324- NIT 12 (Imports) of 2020 Dated: 25 -09-2020

Subject: Abbreviated Notice Inviting Tenders for supply, installation, testing & commissioning of various Bio- Medical equipments for the department of Gastroenterology SKIMS.

On behalf of the Lt. Governor of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir through Director, Sher-I-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences, Soura, Srinagar, e-tenders are invited from the original manufacturers/their Indian subsidiaries/Indian Agents on the authorization of principal manufacturers /Indian Subsidiary if 100% subsidiary of foreign principals (for imported equipment) and manufacturers /their authorized dealers for the J&K (for indigenous equipment) for supply, installation, testing & commissioning of following Bio-Medical equipments:

Group	Name of the item	Qty	Tender fee	EMD
A	High Resolution Ultrasound	01 units	Rs. 1000/-	Rs.50,000/-
B	Endo Ultrasound (EUS)	02 units	Rs.1000/-	Rs. 3,20,000/-
C	Full-fledged Endoscopic Unit (Upper/Lower/Slide View) Latest series	02 units	Rs.1000/-	Rs.2,00,000/-
D	High Resolution Manometry	01 unit	Rs.1000/-	Rs. 50,000/-
E	Endoscope storage Cabinets	2 units	Rs.1000/-	Rs. 50,000/-
F	Hydrogen Breath Test System	1 units	Rs.1000/-	Rs.10,000/-

The detailed tender document is available on www.jktenders.gov.in & on SKIMS website www.skims.ac.in. The NIT schedule is as per following:-

Last date for submission of online bids	02.11.2020 upto 4:00 PM
Opening of Technical bids	05.11.2020 at 12:30 PM

Complete bidding process will be online on e-tendering portal www.jktenders.gov.in & the tenders should be submitted strictly in accordance with the provisions of the detailed NIT.

Sd/
Asstt. Materials Management Officer (Imports)
For & on behalf of Chief of Materials Management
No: SIMS-324-eNIT 12 (Imports) 2020-3031-37-5342-45
Dated: 25/09/2020

ARC, DG (S) CABINET SECRETARIAT

SEALED TENDERS ARE INVITED ON PLAIN PAPER FOR SALE OF VEHICLES AS SCRAP ON "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS".

SL. NO	REGN. NO	MAKE & YEAR OF PURCHASE	BID SECURITY (₹)
1.	DL-12C-5579	Maruti SX4, 2011	5000/-
2.	DL-12C-5580	Maruti SX4, 2011	5000/-
3.	DL-9CG-3368	Maruti Gypsy, 2003	5000/-
4.	DL-1M-2465	Tata Truck, 2007	5000/-
5.	DL-1M-3633	Eicher Truck, 2008	5000/-
6.	DI-9CQ-2027	Maruti Gypsy king, 2007	5000/-

2. BANK DRAFT TOWARDS EARNEST MONEY DRAWN IN FAVOUR OF DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTS, CABINET SECRETARIAT, PAYABLE AT SBI RK PURAM, NEW DELHI MAY BE ENCLOSED ALONGWITH SEALED TENDERS ADDRESSED TO "JOINT DIRECTOR (ADMN), ARC, DG (S), CABINET SECRETARIAT, GOI, EAST BLOCK-V, R.K.PURAM, NEW DELHI-110066". ALSO A COPY OF PROOF OF RESIDENCE IS REQUIRED TO BE ATTACHED ALONGWITH THE TENDER.

3. THE ABOVE VEHICLES AT SL. NO. 01 TO 06 CAN BE INSPECTED BETWEEN 1100 to 1600 HRS ON 30.09.2020 TO 01.10.2020 AT "ARC, MAHIPALPUR, (PALAM), NEAR METRO STATION". SEALED TENDERS INDICATING THE AMOUNT & GST OF EACH VEHICLE SEALED IN ENVELOPE MENTIONING WITH QUOTE FOR VEHICLES & BIDDERS NAME & ADDS MAY BE SENT THROUGH SPEED POST ONLY AND ADDRESS TO "JOINT DIRECTOR(A), ARC, DG (S), CABINET SECRETARIAT, GOI, EAST BLOCK-V, R.K. PURAM, NEW DELHI-110066". TENDERS WILL BE RECEIVED UPTO 1700 HRS ON 19.10.2020 AND WILL BE OPENED ON. 21.10.2020 AT 1500 HRS. DATE OF ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIGHEST BID WILL BE ON. 23.10.2020 AT 1200 HRS. SUCCESSFUL BIDDERS WILL BE REQUIRED TO MAKE FULL PAYMENT BY BANK DRAFT DRAWN IN FAVOUR OF DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTS, CABINET SECRETARIAT, PAYABLE AT SBI RK PURAM, NEW DELHI WITHIN ONE WEEK AND COLLECT THE VEHICLES IMMEDIATELY FAILING WHICH EARNEST MONEY WILL BE FORFEITED. IN CASE OF UNSUCCESSFUL BIDDERS, THE EARNEST MONEY WILL BE REFUNDED BY REGISTERED POST WITHIN 2 WEEKS. THE BOARD OF OFFICERS FOR THIS AUCTION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL TENDERS WITHOUT ASSIGNING ANY REASON. GST NO. OF OUR DEPARTMENT IS 07DELD08317B1D1.

Sd/
davp 58101/11/0018/2021
Joint Director (A)

RITES LIMITED
(A Government of India Enterprise) CIN No.: L74899DL1974G01007227

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

The General Manager/EXPOTECH, RITES Ltd. invites online bids in single packet system for the following:

Item & Quantity	Description
Development, Supply, Installation and Commissioning of 3 phase AC-AC Transmission System including Driver Cab Equipment For 1800 HP Cape Gauge DEMUs – for 5 DEMU Rake sets.	

Tender Reference: RITES/EXP/02/DEM/Transmission System
Completion Period: 24 Weeks
Last date & time of submission of bid: 06.10.2020 up to 11:00 hrs. IST

The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the website <http://ritesltd.com/> and CPP portal <https://etenders.gov.in/procure/app>. Addendum/Corrigendum, if any, shall be hosted online only

Dept. of Fisheries and Animal Resources Development, Govt. of Odisha
OFFICE OF THE JOINT DIRECTOR, FROZEN SEMEN BANK, KHAPURIA, CUTTACK-753 010, ODISHA
An ISO 9001:2015 Certified Unit
E-Mail- jdfsbcct@gmail.com Tel. No.- 0671-2344532

No. 1667/FSB Date: 23.09.2020
NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed tenders are invited from reputed Firms/ Suppliers registered under GST in two part bid for supply of Liquid Nitrogen (LN2) at seven different locations in Odisha for the year 2020-21. A complete set of Tender Papers containing the details of item with specifications, terms and conditions will be available at office of the Joint Director, Frozen Semen Bank, Khapuria, Cuttack from 25.09.2020 to 16.10.2020 up to 11.00 AM on working days within office hours on payment of non-refundable fees of **Rs. 11800/-** (Rupees Eleven thousands Eight hundred only) by cash / Demand Draft, which includes cost of tender paper at Rs. 10000/-+ GST @18% i.e. Rs. 1800/- . The sealed tender will be received from 25.09.2020 to 16.10.2020 up to 01.00 PM. The tender papers can also be downloaded from web site <http://odishaahvs.nic.in> / www.cuttack.nic.in/ www.oirds.com and submitted along with the above cost in shape of bank draft drawn in favour of "The Joint Director, Frozen Semen Bank, Khapuria, Cuttack" payable at SBI Kalyaninagar Branch, Cuttack. Tender papers downloaded and submitted without the cost of the tender paper shall be liable for rejection.

Sd/-
Joint Director
Frozen Semen Bank, Cuttack
OIPR-06080/11/0001/2021

दक्षिणांचल विद्युत वितरण निगम लि०
(उ.प्र. सरकार का उपक्रम)
CIN:U31200UP2003SGC027460

SELECTION OF TECHNICAL MEMBER FOR CONSUMER GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL FORUM, BANDA (U.P.)

In accordance with the "Uttar Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission (Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum & Electricity Ombudsman) Regulations, 2007", Dakshinanchal Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd. Agra invites applications from suitable persons for the post of Technical Member in consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, Banda. The regulation is available on the website of U.P. Electricity Regulatory commission www.uperc.org. The relevant provisions of the UPERC (Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum & Electricity Ombudsman) Regulations, 2007 relating to qualification, age, period of employment etc of Technical Member are as follows:- 1. Holds a degree in Electrical or Mechanical Engineering 2. Has at least 10 years experience in electricity distribution. 3. Held a post not below the rank of a Deputy General Manager/ Superintending Engineer or an equivalent post in any Government Department of Government undertaking or a private company. 4. Preferably has experience in regulatory affairs and has attained the age of 58 years. 5. Shall hold office of the forum for a period of three years or up to age of 65 years, whichever is earlier. Applications on format given below should reach the Director (P&A), Dakshinanchal Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd., Urja Bhawan, 220 K.V., Sub Station, Bye Pass road, Sikandra, Agra through registered/speed post or by hand latest by 26-10-2020 at 17:00 hrs. On the covering envelop it must be mentioned clearly in bold letters the name of THE POST APPLIED FOR.....

APPLICATION FORMAT

Post applied for.....
1. Name.....
2. ID No.
3. Father's Name.....
4. Address for communication with telephone/ Mob. No.
5. Date of Birth.....
6. Technical Qualification.....
7. Last post held.....
8. Details of employment in reverse chronological order.....

Any other information that the candidate may wish to give.....

(Signature & name in capital letter of Applicant)

SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER(Admn.)
13181/प्रनि/काप्र/उअ/अं-1/तकनीकी सदस्य दिनांक 26/09/2020
"SAVE ELECTRICITY FOR THE NATION"



Government of Jammu & Kashmir
Office of the Executive Engineer, Trans. Line Maintt. Division-7, JKPTCL Bemina, Srinagar-190010
Ph. No. 0194-3516481 e-mail: tlmd7.jkptcl@gmail.com

EXTENSION NOTICE-I

Due to poor response the last date for submission of bids in respect of e-NIT No. TLMD-7/18 of 2020 dated: 03-09-2020 for construction of 7 No. tower foundations (PS type) and setting right of 4 No. existing foundations in 220kV D/c ZAMTL (Sec-II) in district Srinagar is hereby extended with revised critical dates are as under.

1	E-bids submission end date and time	01-10-2020 (16:00 Hrs)
2	Online techno commercial e-bid opening date and time	03-10-2020 (13:00 Hrs)

All other terms and conditions of e-NIT will remain same.

Sd/
Executive Engineer
TLMD-7 Srinagar

No. TLMD-7/TS/1399-401
Dated: 25 : 09 : 2020
DIPK-NB-2605/20

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU - PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
BUILDING ORGANIZATION OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, P.W.D., BUILDINGS (CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE) CIRCLE, SALEM - 7.
PRE-QUALIFICATION APPLICATION AND PRICE TENDER FORM OF CONTRACT: LUMPSUM TWO COVER SYSTEM) SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE No.18/ 2020-2021/SEB/CS/MPC/SLM, Dated 25.09.2020

For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu, the Superintending Engineer, P.W.D. Buildings (Construction and Maintenance) Circle, Salem - 7 invites tenders for the following work, at the office upto 3.00 P.M. on 22.10.2020 in two sealed covers containing (i) Qualification details and EMD in a separate inner cover and (ii) Price Tender Schedule in another sealed cover and put into one common sealed cover from the experienced and competent contractors. (Firms as detailed below). The tender schedule can be downloaded at free of cost from the Govt. designated website (v2) <http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in>. The tender schedule will also be available in the Office of the Superintending Engineer, P.W.D. Buildings (CS&M) Circle, Salem-7, from 01.10.2020 to 21.10.2020 upto 5.45 pm. The tenders received will be opened at 3.30 P.M. on 22.10.2020, in the presence of the tenderers or their representatives who choose to be present at that time.

Sl. No	Name of Work	Approximate value of work including G.S.T. (Rs. In Lakhs)	Amount of Earnest Money Deposit in Rupees	Period of Completion
1.	Providing furnitures, False ceiling, Wall panelling, PA System, Projectors with screen, Computerization, Copier, Colour printer with scanner, CCTV Cameras, Intercom EPABX LAN connection, LED TV and Electrical Service connection arrangements in Government Law College at Karamangalam taluk of Dharmapuri District.	830.50	4,26,000	6 Months

EMD to be credited: The Executive Engineer, P.W.D. Buildings (CS&M) Division, Dharmapuri
Cost of tender schedule: Document cost: Rs.15000/- (+) G.S.T. 12%; Rs.1800/-

Tender documents, are available in the following website and can also be downloaded at free of cost: www.tenders.tn.gov.in. Any other details can be had from the Office of the Superintending Engineer, P.W.D. Buildings (Construction and Maintenance) Circle, Salem - 636 007, during working hours. Any changes in tender condition will also be published in website www.tenders.tn.gov.in.
DIPR / 3634 / TENDER / 2020

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER PW (R&B) DEPARTMENT
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
e-NIT No. 01 of 2020-21 Dated 22.09.2020

For and on the behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir e-tenders are invited on Rs. basis from registered and reputed Consultancy Firms/Agencies who have experience in similar nature of works/having full knowledge for such particular type of work.

S. No	Name of Work	Quantity No Units	Estimated Rate	Cost of documents (₹)	Earnest Money (₹)	Time of completion	Class of Contractor
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Consultancy Services for Computerization, / Reorganization of Public Works Department (J&K)	10000	Rs. 2500000/-	1000/-	50000/-	45 Days	Firms having eligibility criteria

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website <http://tktenders.gov.in> as per below schedule:

1	Date of issue of Tender Notice	22.09.2020
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 23-09-2020 to 06-10-2020, 4:00 PM

No.: CE/TS/1095-1126
Dated: 27.09.2020
DIPW-5644/20

Sd/-
Chief Engineer
PW (R&B) Department Jammu

Odisha records 13,000 cases in three days; some districts declare partial shutdown

AISHWARYA MOHANTY
BHUBANESWAR, SEPT 26

WITH A jump of nearly 13,000 cases over the past three days, Covid-19 cases in Odisha have breached the 2-lakh mark, leading authorities of several districts to announce partial shutdowns in their jurisdictions. In other districts, residents themselves have opted for partial shutdown measures to combat the spike in cases.

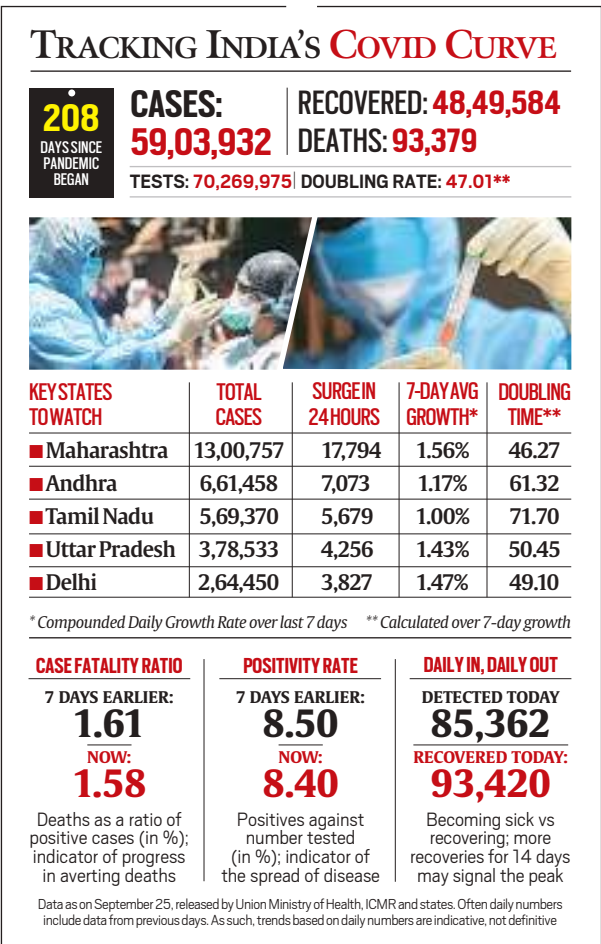
On Saturday, the state recorded its highest single-day surge with 4,356 cases and 16 deaths, taking the overall figure to 2,05,452 and 783 fatalities. Since September 1, Odisha has added 97,290 cases — 47 per cent of the total caseload.

“The cases have increased because of the rise in testing, which means there is timely detection. But it is not a cause of concern because recoveries have gone up as well. This is a natural course of the infection and eventually, the cases will decline,” said Health Minister Naba Kishore Das.

While Ganjam district — once a hotspot — has shown a declining trend in the number of cases, districts such as Khurda, Cuttack and Puri have now become a major areas of concern. Apart from these, the infection is also spreading fast in 15 other districts.

Meanwhile to contain the spread, a few district authorities have ordered partial shutdowns. Balliguda town authorities in Kandhamal district have ordered the closure of all shops selling non-essentials until October 2. Similarly, in Jharsuguda, road-side fast-food shops have been asked to shut down for 15 days. The vendors will however be paid Rs 2,500 as compensation for their losses. Nayagarh authorities have ordered a complete shutdown on weekends.

In Balangir district, residents have opted for a voluntary shutdown for seven days. “We decided to go for a shutdown ourselves as the cases are on a rise,” said Tripurani Panigrahi, from the Covid Control Committee of the district.



Gujarat govt cancels its Navratri festivities in wake of pandemic

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
AHMEDABAD, SEPTEMBER 26

THE NAVRATRI festivities organised by the Gujarat government have been cancelled in wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, an official statement said here on Saturday.

Every year, Gujarat government organises grand festivities during Navratri on GMDC grounds in Ahmedabad. Last year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had attended the festivities and performed an aarti before the idol of Goddess Ambe.

“In wake of the Covid pandemic, Chief Minister Vijay Rupani had taken an important decision in public interest to cancel the state-level Navratri

festivities organised by the state government between October 17 and 25,” the statement said.

A state official reiterated that only the government-organised function during Navratri has been cancelled as of now.

The festival that begins on October 17 has been described as the “world’s longest festival” by Modi when he was the chief minister of the state. A delegation of garba organisers had called on Rupani in July 2020 and requested permission for conducting the festival.

Currently, as per the Unluck 4.0 guidelines, only 100 people are allowed to gather from in public places for social, entertainment, cultural, religious and political functions.

CHHATTISGARH

Editor assaulted in Kanker, two councillors named in FIR

Journalists write to Governor, accuse ‘Congress workers’ of attacking them

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
RAIPUR, SEPTEMBER 26

AN FIR was registered against two councilors, the husband of a council leader, and others for allegedly assaulting and threatening the editor of a regional daily newspaper near Kanker city police station in Chhattisgarh’s Bastar division on Saturday.

The incident occurred when some journalists had approached the police after one of them allegedly received threats. Kamal Shukla, 53, editor of *Bhumkal News*, was assaulted by a group of people, leaving him injured, the FIR stated.

People present at the spot uploaded a video on social media that purportedly shows Shukla, in a disheveled state, being dragged amid a large crowd. “I was abused and shown guns twice inside the police station by Congress leaders,” Shukla’s written statement to the police said.

Accusing policemen, including the station in-charge, of in-

Home Minister Tamradhwaj Sahu has denied this was a political issue, and said the incident was an ‘internal matter between journalists, which led to heated exchange’

citing the crowd, he stated, “The police clearly seem to be under political pressure but I, a common man, have no option but to approach the police.”

Shukla, who suffered injuries on neck and head, added, “I was threatened by policemen a couple of days ago. I believe they, too, are involved in this (assault).”

Home Minister Tamradhwaj Sahu in a media statement, denied this was a political issue: “This seems to be some internal matter between journalists, which led to heated exchange. I have asked the police to follow

procedure and FIR has been registered.”

In his statement, Shukla also alleged that the accused accosted him inside the police station, threatening him for disrupting their sand business. “I have in the past written stories on the corrupt of the councilmen, illegal sand-mining and other issues. Hence I am made into a target,” he stated.

In a statement, the police said it was a case of “mutual estrangement” that became physical between journalists Shukla and Tiwari, along with Tiwari’s supporters.

The FIR registered under IPC Sections 294 (obscene act in public place), 323 (voluntarily causing hurt), 506 (criminal intimidation) and 34 (common intent) names councilors Makbool Khan and Shadab Khan; ex-councilor Jitendra Singh Thakur; Ganesh Tiwari and Abdul Gaffar Memon, along with others.

Thakur is husband of present council leader and Congress leader Saroj Singh Thakur. Tiwari

is a local journalist and editor of local daily *Amar Stambh*.

While Thakur and Tiwari could not be reached for a comment, Memon has filed a counter-complaint, accusing Shukla of attacking him at the police station. Police officials said the complaint will not be turned into FIR.

Journalists in Kanker have submitted a letter to Governor Anusuiya Uikey, accusing “Congress workers and hooligans” of assaulting and abusing them. Requesting her intervention, they wrote, “There will be CCTV recordings of how the police did nothing to help us. We managed to shield Shukla and others for some time, but eventually we were attacked by Congress workers and hooligans.”

Activists across the state condemned the attack on a senior journalist and criticised the Congress-led state government and reminded the party of its promise in the poll manifesto of bringing in a journalist protection law.

In west UP, inter-faith same-sex couple seeks dist admin help after ‘families object’

AMIL BHATNAGAR
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 26

AN INTER-FAITH same-sex couple on Friday approached the district administration of Shamli, in Uttar Pradesh, and sought intervention, saying that their families have objected to their relationship.

The couple, in their early-20s, come from a village in Shamli and alleged that their families have threatened them with dire consequences.

The police said protection will be provided to the couple

as and when the need arises.

Shamli district magistrate Jasjeet Kaur said: “We recorded the statements of the inter-faith same-sex couple in front of a magistrate so that there is a legal record of it. In their statement, the women said they are educated adults who are aware of the rational decision they are making. They said they have the right to live their lives as they wish. It was conveyed to the families, and the couple has so far not complained of any problems following their statements.”

According to local residents,

the two women had eloped a few days ago out of fear of their families and went into hiding.

The two lived in the same village and have known each other since childhood, a local resident told *The Sunday Express*.

After they reportedly eloped, one woman’s family complained to the local police that she had been kidnapped by her partner’s brother. The police traced the couple and arranged a discussion between the two and their families in police’s presence.

The women at present are

based in another village, away from their families, the police said.

Circle Officer (City) Pradeep Singh said, “The two are adults and have the right to live with each other. We heard their problems and their statements were recorded. So far we have not received a written request for (police) protection, but we will provide it whenever the case arises.”

Singh also said, “It is enshrined in our Constitution that they have the freedom to live as they will, and we will ensure that the law is followed.”

MAGNETIC, MESMERISING MAHARASHTRA

Maharashtra is blessed with a veritable bouquet of tourist attractions. A long coastline with white sandy beaches, exotic wildlife sanctuaries, cloud-kissed hill stations, impenetrable forts with tons of history lessons, ancient caves dating back to the 2nd century BC...the list goes on and on. On World Tourism Day, we pay tribute to this tourism paradise

IT’S NO SECRET that Maharashtra attracts tourists from different states and foreign countries all year round. It perpetually ranks among the most visited Indian state by foreigners and domestic tourists alike. And for good reason too. Maharashtra is the third largest state in the country, and unquestionably the most industrialised. Its frontline cities include Pune, Nagpur, Nashik, Shirdi, and Kolhapur. And, of course, there’s Mumbai, India’s financial capital, city of dreams, home of Bollywood, cricket’s holy Mecca, and what-have-you-not.

Often described as the ‘Gateway to the Heart of India’, Maharashtra, the land of everything unlimited, invites you into its widespread plethora of attractions. It is adorned by the beautiful Sahyadri ranges of the Western Ghats with high mountains that disappear into the morning mist, while the sprawling belt of the Konkan Coast mesmerises the eyes by its white beaches. The ruins of the ancient forts and palaces in Pune and Ratnagiri among others proudly narrate the story of the then mighty rulers of Maharashtra. Centuries-old temples situated in places like Pandharpur and Ozar are still rooted in their traditions, offering sanctuary to pilgrims. As do the small hill stations of Mahabaleshwar, Lonavala, Matheran, nestled cosily in nature, provide respite to travellers from the hustle and bustle of the cities.

Covid-19 may have impacted the tourism sector for the moment, but the Government of Maharashtra and the Department of Tourism have been hands-on throughout the pandemic. Various initiatives are being considered by Maharashtra Tourism in close consultation with the industry and domain experts to ensure that the tourism industry in the state and its various dependents can remain resilient in these difficult times and come out of it stronger.

BEACHES



Bordered by the Arabian Sea on its west, Maharashtra has as many beaches as the colours of the ocean. Here, the translucent waters of the Konkan gently lap onto pristine white sands. There, the azure blue-green of the Shreevardhan belt encourages the adventurous to plunge in. The state’s 700 km stretch along the Arabian Sea, makes you experience love at first sight.

If you wish to completely escape the chaos, Maharashtra’s beaches will soothe city-weary souls. Kihim, Marve, and Madh are just an hour’s drive from big-city Mumbai but, they transform the landscape. Breathe in fresh, pollution-free oxygen. Take a de-stressing languid stroll amongst dense coconut trees on Vengurla’s fine white sands with cashew, jackfruit, and mango orchards. Indulge in village banter over crisp, fried fish at Shivaji’s Sindhudurg or Murud-Janjira.

The adventurous could water-scooter or snorkel in the clear waters of Tarkarli to watch sea creatures. Or swim in the sandy, calm Velneshwar’s picturesque beach for hydro-therapy.

Whether you enjoy bustling promenades or the serenity of secluded alcoves, Maharashtra has them all.

HILL STATIONS

The Western Ghats, blessed by the altitude of the Sahyadri Ranges, envelop little sleepy hollows. These petite hill-stations, popularised by the British Raj to beat the Indian heat, are jewels in the hills. In the mornings, sunbeams play hide-and-



seek through the rolling dawn mist. By afternoon, they are still cool thanks to their height. As evening falls, they bundle up in blankets of fog, toasty aromas wafting from local pots.

From north to south, the Western Ghats rise steeply. Some ranges dip straight into the Arabian Sea, while others meander around, jumping over waterfalls and lakes. Each of the major cities in Maharashtra has the bounty of a hill-station within a few hours’ driving distance. So rich and varied is the state’s topography that each of these homes in the hills is unique. Let no cynic tell you that two hill-stations are similar; each has its characteristic charm, charisma, and allure.

CAVES



Deep, dark, and mysterious, there is a secretive lure to ancient caves that eludes the brightness of sunbeams and radiates ancient history. Maharashtra, home to the largest number of caves in India, snuggles within its awe-inspiring Sahyadri Range caves of all sizes, shapes, and hues. From ancient rock-cut ones to ones with intricate sculptures that have housed reigning deities since time immemorial, these caves are

fascinating archaeological legacies.

The Elephanta caves, on an island 11 km from Mumbai, are proud to be a UNESCO World Heritage Site as also those of Ajanta and Ellora near Aurangabad which boast of the glorious architectural experiments for Buddhist, Hindu and Jain monks and devotees. The creation of the World Heritage Monuments at Ajanta, started in 2nd century BCE and was completed only in the 5th - 6th century CE, tracing the entire journey of the evolution of Buddhist architecture.

FORTS



On land and ocean, the strength of stone stands mighty over years. The Maratha heartland is fortified by over 350 forts – the largest number in any state in India. Here, the crimson-edged sword of the Maratha ruler Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj’s gleams with the pride of a victorious warrior.

The once-proud bastions of the army, today stand silent and dignified. Battered by the weather gods, often plundered, walls crumbling in sections and roofs blown away, yet the forts of Maharashtra exude

NEW INITIATIVES

Under the leadership of Aditya Thackeray, Cabinet Minister of Tourism and Environment, Government of Maharashtra, two policies have been implemented, namely Beach Shack Policy and Agro Tourism Policy. Two more, namely Adventure Tourism Policy and Caravan Policy are under implementation.



power and inspire awe.

Mahabaleshwar offers views of Shivaji’s famous mountain fort, Pratapgad. Shivneri, the birthplace of Shivaji, is sacred for his followers and one of the best-maintained forts in Maharashtra today. While Raigad, the capital of the Marathas, has an enchantingly quaint but technically sound ropeway to pull you up to its peak. Maharashtra’s coastal splendour is magnified by Sindhudurg, Shivaji’s ocean fort on a rocky island, which makes a lovely picnic spot as you imagine horses and armies marching forward.

Maharashtra’s forts speak of vision and authority. Whether it’s the mountains that call out to you or the ocean, Maharashtra has a fort for all seasons.

WILDLIFE SANCTUARIES

There is nothing to beat the sight of a tiger crossing the very path on which your jeep has been travelling. It can actually make your heart skip a few beats. And just as fascinating can be the sight of a bird high up in the branches, dazzling the surrounding landscape with its bountiful colours. Nature, which controls its flora and fauna, has in that sense been very favourable to Maharashtra, which has some of the largest wildlife sanctuaries located in ecological hotspots that



attract both the researchers and tourists in huge numbers.

Of these, the Melghat Tiger Reserve is one of the best known in the country. Located at the border of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, you may not only come across the majestic tiger in this reserve but also a wide variety of other animals and birds, including the very elusive forest owlet. The giant flying squirrel is also a rare sighting here.



Jharkhand pastor says assaulted over cow slaughter allegation, 5 held

ABHISHEK ANGAD
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 26

A MOB of local villagers allegedly beat up a pastor in Jharkhand’s Simdega district after accusing him of cow slaughter, and also assaulted six other who tried to intervene, according to the FIR.

The police formed an SIT and have nabbed five accused, Simdega SP Sams Tabrez said.

The FIR, lodged on the basis of a complaint by the victim, Pastor Raj Singh, stated that the incident took place early the morning of September 16 at their home in Simdega’s Bedigudar village, about 8 km from the district headquarters.

All seven, including the pastor, were subsequently garlanded with shoes and slippers and paraded in public, their heads partially tonsured, the FIR states. According to Singh’s complaint, they were attacked for not chanting “Jai Shri Ram” slogans.

All seven are tribal Christians. SP Tabrez said an FIR was registered on the complaint by Singh’s wife Rozelin Kullu, invoking IPC Sections 341 (wrongful restraint), 323 (voluntarily causing hurt), 354(b) (assault or use of criminal force on woman with intent to disrobe), 504 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of peace), among others, and under sections of SC/ST Act.

DIG Ranchi (Chota Nagpur Range) Akhilesh Jha said: “As per our investigation we were informed that a cattle was slaughtered. The police reached and did not find anything.... On the basis of the complaint we registered a case against the mob and we have arrested five of them.” When asked, DIG Jha said the accused are all local villagers and “have no links with any organisation”.

However, he added, initial probe did not come across anyone forcing any person to chant Jai Shri Ram. But pastor Singh, who converted to Christianity in 2016, and wife Rozelin stuck to their complaint when *The Sunday Express* spoke with them.

SIT didn't take statement of main accused: Tripathi's kin

**Indra Kant
Tripathi**

Fourth accused held in Hathras gangrape case

Meanwhile, the woman remains critical and has quadriplegia (paralysis in all four limbs), doctors said. "She sustained severe injuries on her neck and back and is not able to breathe properly. We are treating her and she is on a ventilator. If required, we will be referring her to a Delhi hospital....," one of the doctors treating her said.

"We recorded her statement and lodged an FIR. We launched a manhunt for the culprits. Her in-laws have been informed," said Akhilesh Narain Singh, SP Meerut city.

Police: Victim's father chased abductors, lost trail in traffic

CBI files chargesheet against 9 TN policemen

The CBI rushed to file the chargesheet as the three-month custody of the accused is running out on September 30 making them eligible for bail, agency sources said. **PT**

CBI files chargesheet against 9 TN policemen

New Delhi, Madurai: The CBI has filed a chargesheet against nine Tamil Nadu policemen for murder, conspiracy and other offences in the custodial death case of the father-son duo who were arrested on a "fake" charge of violating the lockdown and tortured in a Sathankulam police station in June this year, officials said Saturday.

The policemen have also been accused of destruction of evidence in the chargesheet, filed before the Chief Judicial Magistrate in Madurai on Friday, in the alleged torture and murder of shopkeepers J Bennix and his father RPN Jayaraj, who ran a mobile phone shop in Thoothukudi district.

World Tourism Day

Chhattisgarh Tourism Destinations



Achanakmar Tiger Reserve
Achanakmar Tiger Reserve in Chhattisgarh is a tropical moist deciduous and tropical dry deciduous forest. The reserve is also a part of the much larger Achanakmar-Amarkantak Biosphere Reserve. Sal, bija, saja, haldu, teak, tinsa, dhavara, lendia, khamar and bamboo flourish here along with over 600 species of medicinal plants. The winding Maniyari river that flows right through the heart of the reserve is its lifeline. Wild fauna found here includes the tiger, leopard, bison, flying squirrel, Indian giant squirrel, chinkara, wild dog, hyena, sambar, chital and over 150 species of birds. Even a short trek through this park easily reveals its extraordinary beauty and biodiversity.

INDRAVATI TIGER RESERVE
Indravati National Park is the finest and most famous wildlife parks of Chhattisgarh. Indravati National Park is located in Dantewada district of Chhattisgarh. The Park derives its name from the Indravati River, which flows from east to west and forms the northern boundary of the reserve with the Indian state of Maharashtra. With a total area of approximately 2799.08 sq km, Indravati attained the status of a National Park in 1981 and a Tiger Reserve in 1983 under the famous Project Tiger of India to become one of the most famous tiger reserves of India.

Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary
Barnawapara Wildlife sanctuary, is named after Bar and Nawapara forest villages, which are in the heart of the sanctuary. It is a land mass of undulating terrain dotted with numerous low and high hillocks well forested area of North-eastern corner of Raipur district. The Tributaries of Mahanadi are the source of water. River Balamdehi forms the western boundary and Jonk River forms the north-eastern boundary of the Sanctuary. The well stocked forests of the sanctuary classified as teas, sal and mixed forests. This sanctuary is famous for the frequent sighting of the Indian bison (Gaur) Cheetal, Sambhar, Neelgai, Wild boar are commonly seen. Bar-Nawapara boosts of over 150 species Birds.

Bastar
Bastar is a tribal region in Chhattisgarh, blessed with an exceptional scenic beauty that beckons the lovers of nature to explore the forests, waterfalls, wildlife, ancient temples, tribal dances and music. Located at a distance of 264 km from Raipur, Bastar is one of the most significant eco-friendly destinations of the country. It has plenty to offer to its visitors with its valuable tribal art and culture that lie in and around the lush green city of Jagdalpur. One can choose from National Parks, waterfalls, natural caves, palaces, museums and places of religious significance.

Bhoramdeo Temple
Bhoramdeo Temple, or the 'Khajuraho of Chhattisgarh', carved on the rocky stones in the Nagar style is an ancient Hindu temple dedicated to Lord Shiva. Situated in the Kabirdham district of Chhattisgarh, This temple was built in the period of 7th to 11th century A.D and is beautifully located amidst mountain ranges. The temples are said to be built by King Ramchandra of the Nag Dynasty. The Shiva Linga in the temple is wonderfully carved and the artistic appeal beckons the visitors. The Bhoramdeo temple has a resemblance with the Sun temple of Konark and The Khajuraho temple.

Champaranya
Champaranya (earlier known as Champajhar) is a small but famous village as it's the birthplace of the saint Vallabhacharya, the reformer and founder of the Vallabh Sect. A beautiful temple has been constructed in honor of this great saint, which has enhanced the

religious holiness of the place. The temple of Champakeshwara Mahadeva is another attraction at Champaranya, worth visiting on your Champaranya Tour. It is now generally regarded as a Vaishnava peeth (pilgrim site). The temple complex is also referred to as Sudamapuri. The shrine attracts large number of pilgrims, mostly Gujaratis during the Hindu month of Shravan.

Off beat tourism destinations in the state

When we talk of off beat destinations..... Chhattisgarh is full of it. This state boasts of untouched, untapped, unexplored and virgin locations. These places offer a unique and alternate experience to the tourists as compared to other traditional destinations which have become overcrowded with the given time.

In this era of pandemic Chhattisgarh presents itself as one of the most promising destination.

We have got every kind of attraction to lure local as well as tourists from far and wide.

There is so much so hidden about Chhattisgarh that it would be difficult for a person to visit it in one go. We have rich archaeological, monumental and natural heritage. Other than these we offer whole lot of experiences to the tourists. Our USPs

Chitrakote Waterfall
Chitrakote waterfalls, also called as the mini Niagara Fall of India, bear the proud distinction of being the broadest waterfall in India. The majestic beauty is located 38 km from Jagdalpur in Bastar on the river Indravati. The water of the river flows through the dense vegetation and cascades from a height of about 95 feet. A horse-shoe shaped waterfall, best seen during and after the monsoon, between July and October. This paints a very beautiful sight.

Kanger Valley National Park
Get enchanted by rugged mountain views, deep gorges, dancing trees and seasonal wild flowers, as together they make the perfect environment for varied species of Wildlife. Chhattisgarh gives you the rare opportunity to observe wildlife in its natural habitat at the Kanger Valley National Park.

MadkuDweep
Madku Dweep is an island of great natural beauty marked by lush verdure and splendid waterfalls. Ruins of temples, epigraphs, coins and pottery from ancient times have been unearthed here. The ancient art found here reveals highly skilled workmanship

Malhar
It is time to delve into the historic treasure of Chhattisgarh's most ancient town. Malhar's antique charm and mesmerizing sculptures create an ambience that can never be forgotten.. This town is in the list of "Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains of National Importance" maintained by Archaeological Survey of India.

Rajim
Rajim is famous for its rich cultural heritage and the beautiful ancient temples. The holy confluence of three rivers Mahanadi (Chitrotpala), Pairi and Sondur,

called Triveni Sangam is at Rajim. Rajim is also known as the "Prayag" of the Chhattisgarh. Every year sages from all across the country reach the Kumbh mela which begins from Maagh poornima and lasts till Mahashivratri.

Sirpur
Sirpur has a rich background of traditional cultural heritage and architecture. The archaeological remains

- include:-
- Rich tribal culture, cuisine and their lifestyle
 - Stalactite & stalagmite caves in Bastar
 - Megalithic burial site, Karkabhat famous for its menhirs.
 - Rock paintings
 - Kosa fabric and bell metal and wooden Handicrafts
 - Longest running festival Bastar Dussehra is celebrated for 75 Days
 - Very few people are aware of the fact that Lord Rama spent good time in Chhattisgarh during his exile.

The only temple of Mata Kaushalya is located here in Chhattisgarh at Chandrakhuri

are still a pride for this region. The Buddha Viharas in Sirpur are older than Nalanda. The town of sirpur has been mentioned in ancient epigraphic records, dating back to the 5th to the 8th centuries A.D. Drained by the pristine waters of the Mahanadi and facing the Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary on the Northeast, Sirpur is a small town, 84 kms from the capital, Raipur. Moving along from Raipur, one reaches Arang, from where one goes to Tumgaon. A road from here leads

northwards, to Sirpur. It is an enriching experience to see how life goes on in these quiet villages, without getting affected by the hustle bustle of the outside world.

Tirathgarh Waterfall
Chhattisgarh is famous for its waterfalls. One of these magnificent falls is the Tirathgarh Waterfall. The fall here splits into multiple falls, creating a stunning vista. The falls comes under the eco-tourism venture of the state tourism department as it enjoins the Kanger National Park. The fall here splits into multiple falls, creating a stunning vista. The waterfall has lush green forest surrounding it. Well maintained steps lead down to the bottom. There is a small temple on a large rock opposite the falls. All around are the ruins of a 1,000 year old, advanced, Hindu civilization. This 300 feet fall is an enticing and magnificent one and is also a 'must see' tourist picnic spot.

Wildlife In Chhattisgarh
The Pamed Wildlife Sanctuary is an important wildlife reserve in Chhattisgarh. With an area of 262 sq km, it is placed in the Dantewada district in southern part of Chhattisgarh and the Sanctuary is close to the state border with Andhra Pradesh. Pamed Wildlife Sanctuary has some precious trees like Sal and teak. There are mixed forests creating a different aura about the place. The travellers who visit the place are fortunate to get a feel to the dense forests which create an enchanting atmosphere. In Pameda wildlife sanctuary deer can be easily sighted. Here you find the chital or the spotted deer, India Gazelle and the chinkara. Those who are interested in wildlife will never forget the images of the deer running all around the sanctuary like carefree creatures of nature

GOMARDA SANCTUARY
Gomarda Wildlife Sanctuary is another of the wildlife sanctuaries in Chhattisgarh and it is located near Sarangarh town in Raigarh. It is the natural habitat of a number of rare species and is one of the exotic places. Gomarda Wildlife Sanctuary is the abode of other species like the Nilgiri, Sambars, Gaurs, Barking Deer, Chausingha, Muntjac, Sloth Bear, Wild Boar, Dhole or the wild dog and the Jackel.



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JASPAL BINDRA
CHAIRMAN, CENTRUM
CAPITAL LTD

We've been reading a lot about how the US and Japan are incentivising their domiciled companies to reduce or diversify their investments from Mainland China. Is that going to reshape the manufacturing scene in the world? And how does it impact India?

So far, if you look at the evidence, there is some diversification going on outside of China, but it's happening a lot slower than you think. That's because China is still a very large market, and has been moving up the value chain. So what's moving out of China is much more of the low value-added stuff. The big beneficiaries of that have been countries like Vietnam. India's share in global exports and foreign direct investment has gone up over the last three-four years, but that's an under-appreciated story. With companies from the US and Japan trying to diversify their supply chains out of China, the competition is quite intense, because you have so many economies trying to play the same game — Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, or Mexico. India does have an opportunity, and maybe because of the large domestic market size, we are seeing some movement towards India, but possibly not as rapid as we'd like, and certainly nowhere near as rapid as the likes of Vietnam.



ASHOK KHEMKA
PRINCIPAL SECRETARY TO THE
GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA

Regarding the Vocal for Local campaign in India, how do you reconcile with the benefits from global trade and favourable immigration policies?

It's still unclear what exactly they mean by the term Vocal for Local. Are we abandoning a strategy of trying to increase our export share or is this just a new reality that we are adapting to in the era of de-globalisation? I see this as just a reality. So, it's very interesting that the other country where the word self-reliance is very popular these days is China. It's really ironic that some of the biggest beneficiaries of globalisation have been countries like China, and even India, that there's no way any economy in the world can grow at a rate of 7/8/9 per cent without exports playing a major role in that. It's never happened in history. Now, in a de-globalised environment, we're coming up with these kind of strategies and slogans. On the other hand, it's very clear that if we are not going to export or have export growth, the probability of achieving high economic growth is zero. Even in the boom era of 2003-2008, our annual export growth was 30 per cent. Unless you have export growth of 20-30 per cent a year, the odds of you growing rapidly are close to zero.



HARSH GOENKA
CHAIRMAN, RPG ENTERPRISES

What are the top global trends you're seeing in the post-pandemic world?

I see four big trends — de-globalisation, digitisation, rise in debt levels, and the state becoming more intrusive. If you look at past crises, once something happened, the world got

almost turned upside down, in terms of how things work. The distinctive feature of this crisis is that these trends I spoke about were already happening before the crisis began. And after the crisis, these trends have accelerated. In fact, they've been telescoped in time, so instead of playing out over the next five or 10 years, they have played out in five months.



MUDIT JAIN

MANAGING DIRECTOR, DCW LIMITED

Is it better to abolish the taxes completely, so people will spend more and consumption will stimulate the economy?

That's a very radical suggestion. I don't think any economy today is doing that. Even countries in the Middle East

which used to not have taxes, are introducing some form of taxation. But rationalising the tax structure is something I'm all for. I do feel that having more sur-charges spoils the federal polity of our country because the revenue flows to the Centre, not to the states. So I'm in favour of simplification of the tax structure, something we were doing in the 1990s.



‘In this country, the link between politics and economics is very loose’

At an e-Adda held this week, Ruchir Sharma, Head of Emerging Markets and Chief Global Strategist at Morgan Stanley Investment Management, spoke on India's economic future, the government's response to the pandemic and his new book, *The 10 Rules of Successful Nations*

On why India couldn't become a breakout nation

In *Breakout Nations* (2012), my main thesis was that, at that point in time, the emerging markets, collectively known as BRICS, are way overrated. And I had said that India will not be able to grow at a sustained pace of about 7 per cent. In fact, in my list, India was not mentioned as one of the breakout nations. I said, at best, we have a 50 per cent chance of being able to get into the club of breakout nations this decade. And the true emerging nation in the world is the United States, because the book ended on the note that technology is the key to long-term progress.

On whether politics is economy-proof

This is the point I had made in my last book — *Democracy on the Road* (2019). There have been about 30 instances when a state's economy has grown at a pace of about 8 per cent over the chief minister's five-year term, but the probability that the CM gets re-elected, after delivering a growth rate as high as that, is still only 50 per cent. That is a very telling statistic. In this country, the link between politics and economics is very loose, and the Prime Minister probably has figured this out. If you look at other countries, especially in the West, the right-wing parties tend to be business-friendly or market-friendly. In India's case, unfortunately, we don't have such a party because everyone believes in socialism and statism.

On whether the corporate sector's leverage over the government has increased

This pandemic has taught us that the role of the state has increased further. In India, look at the way the state had to turn more intrusive in the way it has dealt with the pandemic. We are still dealing with a maze of bureaucratic laws — when you can open a factory, or not. India typically reforms but has its back to the wall. I don't think that the corporate sector in India has any more leverage over the government than it did in the past.

On the time to make bets on India

In India, one of the things I'm finding a bit underwhelming is that the choices are getting more and more limited. A unique strength of India, for many years, was that the number of good quality companies that you could invest in was always very large, compared to other developing economies. Unfortunately, in the last three to four years, that number has



(Clockwise from top) Ruchir Sharma was in conversation with P Vaidyanathan Iyer, Executive Editor for National Affairs, *The Indian Express*, and Anant Goenka, Executive Director, The Indian Express Group. Eminent guests who participated in the e-Adda include Aditya Shriram, Executive Director and Ajit Shriram, Managing Director, DCM Shriram; Saugata Bhattacharya, Executive Vice-President and Chief Economist, Axis Bank; Dhruv Agarwala, CEO, *Proptiger.com*; Gautam Kumra, MD, McKinsey & Co; Aarti Vij, Chairperson, Media & Protocol Division, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Delhi; Girish Agarwal, Director, *Dainik Bhaskar*; Hemendra Kothari, Chairman, DSP Investment Managers Pvt Ltd; Jan Thompson, Acting High Commissioner, British High Commission; Retd Prof Sudha Pai from Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University; Kiran Karnik, Chairperson, IIT-D; N Ravi, Publisher, *The Hindu*; Rajini Thakur, Chief Economist, RBL Bank; Rod Hilton, Deputy High Commissioner, Australian High Commission; Suketu V Shah, MD, Mukand Ltd; Manish Kejriwal, Managing Partner, Kedaara Capital and Surendra Ahuja, MD, Boeing Defence India

shrunk a lot, either because some of the corporates have been too leveraged and they've been forced to do what they can to get out of that leverage, or as I said, a lot of the wealth being created in the so-called new economy, is really happening at two ends.

On whether democracy is better for growth

If you look at the very fast-growing economies in the world, after World War II, the economies which achieved a growth rate of more than 6-7 per cent were largely authoritarian regimes, whether it was China or before that, in the case of Korea and Taiwan. But the downside is this: if you look at the biggest basket cases in the world, they were also authoritarian regimes, whether it was in Africa or Latin America. Under authoritarian regimes, you get extreme outcomes. If the leadership at the top gets the formula correct and is prioritising economics, they can end up creating very high economic growth, because they can get a lot done. On the other hand, because the leadership at the top often lives in



developing country. But one thing we do know is that high inflation, for sure, kills economic prospects... and I think that the government is wise to junk such advice that they could just print their way out of trouble.

On the new farm bills

In principle, what the government is trying to do in terms of freeing up the agricultural sector, you can argue that it is a positive step. But the method in which it's done has really rankled a lot of people. I'm glad that the word reform is back in the governance lexicon, but whether it should have been done this way, and the method is something that a lot of people are debating.

On India's growth prospects in the foreseeable future

As far as India is concerned, the line that I've always used and I don't feel compelled to change it, is that this is the country that consistently disappoints the optimists and the pessimists. That's how it's going to be. The short answer is that I don't think India is going to grow at a pace of more than 5 per cent on a sustained basis for the foreseeable future, because growth is coming down across the world, and for a developing economy with a per capita income of less than \$5,000, if you're able to grow at even 5 per cent, that's going to take a lot in an era where you have the globalisation, but you already have high debt levels. I think that's going to be quite a challenge.

On identity politics and polarisation the world over

The extent of polarisation in the US is unparalleled. In fact, a friend of mine described it as Civil War Lite. Because I've never seen such polarisation in America, and the data bears it out that 90 per cent of Republicans back (Donald) Trump; in the past, that number was never as high. On the other hand, more than 90 percent of Democrats hate Trump. You never had numbers like this in American political history. And it's been systematically getting more polarised over the last four years. This is a bit worrying because even economic facts are now subject to political ideology.

On the upcoming US elections

The single best indicator that I look at on a daily basis are the betting odds. So, the betting market today, I think, is about 56 per cent for Biden and 44 per cent for Trump. That is the best indicator on how to read what's going on.

For longer version, go to www.indianexpress.com



SHYAM BAGRI
FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN,
BAGRI'S INDIA LTD

With economic growth, we should be able to increase the purchasing power of the poor. But at the same time, we should be able to improve the environment without impacting it adversely. How can we do that?

I think that this debate is there. It's almost as if we think that there's a big conflict between high economic growth and some of the other measures in the society — climate, happiness or inequality. I think that's what you are referring to. My research shows that per capita income is the single best indicator of how a country is doing on all those metrics. The richer a nation is, with higher per capita income, the greater is its correlation with happiness, sustainability and inequality. The richest country in the world — Switzerland — has the highest per capita income of over \$80,000 per head. And on both measures, like equality and happiness, it ranks high up there. The same goes for many Scandinavian nations. I would say that focusing on increasing your per capita income is the single best way of achieving your other goals in life.



SENTHIL CHENGALVARAYAN
SENIOR JOURNALIST

You're a big believer in data. What are the next few data points you will be looking at, over the next six months to two years, for India?

So my book, *The 10 Rules of Successful Nations*, says that basically, it's all data driven. What are those rules? Is India gaining more share in the global export world? What is India's share of foreign direct investment? What is happening to the concentration of wealth in India — is it getting more or less concentrated? Those are the data points I shall be looking at, for the next six months, 12 months or 18 months, and that's my entire effort in coming up with this book. Most economic books are written by academics. The big problem I have with books written by academics is that they tend to have very long term horizons, for which neither you nor I will be here to know whether you're right or wrong. What I've tried to do in this book, therefore, is to come up with a timeframe using data that you can track actively to know if a nation is doing well or not. So I will be looking for these data points, to see if India is making more progress. I maintain a scorecard of all the countries — developed, developing and frontier markets — and keep updating these rules. My point was to come up with a practical read that you can look at, based on historical research, to show what is the data you should be looking at, to know if a nation is rising or falling. And in India's case, this kind of data is what we'll be looking at, how much are we spending on research and development rather than on welfare.

ISL teams ‘tense’ over visa delay of foreign recruits

MIHIR VASAVDA
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 26

THE INDIAN Super League (ISL) clubs are ‘worried’ about the uncertainty over visas of more than 100 foreigners — players and coaching staff — even as they gradually enter the bubble in Goa to prepare for the upcoming season.

The ISL, scheduled to begin in the third week of November, will be the first sporting event with foreign players to be held in India since the pandemic began. The five-month long season will be held in a bio-secure environment across three venues in the coastal state.

Ten teams have already started conducting mandatory Covid-19 RT-PCR tests on Indian players and most are likely to reach Goa in the coming week. But they will begin the pre-season without their foreign imports — managers as well as players.

As per rules, each team can have a maximum of seven foreign players in their squad. There are 10 sides in the league, although the number is set to increase by one given that East Bengal’s inclusion in the ISL is imminent. The manager of every team is also a foreigner and he will bring with him at least two members of support staff.

“The league has been trying to help us and they are in touch with the government. We have also been speaking with the embassies and thankfully for us, a lot of our players are from one country — Spain. They need some sort of clearances from the government before they can issue visas,” FC Goa’s Director of Football Ravi Puskur said.

Since the government imposed the lockdown in March following the Covid-19 outbreak, several restrictions have been imposed on issuance of visas. According to a Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) advisory, only a select bunch of professionals — which does not specify sports persons — are currently permitted to enter the country.

ISL players and coaches require an employment visa and according to club officials, that can’t be obtained without the necessary clearances from the Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

Barring a handful of players, the majority have not even been able to apply for a visa. “None of our foreign players are here because right now, the government is issuing visas only in special cases. We are in touch with the embassies and they have said they are waiting to hear from the MHA. The league is also trying to help with the situation,” Jamshedpur FC CEO Mukul Choudhari said.

It learnt that efforts to get the required clearances have been going on for close to a month. However, with the government unlikely to make an exception specifically for footballers, there is no clarity when the visas will be issued, if at all.

“We have been following up with the



Former Las Palmas and Deportivo La Coruna midfielder Vicente Gomez recently signed for Kerala Blasters.

INDIA BOUND

100 More than 100 foreigners — players and coaching staff — will be a part of the ISL, divided over 11 teams.

league and are awaiting further information. Given that the league is likely to start in the third week of November, we would have liked to have our foreign players and coaches in India by now,” Bengaluru FC chief executive Mandar Tamhane said.

While the start of the league is still two months away, Puskur said a proper pre-season is crucial to ensure the players — who haven’t played since the lockdown began in March — do not get injured. If the visas are issued in the coming week, quarantine protocols and mandatory testing would mean the training can begin only by the third week of October. But that might not be enough.

“From a sporting perspective, a month-long pre-season isn’t sufficient. We are two weeks behind already. We would have liked our players here by September 15 because there are a lot of protocols to be followed, including the quarantine period,” Puskur said. “So by the time we finish all that, the boys will have around 25-30 days of training which is not enough, especially when players have been out of action for the best part of seven months.”

A proper pre-season assumes even more significance for FC Goa, who will become the first Indian club to play in the 2021 Asian Champions League, due to begin in February. “Our players will have to be conditioned accordingly as they will have to last longer. In an ideal scenario, we would have liked a 10-week pre-season. It looks like we will get a six-week pre-season but we are going pretty cut-to-cut at the moment,” Puskur said. “We are a little tense but the coach is trying to work out how we can adapt the best.”

Tennis vs Virus: Rd 2 in Paris

French Open gets underway today amidst rising cases and confusion over rules

SHASHANK NAIR
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 26

ON FRIDAY, a couple of days before the year’s final Grand Slam starts at Paris, France recorded 15,797 new coronavirus cases and 150 new deaths. A burgeoning population continuing battling the coronavirus, an unrest among players on various Covid related issues and minimal clarity on test results has ensured that the French Open is enduring a nightmarish beginning.

Crowd control

Initially, the French Open organisers said that the event would see 20,000 fans being allowed to enter the arena. As coronavirus cases jumped, the number was reduced to 11,500. It further dropped to 5000 and now finally it has been decided that only 1000 will be allowed in. Fans and players mingling are a risk, especially after what happened at the Tour de France where supporters could come in close proximity to riders during a race and at one stage, four support staff from four different teams contracted the virus.

Living arrangements

Players have been asked to pick one of two hotels designated by the authorities. This means that French players with housing in the capital have been asked to move into these official properties. Serena Williams had earlier voiced her desire to stay in her own apartment in Paris and insinuated that if fans were being allowed to be in close proximity with players, then the ‘bubble’ wasn’t as secure in the first place. “Well, if there are fans, then we should be able to stay elsewhere, then,” the 23-time major winner said at the US Open, according to a report in Yahoo. “Yeah, that’s interesting, because there is no private housing but there’s fans.”

Damir’s dire case

One of the bizarre stories from the French Open this week has been that of Damir Dzumhur. Ranked 116 in the world, Dzumhur was supposed to take part in the French Open qualifiers before it was revealed that he was in contact with his coach Petar Popovic, who had tested positive for coronavirus.

Both coach and player alleged that the French organisers didn’t give them the opportunity for a second test. They had asked for a second test because Popovic had already contracted the virus this year and was ‘full of antibodies’ — his statement according to a report in L’Equipe. The duo is ready to sue the organisers of the French Open after Popovic went through another test which came back negative.

It’s a scandal and a huge frustration,” Popovic told L’Equipe on Tuesday. “I’m sure we’re going to win in court. They’re going to pay a lot for this. It makes me crazy,” he added.



French Open’s protocols are much different from those at the recent US Open. AP

After pulling out, Covid-positive Verdasco questions testing protocols

REUTERS
PARIS, SEPTEMBER 26

SPAIN’S FERNANDO Verdasco questioned the French Open’s COVID-19 testing protocols on Friday after having to withdraw from the tournament due to a positive result, which he deemed was false. Verdasco, 36, pulled out of the final Grand Slam of the year in Paris on Thursday, alongside Canada’s Milos Raonic and Switzerland’s Belinda Bencic.

The Spaniard said he had returned a negative result on several occasions before he arrived in Paris, including at this month’s Italian Open in Rome, where he lost in the qualifiers. The world number 58 criticised the French Open’s testing procedures after he was denied a re-test. “In August, I passed the COVID-19 asymptotically,” he said in a statement on Twitter. “Since then I have done multiple PCR tests, with negative results... I tested negative again a few days ago in the test I took before going to Hamburg... My team and family travelled to Paris on Tuesday... they all tested negative except me. I explained my history and situation to try to request another test...”

He added: “The Roland Garros organisation refused to do another test, even taking into account all these circumstances, and that there were enough days to repeat the tests before the competition and the draw ceremony. Still, I was disqualified.”

ORDER OF PLAY

Court Philippe Chatrier
J Sinner vs 11-D Goffin, 1-S Halep vs S Sorribes Tormo, 17-A Kontaveit vs C Garcia, 16-S Wawrinka vs A Murray
Court Suzanne Lenglen
10-V Azarenka vs D Kovinic, J Rodionov vs J Chardy, 9-J Konta vs C Gauff, 6-A Zverev vs D Novak
Court Simonne Mathieu
M Gasparian vs 16-E Mertens, AK Schmiedlova vs V Williams, 23-B Paire vs S Kwon, M Kecmanovic vs 12-D Schwartzman
Live on Star Sports Network, 2.30pm onwards

Verdasco said he had undergone two Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) tests and an antibody test since his withdrawal from the French Open and returned a negative result in all three tests. “I want to communicate my total frustration and outrage with the organisation of Roland Garros for taking away my right to participate even without giving me the opportunity to take another test with a new sample to confirm that the result of the first could be an error,” he said.

On Wednesday, Bosnian Damir Dzumhur said he was taking legal action against the French Open organisers.

BRIDGE

The opening lead of the two of a suit can be quite revealing. You are South, declarer in just 2S.

NORTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
♠ Q984	1♣	1♥	1♠	
♥ A83	Pass	2♣	Pass	Pass
♦ 10	Pass			
♣ KQJ109				
SOUTH				
♠ AK76				
♥ Q65				
♦ 7543				
♣ 63				

West leads the H2. What is your plan?
The West Hand: S-J 102 H-2D-KQJ2 C-A8542
The East Hand: S-53 H-KJ10974 D-A986C-7

You have two possible losers in hearts, four in diamonds and one in clubs. However, things are promising because three of your diamond losers can be ruffed in dummy and/or thrown on club winners. East surely has the HK for the overall so if you duck in dummy and East takes the HK, your HQ will be set up. Is this the best way to proceed? The lead of the H2 is ominous. A two is often the lowest card from four because the common lead from a long suit is the fourth highest. It may also be the lowest from a three-card suit containing an honour. It cannot be from a doubleton because the standard lead from a doubleton is the higher card. But here, because East has at least five hearts for the overall, the H2 is clearly a singleton! Look what happens if you duck the lead in dummy. East wins the HK and returns a heart, which West ruffs. West then leads a diamond to East’s ace and East leads another heart, which West ruffs. Then West leads the CA and another club for East to ruff. You have just lost six tricks whilst watching helplessly from the sidelines. Your partner is looking equally stunned! The sight of the H2 should ring alarm bells. You should immediately win with the HA, lead three rounds of trumps to deprive the defenders of their fun, and then play clubs until the defenders take their CA. When they do, they may cash their DA and possibly the HK, which will set up your HQ as a winner. In any case you will be able to dispose of three losers on the established clubs and ruff a diamond in dummy. You will end up with only three losers. That gives you ten tricks instead of seven! You are South, declarer in 4H.

NORTH	SOUTH
♠ AJ76	♠ K54
♥ A986	♥ KJ753
♦ 43	♦ A95
♣ KQ6	♣ 107

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
3♦	dbl	Pass	4H
Pass	Pass	Pass	

West opens 3D. This is a preemptive bid showing a hand with seven diamonds and less than an opening bid. Your partner doubles, showing a good opening hand with a shortage in diamonds and support for the other suits. You have close to an opening hand with five hearts, so you jump to 4H which becomes the final contract.

West leads the DK. How will you play the hand?

SUNDAY CROSSWORD 2288

QUICK CLUES

ACROSS

- Scandinavian language (6)
- Commandeer (6)
- Wife of Esau (4)
- Thriving (10)
- Language of Andhra Pradesh (6)
- Misers (8)
- Cleverness (9)
- Fixed (4)
- Advance slowly (4)
- Newshounds (9)
- Pertaining to just bare bones, in a way? (8)
- Din (6)
- Devilish; wicked (10)
- Related (4)
- French Open site Roland ____ (6)
- Famous city in Kerala (6)

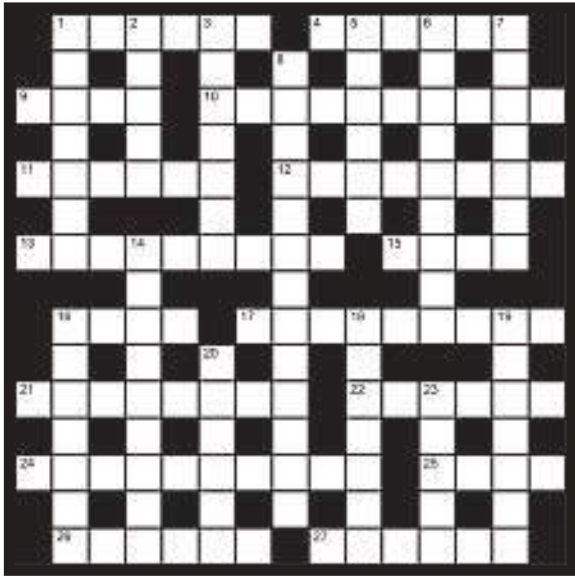
DOWN

- Anger (7)
- India’s first PM. (5)
- Hara-kiiri (7)
- Attack as false (6)
- Trapeze artist (9)
- Realm (7)
- All day and all night (5,3,5)
- King Arthur’s sword (9)
- Faint idea (7)
- Shakespeare’s Moor (7)
- Get-together again (7)
- Verdi opera (6)
- A sandy shore (5)

CRYPTIC CLUES

ACROSS

- Seeing a girl is turned on (6)
- It’s important to have a friend round the edge? (6)
- Vigour of brother before ten, it appears (4)
- Assume gear appropriate for hill-climbing (6,4)
- Cancel a fixture (6)
- Arts return what in Panama? (5,3)
- Strongly beat and leapt at Pit Bull (9)
- Mr Flintstone is loud and colourful (4)
- Forced to be another dame (4)
- Ate in rest periods (3,6)
- That blooming fruit may make the graduate go and get black (8)
- How one may receive payment of a sort (2,4)
- Stellar performer in dampened American financial system? (4,6)



- A ton designed international organisation (4)
- City in Maharashtra led astray by signal (6)
- The happy days in Germany (6)
- small swelling (7)
- Former leader’s relative with bit of tension in stomach (4,3)
- Having gone beyond the Spanish in shade? (6)
- School rulers? (5)

Solutions to 2287

QUICK CLUES Across: 1 Bleeds, 4 Dances, 8 Inferno, 9 Crampion, 11 Los angeles, 12 Owls, 13 Zebra, 14 Depleted, 16 Mean well, 18 In bad, 20 Ager, 21 Mendacious, 23 Thrifty, 24 Percept, 25 Uphold, 26 Friend, 27 Down, 18 Ringo, 2 Ewe-lamb, 3 Denigrate, 5 Acres, 6 Compose, 7 Spoonfeed, 10 Fledgling, 13 Zhengzhou, 15 Privateer, 17 Norwich, 19 Brioche, 21 Metal, 22 Upped. **CRYPTIC CLUES Across:** 1 Ambits, 4 Brewed, 8 Catlike, 9 Dug-outs, 11 Highhanded, 12 Weft, 13 Napoo, 14 Jamboree, 16 Golf club, 18 Nicks, 20 Plan, 21 Quadruplet, 23 Ignored, 24 Odd-ball, 25 Titans, 26 Wyvern. **Down:** 1 Absci, 2 Bellhop, 3 Take a toll, 5 Round, 6 Who’s Who, 7 Duty-free, 10 Odd-job man, 13 Neon light, 15 Man Friday, 17 Find out, 19 Capable, 21 Queen, 22 Ellen.

JUMBLLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

To be as good as our fathers we must be better, ____ is not discipleship. - Wendell Phillips (9)

NPAIO	EORXTT
■■■■■	■■■■■
ILIACI	AAANMN
■■■■■	■■■■■

Wendell Phillips
Answer: To be as good as our fathers we must be better, imitation is not discipleship. -

SUDOKU 4244

Difficulty Level 4s

Instructions

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level

1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius



SOLUTION SUDOKU 4243



YOUR WEEK AHEAD

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

Such a reputation for being fussy, but you’ll be so much happier if you allow others to go about their daily business. There’ll be plenty of time to carp and criticise next week. For now, sit back and relax.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

Your social stars are becoming stronger by the day. Confidence, they say, breeds success. This is true but, now that your stars are looking optimistic, may I advise a little caution. Go into any risky situation with your eyes wide open.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

The most helpful cosmic pattern this week occurs on Wednesday, when the Sun forms a new relationship with Jupiter, a splendid planet which indicates general good fortune. This celestial body also encourages prudence, justice and good manners. On the other hand, reckless actions and unwise speculations can only result in loss.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

Undoubtedly, a special time of year is fast approaching. In the meantime, there is still a spot of confusion to clear up, a mystery to resolve, or a lost object to find. Make the most of the current planetary energies and enjoy a favourite fantasy. Even in business, your imagination can show the way forward, so don’t be afraid to follow your dreams.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

Money matters are due to grow dramatically in importance over the next two weeks. The general trend of events is entirely auspicious, so please exploit all welcome personal offers, opportunities and bargains the moment they arise, and no later. Plus, Venus’ charming and affectionate location can only boost your self-esteem.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)

All-in-all this looks like a positive week. Not for the first time your stars are perfectly poised at work. What’s more, you may impress an employer. You will make all the right choices and charm others with your elegant wit, while your love life will be blessed by your poetic soul.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)

A series of helpful planetary patterns are bound to work in your favour, and this could be a quite remarkable moment. Lost objects will be found, delayed decisions will be taken and old friends will turn up, completely out of the blue. You will even get an inkling of some very good news indeed. At work, a new responsibility is coming your way.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)

Your instincts are working well, and there are many ways of turning obstacles to your advantage. One is to spend money judiciously, compensating for any past economies, all the while making it clear to loved ones that you really do care. Health matters will benefit from an improvement in diet.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 22)

A number of potent planets will fall in the crucial central portion of your sign, focusing your attention on vital long-term issues. It looks very much as if some sort of major adjustment at home will be the result of pressures which have been building up over recent months.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

Serious Saturn steps up its role in your chart. Think hard about where you must go from here at work, but don’t delay; you have but a narrow window of opportunity during which you may make an effective and realistic choice. In love, all you need is sympathy but, partners will need to know that you are right behind them.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

You are certainly feeling much more determined and, if all goes according to plan, you will feel greatly relieved that problems which have bedevilled you for so long will finally be laid to rest. However, it is vital that you stand up to other people’s demands with determination.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

Secretive stars are working in your favour, and some people you know have to learn to be more discreet. However, you must begin to speak your mind more readily, especially now that colleagues will be relying on you to a much greater extent than in the past.

Fernandes scores United’s winner with the last kick

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BRIGHTON, SEPTEMBER 26

BRUNO FERNANDES converted a penalty in the 10th minute of stoppage time with the last kick of a wild Premier League game to earn Manchester United a 3-2 win over Brighton, which had earlier scored in added-on time and also hit the goal frame on five occasions on Saturday.

United was awarded a spot kick after the referee saw on the pitchside monitor that Harry Maguire’s header deflected off the outstretched hand of Brighton striker Neal Maupay before being cleared off the line.

Despite the full-time whistle having already been blown, Fernandes was allowed to take a penalty and the Portugal playmaker found the corner of the net to score the latest Premier League goal since 2011 and secure a first win of the campaign for United.

Even Fernandes accepted it was fortunate. In the last of the allotted five minutes of second-half stoppage time, Solly March - one of the players to have previously hit the goal frame - headed home at the far post for a goal that looked like sealing a point for the hosts.

Earlier, Leandro Trossard struck both posts in the opening 21 minutes before smashing a shot against the bar in the second half. With Adam Webster heading against the bar and March striking a shot against the post, the Premier League’s official statistics supplier, Opta, said it was the first time a team had struck the goal frame five times in a match since the company started compiling data in 2003-04.

“They have a lot of chances, it’s true,” Fernandes said. “Maybe everyone can say they deserve more, or not. The point is, score goals - don’t hit the crossbar or the post. Sometimes you have to have some luck.”

Brighton went ahead in the 40th minute when Maupay converted a cheeky “Panenka” penalty after Fernandes brought down Tariq Lamprey. United equalized three minutes later via an own-goal by Lewis Dunk, who inadvertently turned the ball into his own net after Nemanja Matic pulled the ball back across the face of goal at a free kick.

Brighton was denied a penalty at the start of the second half after Paul Pogba was initially adjudged to have clipped the legs of Aaron Connolly. The referee changed his mind after viewing the incident on the pitchside monitor and booked Connolly. Then United went ahead through Marcus Rashford, who cut in from the left after being played in behind the Brighton defense, delivered two shimmies, before getting the ball back on his left foot and rifling in a shot that deflected into the top corner in the 55th minute.

BRIEFLY

Hamilton takes pole at Russian Grand Prix

Lewis Hamilton took a step closer to equalling the Formula One win record on Saturday by clinching pole position at the Russian Grand Prix, after narrowly avoiding early elimination when Sebastian Vettel crashed. Hamilton charged to a track-record time of 1 minute, 31.304 seconds, beating the Red Bull of Max Verstappen by .563 for his fifth straight pole position. Hamilton can achieve his 91st career win in the race on Sunday, matching the record held by Michael Schumacher.

ATK Mohun Bagan sign defender Jhingan

Defending Indian Super League champions ATK Mohun Bagan on Saturday announced the signing of high-profile defender Sandesh Jhingan. The 27-year-old Arjuna awardee is said to be the highest-valued footballer in India but the club did not reveal the signing amount. The former Kerala Blasters defender was keen to ply his trade in Europe, preferably Portugal but because of the pandemic he changed his plans and joined the club, will compete in the AFC Cup 2021.

David is new women's selection panel head

Neetu David, one of India's finest woman cricketers in the late '90s and early 2000s, has been appointed chairman of the women's selection committee replacing Hemalata Kala, the BCCI announced on Saturday. The other members of the panel are Mithu Mukherjee, Renu Margate, Arati Vaidya and VKalpna — all former India players. The four-year term of the previous panel, led by Kala, ended in March 2020. It had Sudha Shah, Anjali Pendharkar, Shashi Gupta and Lopamudra Banerjee as other members.

AGENCIES

Night belongs to Knights

After a lacklustre start to season, KKR bounce back with an emphatic win over SRH

SYNOPSIS

Cummins keeps SRH in check before Gill anchors chase

TUSHAR BHADURI
SEPTEMBER 26

CONVENTIONAL WISDOM said dew in the second half of matches should make chasing the preferred option. Every captain in the first week went by that logic, but six straight matches had gone in favour of the team batting first, going into Saturday's game. One wondered when a captain will make a different decision at the toss.

Sunrisers Hyderabad skipper David Warner did so against Kolkata Knight Riders, a move also prompted by the desire to not put his lightweight and inexperienced middle order under the pressure of a tight chase. Warner and his opening partner Jonny Bairstow are the soul of the line-up and were expected to do the bulk of the scoring. It didn't work for them as their total of 142 was easily overhauled with two overs to spare, at the cost of three wickets.

Cummins keeps SRH in check

Warner's compatriot Pat Cummins has the ability to put the best laid plans to waste. The pacer had just come out of quarantine in time for KKR's first match against Mumbai Indians, as he was carted all around the park. Both SRH openers were all at sea as Cummins refused to give them any room, attacking the opposition captain from around the stumps. Bairstow struggled even more as the ball repeatedly snaked into him from outside the off-stump. All the Englishman's efforts to get Cummins away failed and his dismissal wouldn't have been out of place in a longer-format game.

Bairstow stands on leg-stump to open up the off-side and the bowler often gets a clear view of two sticks. Cummins' stock ball comes in from outside off-stump and this



Sunrisers' Wriddhiman Saha is run out by KKR's Dinesh Karthik. BCCI/IPL

time it knocked back the off-stump as Bairstow's bat made contact with thin air.

KKR skipper Dinesh Karthik used three of Cummins' overs inside the Powerplay and the speedster conceded only 11 runs in them. It prevented Sunrisers from getting a brisk start and even though Manish Pandey scored 51 off 38 balls, Wriddhiman Saha (30 off 31) struggled at No. 4. It meant that despite the potent bowling at their disposal, SRH's score was woefully inadequate.

Gill anchors chase

Not chasing a big total played right into the hands of KKR opener Shubman Gill. The youngster looked fidgety in the first game, as the team was chasing a tall score. But his unbeaten 70 off 62 balls on Saturday showed how he has developed his game in recent times, and also become a more mature player.

He played textbook shots easy on the eye, but also knew when to manufacture something unexpected. Very early in the chase, af-

ter KKR had lost pinch-hitter Sunil Narine, Gill jumped out to left-arm pacer Khaleel Ahmed and deposited him over long-on.

Nitish Rana, coming in at No. 3, took the pressure off Gill with a flurry of boundaries and even though KKR lost two quick wickets to find themselves 53/3 in the seventh over, the asking rate was never too much of a concern. What made Gill's innings even more impressive was the manner in which he handled Rashid Khan, who has bamboozled some of the best batsmen in the world. Eoin Morgan (42 not out off 29 balls) ensured the result was never in doubt. The time both of them spent together in the middle will be to KKR's advantage as the tournament goes along.

BRIEF SCORES: Sunrisers Hyderabad 142/4 in 20 overs (M Pandey 51, D Warner 36; P Cummins 1/19) lost to Kolkata Knight Riders 145/3 in 18 overs (S Gill 70, E Morgan 42; R Khan 1/25) by 7 wickets



EMOTIONAL ROLLER COASTER

Hot heads, calm minds and everything in between at the game.

Saucer-eyed stare

Varun Chakravathy shouldn't have any problem unlocking his phone with the eye-tracking app. He gives a saucer-eyed stare at release before blinking into a sad-puppy look reaction most times. When he removed a set David Warner with a two-fingered googly, those eyes almost bulged out of his socket.

A short while later, he tried that ball again, rapped Wriddhiman Saha on pads and appealed with his puppy eyes. When DRS had it as umpire's call, the sad-puppy look returned and a teammate had to pet down his beard to cheer him up. In his third over, when Manish Pandey bottom-edged a four through the legs of the wicket-keeper Dinesh Karthik, anguish spilled out of those saucer eyes.



All in all, though, not a bad outing for a man who had made his acting debut before serious cricket, and didn't expect to be picked at this IPL auction.

Curious cat Rashid Khan

Rashid Khan doesn't mind talking cricket with the opposition even in the heat of the battle. Not unlike Muttiah Muralitharan, you could say. The dewy-eyed Shubman Gill had played all his variations pretty well even as other batsmen had a bit of problem. And so, at the end of his last over, Khan went for an private chat with Gill, conducted in the public eye. A smiling Gill was seen mimicking Khan's googly release and even traced its imaginary trajectory, and Khan lapped it up intently. Both walked away with a smile and why not as both had a good day. Gill's stillness and assurance in his body language in his unbeaten fifty triggered raves from Brian Lara and made Graeme Swann call him a "upcoming superstar" of Indian cricket. Rashid Khan not only got Dinesh Karthik but almost twice had Eoin Morgan lbw. Both times Morgan was beaten but was lucky to survive. Gill wasn't troubled but he wasn't allowed to attack him, either.

SRIRAM VEERA

MARUTI SUZUKI

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