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INDIAN
EXPRESS
GROUP



HEARING IN SUPREME COURT ON MONDAY

No headway, Govt wants us to go to SC or form panel: farmer unions; next round of talks Jan 15



Farmer union leaders leave after their meeting with the government, in New Delhi on Friday. Prem Nath Pandey

Sought option other than repeal, court hearing did come up during talks: Tomar

HARIKISHAN SHARMA & RAAKHI JAGGA
NEW DELHI, LUDHIANA, JAN 8

TALKS BETWEEN the Centre and farmer unions opposed to the new agriculture laws failed to make headway Friday after the unions insisted on repeal of the laws, only to be told by the government to "suggest an alternative other than repeal".

While the two sides agreed

to sit across the table again on January 15, all eyes are now on the Supreme Court where hearing on a clutch of petitions is scheduled January 11.

Leaders of the unions claimed they were told by the government to go to the Supreme Court or form a committee with representatives of the two sides.

Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar and Minister of State Som Prakash,

who along with Food Minister Piyush Goyal have been negotiating with the farmers, said reference to the Supreme Court hearing on January 11 did come up during the talks.

Last month, the Supreme Court, while noting that the Centre's talks with farmer groups did not appear to be yielding results, had said it would form a committee comprising representatives of the Centre and farmers organisa-

tions to try and resolve the impasse – farmer unions, the majority from Punjab, have been camping at the gates of Delhi since November 26.

Two days ago, a three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice of India S A Bobde posted the matter to January 11 after Attorney General K K Venugopal told the court that "there are chances of the parties coming to some sort of an understanding".

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DAY AFTER AZHAR WARRANT

15 years' jail for 26/11 planner Lakhvi, India points to FATF

Lashkar ops chief sentenced in terror finance case

M ZULQUERNAIN

LAHORE, JANUARY 8

MUMBAI ATTACK mastermind and Lashkar-e-Taiba operations commander Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi was sentenced to 15 years in jail Friday by a Pakistani anti-terrorism court here in a terror financing case, amidst growing international pressure on Islamabad to bring to justice terrorists roaming free in the country.

UN proscribed terrorist Lakhvi, 61, who was on bail since 2015 in the Mumbai attack case, was arrested by the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) of Punjab province last Saturday.

"The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) Lahore convicted Lakhvi for commission of offences of terrorism financing in a case registered by the CTD for 15 years under different sections of the Anti-Terrorism Act 1997," a court official told PTI after the hearing.

Judge Ejaz Ahmad Buttari sentenced Lakhvi to five years of rigorous imprisonment each on three counts with a fine of PKR 100,000 (approximately USD 620) each on three counts.

"In default of payment of fine, he will have to undergo an im-



Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi after a court appearance in Islamabad in Jan 2015. AP file

prisonment of six months each on three counts. He has been sent to prison to serve the sentences," the official said.

(ENS reports from New Delhi: The Ministry of External Affairs, in its remarks on Lakhvi's sentencing, said: "The timing of these actions clearly suggest the intention of conveying a sense of compliance ahead of the APJG (Asia-Pacific Joint Group) meeting, and the next FATF (Financial Action Task Force) plenary meeting in February 2021. It has become routine for Pakistan to come up with such farcical actions, prior to important meetings."

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UK air arrivals stranded as Delhi orders quarantine without notice

PRANAV MUKUL & ASHNA BUTANI
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

A DAY after Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal urged the Centre to extend its ban on all flights from the UK, his government announced stringent conditions for passengers arriving from that country, including seven days of institutional quarantine even if they test negative at the airport.

However, the decision, which was announced in an order issued Friday, took the nearly 250 passengers who arrived on an Air India flight (AI 112) in the morning by surprise as they were bunched in groups to be taken to two hotels in Aerocity – JW Marriott and Aloft – for institutional quarantine.

Till 9 pm, official sources told *The Indian Express*, about 150 of them had been tested, with one positive case reported.

When the flight took off from London at about 9.40 pm Thursday local time, the prevalent rules in Delhi allowed for arriving passengers to exit the airport after testing negative. AI 112 was the first flight from London following partial resumption of India-UK flights after the Centre temporarily suspended arrivals to prevent the spread of a highly contagious variant of the coronavirus in that country.

However, a relative of one of the affected passengers said, "there was chaos" on landing at 10:30 am as none of the passengers was prepared for institutional quarantine.

Gouri Shankar Das, who was on the flight, tweeted from the airport: "... I am one of the passengers of flight AI112 from London with my 4.5 months old daughter... There is no food for

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EXPLAINED



THE RETURN OF BIRD FLU

PAGE 13



Workers install heavy-duty security fencing around the US Capitol a day after President Donald Trump's supporters stormed the building, in Washington DC on Thursday. Reuters

As Democrats push to impeach him, Trump says won't be at inauguration

PETER BAKER, MAGGIE HABERMAN, LUKE BROADWATER & GLENN THRUSH
WASHINGTON, JANUARY 8

AFTER BEGRUDGINGLY conceding defeat less than two weeks before he is due to leave office, US President Donald Trump announced on Twitter that he would not be attending President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration.

"To all of those who have

asked, I will not be going to the Inauguration on January 20th," he said on Friday.

The announcement marks another break with tradition that undermines the ceremonial demonstration of a core democratic value that Trump has virtually disregarded since the election – the peaceful transfer of power between administrations.

Only three presidents in US history have skipped their successor's swearing-in – the last time it happened was more than



A video grab of President Donald Trump's address. Twitter via Reuters

150 years ago. Democrat Andrew Johnson sat out the 1869 inauguration after he was replaced by Republican Ulysses S Grant; before that, John Adams and his son John Quincy Adams skipped the inaugurations of 1801 and 1829 respectively.

Meanwhile, the Trump administration plunged deeper into crisis as more officials resigned in protest, prominent Republicans broke with the President, and Democratic

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ONCE UPON A FAILED COUP

BY ASHUTOSH VARSHNEY
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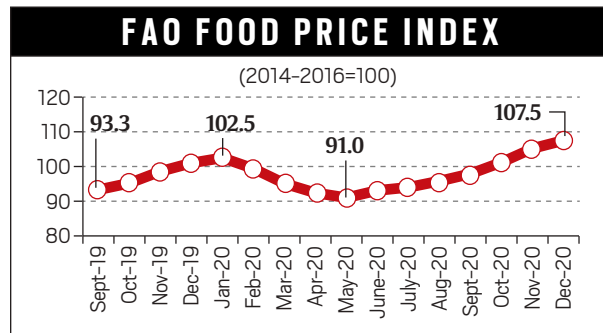
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ACROSS FARM COMMODITIES

Growth silver lining but food inflation may be dark cloud

Food and Agriculture Organisation's food price index highest since 2014

**HARISH DAMODARAN**
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

FIRST, IT was the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) that, on December 4, revised downwards its GDP deflator growth projection for 2020-21 from 9.5% to 7.5%. On Thursday, the National Statistical Office (NSO) pegged the current fiscal's GDP growth at minus 7.7%. The figure was even better, at minus 7.2%, after netting out taxes and subsidies on products.

These official estimates – along with data pertaining to the purchasing managers' index, electricity and fuel consumption, goods and services tax collection, Google mobility index and other high-frequency indicators – con-

firm one thing: The extent of negative growth induced by Covid-19 and the lockdown hasn't been as much as was initially feared.

The NSO's first advance estimates suggest that the Indian economy may even register a small 0.3% year-on-year growth in the second half (October-March), after contracting minus 14.9% in the first half (April-September) of 2020-21.

But this relative optimism on growth – economic activity seems inching towards its pre-pandemic levels – is tempered by an emerging challenge: food inflation.

This also makes it difficult for the RBI to further cut interest rates or even continue with its

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Aurangzeb not secular, says Uddhav, spars with Cong over Aurangabad

VISHWAS WAGHMODE
MUMBAI, JANUARY 8

RULING ALLIES Shiv Sena and Congress sparred Friday over the name of Aurangabad, where civic polls are slated to be held this year, with Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray continuing to refer to the city as Sambhaji Nagar and saying that while the coalition's agenda adheres to secularism, Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb "does not fit into it".

Responding to the Congress's objection to him referring to Aurangabad as Sambhaji Nagar to honour the Maratha ruler, Thackeray told reporters: "Aurangzeb was not a secular person. While our agenda has the word secular in it, a person like Aurangzeb does not fit into it."

Thackeray's remarks assume significance with the Shiv Sena taking a different stance on secularism from its allies on this issue.

When it was pointed out that he had referred to Aurangabad as Sambhaji Nagar on his official Twitter handle over the past two

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Uddhav Thackeray

PAGE 1
ANCHOR**LALMANI VERMA**
DEHRADUN, JANUARY 8

THIS NOVEMBER, as a gesture of thanks to local residents who had helped out during the wedding functions of his cousin sister and two daughters, primary school teacher Mahesh Singh of Ratir Kethi village in Uttarakhand's Bageshwar district promised them liquor instead of money, as per a local tradition.

Consequently, Singh recalls, at each of the three ceremonies, he ended up spending Rs 15,000 on liquor for the guests and all

those who helped out – from door-to-door distribution of invitations to fetching wood for fuel, and arranging food and serving of meals.

With labour hard to find in remote areas like Ratir Kethi, the village saw at least four other wedding ceremonies that month where the same promise was made.

But on December 29, driven as much by the money spent on this tradition as complaints of drunken brawls and domestic violence, Ratir Kethi passed a resolution banning the sale, distribution and serving of liquor at wedding cere-

monies, and religious as well as social gatherings like fairs.

The women of Ratir Kethi drove the change, with the resolution passed in the presence of at least one member from each of the 80 households of the village, said pradhan Surendra Singh Mehta. No one raised a protest, he added. A copy of the resolution was later handed over to the local police station and authorities, seeking their support in executing the move.

Apart from banning liquor at ceremonies or gatherings, the resolution says that if a person in a drunken state misbehaves



Ratir Kethi passed a resolution to ban liquor at weddings

with family members or indulges in domestic violence, the

panchayat will take the matter to the police. Villagers can also

approach the police if any person creates a ruckus or enters into a scuffle at a public place or a gathering in a drunken state.

Mehta pointed out that women at the receiving end of domestic violence usually do not approach authorities, and said the resolution will be enough of a deterrent.

Located at the border of Pithoragarh and Bageshwar districts at a height of about 4,000 feet, Ratir Kethi is about 81 km from the district headquarters. The nearest liquor shop is over 20 km away in Saama sub-town, which is where mobile connec-

tivity ends as well. Liquor is sourced from here and sold in villages by local retailers.

Bageshwar SP Manikant Mishra said: "The villagers have requested us to ensure that the sale and consumption of liquor do not take place during marriage functions and other events. The police cannot stop that legally, but their resolution deserves appreciation. I will visit the village soon to speak to the villagers and discuss how they can stop this. A social evil can be stopped only with the cooperation of society."

Mishra added that liquor is

the cause of most arguments, scuffles and crimes in the hills. At least four cases of clashes between guests had been reported in marriage ceremonies in the recent season in the district, he said. On their part, the SP said, the police can ensure there is no illegal sale of liquor in bulk and from grocery shops around the village.

Mahesh Singh recalls that till a decade ago, there was no compulsion to serve liquor at weddings, or to people helping out with tasks. "It increases the financial burden but worse is when someone in a drunken state starts a scuffle," he said.



New Delhi



EQUIPPED WITH ECG, OXYGEN CYLINDERS

At Singhu, a mini hospital for quick relief

JIGNASA SINHA & ARANYA SHANKAR
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

WITH SEVERAL farmer deaths and many protesters falling ill in the harsh weather, a temporary, four-bed 'hospital' has come up at Singhu, near the main stage, particularly with an eye on the elderly and heart patients.

Life Care Foundation, an NGO from Punjab's Dera Bassi, said they set up "24-hour emergency hospital" after they felt the need to move beyond providing just first-aid.

"We have been giving first-aid and over the counter medicines from the first day, but in recent days we felt the need to have a hospital here. Since it's an eight-kilometre stretch, it takes time for the ambulance to come and ferry patients to hospital," said Avatar Singh (36) from Dera Bassi in Punjab, who started the initiative at the Singhu protest site.

"We've seen people who had elevated blood pressure, one seemed to have suffered a heart attack. So we realised it is necessary to have this facility at the camp. In fact, many more such hospitals need to come up. It's not much but something is better than nothing. We also have nebulisers for asthma patients and a fridge to keep insulin injections and tetanus shots, since both sugar issues and injuries are common," he said.

"We will have three doctors from different hospitals in Punjab who will work in 10-15 days' shift at the camp. We are also paying them a salary," he said.

Singh, a farmer, said he had to take a Rs 9 lakh loan to help at the protests. He has spent Rs 3.5 lakh so far.

PROTEST WATCH

■ No. of protesters ■ No. of tractors ■ No. of cops

1. Khatkhat toll plaza

Jind-Patiala highway on NH71

500 50 20

No. of barricades: None

Distance of protest site from Delhi: 145 km

Protest on since December 25

2. Masani

Near Masani village in Rewari, Haryana

500-plus 30-plus

Distance from Delhi: 54 km

Protest on since December 31

5. Shahjahanpur-Khera border

At the Haryana-Rajasthan border on NH48, near Jaisinghpur Khera village

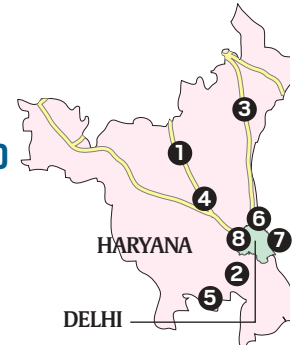
Around 2,000 More than 200

No. of police personnel: Around

300 personnel, including police and paramilitary

Distance from Delhi: 82 km

Protest on since December 13



3. Ghraunda (Karnal): Ambala-Delhi (NH-44)

2,000 25 20

No. of barricades: None

Distance of protest site from Delhi: 100 km

Date of beginning of protest: December 25

6. Singhu Border

30,000 approx.

over 6,000

15 companies

Protest on since November 27, covers a 16-km-long stretch

8. Tikri Border

15,000 approx.

10,000 tractors approx., over 3,000 four-wheelers

10 companies

Protest on since Nov 27, from Tikri Border metro station to Bahadurgarh metro station to Pakoda Chowk, covers a distance of 33 km

4. Makdoli (Rohtak): Rohtak-Panipat highway (NH-71A)

500 50-100 20

No. of barricades: None

Distance of protest site from Delhi: 80 km

Date of beginning of protest: December 25

7. Ghazipur

8,000 approx.

1,000 tractors, 500 cars

4-5 companies

Protest on since Nov 28, covers over a 3-km stretch

beds are placed at the back. The hospital is equipped with catheters, ECG machines, oxygen cylinders and other medical equipment.

Doctors said they treat 20-25 patients a day. At least 4-5 patients are admitted and treated for a day or two and 2-3 patients are referred to other hospitals.

"If a person suffers a heart attack, we give them primary treatment and send them to a hospital. First-aid in these cases has to be quick. We also test people for high sugar and cholesterol. Most farmers don't take the right medicines and fall sick," said Dr Surjit, who works at a hospital in Mohali and is volunteering here.

Dr Chandan Singh (28) from Chandigarh was busy attending to patients complaining of diarrhoea, chest pain, etc. "I felt it was more important to come here because the farmers have been here for months in poor hygienic conditions and are bound to fall ill. They needed our help more than city dwellers," he said.

Ravinder, a farmer from near Rohtak in Haryana, had come to take medicines for a skin infection. "I saw they have put beds as well. It's a relief to know we will have the option if we need it," he said.

Balvinder Singh (56), a farmer from Rohtak, has been admitted at the mini hospital for two days. He said he collapsed on the road after his joints and head ached for a while. His wife brought him here and doctors gave him medicines and checked his BP. "They say I may have typhoid," said Balvinder.

The organisation is planning to get more equipment and doctors who can similarly look after protesting farmers at the Tikri border.

A protester undergoing treatment at the four-bed facility at Singhu Friday.
Abhinav Saha



After Tamil, Delhi govt nod to set up Konkani language academy

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

WITH THE Aam Aadmi Party gearing up to fight the 2022 assembly polls in Goa, the Arvind Kejriwal-led Cabinet in Delhi Friday approved the setting up of a Konkani language academy in the capital.

The government said that the academy will seek to facilitate the growth and promotion of the Konkani language and culture in the city. "Congratulations to all Konkani speaking people and all those who love Konkani language. To promote Konkani language, Delhi Cabinet today approved setting up of a Konkani academy in Delhi," CM tweeted.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, who holds the Arts, Culture, and Languages portfolio, said, "Goa has a special place in every Indian's heart. The Delhi



Goa has a special place in every Indian's heart: Sisodia

government's Konkani Academy will bring forth the best of authentic Konkani culture to the capital."

The AAP had fared poorly in the 2017 assembly polls in Goa. After returning to power in Delhi with a thumping majority, the party has considerably increased its organisational activities in the state, which is currently governed by the BJP.

Currently, there are eight functional language academies in Delhi covering Urdu, Sanskrit, Punjabi, Hindi, Maithili-Bhojpuri, Garhwali-Kumaoni-Jaunsari, Sindhi and Tamil. Tamil was notified recently.

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

THREE YEARS after a Class 2 student was found murdered in his school in Gurgaon and the school bus conductor arrested by the local police, the CBI has filed a chargesheet against four Gurgaon police officers for falsely implicating him in the case.

The agency has filed a supplementary chargesheet in a special court in Panchkula accusing the then SHO of Bhondsi police station Narendra Singh Khatana, sub-inspector Shamsher Singh, ASI Subhash Chand and ACP (Sohna) Barem Singh for arresting conductor Ashok Kumar for the murder despite him being innocent.

CBI, which had been handed over the investigation, did not prosecute Ashok Kumar and had instead arrested a student for the murder. The eight-year-old victim was found with his

throat slit near the school toilet on September 8, 2017, within half-an-hour of his father dropping him to the school.

Gurgaon police had arrested the conductor, accusing him of murder, within the next two days. The police showed recovery of a knife from him and claimed he had wanted to sodomise the child and when the child raised an alarm, Kumar killed him.

Police also paraded Kumar in front of news channel cameras and made him confess the crime before journalists.

The CBI, however, found the claims of police to be false and instead arrested a 16-year-old, who had allegedly killed the child in a bid to postpone school exams.

The CBI has charged the police officers under IPC sections 120-B (criminal conspiracy), 166A (disobeying directions under law), 167 (public servant framing an incorrect document with intent to cause injury), 330

(police officer torturing someone to confess a crime) and 506 (criminal intimidation), officials said.

The agency had examined teachers, students and scanned local markets, which led them to a senior student.

The juvenile was apprehended in the murder on November 7, 2017, CBI spokesperson R C Joshi said.

"It was revealed during CBI investigation that the conductor earlier arrested by Gurgaon Police was not involved in this murder case. During further investigation, the alleged role of the said police officials came to light and a supplementary chargesheet was therefore filed against them," he said.

According to the agency, the juvenile, believed to be weak in his studies, allegedly slit the victim's throat to get the school to declare a holiday in order to defer a scheduled parent-teacher meeting (PTM) and an examination.

\$200 mn project at US Embassy: 'Testimony to strength, longevity of US-India relations'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

UNION MINISTER Hardeep Singh Puri, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, and outgoing US Ambassador to India Kenneth I Juster Friday broke ground on the new "more environmentally sustainable" Chancery building to be constructed inside the US Embassy campus.

"The project we celebrate today is more than a series of buildings and infrastructure. It reflects America's enduring commitment to the US-India partnership and is a testament to the strength and longevity of that partnership," Juster said.

"The new design reduces total water use by 37% and potable water use by 74%. The reflecting pool will be redesigned to capture stormwater during the monsoon season, storing one million gallons for treatment and reuse... Throughout the project, the



(From left) Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, US Ambassador Kenneth I Juster and Delhi Deputy CM Manish Sisodia, Friday. PTI

Embassy will be planting over 2,000 trees in public areas in New Delhi," he said.

Juster said the "endeavour was also an investment in the local community". "During the

project, an approximate \$200 million will be invested in the local economy and the project will employ approximately 800 Indian workers at the peak of construction activities. These work-

ers will have the opportunity to learn new technical skills and safety awareness that will help distinguish them in the local market," he said.

Speaking at the event, Puri

lauded Juster's contribution to strengthening India-US relations, saying ties were "stronger, more enduring and with greater potential now" as compared to when the envoy had come to India.

Sisodia too said the relationship between the US Embassy and the Delhi government was "mutually beneficial". "India has adopted a New Education Policy which has enabled partnership in higher education with reputed universities of the world. The Delhi government will seek your cooperation in making Delhi a regional educational hub for some of the Ivy League colleges and schools," he said.

In a statement, the US Embassy said the "new Chancery building will stand adjacent to the iconic original Chancery and the Ambassador's Residence at Roosevelt House on the Embassy campus". Friday also marked the 62nd anniversary of the groundbreaking of the original Chancery in 1959.

Another vaccine dry run as capital hopes to smoothen rollout process

ASTHA SAXENA
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

THE THIRD round of the Covid-19 vaccination dry run, held in the capital's four districts on Friday, saw improved coordination among teams, but not without some minor glitches.

Around 25 beneficiaries were called in each session site to carry out the immunisation programme.

The first dry run for the Covid-19 vaccination rollout was held in Delhi on January 2 at three sites — GTB Hospital, Shahdara; the Urban Primary Health Centre, Darya Ganj; and the Venkateshwar Hospital, Dwarka.

At the Delhi government's Baba Saheb Ambedkar hospital, calls were made to all listed beneficiaries on Thursday evening.

"A message was sent to all the 25 beneficiaries and around 17 of them reached the session site on Friday. It was a smooth process as we have already been training our healthcare staff for the last few weeks," said Dr Pankaj Kumar, nodal officer of the Covid-19 vaccination centre at the hospital.

The process was equally smooth at east Delhi's Delhi State Cancer Institute (DSCI). Following social distancing and other Covid norms, the beneficiaries waited outside the centre as the vaccinating officer called out their names. A police officer was also seated at the gate to

verify details of registered people.

"The IDs of all the beneficiaries are being checked at the vaccination room. There are eight seats in the observation room where the beneficiaries will wait for at least 30 minutes to see if there are any reactions to the vaccine," said Dr Pragya Shukla, nodal officer of Covid-19 at the institute.

However, some centres reported minor issues while carrying out the exercise. A senior district official from New Delhi district, where the dry run was held at 10 sites, said, "There were some issues while using the Co-WIN app but we are working on it. Since the dry run was held at government and private hospitals, we could easily coordinate with healthcare workers."

In the southeast district, the exercise was carried out at 19 session sites. The district has identified 72 sites for the final vaccination programme in the first phase. "Primarily, there were small issues and we have sent feedback to the state health department. Overall, the entire exercise was fairly successful. Special emphasis was given on the mock drill for reporting of AEFI (adverse event following immunisation) and emergency situation."

According to top officials in the state health department, the city is expected to start the vaccination programme in the coming week.



Dry run at the railway hospital in Paharganj. Praveen Khanna

UK strain detected in 33 people so far in Delhi

ASTHA SAXENA
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

TWENTY MORE people in Delhi have been found to be infected with the new strain of SARS-Cov-2 virus that emerged in the United Kingdom, taking the total number of people infected with the strain in the city to 33.

A total of 115 Covid-19 positive samples have been sent to the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) for genome sequencing by the state health department. Of these samples, the testing centre has released the report of 80, out of which 33 are found to be carrying the strain.

They are being treated at Lok Nayak, Max Saket, Batra Hospital

Tughlakabad, Fortis Vasant Kunj and Sir Ganga Ram hospital.

On Friday, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced guidelines for the testing of passengers coming from the UK as the Central government lifted the ban on the flights. As per the rules, travellers coming from the UK to the city will have to undergo a seven-day institutional quarantine and a seven-day home quarantine even if they test negative for Covid-19 on arrival.

Meanwhile, Delhi recorded 444 fresh cases of Covid-19 on Friday, the seventh time the daily infection count stood below the 500-mark in January, while the positivity rate dipped to 0.59 per cent. Ten more deaths were reported in the last 24 hours.

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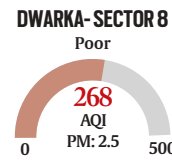


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At the Ghazipur poultry market. *Tashi Tobgyal*

ASTHA SAXENA
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

THE DELHI unit of the Department of Animal Husbandry has collected nine samples from three areas in the national capital to check for presence of avian flu or bird flu, which has already been reported in five states so far — Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala and Haryana.

According to senior officials from the department, the samples have been collected in the last two days. On Thursday, four

The samples were picked up from Hastal in West Delhi, where 16 wild birds had died. The samples have been sent to the Northern Regional Disease Diagnostic Laboratory in Jalandhar.

"Five more samples were collected on Friday – four from Mayur Vihar Phase 3 and one from DDA park in Dwarka sector 9. Around 15 crows had died in Dwarka, while 17 crows have been found dead at East Delhi's Mayur Vihar," said Dr Rakesh Singh from the Department of Animal Husbandry.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia took note of the incident, following which the rapid re-

“These samples will be sent to the National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases in Bhopal on Tuesday,” said Dr Singh. H5N1 is a type of influenza virus that causes “highly infectious, severe respiratory diseases in birds called avian influenza” according to the World Health Organisation.

Uttar Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir have also witnessed unusual deaths of poultry, crows and migratory birds. The Centre has asked local authorities to boost surveillance around water bodies, live bird markets, zoos and poultry farms.

Sisodia had said on Thursday that there is no case of bird flu in Delhi yet and asked officials to keep a close watch on poultry birds coming in from neighbouring states to prevent any infection. Eleven rapid response teams have been set up to monitor Delhi's potential hotspots.

Sisodia had also instructed officials to maintain a strict vigil on birds at major bird sites, especially poultry markets, water bodies, zoos and other potential hotspots. These include Ghazipur Fish and Poultry Market, Shakti Shakti Lake, Sanjay Lake, Bhalswa Horseshoe Lake, Delhi Zoo, and smaller water bodies in DDA parks.

SUANSHU KHURANA
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

MORE THAN half a century after the capital's premier dance institute, Kathak Kendra, became a constituent unit of Sangeet Natak Akademi, it finally has an internal complaints committee (ICC) for reporting and redressal of any sexual harassment complaints involving gurus and students.

The formation of the committee was prompted by an FIR lodged by a 23-year-old woman, said Suman Kumar, director of Kathak Kendra.

The woman had alleged molestation by her pakhawaj teacher Pt Ravi Shankar Upadhyay, a noted pakhawaj player based in Delhi and a guru at the Kendra. Upadhyay was arrested on December 15 and sent to judicial custody. Upadhyay, who has been suspended, was lodged in Tihar Jail and was granted bail on December 23. The next hearing is scheduled in a month.

The ICC includes Kathak dancers Rajendra Gangnani and Malti Shyam, who are currently gurus at the Kendra; Dr Mridula Tandon, founder of capital-based NGO SAKSHI; two women section officers from Kathak Kendra; and Subhash Dutta, a consultant with the Kendra.

Since it was formed in December, the ICC has held three meetings over the complaints against Upadhyay. The woman's statement and that of other students have already been recorded, while Upadhyay's testimony will be recorded in the next few days. The first meeting was virtual, while members met for the next two.

“Since the police investigation is also going on, we keep understanding the process and devel-



Noted pakhawaj player Ravi Shankar Upadhyay was arrested on December 15

opment of it. We are sharing all updates we get from there with the ICC members,” said Kumar.

He told *The Indian Express* that he has sent another letter to Upadhyay informing him that he will not be allowed to step inside the Kendra without permission while the investigation is on. A decision on Upadhyay's termination, if any, will be based on further investigation.

ICC member Mridula Tandon said the organisation is sending out circulars and putting up posters to ensure anyone can reach out to them. "There has to be zero tolerance. As the head of an institute, if one hears random talk, it needs to be taken up. The woman who has raised the issue, she deserves kudos for raising it."

Kathak Kendra, a constituent unit of Sangeet Natak Akademi, was initially established as the Kathak wing of Sriram Bharatiya Kala Kendra. In 1964, the institute became a part of Sangeet Natak Akademi.

Upadhyay is the son of pakhawaj maestro Ramji Upadhyay of the Gaya gharana and carries a 400-year-old family legacy. He has accompanied many reputed artistes on stage.

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE						
SR. No.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP./AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE CLOSING DATE (TIME)	AMOUNT / END (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH	NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	DHEVN	TENDER FOR CONSTRUCTION OF RUCCA PLATFORM AT SDO TRW DHEVN NARNIAUL	05.01.2021 27.01.2021	41.67 LACS	www.dhevn.org.in	8099922323 xenchilggn@dhevn.org.in
2	DHEVN	TENDER FOR CONSTRUCTING RUCCA PLATFORM WITH EARTH-FILLING AND PROPER DRAINAGE IN OFFICE OF SDO TRW FARIDABAD	05.01.2021 27.01.2021	45.33 LACS	www.dhevn.org.in	8099922323 xenchilggn@dhevn.org.in
3	DHEVN	TENDER FOR EARTH-FILLING RUCCA PLATFORM IN THE OFFICE PREMISES, DISMANTLEMENT OF OLD BROKEN BOUNDARY WALL AND CONSTRUCTION OF NEW BOUNDARY WALL IN ITS PLACE WITH BARBED WIRE AND GATE ALL AROUND THE BOUNDARY OF OFFICE OF SDO STORE NARNIAUL	05.01.2021 27.01.2021	18.15 LACS	www.dhevn.org.in	8099922323 xenchilggn@dhevn.org.in
4	DHEVN	FLIER & ADJUSTABLE SPANNER, 10 SPANNER SET 3 32 HAMMER WITH HANDLE HEXA INSULATED SCREW DRIVER TORCH EARTHING STICKS	13.01.2021 01.02.2021	10 LACS	www.dhevn.org.in	01664-243491 scopshiwani@dhevn.org.in
5	DHEVN	SUPPLY INSTALLATION TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF ELECTRIC LINES UP TO 11 KV VOLTAGE LEVEL ON TURNKEY BASIS BY EXECUTING THE WORK UNDER MGSJ SCHEME ON 4 NOS. RDS FEEDERS IN DISTRICT SHIWANI	08.01.2021 28.01.2021	5.76 CRORE	www.dhevn.org.in	01664-243491 scopshiwani@dhevn.org.in
6	DHEVN	CHECKING AND TESTING OF ALL HT CONNECTIONS HAVING SUPPLY ON 33 KV AND ABOVE VOLTAGE ALONG WITH ABT METERING CONNECTION AND ITS DATA ANALYSIS OF CMRI REPORT.	06.01.2021 27.01.2021	1.91 CRORE	www.dhevn.org.in	8099900357 somp@dhevn.org.in
7	DHEVN	SUPPLY OF INSTALLATION TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF ELECTRIC LINES UP TO 11 KV VOLTAGE LEVEL ON TURNKEY BASIS BY EXECUTING THE WORK UNDER MGSJ SCHEME ON 6 NOS. RDS FEEDERS IN DISTRICT SHIWANI	08.01.2021 28.01.2021	10.30 CRORE	www.dhevn.org.in	01664-243491 scopshiwani@dhevn.org.in
8	DHEVN	SUPPLY INSTALLATION TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF ELECTRIC LINES UP TO 11 KV VOLTAGE LEVEL ON TURNKEY BASIS BY EXECUTING THE WORK UNDER MGSJ SCHEME ON 19 NOS. RDS FEEDERS IN DISTRICT DABRI	08.01.2021 28.01.2021	23.98 CRORE	www.dhevn.org.in	01664-243491 scopshiwani@dhevn.org.in
9	DHEVN	TENDER FOR ANNUAL MAINTENANCE OF VIDYUT NAGAR COLONY, HISAR	08.01.2021 01.02.2021	1.58 CRORE	www.dhevn.org.in	7027348444 mailto:redhreshivani@gmail.com
10	HSAB (JPL)(OR)	CONST. OF CC PLATFORM IN PURCHASE CENTRE AT BARNIA IN MC THANESAR (+ 1 OTHER WORK)	12.01.2021 22.01.2021	74.97 LACS	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	01744-231420 sanket2015@gmail.com
11	HMPNL	CONSTRUCTION OF 66 KV & 132 KV TRANSMISSION LINES IN YAMUNANAGAR & SONPAT AREA (ESTIMATED COST OF WORK: RS. 14.74 CRORES)	04.01.2021 19.02.2021	END 29.48 LACS	www.hmpn.org.in	0172-2583759 pro@hmpn.org.in
12	SANAGRA SHEKHA, FATEHABAD	WALL PAINTING SIZE AS PER SITE REQUIREMENT WITH WRITING AND LOGO THREE MULTI COLOURS AND WALL PRIMER OF FINE QUALITY PAINT AT SITE OF DIFFERENT ELEMENTARY (172 NOS) AND 166 NOS)	08.01.2021 23.01.2021	1.35 CRORE	https://etenders.hry.nic.in	01667221045 fatehabad2_dpc_hispp@gmail.com
13	DHEVN	FIXING THE RATE CONTRACT FOR THE SUPPLY OF ACSN RACCON CONDUCTOR 80 MM SQ	08.01.2021 28.01.2021	12.45 CRORE	www.dhevn.org.in	8099888680 sureshshivani@gmail.com

1326/HRY

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.etenders.hry.nic.in

Interested parties having relevant work experience may submit their EOI by **19.01.2021, Tuesday by 5.00 PM** to Company Secretary Office, Rail Vikas Nigam Limited, Room no. 284, 1st Floor, August Kranti Bhawan, Bhikaji Cama Place, R.K.Puram, New Delhi- 110066.

यमुना एक्सप्रेसवे औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण
प्रथम तल, कॉन्फिडेंसियल कॉम्प्लेक्स, सेक्टर-ओमेगा-1, (पी-2)
वेस्ट नोडा सिटी, जनपद-गौतमबुद्ध नगर, फोन नं. 0120-2395152
वेबसाइट: www.yamunaxpresswayauthority.com

पंजाब: वाई.ई.ए./PROF/133379/2020 दिनांक: 08/01/2021

सार्वजनिक सूचना

1. यमुना एक्सप्रेसवे औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण की 69वीं बोर्ड बैठक में लिये गये निर्णय के अनुपालन में BHS-02/2013 एवं BHS-03/2014 योजनाओं के अन्तर्गत आवंटित क्षेत्रफल— 54.75 वर्गमीटर के आवंटियों को कोविड—19 वैश्विक महामारी के दृष्टिगत रिफण्ड हेतु दिनांक 31.01.2021 तक का समय विस्तरण अनुमत्य किया गया है।

2. यमुना एक्सप्रेसवे औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण की 69वीं बोर्ड बैठक में कोविड-19 वैश्विक महामारी के दृष्टिगत प्राधिकरण की आवासीय भवन योजनाओं BHS-04/2014 एवं BHS-05/2015 में आवंटित भवनों के आवंटियों को प्राधिकरण की अन्य योजनाओं के रिक्त भवनों में शिफ्ट करने हेतु अपनी सहमति दिये जाने के लिए दिनांक 31.01.2021 तक का समय प्रदान किया गया है।

प्रदेश कार्याधिकारी (एम.)


ग्रेटर नौएडा औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण
 भूखण्ड संख्या-1, सैक्टर नॉलेज पार्क-4, ग्रेटर नौएडा सिटी, जिला गौतमबुद्ध नगर, उ. प्र.
 ई-मेल: authority@gnida.in वेबसाइट: www.greaternoidaauthority.in

प्रकाश: स्वा.वि./2021/09 **दिनांक: 06.01.2021**

ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

विशेष कार्याधिकारी (स्वा.प्री.एन) ग्रेटर नौएडा औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण द्वारा मुख्य कार्यपालक अधिकारी, ग्रेटर नौएडा की ओर से ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या-स्वा.वि./2020/08, दिनांक 06.01.2021 के माध्यम से उल्लेखित क्रम संख्या-01 पर अतिरिक्त कार्य की ई-निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। ई-निविदा की प्रतिलिपि प्रमाण पत्र व शर्तें ग्रेटर नौएडा प्राधिकरण की वेबसाइट www.greaternoidaauthority.in पर ई-निविदा लिंक एवं ई-नॉटल <http://tendering.up.nic.in> पर उपलब्ध है। किसी परिचयन, संशोधन व अतिरिक्त सूचनाओं के लिए उक्त वेबसाइट देखेंगे रहें।

क्र. स.	कार्य का नाम/वर्क सफ़िल	अनुमानित लागत
1.	Supply of Cattle Feed for Cattle Shed in Jalpura for Six Month, Greater Noida. (वर्क सफ़िल-स्वास्थ्य)	रु. 68.24 लाख

जिससे दिनांक 11.01.2021 से 25.01.2021 को 17:00 बजे तक अगलोज किया जा सकता है। प्राप्त ई-निविदाओं को प्री-क्वालिफिकेशन दिनांक 25.01.2021 को 11:00 बजे खोली जायेगी।

विशेष कार्याधिकारी (एस.पी.एस.)

Follow Us On    / OfficialIGNIDA

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE

e-tender is invited on Behalf of the President of India for the under mentioned work :-

1. Name of the work with its location :
Composite Work (Civil & Mechanical)
involving construction of Industrial shed with
Pre-Engineered Building (PEB), Service
building, Electrification and illumination
works, Procurement and commissioning of
specified Mechanical Machineries & Plant
and other associated Civil, Electrical,
Mechanical & Telecom works in connection
with Facilities for POH of DEMU/MEMU at
CSW Workshop, New Bongaon (NBQS),
Northeast Frontier Railway". E-tender No.
2020WP/S&T/NBQS/DEMU/WT-03
(Open). 2. S&T/DEMU/Work of the work :
₹19,61,43,351.26. 3. Earnest money to be
deposited : 1,10,70,000/- 4. Date and time
of opening of tenders : 12.30 hrs on 22/01/2021
at 12.30 hrs. 5. Website particular and notice
board location where complete details of
tender can be seen and downloaded :
Tender can be downloaded and Bided from
IREPS website : www.ireps.gov.in and
in detailed can be seen from the notice board
at Office of CAO/PW, Chamber Bhawan,
J.C. Road, Patna - 800001.

Any e-tenders which is sent by Post/Courier/ Fax or by hand will not be accepted. All such manual submission of tender even if it is on firm's letter pad or received in time will not be accepted. The above e-tender document along with full information is available on website <http://www.irops.gov.in>

Dy. Chief Sig. & Telecom Engg./WP/
ECR/Patna
PR/01270/WP/S&T/T/20-21/44

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY
KOTA DIVISION-OPEN TENDER

**NOTICE No.EL/50/NIT/09
(2020-21) Date-06.01.2021**

**Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer
(General), West Central Railway,
Kota for and on behalf of President of
Union of India invites E-tenders
for following Works.1.Tender No.
EL/50/63R/2020-21, Description-
Work-Provision of 750 V power
supply for maintenance of HOG
coaches in washing/ sink lines of
Maintenance depot/ Sheds.
Approx. Cost of work (In Rs.)-
1,29,73,199.66 Cost of Tender
form (In Rs.)- 5000/- Earnest
Money (In Rs.)- 2,14,900/-
2.Tender No. EL/50/64R/2020-21,
Description of Work-Kota
Division-Rewiring of staff quarters
Approx. Cost of work (In Rs.)-
14,51,506.40 Cost of Tender form
In Rs.)- 2000/- Earnest Money
In Rs.)- 29,000/- Completion period
for all tenders- 04 Months, Date
and Time of Submission and
opening for all tenders-
Submission upto 03.02.2021 upto
15.00 hrs, and opening at 15.15 hrs.
The offer is accepted only
through E-Tendering on website
<http://www.imps.gov.in>. The bidders
should have class III digital
signature Certificate and must
be registered on IREPS Portal. No
tender is accepted manually. Please
read tender terms & conditions
before the tendering.**

**Senior Divisional Electrical
Engineer (General)
West Central Railway, Kota**

निविदा नं. एल/५०/नित/०९/२०२०-२१ दिनांक ०६.०१.२०२१

Macron advisor meets PM Modi, talks regional and global issues

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

EMMANUEL BONNE, Diplomatic Advisor to French President Emmanuel Macron, called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday.

During the meeting, Modi "expressed his satisfaction on the progress both countries have made on key aspects of the India-France Strategic Partnership, including counter-terrorism, cyber-security, defence and strategic cooperation, etc", the government said in a statement. It mentioned that Bonne briefed Modi "on India-France cooperation on var-



PM Narendra Modi with Emmanuel Bonne. PTI

ious regional and global issues, including maritime and multilateral cooperation". Modi, it said, "fondly recalled his recent exchanges with President Macron, and conveyed his best wishes for his health" and "reiterated his invitation to

AFTER OUTGOING US ENVOY'S REMARKS India's independent foreign policy applies to defence acquisitions: MEA

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

AFTER THE outgoing US Ambassador to India spoke about "interoperability" issues in a veiled reference to India's procurement of S400 air defence systems from Russia, the MEA Friday made it clear that India pursues an independent foreign policy that includes defence acquisitions.

MEA spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said India shares strategic partnerships with both the US and Russia. He added: "India has always pursued an independent foreign policy. This also applies to our defence acquisitions and supplies which are guided by our na-

tional security interests."

The remarks come just days after Kenneth Juster had said in his farewell speech, without naming the S400 missile system, that "as systems get more technologically advanced, country A that does not get along with country B, will be less willing to sell technology that could potentially be compromised to country B".

He said: "We haven't hit that point yet, but that could come in the future... there are trade-offs India has to decide (as to) how much it matters to get the most sophisticated technology, to be as interoperable as it can be within its technology and potentially with other friendly forces..."

MEA: India, China have maintained communication links at ground level

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

THE MINISTRY of External Affairs (MEA) on Friday said that India and China have maintained communication links at the ground level to avoid any misunderstandings, even as the two sides are waiting for the next round of senior commander-level talks with respect to the military standoff in eastern Ladakh.

During the weekly briefing, MEA spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said the last round of diplomatic talks at the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination took place on December 18 "and the two sides

have agreed to hold the next round of senior commanders meeting, and they are in constant communication through diplomatic and military channels..."

Srivastava said, "In the meantime, both sides have maintained communication at the ground level to avoid any misunderstandings and misjudgements, even as discussions continue for achieving complete disengagement in all friction areas in accordance with existing bilateral agreements to restore peace and tranquillity."

When asked about the 39 Indian sailors stranded in China, Srivastava said the Indian Ambassador in China "has again personally taken up this issue with the Chinese Vice Foreign

Minister, and had requested for early approval of crew exchange". He said that in Delhi, the MEA is in regular contact with the Chinese embassy.

He said, "Chinese authorities have detailed steps, which they have outlined, to ensure smooth movement of new crew to China to affect this crew change....(and) steps have to be complied to by the concerned shipping companies."

Regarding "exploring alternative modes of crew change for sea", Srivastava said the possibility has also been taken up by Chinese authorities and they have "indicated that the details for these options are being worked out".

TATATATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES LIMITED

Registered Office: 9th Floor, Nirmal Building, Nariman Point, Mumbai 400 021. Tel: 91 22 67789595 Fax : 91 22 67789660 Email: investor.relations@tcs.com website: www.tcs.com CIN: L22210MH1995PLC084781

PART I : Audited Consolidated Interim Statement of Financial Results

(₹ crore)

	Three month period ended			Nine month period ended		Year ended
	December 31, 2020	September 30, 2020	December 31, 2019	December 31, 2020	December 31, 2019	March 31, 2020
	2020	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
Revenue	42,015	40,135	39,854	120,472	117,003	156,949
Other income	691	914	818	2,203	3,854	4,592
TOTAL INCOME	42,706	41,049	40,672	122,675	120,857	161,541
Expenses						
Employee benefit expenses	23,431	22,665	21,622	68,189	63,901	85,952
Fees to external consultants	3,230	3,047	3,268	9,340	9,741	12,937
Cost of equipment and software licences	396	266	460	1,008	1,436	1,905
Depreciation and amortisation expense	1,024	998	897	2,998	2,578	3,529
Other operating expenses	2,750	2,644	3,633	8,190	10,792	14,046
TOTAL EXPENSES	30,831	29,620	29,880	89,725	88,448	118,369
PROFIT BEFORE FINANCE COSTS, EXCEPTIONAL ITEM AND TAX	11,875	11,429	10,792	32,950	32,409	43,172
Finance costs	183	174	223	499	673	924
PROFIT BEFORE EXCEPTIONAL ITEM AND TAX	11,692	11,255	10,569	32,451	31,736	42,248
Exceptional item (Refer note 2)						
Provision towards legal claim	-	1,218	-	1,218	-	-
PROFIT BEFORE TAX	11,692	10,037	10,569	31,233	31,736	42,248
Tax expense						
Current tax	3,242	2,849	2,981	8,756	7,702	10,378
Deferred tax	(277)	(316)	(555)	(803)	(320)	(577)
TOTAL TAX EXPENSE	2,965	2,533	2,426	7,953	7,382	9,801
PROFIT FOR THE PERIOD	8,727	7,504	8,143	23,280	24,354	32,447
Profit for the period attributable to:						
Shareholders of the Company	8,701	7,475	8,118	23,184	24,291	32,340
Non-controlling interests	26	29	25	96	63	107
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME (OCI)						
Items that will not be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss	(184)	(62)	(228)	(110)	(367)	(449)
Income tax on items that will not be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss	39	-	63	10	73	90
Items that will be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss	631	(129)	122	1,397	560	1,138
Income tax on items that will be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss	(71)	73	44	(224)	(137)	(315)
TOTAL OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME / (LOSSES)	415	(118)	1	1,073	129	464
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE PERIOD	9,142	7,386	8,144	24,353	24,483	32,911
Total comprehensive income for the period attributable to:						
Shareholders of the Company	9,109	7,358	8,117	24,248	24,405	32,764
Non-controlling interests	33	28	27	105	78	147
Paid up equity share capital (Face Value : ₹ 1 per share)	375	375	375	375	375	375
Total Reserves (including Non-controlling interests)						84,374
Earnings per equity share:- Basic and diluted (₹)	23.19	19.93	21.63	61.79	64.74	86.19
Dividend per share (Par value ₹ 1 each)						
Interim dividend on equity shares (₹)	6.00	12.00	5.00	23.00	55.00	67.00
Final dividend on equity shares (₹)	-	-	-	-	-	6.00
Total dividend on equity shares (₹)	6.00	12.00	5.00	23.00	55.00	73.00
Total equity dividend percentage	600	1,200	500	2,300	5,500	7,300

PART II : Consolidated Segment Information

(₹ crore)

	Three month period ended			Nine month period ended		Year ended
	December 31, 2020	September 30, 2020	December 31, 2019	December 31, 2020	December 31, 2019	March 31, 2020
	2020	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
REVENUE BY INDUSTRY PRACTICE						
Banking, Financial Services and Insurance	16,655	16,138	15,483	48,075	45,888	61,095
Manufacturing	4,027	3,826	4,171	11,737	12,251	16,468
Retail and Consumer Business	6,546	6,353	6,709	18,811	19,598	26,280
Communication, Media and Technology	6,980	6,560	6,608	20,035	19,227	25,978
Others	7,807	7,258	6,883	21,814	20,039	27,128
REVENUE FROM OPERATIONS	42,015	40,135	39,854	120,472	117,003	156,949
SEGMENT RESULTS						
Banking, Financial Services and Insurance	4,807	4,773	4,415	13,695	12,774	16,950
Manufacturing	1,188	1,029	1,135	3,203	3,255	4,445
Retail and Consumer Business	1,966	1,844	1,797	5,112	5,110	6,870
Communication, Media and Technology	2,066	1,917	1,926	5,869	5,604	7,703
Others	2,181	1,950	1,597	5,866	4,386	6,141
Total	12,208	11,513	10,870	33,745	31,129	42,109
Unallocable expenses*	1,207	2,390	1,119	4,715	3,247	4,453
Operating income	11,001	9,123	9,751	29,030	27,882	37,656
Other income	691	914	818	2,203	3,854	4,592
PROFIT BEFORE TAX	11,692	10,037	10,569	31,233	31,736	42,248

*Includes the provision for legal claim of ₹1,218 crore. Refer note 2.

Note: The assets and liabilities of the Group are used interchangeably amongst segments. Allocation of such assets and liabilities is not practicable and any forced allocation would not result in any meaningful segregation. Hence, assets and liabilities have not been identified to any of the reportable segments.

Select explanatory notes to the Statement of Audited Consolidated Interim Financial Results for the three month and nine month period ended December 31, 2020

1. These results have been prepared in accordance with the Indian Accounting Standard (referred to as "Ind AS") 34 Interim Financial Reporting prescribed under Section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with Companies (Indian Accounting Standards) Rules as amended from time to time. These results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors at its meeting held on January 8, 2021. The statutory auditors have expressed an unmodified audit opinion on these results.

2. Pursuant to ruling at the Appeals Court on August 20, 2020, in the case relating to Epic Systems Corporation (referred to as Epic) for alleged unauthorised access to and download of Epic's confidential information and use thereof in the development of the Company's product MedMantra, the Company had provided ₹1,218 crore (US \$165 million) towards this legal claim in its statement of profit and loss for the three month period ended September 30, 2020. This has been presented as an "exceptional item" in the statement of profit and loss. The Company filed a petition for re-hearing of the awards for both compensatory and punitive damages at the Appeals Court on September 3, 2020. Epic also filed for re-hearing of the Appeals Court's decision that invalidated a portion of the award of punitive damages. In November 2020, the petitions for re-hearing filed by the Company and Epic, respectively, were denied by the Appeals Court. The proceedings for assessing punitive damages have been remanded back to the District Court. The Company will continue to pursue all legal options available in the matter.

3. The Indian Parliament has approved the Code on Social Security, 2020 which would impact the contributions by the company towards Provident Fund and Gratuity. The Ministry of Labour and Employment has released draft rules for the Code on Social Security, 2020 on November 13, 2020, and has invited suggestions from stakeholders which are under active consideration by the Ministry. The Company and its Indian subsidiaries will assess the impact and its evaluation once the subject rules are notified and will give appropriate impact in its financial statements in the period in which, the Code becomes effective and the related rules to determine the financial impact are published.

4. The Board of Directors at its meeting held on October 7, 2020, approved a proposal to buy-back upto 5,33,33,333 equity shares of the Company for an aggregate amount not exceeding ₹16,000 crore, being 1.42% of the total paid up equity share capital at ₹3,000 per equity share. The shareholders approved the same on November 18, 2020, by way of a special resolution through postal ballot. The period for tendering of shares for buy-back was from December 18, 2020 to January 1, 2021. The settlement of all valid bids was completed on January 5, 2021, and the equity shares bought back were extinguished on January 6, 2021. Pursuant to the issuance of Letter of Offer, the Company has recorded a liability towards buy-back of equity shares of ₹16,000 crore and the corresponding tax payable of ₹3,726 crore as at December 31, 2020.

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7. The Board of Directors at its meeting held on January 8, 2021, has declared an interim dividend of ₹6.00 per equity share.

8. The results for the three month and nine month period ended December 31, 2020, are available on the BSE Limited website (URL: www.bseindia.com/corporates), the National Stock Exchange of India Limited website (URL: www.nseindia.com/corporates) and on the Company's website (URL: www.tcs.com/investors).

For and on behalf of the Board of Directors

Mumbai
January 8, 2021

Rajesh Gopinathan
CEO and Managing Director

Audited Unconsolidated Interim Statement of Financial Results

(₹ crore)

	Three month period ended			Nine month period ended		Year ended
	December 31, 2020	September 30, 2020	December 31, 2019	December 31, 2020	December 31, 2019	March 31, 2020
	2020	2020	2019	2020	2019	2020
Revenue	34,957	33,365	33,040	99,946	98,084	131,306
Other income	2,096	1,734	1,206	4,536	6,049	8,082
TOTAL INCOME	37,053	35,099	34,246	104,482	104,133	139,388
Expenses						
Employee benefit expenses	17,779	17,211	16,333	51,627	48,263	64,906
Fees to external consultants	3,548	3,404	3,484	10,339	10,404	13,916
Cost of equipment and software licences	331	224	378	839	1,233	1,596
Depreciation and amortisation expense	771	755	677	2,265	1,977	2,701
Other operating expenses	2,621	2,440	3,400	7,783	10,084	13,535
TOTAL EXPENSES	25,050	24,034	24,272	72,853	71,961	96,654
PROFIT BEFORE FINANCE COSTS, EXCEPTIONAL ITEM AND TAX	12,003	11,065	9,974	31,629	32,172	42,734
Finance costs	159	149	200	426	532	743
PROFIT BEFORE EXCEPTIONAL ITEM AND TAX	11,844	10,916	9,774	31,203	31,640	41,991
Exceptional item (Refer note 2)						
Provision towards legal claim	-	1,218	-	1,218	-	-
PROFIT BEFORE TAX	11,844	9,698	9,774	29,985	31,640	41,991
Tax Expense						
Current tax	2,968	2,522	2,692	7,813	6,765	9,012
Deferred tax	(366)	(272)	(601)	(614)	(158)	(281)
TOTAL TAX EXPENSE	2,602	2,250	2,091	7,199	6,607	8,731
PROFIT FOR THE PERIOD	9,242	7,448	7,683	22,786	25,033	33,260
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME (OCI)						
Items that will not be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss	(187)	1	(225)	(50)	(276)	(409)
Income tax on items that will not be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss	40	-	63	11	58	86
Items that will be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss	126	(162)	(229)	608	212	812
Income tax on items that will be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss	(71)	73	44	(224)	(137)	(315)
TOTAL OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME / (LOSSES)	(92)	(88)	(347)	345	(143)	174
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE PERIOD	9,150	7,360	7,336	23,131	24,890	33,434
Paid up equity share capital (Face Value : ₹ 1 per share)	375	375	375	375	375	375
Total Reserves						73,993
Earnings per equity share:- Basic and diluted (₹)	24.63	19.85	20.47	60.72	66.71	88.64
Dividend per share (Par value ₹ 1 each)						
Interim dividend on equity shares (₹)	6.00	12.00	5.00	23.00	55.00	67.00
Final dividend on equity shares (₹)	-	-	-	-	-	6.00
Total dividend on equity shares (₹)	6.00	12.00	5.00	23.00	55.00	73.00
Total equity dividend percentage	600	1,200	500	2,300	5,500	7,300

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For and on behalf of the Board of Directors

Mumbai
January 8, 2021

Rajesh Gopinathan
CEO and Managing Director

6 GOVT & POLITICS



DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



KEEPING IN TOUCH

WHEN BJP chief ministers visit the party headquarters in Delhi, it is mainly to meet the party president or senior leaders. It is rare for them to keep aside time for staff at the party office. But when Tripura Chief Minister Biplob Kumar Deb visited the BJP headquarters to meet party chief J P Nadda on Friday, he made it a point to go from floor to floor to meet the staff also. Deb recently upset the BJP leadership for unilaterally calling a public meeting to seek the people's mandate on whether he should continue in office in the face of intense factionalism in the state party unit. He had to call off the meeting after the national leadership intervened.

PACKED SCHEDULE

BJP PRESIDENT J P Nadda, who has returned to work after battling Covid, seems to be having hectic days. After spending three days in Ahmedabad for the RSS meeting, Nadda returned to Delhi on Thursday evening. On Friday, he took meetings on booth strengthening and coordination with state leaders from Rajasthan and Maharashtra. While the party's electoral setback in last month's Council polls for graduate and teacher constituencies in Maharashtra came up for discussion with the leaders from that state, Nadda discussed strengthening of the organisation with the Rajasthan leaders, sources said. On Saturday, the party chief will be heading to poll-bound West Bengal. Next week, Nadda will resume his 120-day national tour programme, visiting Assam on Monday and Tuesday.

THE VISIT

THERE WERE reports some days ago that Punjab Congress president Sunil Jakhar was unhappy that many senior AICC leaders have not visited party MPs from the state who had been sitting on a dharna at Jantar Mantar in solidarity with the protesting farmers. Congress leaders, including K C Venugopal, Pawan Kumar Bansal and party MP Manickam Tagore, later visited Jantar Mantar and met them in a show of support. On Friday, the MPs had a meeting with Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. She did not go to Jantar Mantar. The MPs – among them Ravneet Singh Bittu, Jasbir Singh Gill and Gurjeet Singh Aujla – met Priyanka at her residence. And the AICC publicised the meeting.

Budget session will be as long as earlier, all issues to be discussed: Speaker

LALMANI VERMA
DEHRADUN, JANUARY 8



Om Birla in Dehradun on Friday

INDICATING THAT the upcoming Budget session of Parliament will have a Question Hour, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Friday said questions of Opposition parties will be answered and issues raised by them discussed when the House meets for the next session.

Speaking to reporters in Dehradun, Birla said the upcoming Budget session will be of the same duration as it had been in the past and there will be discussions on all issues.

The Lok Sabha Speaker was in Dehradun to address an event part of an outreach programme for Panchayati Raj Institutions – ‘Panchayati Raj System: Strengthening the Decentralised

Democracy’. The event was aimed at introducing panchayat members to the functioning of Parliament and to provide them with an exposure to democratic principles and ethos.

Sources said the Budget Session is likely to begin on January 29. The session is expected to be held in adherence to precautions in view of Covid-19, the sources added.

Precautions that were in place for the Monsoon Session, which was held in September but cut short after many MPs tested positive for Covid, will continue, sources said.

Ministry delays green nod for coal mine in Chhattisgarh, points to NGT ruling

GARGI VERMA
RAIPUR, JANUARY 8

THE ENVIRONMENT Ministry has delayed the green nod for a coal mine in Chhattisgarh's Raigarh district, noting that the project didn't even have the first phase of environmental clearance and that the proposal submitted by Maharashtra State Power Generation Co. Ltd was different "for which the ToR [Terms of Reference] was given".

The coal mine project is proposed to come up in Gare Palma area of Tamnar tehsil in the district.

A January 1 letter from the ministry asked MahaGenCo to "provide comments" on a February 2020 National Green Tribunal order on the same area. According to the letter, the NGT

has said that no further conversion of underground coal mines to open-cast coal mines can be permitted in Tamnar and Gharghora areas of Raigarh, "keeping in mind the environmental cost in terms of forest loss, major non-compliance in pollution control and social cost (rehabilitation)".

The Gare Palma coal block located in Tamnar block, encompassing 14 villages, is licensed out to MahaGenCo. Tribal residents have been protesting mining activity in the area for some time now. The Indian Express in November had reported that despite a clear order by the National Commission of Scheduled Tribes (NCST) to defer public hearings, and a study by Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) that points to adverse impact of coal mining

FARMERS' PROTEST



A protest against the three farm bills by a pensioners' association and textile and labour unions outside the mini-secretariat in Ludhiana on Friday. *Gurmeet Singh*

BKU to oppose Khattar's visit to Karnal tomorrow

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, JANUARY 8

FARMERS IN Haryana are heading toward another confrontation with the state government with the Bhartiya Kisan Union Friday announcing it will oppose a "kisan panchayat" to be addressed by Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar in Karnal district Sunday. The "kisan panchayat" is being organised in Kaimla village to create "awareness" among the farmers about the "benefits of three laws".

Khattar, who was in Delhi to meet Union Home Minister Amit Shah said the meeting will take place as per schedule.

On Friday, farmers gathered at Ghraunda toll plaza on Ambala-Delhi national highway before moving to Kaimla to hold a panchayat there against the CM's programme. The protesters also removed barricades installed by the police on the outskirts of the village. However, a group of villagers said they were in favour of the CM's meeting. "We decided to return to toll plaza to avert a confrontation there," said BKU leader Jagdip



Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar in New Delhi, Friday

Singh Aulakh.

Farmers now plan to block all roads leading to the village on Sunday. The administration is preparing a temporary helipad near the venue amid a possibility that Khattar may need to take the aerial route to the village.

Karnal SP Ganga Ram Punia told *The Indian Express* that adequate police force will be deployed in the village. Sources said additional forces from adjoining districts will also be called in.

Chief Minister Khattar as well legislators of the ruling BJP-JJP alliance, including Deputy CM Dushyant Chautala, have been facing a series of protests by the state's farmers.

KHATTAR MEETS SHAH, SAYS DIALOGUE KEY

Chandigarh: Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar Friday met Home Minister Amit Shah, and later said there was hope that a solution will be reached through dialogue. He said that now when various issues are being discussed together, the possibilities of resolving the matter pertaining to the Acts is stronger. **ENS**

CHAUTALA: WILL QUIT IF DEMANDS NOT MET

Chandigarh: Indian National Lok Dal leader Abhay Singh Chautala Friday announced that he would resign from Haryana Assembly if the Centre doesn't accept farmers' demands by January 26. Ellenabad MLA Chautala is the lone INLD MLA in the Assembly. He has been visiting sites to support farmers since the protests began. **ENS**



At the foundation stone laying ceremony. *Express*

Andhra Brahmin Corporation chairman and YSRC leader Malladi Vishnu, who attended the foundation stone ceremony, said the previous TDP government had demolished over 40 temples in Vijayawada.

The temples to be reconstructed are the Rahu-Kethu

temple, Sri Anjaneyaswamy temple, Sri Seethamma Vari Paadaalu, Dakshinamukha Anjaneyaswamy temple, Saneeswara Swamy temple, Sri Dasanjaneya Swamy Vaari temple, Boddu Bomma, Sri Veera Babu Swamy temple, and Gosala Krishna temple.

Baghel to visit Bastar today, review work

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
RAIPUR, JANUARY 8

CHHATTISGARH CHIEF Minister Bhupesh Baghel is all set for a two-day tour of the state's Bastar division starting Saturday. He will visit the Maoist-affected districts of



Bhupesh Baghel

nounced development projects worth several hundred crores in the past three weeks, since the Congress-led government finished two years. He said he was touring also to review work of departments in the district.

Oppn slams govt: Show compassion to farmers, not rules

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

AS THE eighth round of talks between the government and farmer's unions ended inconclusively, the Opposition Friday hit out at the government, accusing it of trying to tire out the farmers by holding meeting after meeting.

"Our farmers are fighting for justice and deserve compassion and sensitive understanding, not merely technical reading of rules. The government and the Hon'ble Supreme Court must understand that while farmers will survive Covid, their satyagrah is for their very survival," senior Congress leader Anand Sharma said.

Congress communication department head Randeep Surjewala said the government is trying to tire out the farmers by holding meeting after meeting. "But the farmers will neither get tired nor bow down," Surjewala said.

Sharma said that in a free country, the farmers would have had the right to protest inside the national capital and not be stopped at the borders.

Alleging that the BJP government has crossed all limits of "cruelty" and "ruthlessness", AICC general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said "the country has to think whether laws for farmers should emerge from their fields or in made the drawing rooms of a handful of billionaire friends of the BJP government." She said the Congress will not back down from its demand that the laws should be repealed.

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi tweeted in Hindi: "Those whose intentions are not clear, it is their strategy to give one date after another."

Condemning the attitude of the government, CPI general secretary D Raja said the government must be sincere in holding talks and sensitive to the concerns of farmers. "The government remains rigid, adamant and arrogant, not accepting the demand of the farmers. It should accept the demand of farmers and repeal the three agri-laws," he said.

MP RALLIES

Digvijaya says Muslim areas being targeted, CM hits back

IRAM SIDDIQUE
BHOPAL, JANUARY 8

SENIOR CONGRESS leader and Raja Sabha member Digvijaya Singh on Friday said that Muslim localities in Madhya Pradesh were being targeted during fund-raising rallies for the Ram Temple in Ayodhya and demanded an impartial probe into the recent clashes even as Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan assured people from all communities that they were safe.

With guns, lathis, swords and provocative speeches, those who have set out to collect donations for the construction of temple are targeting Muslim localities, Singh told reporters after meeting Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains and DGP Vivek Johri along with MLA Arif Masood and a delegation from the three districts that witnessed clashes last month.

The former chief minister demanded an impartial probe into the clashes that broke out in Ujjain, Mandsaur and Indore during the rallies.

"I will oppose these Hindus who are trying to break communal harmony between Hindus and Muslims. Hindu-Muslim unity is the basis of India. They fought together for the freedom struggle and those who did nothing during the freedom struggle are trying to vitiate the atmosphere," Singh said.

He said he a better Hindu than all BJP leaders, as he practises Sanatan Dharma which calls for respect for all.

Holding the district administrators responsible, Singh said, "Ministers, IAS and IPS officers are bound by the Constitution and are not slaves of any political party, be it the Congress or BJP. How were the rallies allowed to be taken out? The district collectors and SPs of the affected districts should be removed," he

said. "It is strange that police cases are being registered against people whose houses were torched, vehicles damaged, and who sustained bullet wounds. What sort of justice is this?"

Reacting to Singh's charges, Chief Minister Chouhan said in a video clip to media outlets: "Every society, community and sect is safe and secure in Madhya Pradesh."

"If action has to be taken against anyone, it is going to be against goons and mafia. And it will take place for sure. No power can stop it... A wrongdoer will face the consequences... All are equal in the eye of the law," he said. "MP government is against goons, drug peddlers and all types of mafia. Whoever the stone-pelters may be... nobody, not even Digvijaya, can save them."

This came two days after a delegation headed by social activist Medha Patkar visited Indore's Chandan Khedi village, where clashes took place on December 29. The six-member delegation submitted a report to Indore Commissioner Pawan Kumar on Thursday, saying that members of the rally that was passing through the village on the day of the clash were armed with iron rods, kerosene and diesel. They attacked the minaret of a mosque – near which an altercation broke out – with swords to incite communal violence. In the report, they accused the police of inaction.

After the clashes, the police booked around 23 villagers, but only two out of the three people who climbed the minaret were arrested – and both secured bail within two days, it said.

"It is shocking that Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, who was in Indore immediately after the clashes, did not feel the need to appeal for peace and instead spoke about creating a law against stone-pelters," said Patkar.

UNEASE IN MAHARASHTRA CONGRESS

Cong conducts audio vote with 1,000 leaders for PCC chief post

MANOJ CG
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

FACING HECTIC lobbying in its plans to revamp the Maharashtra party unit, the central Congress leadership on Friday asked 1000-odd party leaders from the state -- upwards from the block level -- to suggest three names for the post of state Congress president in a telephonic poll.

The audio voting results will be one of the inputs for selection of a new state president or a decision in favour of letting incumbent Balasahab Thorat continue.

The move comes days after Thorat rushed to Delhi and conveyed his unease to the high command about the style of functioning of AICC Maharashtra in-charge H K Patil. After his visit, Patil reached Mumbai earlier this week to meet MLAs, MLCs and senior leaders to gauge their mood about the possible reshuffle, but cut short his stay and returned to Delhi on Thursday.

On Friday, the AICC Technology and Data Cell headed by Praveen Chakravarty sent out messages to over 1,000 leaders – members of block and district units and PCC delegates -- about the poll. "You are an important leader of Maharashtra Congress. Today, you will get a call on this number from Delhi. Listen carefully and follow the instructions," read the SMS sent in Patil's name. Once the call is connected, leaders have to give three names in the next 15 seconds.

"For the first time we are not asking for one name. In the case of the Mumbai Regional Congress Committee, we had asked for one name... Every person will be asked to list three names in terms of their preference. It is like the rank choice voting system... People can rank candidates by preference. They can name whoever they want," a high command leader said.

Sources said some senior leaders are not happy with the plan and have conveyed their apprehensions to Congress president Sonia Gandhi. "Most district Congress presidents had been appointed by either Thorat or his predecessor Ashok Chavan. And the committees at the district and block level would have been handpicked by these district presidents. How do you expect

these people to give an unbiased opinion and favour a new person?" said a leader close to one of the contenders for the state party chief's post.

There is another apprehension. "Most MLAs and MLCs had told Patil that they are for continuation of Thorat... I don't know whether the leadership has someone else in mind and this exercise is being carried out to appoint that person," an AICC leader said.

The Congress leadership defended the move. "We are simply seeking the opinion of block committee members, district committee members and PCC level... It will be just one more important input which will help in decision-making... It is an opinion-gathering exercise.... We want to give them a medium where they can be fearless and give their opinion. It is not a substitute for consultation process. The AICC in charge is talking to senior leaders. We ask the opinion of people in Tilak Bhawan or 24, Akbar Road... why not open it up and add some 1000 more people in the party who are actually doing the work on the ground," a senior leader said.



PWD Minister Ashok Chavan

PWD Minister Ashok Chavan, who heads the ministerial sub-committee formed over the quota strife, Friday demanded that a nine-judge or a 11-judge bench should hear the issue. Facing flak over its handling

of the Maratha quota issue in the SC, the Uddhav Thackeray government feels that a larger bench is necessary to overturn the landmark order by a nine-judge bench in 1993 that had capped total reservation at 50 per cent.

"A five-judge bench won't be able to overturn the 1993 order," Chavan said. He also called for a review of the 50 per cent cap. "The decision was taken three decades ago. It should be reviewed," he added.

EXPRESS NETWORK

BRIEFLY



Naveen Patnaik

ODISHA

Home Dept asks police to tighten CM's security

Bhubaneswar: The Odisha government has asked the state police to tighten Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's security cover following an anonymous letter threatening to kill him. Instructions have been issued to the police to also beef up security at the state secretariat and across routes which Patnaik might take in the days to come. The letter was sent to the official residence of the Chief Minister on January 5. Special Secretary (Home) Santosh Bala had asked the state's director general of police, director general of intelligence and the commissioner of police, Bhubaneswar, to inquire.

ENS

CHANDIGARH

BJP's Ravi Kant Sharma elected Mayor

Chandigarh: The BJP on Friday swept the mayoral polls of the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation with its candidate Ravi Kant Sharma getting elected as the city's new mayor. BJP councillor Ravi Kant Sharma defeated Congress nominee Devinder Singh Babla, officials said. Sharma got 17 votes out of 24 polled while Babla got five votes, they said, adding two votes were declared invalid.

PTI

KERALA

Flyover scam: HC grants bail to ex-minister

Kochi: The Kerala High Court on Friday granted bail to former state minister and IUML MLA V K Ebrahim Kunju, arrested by the Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau in the flyover scam case, considering his ill health. Kunju was arrested on November 18 in connection with alleged corruption in the construction of a flyover at Palarivattom during the previous Congress-led UDF rule. The High Court had on December 14 dismissed Kunju's bail application with the liberty to file a fresh application once he was discharged from the hospital, where he is now undergoing treatment for cancer.

PTI

UTTARAKHAND

FIR against Rly officials in Haridwar mishap

Dehradun: The Uttarakhand Police on Friday registered an FIR against unnamed railway officials in connection with the death of four persons who were run over by a speeding train Thursday during its trial run on a new railway track in Haridwar district. "An FIR under IPC section 304(A) (causing death by negligence) has been lodged against unidentified railway officials in connection with the incident on the complaint of a local resident," said Pravin Koshywari, SHO, Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat had ordered a magisterial probe into the incident.

ENS

Modi set to discuss Covid vaccine rollout with all CMs on January 11

LIZ MATHEW & KAUNAIN SHERIFF
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi is scheduled to discuss the Covid-19 vaccine roll out with all chief ministers on January 11, and the ruling BJP is preparing a massive campaign in order to allay the apprehensions among the people and remove the vaccine hesitancy, sources said.

Two vaccines - Covaxin, developed by Bharat Biotech along with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), and Covishield, a variant of Oxford AstraZeneca's AZD1222 manufactured under licence by the Serum Institute of India - on January 3 received regulatory approval for restricted use in emergency situation.

Modi, in his virtual meet with the CMs, is expected to discuss the Centre's plans with regards to the mass immunisation programme against the virus. A national dry run has recently been held to test

EXPLAINED E BJP aims to promote programme as govt achievement

WHILE THE government is trying to ensure that the infrastructure is in place for a seamless and hassle-free vaccine rollout, the BJP wants to chip in by launching an intense campaign to promote the vaccination programme. With the campaign, the party aims to help the government in allaying fears and apprehensions with respect to the vaccine and to project it as a significant achievement by the Narendra Modi-led government.

the operational feasibility of the software platform to identify the challenges that could be faced during the vaccine rollout.

BJP sources said the party is planning to chalk out extensive programmes for a campaign on the vaccination. "Yes, the BJP will run a massive nationwide campaign to promote vaccination. It is a big achievement by the government that the country could

develop vaccines. Our campaign, which will involve every party leader, will work on allaying the fears of the people over vaccine," said a senior party leader. However, he added, the party leadership will begin planning for the same only after Sunday.

Sources said that with Budget Session expected to begin on January 29, presiding officers of both Rajya Sabha and Lok

Sabha will discuss with the government the possibility of providing vaccination for members of Parliament on a priority basis.

At a state health ministers' meeting on Thursday, Bihar's Mangal Pandey had suggested that all MPs and MLAs should be given priority with regards to the vaccine.

"There is a demand for such a move. The lawmakers and legislators move around and meet a lot of people, so their vaccination is important. It will also help the general public to shed fears about the vaccine," said a minister in the Uttar Pradesh government.

While senior party leaders are awaiting a government's decision on them getting vaccinated, some have even written to Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan, volunteering for trial runs.

Meanwhile, the government's preparation for the rolling out of the vaccines has been on the fast track, with the Health Ministry indicating that it would be administered within ten days after its approval.

On November 24, an official communication was sent to all state governments to form a block task force, which would be the backbone of the vaccine administration and would be entrusted with "monitoring" three important functions -- communication planning, cold chain, and vaccine logistics planning.

State governments were also told to include important stakeholders, including "local influencers and religious leaders at Block level".

This was a clear signal that the Covid-19 immunization programme will be distinctly different from the universal immunisation programme, and that political leaders who are local influencers will play a key role in the implementation of the government's communication plan.

"Maximise use of local influencers for countering misinformation," the government stated in the terms of reference (ToR) based on which the block level task force will function.

After rap from HC and Centre, TN govt scraps theatre order

ARUN JANARDHANAN
CHENNAI, JANUARY 8

THE TAMIL Nadu government Friday scrapped its decision to allow full occupancy in cinemas and restored the centrally-mandated cap of 50 per cent. This came hours after the Madras High Court temporarily stayed the original order, and days after the Centre pulled up the state for "diluting" Covid-19 protocol.

In a statement, the government said the reversal was made "considering the safety of people", but also tried to justify its earlier decision by citing a fall in Covid-19 cases in the state.

The order allowing 100 per cent occupancy came after actor Vijay met Chief Minister Edappadi K Paniswami with

this request ahead of the January 13 release of his much-hyped film *Master*. Another major Tamil film, Silambarasan-starrer *Eswaran*, is scheduled to release on January 14. Both dates fall around the Pongal festive period.

With public health experts questioning the wisdom of allowing theatres to run at full capacity, the Union Home Secretary on January 5 wrote to the Tamil Nadu Chief Secretary, reminding him that the state cannot dilute central guidelines issued under the Disaster Management Act.

And as the Madras High Court Friday put a stay on the easing of occupancy norms till January 11, the government finally acted.

Hearing a batch of three petitions, a High Court division bench said: "We are dealing with

the Covid-19 pandemic situation which does not bother about the economic factors and territories such as district, state or country."

"We hope and trust that the state government would reconsider the issue in the right perspective," the bench said. It adjourned the matter to January 11 after the government's counsel sought time to reply.

Quoting the petitioners, the judges also asked the state government to consider ideas such as increasing the number of shows while ensuring that cinemas are sanitised.

S Thanu, president of the Film Federation of India, wrote to Home Minister Amit Shah two days ago saying the 50 per cent occupancy rule in cinemas was not "feasible and economically viable".

Mamata allows full occupancy in halls screening film fest movies

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, JANUARY 8

CHIEF MINISTER Mamata Banerjee on Friday allowed full occupancy in cinema halls during the week-long Kolkata International Film Festival (KIFF), which was inaugurated during the day in an online event attended by Hindi film actor Shah Rukh Khan. This overrides the Centre's rules allowing only 50 per cent occupancy of theatres.

"At present, because of the pandemic, only 50 per cent occupancy in cinema halls is allowed. I would ask the state's chief secretary to come up with a notification today so that 100 per cent seats can be occupied," Banerjee said at the inauguration of the 26th edition of the KIFF.

Mamata said, "I would urge cinema hall owners to ensure



Mamata Banerjee and Shah Rukh Khan at the inauguration of the Kolkata film festival. *Express*

that people wear face masks and use hand sanitisers. Sanitisation should be done after every show. Every audience member should carry his or her own sanitiser or a tissue paper. Nowadays, you also get machines with which

you can sanitise the entire hall in just five minutes."

The current set of "unlock" guidelines issued by the Centre, meant to allow a phased resumption of social and economic life, is in place till January 31.

Customs may question Kerala Speaker in forex smuggling case

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JANUARY 8

CUSTOMS DEPARTMENT would question Kerala Assembly Speaker P Sreeramakrishnan and a few other top functionaries of the state government in connection with a case pertaining to smuggling foreign exchange out of the country, sources told *The Indian Express* on Friday. This came a day after the Speaker denied any wrongdoing and defended his conduct in public life.

While probing into a case related to smuggling of gold through diplomatic cargo channel to the UAE Consulate, the central agency found that two of the accused - Swapna Suresh and PS Sarith - allegedly indulged in smuggling US dollars out of the country, the sources said. The Speaker would be questioned on the basis of statements the two accused gave to the magistrate court under Section 164 of CrPC.

"Their statements contain the names of several senior government functionaries, including the Speaker and a few ministers. They have mentioned illegal activities in their statements. But we are looking into only those issues that come under the purview of the Customs Act," a source in the agency said.

Customs officials said they have not decided when they would issue a notice to Sreeramakrishnan to record his statement. "There are no legal hurdles for questioning the Speaker. We want to hear what the Speaker has to say about the deposition of the accused persons," an official said.

On Friday, the Customs questioned the Speaker's assistant private secretary K Ayyappan at its Kochi office for nearly nine hours in connection with the case. "Ayyappan had been in touch with both Swapna and Sarith. He had made calls to both on certain days," a source alleged. But officials said questioning of the Speaker's personal staff was not very fruitful as "Ayyappan appeared tutored by someone else".

"He turned up for questioning after leaving his mobile phone in Thiruvananthapuram," an official said.

The Opposition has given a notice for a resolution seeking removal of the Speaker over the case. But denying any wrongdoing, Sreeramakrishnan on Thursday told reporters, "I have been a public figure for the past 40 years. Throughout these years, I haven't faced allegations of even a single rupee. I am sure that I haven't committed any mistake. So, I am least afraid about the controversies. I don't think that I would be summoned by the Customs."



Opposition MLAs stage a protest outside Kerala Legislative Assembly complex in Thiruvananthapuram on Friday. *PTI*

Kerala Governor's address slams farm laws, central agencies

SHAJU PHILIP
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JANUARY 8

KERALA GOVERNOR Arif Mohammed Khan, in his address to the Assembly on Friday, adopted a stand against farm laws, the labour code and the central government agencies probing the gold smuggling case. Referring to the 2019 Citizenship Amendment Act, the address said the state government is committed to defending secular values.

The Opposition UDF legislators led by the Congress boycotted the address. Lone BJP legislator O Rajagopal did not join the boycott and sat through it.

Referring to the central agencies' probe into the gold smuggling case, the Governor said, "Actions of certain Central Government agencies have overstepped the constitutional con-

tours. The Central agencies are impeding the development activities and flagship programmes undertaken by the state. This has had a demoralising effect on honest and hardworking officers..."

On the farm laws, he said, "These agrarian laws will undermine regulated markets, result in eventual demise of minimum support price and tilt the balance of bargaining power definitively in favour of corporate middlemen."

The address also hailed the recent nationwide strike of workers, saying it had been one of the largest of its kind against the new labour legislation.

Referring to CAA, he said, "When apprehensions were raised regarding the consequences of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, we have taken the lead in alleviating the fears among large sections of the society."

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

Took flag because of patriotic fervour, says Kochi man who carried Tricolour to US Capitol protest

RAHEL PHILIPOSE
PANAJI, JANUARY 8

AS PEOPLE around the world watched the clash on Wednesday between a mob of US President Donald Trump's supporters and law-enforcement authorities at the Capitol building, the Indian Tricolour could be seen fluttering in a sea of US flags.

The flag-bearer was 54-year-old Virginia-based entrepreneur Vincent Xavier Palanthalgal, who moved to the US from Kochi in Kerala in 1992 and is a member of the Virginia Republican Party's State Central Committee.

"It was because of my patriotic fervour and love that I took the Indian flag. Not to defame it or give it a bad name," he told *The Indian Express*.



Vincent Xavier Palanthalgal at the Trump rally on Wednesday.

Visuals of the Tricolour on social media had drawn strong reactions. "Why is there an Indian flag there??? This is one fight we definitely don't need to participate in," BJP MP Varun Gandhi tweeted. Shiv Sena spokesperson Priyanka Chaturvedi said,

"Whoever is waving this Indian flag should feel ashamed. Don't use our tricolour to participate in such violent & criminal acts in another country."

Vincent claimed he had nothing to do with the "miscreants" and said he has been constantly

fielding calls from journalists in an attempt to "clear his name".

On Wednesday, Vincent, along with a group of 10 other Indian Americans, joined a Trump rally in Washington DC to protest against the Congress's certification of President-elect Joe Biden's win in the 2020 election. Carrying the flag was their way of representing the Indian American community, he claimed.

"We marched from the White House lawn to the Capitol in a very disciplined way. Initially it was a very celebratory event. There was laughing and singing, it was like a festival in India," he said. "Trump rallies are usually very fun events. There are always a million American flags as well as flags from other countries."

It was only after they had arrived at the Capitol building that things started getting out of

hand, he said. "We saw people climbing the walls with their claws like animals, which is very difficult for regular people to do."

Vincent said he knew little of what transpired inside the Capitol building. "The internet was jammed and we weren't getting any news. I had to call my wife and ask her to turn on the news. It was only then that I found out that they had managed to get inside and were destroying property."

Several lawmakers, including members of Republican Party, have blamed Trump for the violence.

The US Capitol Police said they had arrested 14 people suspected of involvement in the rioting, most charged with unlawful entry, while the Metropolitan Police Department has made at least 68 arrests.

50-yr-old woman gangraped, brutalised in Jharkhand

ABHISHEK ANGAD
RANCHI, JANUARY 8

THREE MEN allegedly gangraped a 50-year-old woman in Chatra district late on Thursday, police said, adding that they brutalised the victim's private parts with a steel tumbler.

Two of the accused have been arrested, while one is absconding, police said adding that all three were drunk at the time of the incident and that they had a quarrel with the victim prior to raping her.

A case has been registered under IPC section 376 D (gangrape). The victim — a widow — was being treated at a community health centre and is said to be stable.

DIG, Hazaribagh Range, Amol Homkar said: "A widow was gangraped in Chatra district late night on January 7. After the incident took place, the police was informed in the morning and we have arrested two men. One is absconding and will be arrested soon. The woman's private parts were injured."

A police source said: "It appears that there was some old dispute between the accused and the victim. After the argument the accused gangraped her and inserted a steel glass in her private parts."

TN HIGHWAY PROJECT
Plea in SC for review of order upholding land acquisition notice

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

A TAMIL Nadu resident has moved the Supreme Court, seeking review of its December 8, 2020 judgment upholding the notifications issued under the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) Act, 1956, for acquisition of land for construction of the eight-lane Chennai-Krishnagiri-Salem national highway as part of the Bharatmala Pariyojna-Phase-I project.

The plea by Salem resident Yuvaraj S has contended that the judgment suffers from errors apparent on the face of the record and results in a gross miscarriage of justice.

The petition said judicial review of public policy is permissible when the delegatee acts beyond delegated powers as prescribed in the law laid down by the court and added that in the instant case, the Supreme Court did not have the occasion to consider the ground that the authorities acted beyond powers delegated, "not obtaining the Ministry of Finance – Department of Expenditure (DoE) prescribed "Appraisal" by Public Investment Board ("PIB") for projects that cost more than INR 500 Crore", "not obtaining the Ministry of Finance – Department of Economic Affairs ("DoEA") prescribed "Appraisal" by Public-Private-Partnership-Appraisal Committee ("PPAC") for projects with Civil Construction Cost of more than INR 1000 Crore" and "not submitting to ContROLLER and Auditor General ("CAG") prescribed 'Audit of Project Formulation and Approval' in the case of Infrastructure Projects under Public-Private-Partnership".

HC gives Centre last chance to clear stand on same-sex marriages

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court on Friday granted the Centre and the Delhi government one last chance to file a response to petitions seeking the recognition and registration of same-sex marriages under the Hindu Marriage Act, the Special Marriage Act and the Foreign Marriage Act.

The court was told that no reply has been filed in the case by authorities despite issuance of notice in October and November. The Centre on Friday sought more time to file a counter-affidavit in the case. While granting three weeks' time for filing a reply in the case, the court adjourned the case for its next hearing on February 25.

The PIL seeking the recognition of same-sex marriages under the Hindu Marriage Act has been filed by Abhijit Iyer-Mitra and three others. The court last year observed that the statute is gender neutral and the Centre must interpret the law in favour of citizens of India.

UGC paves way for IoEs to set up campuses abroad

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

THE UNIVERSITY Grants Commission (UGC) has amended its regulations, allowing Institutions of Eminence (IoEs) to set up campuses abroad after receiving no objection certificates from the Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Home Affairs. The move is in line with the government's new National Education Policy, which says that high performing universities should be encouraged to set up campuses abroad.

The amendments also permit the IoEs to start new off-campus centres, with a maximum of three in five years and not more than one in an academic year.

There are 18 Institutions of Eminence, including IIT-Delhi, IIT-Kharagpur, IIT-Madras and IIT-Bombay. "Institutions of

Eminence Deemed to be Universities shall be allowed to start new off-shore campuses with the prior approval of the Ministry after receiving No Objection Certificate from Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Home Affairs," say the amendments to the UGC (Institutions of Eminence Deemed to be Universities) Regulations, 2017.

"The Institutions of Eminence Deemed to be Universities shall ensure that the norms and standards of the off-shore campus shall be the same as that maintained on the main campus for similar courses, and the off-shore campus shall also follow similar admission criteria, curriculum, examination system and evaluation system. All the information about off-shore campus shall be disclosed on the website of the Institution of Eminence Deemed to be University."

The functioning of the off-shore campuses shall be reviewed by an Empowered Experts Committee "independently and/or along with the IOE". "After review of the off-shore campus, if the Empowered Experts Committee is not satisfied with the performance of the off-shore campus, it may recommend discontinuation of the off-shore campus to the Central Government. In such cases, the interest of the students enrolled at the off-shore campus shall be adequately protected by the Institution of Eminence Deemed to be University," the amendments state.

The IoEs have also been permitted to start an off-campus centre on an interim campus "subject to the condition that the permanent campus shall be ready within a reasonable time period of not exceeding five years."

Facing high drop-out rate, Bihar to track each student till UG level

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, JANUARY 8

CONCERNED WITH the massive drop-out rate among school children, the Bihar Education Department is set to introduce a management innovation system to track every child till the undergraduate level, including a whole range of technical and professional courses that a student may pursue after completing the Class 12 state board examinations.

At present, Bihar has about 78,000 schools for Class 1 to Class 12, with a total enrollment of 2.5 crore students.

The Education Department has identified four points where children tend to drop out from school — after Class 5 and Class 8, when a student has to change from primary to secondary and from secondary to higher sec-

ondary classes, respectively; as well as after the Class 10 and Class 12 boards.

Education Department Principal Secretary Sanjay Kumar told *The Indian Express*, "We were alarmed at the drop in students' enrolment from Class 1 till Class 12. As per latest 2018-19 state government data, we enrolled 24,03,526 students in Class 1.

But this number dropped to 15,37,628 in Class 10, a dip of about 9 lakh — a huge dip. At Class 12, this number comes down to 6,31,379 students."

Kumar said this number further dropped to less than 4 lakh students after Class 12.

"We understand that a good number of students are moving towards professional courses after Class 12. But the drop-out rate after Class 5 and Class 8 is very worrisome. As these drop-outs are taking place during

changeover of schools because of distance and other factors, we have now asked all district education officers to map secondary schools for Class 5 pass-outs and high school for Class 8 pass-outs. Now, our system will tell parents which nearest middle and high schools their wards would get admitted to," Kumar said.

The secretary said the department will soon put up a request for a tender to track every child.

"We are getting data from science and technology (a nodal department for engineering courses), medical, pharmacy, agriculture, nursing and other professional and technical courses. Once we have the management innovation system in place, we can track every child and work out our plans accordingly to minimise drop-outs through counselling and reaching out to parents," he said

SEDITION CASE

Kangana, her sister appear before cops, record statement

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, JANUARY 8

ACTOR KANGANA Ranaut and her sister Rangoli Chandel on Friday appeared before the Bandra police in connection with an FIR registered against them in October for "allegedly creating enmity between different groups of people" through their social media posts. The FIR was registered at the Bandra police station on the directions of a Metropolitan court hearing a private complaint against the sisters by a Bollywood casting director.

The sisters along with their lawyer appeared at the Bandra police station amid heavy media presence around 1 pm. Ranaut enjoys Y category security of CRPF personnel.

An officer said, "While the time given by the court was to appear at noon, she reached at around 1 pm. We recorded her statement for around two hours but could not complete the formalities and may have to call her again." The statement of Chandel could not be recorded, the officer added.



Kangana Ranaut

The police will submit their report to the Bombay High Court which will hear the matter on January 11. Ranaut had approached the HC for quashing the FIR. The court granted her interim relief from arrest last month and directed her to present herself before police on January 8. Prior to this, the Bandra police had issued three summons to the actor and her sister to appear before them but she failed to turn up. The sisters were booked under sections pertaining to committing malicious or deliberate acts with the intention of outraging religious feelings of citizens, sedition, promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence or language and common intention of the IPC.

The complaint was filed by Munawwar Ali Sayyed, a casting director and fitness trainer.

लक्ष्मीबाई राष्ट्रीय शारीरिक शिक्षा संस्थान, ग्वालियर
(A + नेक प्रत्यायित विश्वविद्यालय मानी गई संस्था)
भारत सरकार, युवा कार्यक्रम एवं खेल मंत्रालय
क्रमांक RCS/S/ 2020-21/66 (H) दिनांक 07.01.2021
चल-साक्षात्कार सूचना
संस्थान ने एक विस्तृत सूचना क्र. RCS/S/ 2020-21/97 दिनांक 07.01.2021 जारी कर पात्र एवं इच्छुक उम्मीदवारों से विभिन्न शैक्षणिक एवं गैर - शैक्षणिक पदों पर नियुक्ति के लिये चल साक्षात्कार मे उन पदों के सम्मुख दर्शित दिनांक एवं समय पर शामिल होने के लिये आमंत्रित किया है, जो पूर्णतः संविदा आधार पर होगी तथा स्थायी नियुक्ति की कोई संभावना अथवा इस प्रकार का कोई अधिकार प्राप्त नहीं होगा।
पद, दिनांक, योग्यताएँ, अनुभव एवं वेतन की विस्तृत जानकारी संस्थान की वेबसाइट www.inipe.edu.in से प्राप्त की जा सकती है।
(डॉ. ए. एस. साजनान) प्रभारी कुलसचिव

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The Nehru Memorial Museum & Library (NMML), an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Culture, seeks qualified candidates for contractual engagement in the Museum on Prime Ministers for the post of **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**. The post is purely on contractual basis for a period of three years with a minimum guaranteed period of one year. If the incumbent wishes to leave before the end of the contract or the institution so decides, a notice of two months or equivalent salary will be required for immediate release. Interested candidates may send a copy of their updated CV and self-attested copies of testimonials on the following email id bhandari_57@yahoo.co.in latest by **31st January, 2021**.
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ADDITIONAL SPECIAL TRAINS
For the convenience of passengers, Railways have decided to run following Additional Special Trains as per the schedule given below :-
09565/09566 Okha - Dehradun - Okha Uttaranchal Express Special Train (Weekly)

Train No. 09565	STATIONS	Train No. 09566		
ARR.	DEP.	ARR.	DEP.	
--	10:00	Okha	14:00	--
19:45	--	Dehradun	--	05:50

Days of Run: 09565 Ex. Okha on every Friday from 15.01.2021 & 09566 Ex. Dehradun on every Sunday from 17.01.2021.
Accommodation: AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Reserved Second Seating.
Stoppage : Dwarka, Khambhalia, Jamnagar, Hapa, Rajkot Jn., Surendranagar, Viramgam Jn., Mahesana Jn., Unjha, Siddhpur, Palanpur Jn., Abu Road, Falna, Beawar, Ajmer Jn., Jaipur, Alwar Jn., Khairthal, Rewari, Gurgaon, Delhi Cantt., Delhi Sarai Rohilla, New Delhi, Ghaziabad, Modi Nagar, Meerut City, Muzaffarnagar, Deoband, Tapri, Roorkee & Haridwar Stations.

09031/09032 Ahmedabad Jn. - Yog Nagari Rishikesh Ahmedabad Jn. Yoga Express Special Train (Weekly)

Train No. 09031	STATIONS	Train No. 09032		
ARR.	DEP.	ARR.	DEP.	
--	10:55	Ahmedabad Jn.	15:40	--
12:30	--	Yog Nagari Rishikesh	--	14:50

Days of Run: 09031 ex. Ahmedabad Jn. on every Monday from 11.01.2021 09032 Ex. Yog Nagari Rishikesh on every Tuesday from 12.01.2021.
Accommodation: 1st AC, AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Reserved Second Seating.
Stoppage : Sabarmati, Gandhinagar Capital, Kalol, Mahesana Jn., Unjha, Palanpur Jn., Abu Road, Pindwara, Jawai Bandh, Falna, Rani, Marwar Jn., Sojat Road, Haripur, Beawar, Ajmer, Kishanganj, Phulera Jn., Jaipur, Gandhinagar Jaipur, Bandikui Jn., Alwar Jn., Khairthal, Rewari, Palautdi Road, Gurgaon, Delhi Cantt., Delhi, Delhi Shahdara, Ghaziabad, New Ghaziabad, Modi Nagar , Meerut City , Meerut Cantt., Sakhoti Tanda, Khatauli, Muzaffarnagar, Deoband, Tapri, Roorkee & Haridwar stations.

04161/04162 Kanpur Central - Anand Vihar Terminal - Kanpur Central Express Special Train (Weekly)

Train No. 04161	STATIONS	Train No. 04162		
ARR.	DEP.	ARR.	DEP.	
--	07:50	Kanpur Central	06:20	--
18:20	--	Anand Vihar Terminal	--	20:45

Days of Run: 04161 ex. Kanpur Central & 04162 Ex. Anand Vihar Terminal on every Sunday from 17.01.2021.
Accommodation: AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Reserved Second Seating.
Stoppage : Kanpur Anwarganj, Kallanpur, Kannauj, Gursahaiganj, Fatehgarh, Farrukhabad, Bhongaon, Mainpuri, Shikohabad, Tundla & Aligarh Stations.

Challenging acquittals in Babri demolition case, two witnesses move HC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
LUCKNOW, JANUARY 8

TWO WITNESSES in the Babri Masjid demolition case moved the Lucknow bench of Allahabad High Court on Friday, challenging a special CBI court's order acquitting all 32 surviving accused in the case, including former Deputy Prime Minister LK Advani, former UP Chief Minister Kalyan Singh, and BJP leaders MM Joshi, Uma Bharti and Vinay Katiyar.

Special court judge SK Yadav had delivered the judgement on September 30 last year, his last day in office. He acquitted the accused citing lack of evidence. In the 2,300-page order, the court

rejected evidence from photos, videos and speeches of the accused. The CBI had filed a chargesheet against 49 people but 17 died during the trial. It did not challenge the acquittals.

Now, Haji Mahboob Ahmad and Syed Akhlaq Ahmad have filed a writ petition against the judgement, according to their lawyer Syed Farman Ahmad Naqvi. The advocate said the petition was submitted to the registry office of the Lucknow bench and the matter was likely to come up for hearing next week.

Mahboob and Akhlaq witnessed the demolition of the mosque on December 6, 1992. Their houses were damaged in arson and looting.

CHANGE IN THE TIME-TABLE AND TERMINAL OF TRAIN NO. 02691/02692 BENGALURU-HAZRAT NIZAMUDDIN-BENGALURU SUPERFAST A.C. EXP. SPECIAL
It is notified for the information of all concerned that the Train No. 02691/02692 Bengaluru-Hazrat Nizamuddin-Bengaluru Superfast A.C. Express Special will run with revised timings and it's terminal will be changed to Hazrat Nizamuddin instead of New Delhi w.e.f. 10.01.2021 from Bengaluru and w.e.f. 13.01.2021 from Hazrat Nizamuddin. The detailed revised timings of this Special Service will be as under:-

REVISED TIMINGS OF TRAIN NO. 02691/02692 BENGALURU-HAZRAT NIZAMUDDIN-BENGALURU					
Train No. 02691		STATIONS	Train No. 02692		
ARR.	DEP.		ARR.	DEP.	
20:00	20:00	KSR Bengaluru	05:20	05:20	
22:33	22:35	Shri Sathya Sai P. Nilayam	02:28	02:30	
01:05	01:10	Guntakal Jn.	23:40	23:45	
02:47	02:49	Raichur	22:06	22:08	
04:30	04:31	Sedam	19:29	19:30	
07:05	07:15	Secunderabad Jn.	17:10	17:25	
09:03	09:05	Kazipet Jn.	15:13	15:15	
12:20	12:25	Balharshah	12:15	12:20	
14:55	15:00	Nagpur	09:25	09:30	
19:16	19:18	Itarsi Jn.	5:23	05:25	
20:50	21:00	Bhopal Jn.	3:45	03:55	
00:16	00:21	Jhansi Jn.	00:25	00:30	
01:19	01:21	Gwalior	23:08	23:10	
02:58	03:00	Agra Cantt.	21:43	21:45	
05:30	05:30	Hazrat Nizamuddin	19:50	19:50	

Time-Table and Terminal Change effective from: 02691 Ex. Bengaluru from 10.01.2021 and 02692 Ex. Hazrat Nizamuddin from 13.01.2021.
Note: All norms of the State and Central Government regarding COVID-19 including Social distancing, sanitization etc., may be followed in the trains and at the Railway stations. All other precautions associated with COVID-19 should also be ensured.
For any kind of information such as detailed Time-Table and stations enroute etc., passengers are requested to contact Railway Enquiry No. 139 or visit Indian Railways website <https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in> or NTES App.
Security Helpline No. 182 | Integrated Helpline No. 139
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Visit us at : www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in
"SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE"

09019/09020 Bandra Terminus - Haridwar - Bandra Terminus Express Special Train (Weekly)

Train No. 09019	STATIONS	Train No. 09020		
ARR.	DEP.	ARR.	DEP.	
--	00:05	Bandra Terminus	22:05	--
08:20	--	Haridwar	--	13:30

Days of Run: 09019 ex. Bandra Terminus on every Monday from 11.01.2021 09020 Ex. Haridwar on every Tuesday from 12.01.2021.
Accommodation: AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Reserved Second Seating.
Stoppage : Borivali, Virar, Palghar, Dahanu Road, Vapi, Valsad, Bilimora Jn., Navsari, Surat, Ankleshwar Jn., Bharuch Jn., Miyagam Karjan, Vadodara Jn., Samlaya Jn., Derol, Godhra Jn., Sant Road, Piprod Jn., Limkheda, Mangal Mahudi, Dahod, Bordi, Anas, Meghnagar, Thandla Rd, Panch Pipila, Bannia, Bhairongarh, Bildi, Morwani, Ratlam Jn., Bangrod, Runkhara, Khachrod, Nagda Jn., Vikramgarh Alot, Chaumhalla, Shamgarh, Bhawani Mandi, Ramganj Mandi, Dakaniya Talav, Kota Jn., Lakheri, Indargarh, Sawai Madhopur, Malarna, Narayanpur Tatwara, Gangapur City, Shri Mahabirji, Hindaun City, Fateh Singhpura, Bayana Jn., Bharatpur Jn., Mathura Jn., Kosi Kalan, Faridabad, H. Nizamuddin, Ghaziabad, Meerut City, Muzaffarnagar, Tapri, Roorkee & Jwalapur stations.

04717/04718 Bikaner Jn. - Haridwar - Bikaner Jn. Express Special Train (Tri-Weekly)

Train No. 04717	STATIONS	Train No. 04718		
ARR.	DEP.	ARR.	DEP.	
--	23:25	Bikaner Jn.	07:50	--
15:20	--	Haridwar	--	16:45

Days of Run: 04717 ex. Bikaner Jn. on every Monday, Wednesday & Friday from 13.01.2021 & 04718 Ex. Haridwar on every Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday from 14.01.2021.
Accommodation: AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Reserved Second Seating.
Stoppage : Sri Dungargarh, Ratnagarh Jn., Churu, Sadulpur Jn., Hisar, Bhiwani, Rohtak Jn., Gohana, Panipat Jn., Kamal, Kurukshetra Jn., Ambala Cant Jn., Saharanpur & Roorkee stations.

Note : The above Special Trains will have the reserved accommodation only.
Note: All norms of the State and Central Government regarding COVID-19 including Social distancing, sanitization etc., may be followed in the trains and at the Railway stations. All other precautions associated with COVID-19 should also be ensured.
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THE INDIAN EXPRESS, SATURDAY, JANUARY 9, 2021

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

WORDLY WISE

HOW DO YOU REGULATE OWNERSHIP OF DATA?
THIS MAY BE THE MOST IMPORTANT POLITICAL
QUESTION OF OUR ERA. — YUVAL NOAH HARARI

The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY
RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

ANTI-SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media platforms blocking Trump is mere headline hunting. They need to look deeper at their complicity

IN NOVEMBER 2016, days after Donald Trump was elected US President, Facebook Founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg rejected the idea that content on the company's platforms influenced elections. "I think it's a pretty crazy idea... Voters make decisions based on their lived experiences," he said. On January 6, after the US Capitol was stormed by Trump supporters, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat and Twitch suspended the president's account to prevent him, ostensibly, from inciting more violence. The move is too little, and coming after a mob egged on by the US President laid siege to the Capitol, it is too late. In times when "lived experiences" are increasingly online, the social media giants have been much too slow in acknowledging their responsibility and addressing real-world consequences.

Trump has a long record of sharing falsehoods and bigotry on social media, beginning with his assertions that his predecessor Barack Obama was not born in the US, to sharing anti-Muslim and White supremacist posts and videos. As recently as the Black Lives Matter protests last year, he tweeted, "when looting starts, shooting starts". Trump and his falsehoods, though, are only a part of a larger digital ecosystem that has devalued facts, created "communities" of conspiracy theorists and, at times, even contributed to violence. Long before the pro-Trump mob stormed the Capitol, WhatsApp and Facebook have been used to pedal falsehoods and incite mobs in countries like Burma and Sri Lanka. These outcomes are an unfortunate consequence of the algorithms and user experience and user interface that follow a "persuasive design" model. In essence, the algorithm is meant to keep users glued to the screen and get more of the same. For example, someone watching "flat earth" videos, or "the history of forced conversion in India" or, more recently, the bizarre conspiracy theories about a film star's suicide, could well be led to something like a QAnon page (a group that believes Trump is saving the US government from a corporate "deep state") or to fake news that whips up prejudice against minority groups.

While Big Tech has moved forward from complete denial of its culpability — under pressure from governments and the threat of external regulation — and instituted some measures for fact-checking and verifying sources, the fundamental structure of its platforms remains unaltered. Companies must confront the challenge and address it at the level of the technology, urgently. But the responsibility for a political discourse that respects facts and decency cannot just be on tech companies. Political parties, for instance, need to be held accountable for their leaders' and members' conduct. Just as tech companies must be called out for spreading falsehoods and creating mobs because it helps their bottom line, political parties must be held responsible if they do so in the name of winning elections and appealing to their base. Blocking a loudmouth or despot or leader of a mob is hardly the answer.

A MESSAGE TO COLOMBO

Minister Jaishankar's reminder on the necessity of the 13th Amendment was much-needed and timely

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER S Jaishankar's three-day visit to Sri Lanka was significant not for any specific outcomes but for what was achieved in political and diplomatic messaging by both sides. Jaishankar's reminder in Colombo that the 13th Amendment is essential to ethnic reconciliation came at a time when powerful Sri Lankan politicians close to President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and his brother, Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, are calling for its scrapping. The cancellation of elections to the provincial councils, apparently due to a spike in COVID-19 cases, is being viewed as a first step towards this end. Jaishankar's message, that India still sees the 1987 amendment — the constitutional basis for the provincial councils — as central to addressing Tamil political aspirations came within days of a statement by the DMK's T R Balu, just as Tamil Nadu hits its election season, asking Prime Minister Narendra Modi to ensure that the provincial council system remains intact. Sri Lankan Tamils themselves no longer set that much store by India's or Tamil Nadu's pronouncements on their problems. Delhi's waning influence in Sri Lanka is an open secret. Yet, it would be a diplomatic and political embarrassment for the Narendra Modi government if the 13th Amendment was indeed abolished.

Delhi's other challenge in Sri Lanka at this point is to operationalise a 2019 agreement to develop along with Japan a container terminal at Colombo Port, where China has a controlling stake in the adjoining Colombo International Container Terminal. The India-Japan-Sri Lanka agreement had triggered a strike at the port ahead of last year's parliamentary election, resolved only after assurances from the Rajapaksa brothers that it would not be handed over to foreign developers. During the EAM's visit, the prime minister and president sent out mixed signals amid calls not to let the port fall victim to geopolitical rivalries in the Indian Ocean.

Sri Lanka, for its part, has two main demands from India at this time. One, it wants supplies of the anti-COVID vaccine. Its other request for a \$1 bn currency swap has been pending since last year. India has already said it will prioritise vaccine supplies to its neighbours and should have no problem in accepting Rajapaksa's request quickly on humanitarian grounds — it can only help Delhi's image in that country. As for the currency swap, its use as a bargaining chip can last only as long as Colombo does not look elsewhere for help.

A ROOM OF HER OWN

A 'period room' in a toilet block in Mumbai stakes a claim on the city — on behalf of its women

ONE OF THE many ways in which Indian cities and towns tell women that they are unwanted in public spaces is by the absence of a woman's toilet. In metropolises like Mumbai and Delhi, the number of toilets for men consistently outnumber those for women by a large margin; women's toilets in large toilet blocks remain locked, especially in the evenings (because what are women doing outside the home after dark, anyway?). If they are unlocked, they are filthy — and sometimes even unsafe — spaces that women venture into at the risk of ill-health and violence. The denial of a woman's body and its natural bodily urges, then, is not only a matter of cultural practices of shame, but it is written into the design of a city itself. A new "period room" in a Mumbai slum, the first of its kind in a public toilet, therefore, suggests a refreshing reimagination of the public space.

The Thane Municipal Corporation's move is an attempt to inculcate menstrual hygiene, one that it wants to replicate in 120 community toilets. The "period room" includes a urinal, a jet spray, a toilet roll-holder, soap, running water, hooks to hang clothes and a dustbin to dispose of menstrual waste — rare amenities in public toilets. For the women of the Lokmanya Nagar slum, in which few families have the luxury of a private toilet, the structure offers precious space and privacy. A study carried out by an NGO that assisted with the project found that 56 per cent of girl students in the area had no access to clean toilets in schools; nor did 18 per cent working women at their workplace.

A "period room" that does not try to hide its function as a space for menstruating women might also, hopefully, cut through the punishing taboo around periods. More importantly, it becomes a small step to stake claim on the city — on behalf of its women.

Once upon a failed coup

When history is written, US courts may be singled out for protecting nation's election integrity



ASHUTOSH VARSHNEY

THAT COUPS TAKE place in developing countries has been an article of faith of political scholarship since the 1960s. What happened in Washington on January 6 was a striking refutation of this conventional wisdom.

It was not a classic coup because the military was not involved. But it was an executive coup, in that President Donald Trump, the head of the executive, incited a mob of supporters — many thousand strong, with a substantial proportion belonging to vigilante groups — to "show the kind of pride and boldness" that would force the two Houses of Congress to overturn the election, which he lost on November 3.

Lacking an independent election commission, the US has a complicated electoral administration system. Legally, states decide who will be president. After people cast their votes, states certify election outcomes, forming an electoral college, whose vote is finally accepted by US legislators on January 6. The vice-president presides over this politically ceremonial but legally necessary step, the last one before a president can be inaugurated on January 20. Mike Pence, Trump's vice-president, refused to overturn the election, infuriating his boss. A huge majority of Republican senators also expressed unwillingness to comply. In the end, the coup failed and Biden was ratified. And as these lines are being written, Trump seems to have recognised — publicly — that the violence has hurt him.

Why do scholars believe that developing countries have coups, but richer democracies do not? Two arguments are often advanced. First, in poorer countries the institutions of oversight, being much weaker, crumble under the onslaughts of mighty politicians. Second, politics in developing countries can have an all-or-nothing quality. The government has such control over the economy and society that once out of power, losses can be huge and imprisonment may not be too far. That generates a political tendency to stay in power at all costs. In richer democracies, opportunities beyond the government are plentiful. An electoral loss does not rob life of all enhancements. Company boards, memoirs, consulting and speaking, legal practices and business openings can fetch millions. The government does not have a decisive control over all sectors of society.

Trump's motivations remain open to speculation. Of the two main hypotheses, one is ideological, another personal. His commitment to a political order that restores white supremacy has been repeatedly noted. Many in the mob were carrying Confederate flags. A second hypothesis is that once out of power, Trump fears prosecution for crimes. In addition to the potentially criminal charges of tax fraud, there are questions about corruption, abuse of power, and violation of campaign finance laws. Ironically, inciting a mob to pressure the legislature might now lead to the most serious charge of all: Abetting an insurrection.

Trump's motivations remain open to speculation. Of the two main hypotheses, one is ideological, another personal. His commitment to a political order that restores white supremacy has been repeatedly noted. Many in the mob were carrying Confederate flags. Since the Civil War (1861-65), these flags, representing those southern states that broke away to preserve slavery, have stood for white supremacy and Black subjugation.

A second hypothesis is that once out of power, Trump fears prosecution for crimes. In addition to the potentially criminal charges of tax fraud, there are questions about corruption, abuse of power, and violation of campaign finance laws. Ironically, inciting a mob to pressure the legislature, aimed at solving an immediate problem, might now lead to the most serious charge of all: Abetting an insurrection.

Nancy Pelosi, Democratic Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Chuck Schumer, who will soon take over the leadership of a Democratic-majority Senate, have already called for the invocation of the 25th Constitutional Amendment. If supported by a majority of the cabinet, the amendment allows the vice president to unseat the president. In case the amendment is not invoked, say Pelosi and Schumer, they would like to impeach Trump, even if less than two weeks remain in his term. That will, in all likelihood, disqualify him from running again in the 2024 elections. This is important because a self-pardon might well save Trump from criminal prosecution, at least for federal crimes, though many legal scholars have serious doubts about the constitutionality of self-pardon.

A coup like this would be inconceivable in a parliamentary democracy. Presidential democracies are more vulnerable to coups because the executive and the legislature are independently elected and, if run by different parties, they can be arch rivals at the polity's heart. In parliamentary systems, the two are intertwined and a parliamentary majority is the prime minister's source of power, making deadly executive-parliament clashes unlikely. Prime ministers don't send mobs, vigilantes or armies to attack parliaments; brazen presidents do.

In the end, of course, the coup failed. So how might one understand the failure? The

proximate reason is simply that with no military support coming, the mob failed to occupy the Capitol building for more than a few hours. That is why, without the military's involvement, coups rarely succeed. And in richer democracies, the armed forces tend not to help the leader in electoral disputes.

But the deeper question is: Why did most Republican politicians in the US Congress, while initially quiet, not support Trump in the end? Here, the role of two institutions is noteworthy.

First, given the state-centric nature of US presidential elections, the behaviour of state officials in swing states is critical. Two of the five swing states — Arizona and Georgia — have Republican governments. Yet their officials did not bow to the wishes of Trump. A leaked tape of Trump's phone call to Georgia's Secretary of State, revealed that to flip the state won by Biden, Trump asked the secretary to "find 11,780 votes". Despite being a Republican, Secretary Brad Raffensperger declined, instead doing the right thing. Legal propriety defeated partisanship.

But the most important role has been played by America's courts. Trump's campaign filed more than 60 legal challenges — from the state courts to federal courts, all the way up to the US Supreme Court. Trump lost all cases but one. The victory was very small, but the defeats were huge. Many of the judges in federal courts were appointed by Trump, who often boasted that if necessary, his judicial appointees would win him the day. But instead of displaying personal loyalty, they applied the law, tossing out the evidence of election fraud as legally flimsy. In the end, it became impossible for most Republicans to go against so many court judgments. Courts defined the permissible limits of politics.

When the history of this period is written, America's courts might be singled out as the institution that protected the nation's election integrity. But it also says something larger about the role of the judiciary in preserving democracy as a system. If independent and unafraid, courts can clip the wings of marauding politicians.

The writer is Sol Goldman professor of international studies and professor of political science at Brown University

BASIC INCOME AND PATRIARCHY

A salary to women for domestic work institutionalises idea of men as 'providers'



ARPAN TULSYAN

LAST MONTH, KAMAL Hasan's party, Makkal Needhi Maiam, promised salaries to housewives as a part of its electoral campaign in Tamil Nadu. This week, the idea was welcomed by Shashi Tharoor, who tweeted that this will "monetise the services of women homemakers in society, enhance their power and autonomy and create near-universal basic income". To this, actor Kangana Ranaut said, "we don't need salary for being the Queens of our own little kingdom". Tharoor maintained that remuneration will lead to a recognition of the value of unpaid work.

Demand for wages against housework was first raised at the third National Women's Liberation conference in Manchester, England. International Wages for Housework Campaign (IWFHC) was formed by Selma James in 1972. Since then, several organisations, particularly in the UK, US, Canada and Italy, have raised similar requests.

In India, an application by the National Housewives Association, seeking recognition as a trade union in 2010, was rejected by the deputy registrar of trade unions on the ground that housework is not a trade or an industry. In 2012, the then minister for Women and Child development, Krishna Tirath, announced that the government was considering mandating a salary for housework to wives, from husbands. The purpose, once again, was to empower women financially and help them live with dignity. However, the proposal never materialised and with the change in the government in 2014, the idea was put to rest.

More than creating a new provision of salary for housework, we need to strengthen awareness, implementation and utilisation of other existing provisions. Starting from the right to reside in the marital home, to *streedhan* and *haq meher*, to coparcenary and inheritance rights as daughters and to basic services, free legal aid and maintenance in instances of violence and divorce.

Housework demands effort and sacrifice, 365 days a year, 24/7. Despite this, a huge proportion of Indian women aren't "queens" reigning over their kingdom, the family. A large number of women live with domestic violence and cruelty because they are economically dependent on others, mainly their husbands. Time-use data from 2019 gathered by the National Sample Survey Organisation revealed that only about a quarter of men and boys above six years engaged in unpaid household chores, compared to over four-fifths of women. Every day, an average Indian male spends 1.5 hours per day in unpaid domestic work, compared to about five hours by a female.

It is thus important to recognise the value of unpaid domestic work. However, creating value isn't always about fair remuneration. Asking men to pay for wives' domestic work could further enhance their sense of entitlement. It may also put the additional onus on women to perform. Besides the ethics of buying domestic labour from wife poses a serious risk of formalising the patriarchal Indian family where the position of men stems from their being "providers" in the relationship. And, despite a legal provision, equal inheritance rights continue to be elusive for a majority of women. So, should dowry be converted to policy, with the rationale being to ensure at least some gains are received by daughters from the parental property? That would be a policy short-cut, but perhaps one that is more effective than salary for housework.

More than creating a new provision of

salary for housework, we need to strengthen awareness, implementation and utilisation of other existing provisions. Starting from the right to reside in the marital home, to *streedhan* and *haq meher*, to coparcenary and inheritance rights as daughters and to basic services, free legal aid and maintenance in instances of violence and divorce.

Our aim cannot be only to ensure "basic income" to women. Women should be encouraged and helped to reach their full potential through quality education, access and opportunities of work, gender-sensitive and harassment-free workplaces and attitudinal and behaviour change within families to make household chores more participative. Once these conditions are met, working inside the home or outside must be a woman's choice, a freedom that she can exercise for herself.

Just like we do not want women to commodify their reproductive services because of their inherently exploitative nature — we have, therefore, banned commercial surrogacy in the country — let us not allow commodification of housework and personal care. At the same time, let us not ask wives to do what husbands can and need to do for themselves, either out of love or in lieu of money. Let us also raise our boys to be brothers, sons, husbands, and fathers who would obviate the need for such discussion itself.

The writer is a senior research scholar at the Department of Social Work, Delhi University

JANUARY 9, 1981, FORTY YEARS AGO

PM IN RAJASTHAN

PRIME MINISTER INDIRA Gandhi warned of military activities across the border in neighbouring countries, and said that they were getting arms from other countries. There was also a talk of making an atom bomb, she said. "We have to strengthen our country and people so that we can meet internal and external dangers and remove poverty," she said. Mrs Gandhi reminded the people in the border districts of Barmer and Jaisalmer that India conducted an atomic test at Pokhran but is committed to peaceful use of nuclear energy. On her visit to the two drought-hit districts, she assured people of all support.

The only answer to combat drought was to plant more trees, she said.

JESUITS TO THE AID

THE INDIAN SOCIAL Institute and the Jesuit Conference of India today offered to take care of the victims of the Bhagalpur blinding who are currently sheltered in a Methodist church. The offer came following a report in this paper that no voluntary association has come forward to take care of the blinded in spite of a Supreme Court order that all their expenses will be borne by the Bihar government. The details of the rehabilitation programme will be worked out by the Indian

Social Institute and the Jesuit Conference.

SAILO'S SUGGESTION

MIZORAM CHIEF MINISTER Brigadier T Sailo has asked for a general amnesty for all Mizo National Front hostiles and to create conditions for talks between the Centre and the MNF chief Laldenga. Sailo made this suggestion in meetings with the home minister and prime minister in Delhi. The purpose of this proposal is two-fold: To scotch MNF propaganda that the Sailo ministry is creating hurdles in the way of talks and facilitate the return of MNF rebels from across the border.

THE IDEAS PAGE

The post-Covid priority

Budget needs to ramp up spending on health and education. Pandemic has enhanced inequalities, shown up absence of safety nets



S MAHENDRA DEV

INDIA IS COMMITTED to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, and social sector development is important in reaching them. Progress in this sector has intrinsic (for its own sake) and instrumental (for higher growth) value. It is needed even to build a \$5 trillion economy faster. Inequalities in India have been increasing over time. COVID-19 has further widened them. In this context, focus on social sector spending and efficiency in delivery systems is essential. India has somewhat progressed on *bijli*, *sadak* and *pani*, but it is essential to invest in the social sector. The Union Budget for 2021-22 can give medium-term direction to the social sector by increasing allocations, particularly in health and education and for social safety nets. No country has progressed without investing in the social sector.

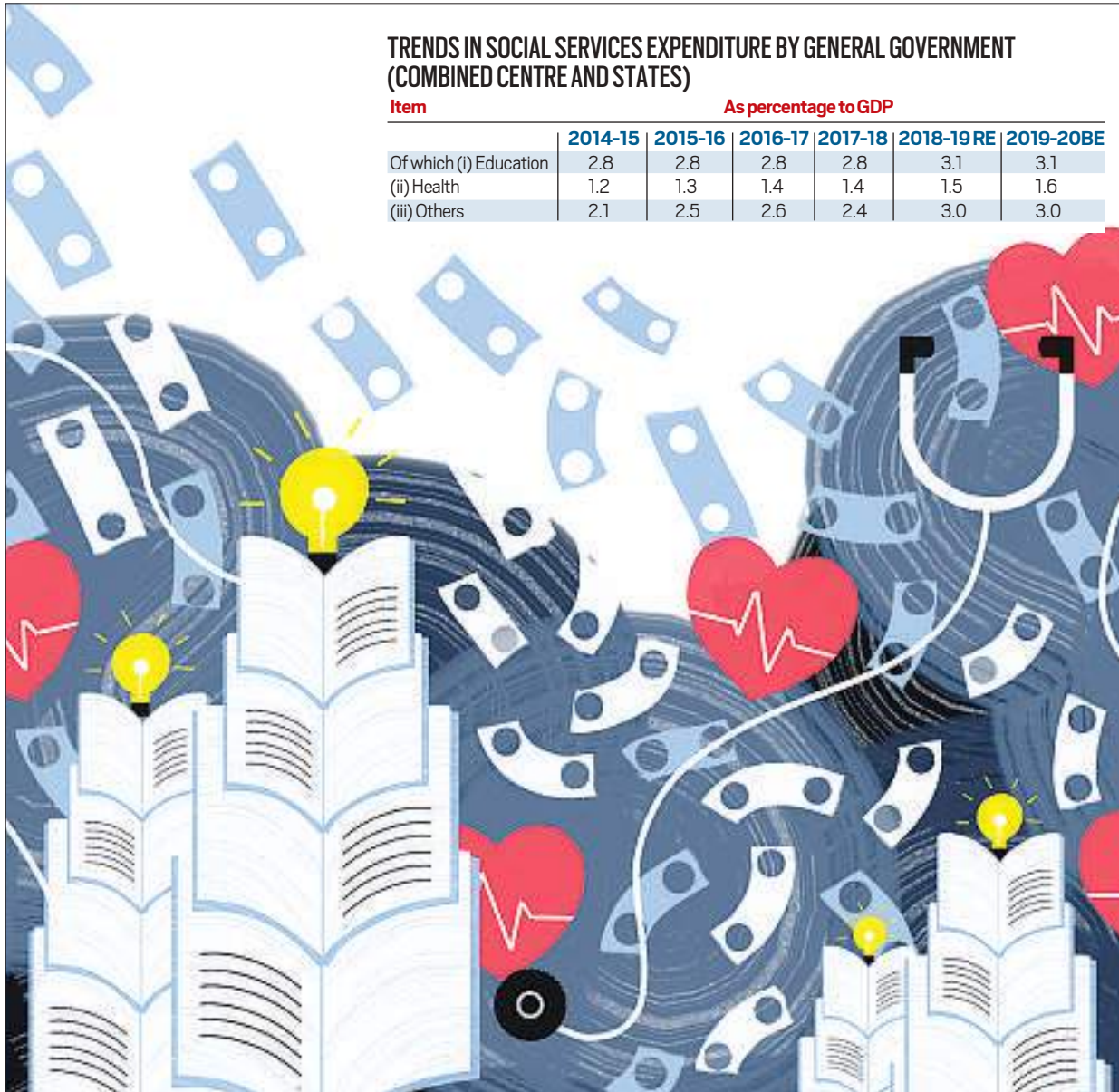
India's progress in the social sector has been much slower compared to its GDP growth. The two primary factors that adversely affect India's human development are low levels of health attainments and education: India ranks 131 out of 189 countries on the Human Development Index.

A look at the social sector expenditure over the last few years (see table) shows that the share of education as a percentage of GDP has been stagnant around 2.8-3 per cent during 2014-15 to 2019-20. In the case of health, the expenditure as a percentage of GDP increased from 1.2 per cent to 1.5 per cent. This is lower than the required 2-3 per cent of GDP. There seems to be an increase in expenditure on "other" services like sports, art and culture, family welfare, water supply and sanitation, labour and labour welfare etc.

The expenditures are inadequate in comparison to the problems in the sector. India's social sector in general, and health and education in particular, encounter significant regional, social and gender disparities, slow growth in public expenditures and problems in delivery systems.

An increase in health expenditure is also important to take care of the present and future pandemics. Given the constraints, health workers did exceptional work during the pandemic. The experience of COVID-19 has also shown that during pandemics we tend to neglect non-pandemic related patients. Health insurance is an important component of health coverage. But, there is no alternative to universal health coverage including a focus on primary health centres to achieve the goals of the health sector. There are supply side problems regarding the health infrastructure. It is essential to have a huge increase in public expenditure on health and provide accessible, affordable and quality health coverage to all.

Another important issue in the social sector is that of undernutrition. The NFHS-5 report shows that malnutrition level has reduced marginally in a few states and has worsened in some other states, although some other indicators have improved between 2015-16 and 2019-20. We can't have a society with 35 per cent of our children suffering from malnutrition. Apart from undernutrition, obesity seems to be increasing in both rural and urban areas. Access and af-



C R Sasikumar

fordable diversified food intake is important for reducing both undernutrition and obesity. There is a need to raise allocations for ICDS and other nutrition programmes. The determinants of nutrition are agriculture, health, women's empowerment, including maternal and child practices, social protection, nutrition education, sanitation and drinking water. The Poshan Abhiyan is a good programme, but has to cover all these determinants with a multi-pronged approach to reduce undernutrition. The cost of ignoring hunger and malnutrition will be high for the country.

Similarly, quality education is key for raising human development. The pandemic has enhanced inequalities in education and has revealed the widening digital gap. Equality of opportunity in terms of quality education is the key for raising human development and for reducing inequalities in the labour market. Several committees have recommended that public expenditure on education should be at 6 per cent of GDP.

In the last few years, the government has done well in providing cooking gas (Ujjwala Yojana) and electricity (Saubhagya Yojana), introducing programmes such as Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and initiatives for housing, financial inclusion and providing loans to the self-employed. These programmes have helped the vulnerable sections, particularly women. Another initiative of the government was to facilitate direct benefit transfers (DBT) for welfare schemes. These initiatives have to be continued.

The COVID-19 period also offers some

We cannot have a society with slow progress in health and education. India, aspiring to be a global power, should have a harmonious and inclusive social sector development. This is also important for achieving the SDGs, reducing inequalities and achieving a \$5 trillion economy faster. Hopefully, more attention will be given to the social sector in the forthcoming budget. Higher social sector funding with better implementation and outcomes are needed.

lessons on safety nets. It is known that migrant workers were the most affected during the pandemic and that they do not have any safety nets. There is a need to have safety nets like an employment guarantee scheme for the urban poor and facilities for migrants. Similarly in rural areas, allocations to MGN-REGA have to be increased because of the reverse migration.

The government should give more focus to the social sector with better policies and implementation. It has to work closely with the states in revitalising the social sector as major expenditures particularly on health and education are met by them. The 15th Finance Commission also seems to have mentioned that health expenditure should be increased to 2.1 per cent of GDP. The Commission may also suggest some incentives for states to increase health expenditure. Both Centre and states should have a five-year vision on the social sector with bold measures.

We cannot have a society with slow progress in health and education. India, aspiring to be a global power, should have a harmonious and inclusive social sector development. This is also important for achieving the SDGs, reducing inequalities and building a \$5 trillion economy faster. Hopefully, more attention will be given to the social sector in the forthcoming budget. Higher social sector funding with better implementation and outcomes are needed.

The writer is director and vice-chancellor, IGDR, Mumbai.

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"The Capitol violence was merely the ultimate and undeniable proof of what was always evident: that this man is not only unfit for his office, he is also a danger to democracy while he retains it."

— THE GUARDIAN

Nourishing the nation

Improving diet of low-income households is only way to address chronic malnutrition



VEENA S RAO

IT IS NEARLY a month since the first phase of the NFHS-5 survey was published. While we await a response from the government or any policy-making authority, several articles by public health/policy experts have appeared, expressing deep concern at the deteriorating nutrition and anaemia indicators, especially among children. More deterioration in nutrition indicators following the COVID-19 pandemic is feared in the next phase of NFHS-5, primarily on account of loss of livelihoods, reduced food consumption among the poor and disruption of government nutrition programmes.

Most articles emphasise the need for higher budgetary allocations for healthcare, ICDS and monitoring systems. While these are no doubt necessary, a debate must also be initiated on whether the current programmes are adequate and effectively target the root causes of malnutrition or if the strategies require change.

The political executive and policymakers must also note that unlike a disease outbreak, which leads to an immediate public demand for government intervention, there may not be any popular demand to address malnutrition — the public, by and large, does not have adequate information about their affliction. All they know is that they are poor, get tired easily, and their children fall ill often. Hence, in the Indian context, it becomes the responsibility of the government/civil society to first provide information and awareness to the community about malnutrition and its causes, and then implement programmes to address them.

The government could start showing its seriousness by examining the current nutrition-related programmes, and analysing why they are not able to reduce malnutrition faster. Do they require complete overhaul? Should additional interventions be introduced in pockets, identified as high-burden districts? Surely, there should be different norms and more intensive interventions within the ICDS for these chronically malnourished pockets with the poorest indicators.

How does the government plan to address adolescent malnutrition (our future demographic dividend) which is as alarming as child malnutrition, and for which we have no clear strategy in place yet? And, finally, we need to know if the National Nutrition Policy 1993 is still operational. If it is, then there is an urgent need to update it, and prioritise interventions in accordance with the latest surveys and research findings. If not, it seems that we are attempting to address this invisible scourge without a policy framework or plan of action.

The discussion should also include another vital question: Do the current interventions address the root causes of malnutrition in India? I refer to them as the three deficits.

The first is the large dietary deficit among at least 40 per cent of our population of all age groups, brought out repeatedly in a succession of reports this decade — the National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau's Third Repeat Survey (2012), NFHS 4, 2015-16, the NNMB Technical Report Number 27, 2017. Clearly, our current interventions are not being able to bridge this protein-calorie-micronutrient deficit. The NHHS-4 and NFHS-5 surveys reveal an acute dietary deficit among infants below two years, and considerable stunting and wasting of infants below six months (caused by foetal malnutrition/maternal dietary deficit). Unless this maternal/infant dietary deficit is addressed, we will not see rapid improvement in our nutritional indicators. This is a serious problem which needs to be acknowledged and prioritised in the public health/public policy agendas.

The next is the even bigger information deficit at the household level, especially among lower-income families. We do not have a national IEC (information, education and communication) programme that reaches targeted households to bring about the required behavioural change regarding some basic but critical facts — for example, about the importance of balanced diets in low-income household budgets, proper maternal, child and adolescent nutrition and healthcare. IEC and behavioural change have been highlighted in all our early Five-Year Plans, but somehow, successive governments have not been able to make it happen.

The largest deficit, which is a major cause of dietary deficiency and India's chronic malnutrition, pertains to inequitable market conditions that deny affordable and energy-fortified food to children, adolescents and adults in lower-income families. The market has stacks of expensive fortified energy food and beverages for higher income groups, but nothing affordable for low-income groups except non-nutritive junk that cost about Rs 5. It is perfectly possible to produce nutritive fortified energy food for children within Rs 5 from wheat, defatted soya, green gram, and ragi malt, providing around 380 calories from 25 grams. A feasibility study conducted by KPMG in 2018 under the Karnataka Multi-sectoral Nutrition Pilot Project reckons that there is a market demand of 42 million tonnes of low-cost energy food per year, but strangely, no private entrepreneur wants to enter this field. One wonders why, in spite of the mandate of the National Nutrition Policy 1983 and the National Plan of Action on Nutrition 1995. The feasibility study also has firm findings about a direct correlation between the high incidence of underweight, stunting and wasting among children, low body mass index and stunting among adolescents, and the lack of low-cost fortified energy food in the market.

Raising the diet of our people from subsistence level to higher levels of nourishment by overcoming the triple deficit is the only way to improve the nutritional indicators of our population — amongst children, adolescents and adults. We expect the government to show its seriousness and start addressing this issue urgently through new ideas and innovations.

The writer is former secretary, Government of India



TAHIR MAHMOOD

"ON A PRELIMINARY analysis it is clear that the appellant as the mother-in-law of the second respondent (wife) cannot be accused of the offence of pronouncement of triple talaq under the Act as the offence can only be committed by a Muslim man (husband)," a Supreme Court Bench led by Justice D Y Chandrachud observed in a recent case decided under the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act of 2019, popularly known as the anti-triple talaq law. The facts of the case show that the Act is being as gravely misunderstood as was, and still is, the true Islamic law on divorce.

The background of the anti-triple talaq law needs to be explained. The blatantly anti-women divorce customs prevalent in pre-Islamic Arabia had been given a severe blow by the teachings of Prophet Muhammad who was, indeed, a great social reformer. Demonstrating the truth of the saying "old habits die hard", unscrupulous men innovated, in the course of time, ways and means to circumvent the Prophet's noble teachings. One of these was the practice of triple talaq — repeating the word "talaq" thrice — which was believed to effect instant dissolution of marriage leaving no room for any reconsideration or

Miscarriage of a reform

Flawed understanding of triple talaq law is leading to its misuse

reconciliation. Instead of nipping in the bud that abominable innovation, law men of the time called it talaq-ul-bidat and declared it to be "sinful but effective". This self-contradictory concept remained in vogue for centuries in Muslim societies across the globe. Twentieth century reformers in some Muslim-dominated lands at last woke up to the need to save families from devastation by its abolition. A Muslim judge of Kerala bemoaned: "Should Muslim wives suffer this tyranny for all times? Should their personal law remain so cruel towards these unfortunate wives? Can it not be amended suitably to alleviate their sufferings?" Social reformers also demanded that what was

bad in theology should be bad in law too. Finding that legislation required for it was nowhere in sight, the apex court of the country tried in some cases to indirectly curb the archaic practice and eventually outlawed it in the Shayara Bano case of 2017. The anti-triple talaq Act of 2019 was the outcome of this judicial reform.

Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code (cruelty to a woman by her husband or his relatives) is often misused. This undeniable fact was once acknowledged by the apex court, though it had to withdraw under feminist pressure the measures it had directed to curb the trend. Like the said provision of the Penal Code, the anti-triple talaq law of 2019 is also prone to misuse and their dishonest combination may play havoc with families. In the triple talaq case under reference, lawyers of a Kerala woman had included her husband's mother in the FIR filed against him under the 2019 Act by vaguely alluding to the said IPC provision. For understanding the commonsense fact that this Act is meant to discipline erring husbands only, the learned lawyers needed a learning session with the apex court.

The provision for bail to be granted to the accused husband under Section 7 of the 2019 Act has been particularly misunder-

stood. Many lawyers misbelieve that it overrides the general provision for anticipatory bail under Section 438 of the Criminal Procedure Code. Soon after the enactment of the Act, a man accused of committing the offence it had created sought anticipatory bail in the Bombay High Court. His wife's lawyers argued that the non-obstante clause in Section 7 of the Act had rendered the CrPc provision inapplicable to cases under its provisions. Rightly rejecting the argument, the court granted bail.

In contrast, in the case under reference, the Kerala High Court had accepted the same faulty argument to refuse bail to the accused husband's mother, who then had to knock at the apex court's doors. Explaining the position under the Act, the court emphatically held: "Parliament has not overridden the provisions of Section 438 of the CrPc. There is no specific provision in Section 7(c), or elsewhere in the Act, making Section 438 inapplicable to an offence punishable under the Act." The verdict is a significant step towards preventing the misuse of the anti-triple divorce law.

The writer is Distinguished Jurist Chair and Professor of Eminence, Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, Amity University

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

INTOLERANT INDIA?

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Bolne bhi mat do yaaro', (IE January 8). The arrest of comedian Munawar Faruqui raises certain questions. First, do we still have the fundamental right to freedom of speech and expression in its real sense, with "reasonable" restrictions, of course? Second, do we still uphold the principle of rule of law as guaranteed under Article 14 of the Indian Constitution? Third, are we not tolerant enough to hear anything that is at even a slight mismatch with our own notions? Fourth, are we under the constant threat of being prosecuted for our words, if these words are against the dominant beliefs of the society? Incidents such as the one in Indore raise questions about our legal system and society, which has always believed in the principle of tolerance.

Sarachana Sisodia, Delhi

A DARK DAY

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'January 6' (IE, January 8), January 6 will be remembered as a black day in the annals of the history of the US, when the world's oldest and most powerful democracy allowed its legislative heart — the US Capitol — to be stormed by supporters of President Donald Trump as a last-ditch, desperate attempt to overturn the Joe Biden victory. The US has, for long, preached the values of democracy and accountability. It is time to put it in practice.

SS Paul, Nadia

IDEAS ONLINE

ONLY IN THE EXPRESS

● AN INSURRECTION FROM THE WHITE HOUSE: RAUNAQ JAISWAL

● DON'T GIVE UP ON PLASMA THERAPY: JANANI MURALIDHARAN

www.indianexpress.com

DIVERSITY NEEDED

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Business of diversity' (IE, January 8). The German cabinet's move is a great one to ensure parity on corporate boards. If, despite SEBI's direction of having at least one woman on board, Indian Inc does not toe the line, the Indian government may be forced to follow Germany's lead.

Bal Govind, Noida

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Business of Diversity' (IE, January 8). Stereotypical notions that women belong in the private sphere, or that they are better off at the lower positions in a corporate hierarchy — as higher up the ladder, only men can run the show — are factors contributing to the low numbers of women in leadership roles in Indian business.

Anamika Priyadarshani, New Delhi

TOP OF THE WORLD



UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash

THE GULF

UAE to reopen all entry points with Qatar after thaw in dispute

THE UNITED Arab Emirates will reopen all its land, sea and air entry points with Qatar starting Saturday, state news agency WAM reported on Friday. Saudi Arabia announced a breakthrough in ending a dispute between Gulf Arab states and Qatar at a summit on Tuesday, with its foreign minister saying Riyadh and its allies would restore all ties which the Doha severed in mid-2017. Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt imposed the embargo on Qatar over allegations that it supports terrorism. UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash said Arab states boycotting Qatar could resume travel and trade links with Doha within a week. **REUTERS**

IRAN

Revolutionary Guards unveil underground missile base

IRAN'S ELITE Revolutionary Guards unveiled an underground missile base at an undisclosed Gulf location on Friday, Iranian state media reported, at a time of heightened tension between Tehran and the United States. "The base is one of several bases housing the Guards' Navy's strategic missiles," the state media quoted the head of the Guards, Major General Hossein Salami, as saying. Last year, the Guards said Iran had built underground "missile cities" along the Gulf coastline, warning of a "nightmare for Iran's enemies". **REUTERS**

PAKISTAN

Main accused in Hindu temple vandalism held

PAKISTANI POLICE on Friday claimed to have arrested the main accused in the vandalism of a Hindu temple by a mob led by members of a radical Islamist party in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The main accused, identified as Faizullah, was arrested from Karak district, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police chief Sanaullah Abbasi said on Friday. Abbasi said Faizullah instigated the mob to attack the temple. Pakistan's top court has ordered that the temple be reconstructed. **PTI**

SOUTH KOREA

Court tells Japan to compensate 'comfort women'

A SOUTH Korean court for the first time on Friday ordered Japan to compensate 12 women who were forced to work in its wartime brothels, a ruling that drew a rebuke from Tokyo and threatened to rekindle a diplomatic feud between the two countries. Reminders of Japan's 1910-45 colonial rule of the Korean peninsula are contentious for both sides, with many surviving "comfort women" — a Japanese euphemism for the sex abuse victims — demanding Tokyo's formal apology and compensation. **REUTERS**

CONCERN IN WASHINGTON OVER WHAT THE PRESIDENT WILL DO NEXT

Pelosi asks US' top general about restricting Trump's military power

Seeks to ensure President cannot initiate hostilities or order a nuclear strike in his remaining days in office

REUTERS

WASHINGTON, JANUARY 8

HOUSE SPEAKER Nancy Pelosi spoke to the top US military commander on Friday about taking precautions to ensure that Republican President Donald Trump cannot initiate hostilities or order a nuclear strike in his remaining 12 days in office.

Pelosi said in a letter to Democratic lawmakers that she spoke to Army General Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, about what measures are available to rein in the Republican president. Trump, angry about his election loss, incited supporters in the days before an invasion of the US Capitol on Wednesday.

"The situation of this unhinged President could not be more dangerous, and we must do everything that we can to protect the American people from his unbalanced assault on our country and our democracy," Pelosi said in a letter to colleagues.

While Pelosi's letter highlights the concern among lawmakers about what Trump may try to do during his remaining time in office, there are questions about what Milley or anyone could actually do to stop a President from using nuclear weapons.

"There is no legal way to do this. The president has sole, unfettered authority to order the use of nuclear weapons with no 'second vote' required," said Jeffrey Lewis, a professor at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey in California.

Milley's office said that Pelosi had initiated the call and Milley "answered her questions regard-



The situation of this unhinged President could not be more dangerous, and we must do everything that we can to protect the American people from his unbalanced assault on our country and our democracy."

NANCY PELOSI
U.S. HOUSE SPEAKER

ing the process of nuclear command authority."

A US official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that any use of nuclear weapons is a highly deliberative process.

Democratic President-elect Joe Biden takes office on Jan. 20. Trump said earlier on Friday he would not attend the inauguration, breaking with long-standing tradition in American presidential transitions.

Pelosi, the top Democrat in Congress, also said she had not heard back from Vice President Mike Pence about whether he would agree to top Democrats' request that he invoke the 25th Amendment to remove Trump from office "for his incitement of insurrection and the danger he still poses." She said "we still hope to hear from him as soon as possible with a positive answer."



A workman walks through the Capitol's Rotunda after cleaning debris outside the office of Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi, on the day after a mob stormed the US Congress. **AP**

US transport, education secys quit in staff exodus after Capitol chaos

DAVID SHEPARDSON, MATT SPETALNICK & STEVE HOLLAND
WASHINGTON, JANUARY 8

US TRANSPORTATION Secretary Elaine Chao and Education Secretary Betsy DeVos resigned on Thursday, joining a growing list of aides leaving President Donald Trump's administration in protest at the storming of the US Capitol by his supporters.

Chao, the wife of Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell, said in an email to staff that the mob attack "has deeply troubled me in a way that I simply cannot set aside." She said her resignation will take effect on Monday.

With less than two weeks left of Trump's presidency, many

TOP AIDES WHO QUIT AFTER WEDNESDAY

- **Betsy DeVos**
Education Secretary
- **Elaine Chao**
Transportation Secretary
- **Mick Mulvaney**
Special envoy to Northern Ireland
- **Tyler Goodspeed**
White House Council of Economic Advisors
- **Matthew Pottinger**
Deputy NSA
- **John Costello**
Deputy Assistant Commerce Secy
- **Stephanie Grisham**
First Lady's Chief of Staff
- **Rickie Niceta**
Social Secretary
- **Sarah Matthews**
Deputy Press Secretary

aides were already heading for the door, making some of their resignations symbolic gestures.

But the sudden exodus suggested revulsion among some over Trump's encouragement of supporters who brought violent chaos to the Capitol on Wednesday in an ultimately futile bid to prevent for-

mal certification of Democrat Joe Biden's election victory.

The White House did not respond to a request for comment on the latest resignations.

Deputy national security adviser Matt Pottinger, a leading aide on Trump's China policy, also quit abruptly Wednesday. **REUTERS**



The Justice Department generally asserts that sitting Presidents cannot be charged with a crime

Justice Dept does not rule out pursuing charges against Trump over inciting riot

KATIE BENNER
WASHINGTON, JANUARY 8

THE US Justice Department said on Thursday that it would not rule out pursuing charges against President Trump for his possible role in inciting the mob that marched to the Capitol, overwhelmed officers and stormed the building a day earlier.

"We are looking at all actors, not only the people who went into the building," Michael Sherwin, the US attorney in Washington, told reporters.

Sherwin was asked whether such targets would include Trump, who exhorted supporters during a rally near the White House, telling them that they could never "take back our country with weakness." Propelled by Trump's baseless claims of election irregularities, the protesters had gathered to demonstrate against Congress's certification of Joe Biden's Electoral College victory and moved on to the Capitol after the President's rally.

Sherwin said he stood by his statement. "We're looking at all actors," he said. "If the evidence fits the elements of a crime, they're going to be charged."

The Justice Department generally asserts that sitting Presidents cannot be charged with a crime, but that protection covers Trump for only 13 more days. **NYT**

that Trump was elected to save the US from deep-state bureaucrats and prominent Democrats who worship Satan and abuse children. He was pictured sitting in Congress in a viking helmet and furs. Angeli, who is known as the "Q Shaman," has been a fixture in the pro-Trump protests in Arizona since the election.

There were also leaders from the Proud Boys, a far-right group whose participants have espoused misogynistic and anti-immigrant views, such as Nick Ochs, a failed Hawaii state legislature candidate and member of a collective called "Murder the Media." Chris Hood and members of his National Socialist Club, a neo-Nazi group, posted photos on Telegram from outside the Capitol on Wednesday. And the Three Percenters, a far-right armed group, were seen gathered in Washington's Freedom Plaza on Tuesday night, most wearing helmets and Kevlar vests adorned with the group's symbol, a Roman numeral three.

The mob came from the broader crowd, tens of thousands of Trump's most loyal supporters. A number of people interviewed said they had never been to Washington before. **NYT**

Allegations of double standards

SEVERAL ACTIVISTS and some lawmakers have pointed out that the response by the security apparatus to the mob of mostly-white Trump supporters stands in stark contrast with how anti-racism protesters were treated last year during country-wide

demonstrations. Police were, on a number of occasions last year, accused of using excessive force on peaceful protesters, leading to allegations that they were following different standards in showing great restraint with Trump supporters who stormed the Capitol.

edge forced the resignations of three top Capitol security officials over the failure to stop the breach. It led lawmakers to demand a review of operations and an FBI briefing over what they called a "terrorist attack". And it is prompt-

ing a broader reckoning over Trump's tenure in office and what comes next for a torn nation.

One protester, a white woman, was shot to death by Capitol Police, and there were dozens of arrests. Three other



Trump supporters confront police inside the Capitol building Wednesday. **NYT**

tified himself only as Aaron. He declined to give his last name, saying, "I'm not that dumb."

As the country sifts through the shards of what happened in Washington on Wednesday, what comes into focus in the storming of the Capitol is a jumbled constellation of hard-core Trump supporters: a largely white crowd, many of them armed with bats, shields and chemical spray; some carried Confederate flags and wore costumes of fur and horns inspired by QAnon; they were mostly men, but there were women, too.

Wednesday, the Metropolitan Police detained 68 people, plus the 14 picked up by the Capitol Police during the unrest. Dozens more people were still being sought by federal authorities. Their number included a 60-year-old gun rights

activist from Arkansas who was pictured sitting in Speaker Nancy Pelosi's office, men in tactical gear taking selfies in the Rotunda and a woman in the House chamber, carrying a QAnon-inspired sign about children.

Some of those who had also surged forward in the crowd seemed to show a bewildered wonder at what they were seeing in front of them. A few remarked on the opulence of the Capitol building and offices, a quality that seemed to confirm their suspicions about the corruption of Washington.

As authorities try to identify those in the mob, some will be less hard to pin down than others. The group included some well-known figures from the conspiratorial right, including Jake Angeli, who has pushed the false QAnon claims

WHO's Swaminathan expresses concern over S African virus variant

ANURADHA MASCARENHAS
PUNE, JANUARY 8



WHO chief scientist Dr Soumya Swaminathan

VIRUSES KEEP evolving but the South African variant of the novel coronavirus does pose concerns, WHO chief scientist Dr Soumya Swaminathan said.

"Preliminary experiments have shown that monoclonal antibodies that were effective against SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes Covid-19) are less effective against the South Africa variant," Swaminathan said.

The new coronavirus variant is driving a second wave of infections in South Africa. It has also spread to other countries in Africa and Europe, and concerns have been raised about how it would respond to Covid-19 vaccines. South Africa named the variant 501Y.V2 because of the N501Y mutation they found in the spike protein that the virus uses to gain entry into cells within the body. This mutation was also found in a different strain of the virus that the UK had notified the WHO about in December.

Experts believe that the UK variant is not likely to affect the efficacy of the vaccines currently being rolled out, but there is uncertainty regarding the South African variant. "The mutations in the spike protein make this South African variant more of a concern as it is less vulnerable to some antibodies," a new study published in pre-print database bioRxiv has

PFIZER STUDY SAYS VACCINE WORKS AGAINST VARIANT

NEW RESEARCH suggests that Pfizer's Covid-19 vaccine can protect against a mutation found in two highly contagious variants of the coronavirus that erupted in Britain and South Africa. Pfizer teamed with researchers from the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston for laboratory tests to see if the mutation affected its vaccine's efficacy. The study is preliminary and has not yet been reviewed by experts. **AP**

suggested.

According to Swaminathan, the serum of persons who have been administered Covid vaccines are now being tested in labs in the UK and South Africa to check whether the vaccines are effective against the South African strain. **FULL REPORT ON** www.indianexpress.com

WHO: Amid short supplies, vaccine doses can be six weeks apart

JAMEY KEATEN
GENEVA, JANUARY 8

WORLD HEALTH Organisation experts on Friday issued recommendations that the interval between administration of two doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine against the coronavirus can be extended to up to six weeks.

WHO's Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on immunization, known as SAGE, formally published its advice after a full review of that vaccine, which is the first to get emergency approval from the UN health agency to fight the Covid-19 pandemic. It said an interval of 21 to 28 days between the doses is recommended.

But the UN health agency also noted that "a number of countries face exceptional circumstances of vaccine supply constraints combined with a high disease burden," and said some have been considering delaying the administration of a second dose as a way to broaden initial coverage.

The agency said this "pragmatic approach" could be considered as a response to "exceptional epidemiological circumstances."

"WHO's recommendation at present is that the interval between doses may be extended up to 42 days (6 weeks), on the basis of currently available clinical trial

LONDON DECLARES COVID EMERGENCY

London: London declared a major incident on Friday because its hospitals were at risk of being overwhelmed by a highly transmissible variant of the coronavirus racing "out of control" in the UK. London Mayor Sadiq Khan said: "We are declaring a major incident because the threat this virus poses to our city is at crisis point." **REUTERS**

BRITAIN APPROVES MODERNA VACCINE

London: The UK's regulatory authority on Friday approved a third Covid-19 vaccine for use in the country, made by Moderna. However, supplies of the new jab are not expected to be available until the spring. The UK has pre-ordered 7 million doses. In trials, the Moderna vaccine offered nearly 95 per cent protection from severe Covid. **PTI**

data," it said, adding: "Should additional data become available on longer intervals between doses, revision of this recommendation will be considered." **AP**

Indonesian cleric linked to bombings in Bali freed from prison

NINIEK KARMINI
JAKARTA, JANUARY 8

A FIREBRAND cleric who inspired bombings in Bali and other attacks walked free from an Indonesian prison Friday after completing his sentence for funding the training of Islamic militants.

Police said they will monitor the activities of Abu Bakar Bashir, who is 82 and ailing. His son said Bashir will avoid activities outside his home due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The slender, white-bearded Bashir, an Indonesian of Yemeni descent, was the spiritual leader of the al-Qaida-linked Jemaah Islamiyah network behind the 2002 bombings on the tourist island of Bali that killed 202 people, mostly foreign tourists, including 88 Australians, leaving a deep scar in that country. Bashir was imprisoned in 2011



Abu Bakar Bashir leaves a van after his release from prison in Bogor, West Java, Indonesia, on Friday. **AP**

for his links to a militant training camp in religiously conservative Aceh province. He was convicted of funding the military-style camp to train Islamic militants and sentenced to 15 years in jail.

He received a total of 55 months of sentence reductions, which are often granted to prisoners on major holidays, said a spokesperson for the Justice Ministry. **AP**



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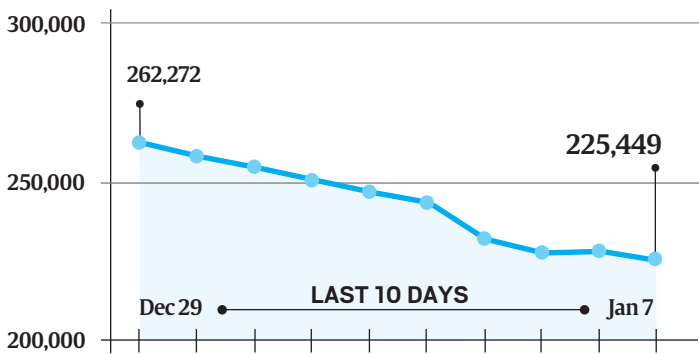
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If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to explained@indianexpress.com

CORONAVIRUS DASHBOARD

INDIA ACTIVE CASES

225,449



Note: The Jan 7 figure in this graph is based on the government update on Jan 8

INDIA TOTAL CASES
10,413,417

Source: Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, updated at 11 pm on Jan 8

WORLD TOTAL CASES
88,389,886

Source: Johns Hopkins University, updated at 11 pm on Jan 8

Role of agriculture: Why this economic slump is different from past ones



Agriculture is expected to show growth in a gloomy year. *Express Archive*

HARISH DAMODARAN
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

THE 7.2% fall in gross value added (GVA) for 2020-21, as per the National Statistical Office's first advance estimates released on Thursday, would be the sharpest ever recorded in India.

Earlier slumps

There have been four earlier occasions when the country's GVA — which is GDP net of all taxes and subsidies on products and, hence, a more accurate measure of economic activity — has suffered contraction.

The extent of negative growth in those years — 1979-80 (minus 5.2%), 1972-73 (minus 0.3%), 1965-66 (minus 3.7%) and 1957-58 (minus 1.2%) — was lower than the 7.2% being projected for the current fiscal.

But it isn't just the bigger decline in GVA/GDP this time that is striking. Equally significant is the fact that in each of those four previous years, the primary culprit was agriculture. All four were drought years — and the farm sector (agriculture, forestry and fishing) registered minus 12.8% growth in 1979-80, minus 5% in 1972-73, minus 11% in 1965-66 and minus 4.5% in 1957-58. In effect, the woes of 'Bharat' impacted the rest of the economy.

Different this time

This has not been the case in 2020-21. While overall GVA is expected to

shrink 7.2%, agriculture and allied activities are set to post 3.4% growth. Far from being a drag, 'Bharat' kept 'India' going during the worst phase of Covid-19 and the nationwide lockdown. Had the farm sector not grown at all, the GVA decline would have worked out to 7.7%, not 7.2%. Incidentally, in 2019-20 as well, agricultural growth at 4% surpassed the 3.9% for the economy as a whole.

Monsoon boost

Agriculture's relatively better performance in the last two years is largely a result of consecutive years of good monsoon (and also post-monsoon) rains. Recharged groundwater tables and reservoirs getting filled to near capacity — besides farming operations being exempted from lockdown restrictions — led to increase in crop acreages and higher production.

Share in economy

If Bharat's doing well hasn't prevented the worst economic slump since independence, the reason is simple. In 1979-80, agriculture's share in India's GDP at constant prices was 33.9%; in 1957-58, it was 48.2%. A drought year in those times invariably translated into low/negative growth rates.

It is different today. The share of agriculture in real GVA was only 14.6% in 2019-20. That is estimated to go up to 16.3% this fiscal, but not enough to make a different even in a bountiful monsoon year.

PARTHA SARATHI BISWAS & ANURADHA MASCARENHAS
PUNE, JANUARY 8

AFTER BIRD flu (avian influenza) was confirmed in Kerala, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh, high alert has been sounded in Maharashtra. Several states, which have been reporting deaths of birds, including crows and migratory species, are scrambling to have samples tested for the virus.

As anxiety spreads, there is fear of a fresh blow to the poultry industry — reports have been coming in of people giving up chicken and eggs, and of prices beginning to fall.

The infection

Bird flu or avian influenza is the name used to describe a viral infection that is reported mostly in birds, but has the potential to affect humans and other animals. The most common strain of the virus that causes severe respiratory disease in birds is H5N1; various other strains like H7, H8 too, cause infection.

The virus was first reported in geese in China in 1996. Since then, outbreaks have been reported periodically across the world. India reported the presence of the virus in Nandurbar, Maharashtra, in 2006, which led to large-scale culling of poultry birds.

Samples from Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Kerala have tested positive for the A (H5N8) strain of the virus, while samples from Himachal Pradesh have shown the presence of A (H5N1).

Human transmission

The H5N1 virus can jump species and infect humans from the infected bird. The first case of H5N1 infection in humans was reported in Hong Kong in 1997, when a poultry farm worker caught the infection from infected birds.

The high mortality rate in humans — al-



An wildlife department doctor collects a swab from a duck at Manda park in Jammu on Thursday. Several states and UTs have sounded a bird flu alert. *AP*

most 60 per cent — is the main cause of concern about the spread of bird flu. In its present form, human-to-human infection is not known — human infections have been reported only among people who have handled infected birds or carcasses.

How common is it?

Between 2006 and December 31, 2018, India reported 225 epicenters of bird flu infection, which led to the culling of 83.49 lakh birds, with farmers being paid Rs 26.37 crore in compensation.

Interestingly, Maharashtra which was the first state to report the infection, has not seen an outbreak since 2006. Odisha, Tripura, and West Bengal are among the states that have reported repeated outbreaks of the infection

in both domesticated and wild birds.

This time, most infections have been reported either in wild birds, crows or migratory birds, Dr A S Ranade, Dean, Bombay Veterinary College, said. Since 2006, the poultry industry has developed bio safety zones around farms, which has stopped commercially reared birds from coming in contact with any foreign feed or bird, Dr Ranade said.

Poultry meat, eggs

Dr Ranade pointed out that the chances of the H5N1 virus infecting humans is comparatively low in India as compared to South East Asian countries, mainly because of the difference in culinary habits.

"The virus dies immediately if exposed

INCIDENTS ACROSS INDIA

GUJARAT: 124 local birds, including 70 crows, and 6 migratory species reported dead

ODISHA: 120 poultry birds dead in Khurda district; government says all samples so far have returned negative for bird flu

UTTAR PRADESH: At least 10 crows found dead in Sonbhadra district; officials say cold and pollution likely cause; samples sent for testing

RAJASTHAN: A total 2,166 birds dead up to Friday; including 1,706 crows and 136 peacocks

CHHATTISGARH: 4 crows were found dead on Thursday; samples sent for tests. Samples have been picked from seven government poultry farms too

DELHI: Around 20 crows reported dead over the last few days in East Delhi; samples sent for testing

to temperatures over 70 degrees Celsius. Unlike in South East Asian countries, both meat and eggs in India are eaten well cooked, which sees them being exposed to over 100 degrees Celsius. Thus the chances of humans contracting the virus from eating chicken and eggs is extremely rare," he said.

India consumes 30 crore poultry birds and 900 crore eggs per month on average.

At the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the poultry industry suffered a body blow after unsubstantiated rumours linked the spread of the disease with consumption of chicken and eggs. Within a span of two months, the industry suffered losses of around \$ 1 billion, as people kept away from eggs and poultry meat. While the industry has managed to get back on its feet, production remains low.

What's new in WhatsApp's privacy policy

SHRUTI DHAPOLA
CHANDIGARH, JANUARY 8

WHATSAPP HAS updated its privacy policy, and users have until February 8 to accept the new terms and conditions. The new policy says how user data is impacted when there is interaction with a business on the platform, and provides more details on integration with Facebook, WhatsApp's parent company.

Will WhatsApp share your messages with Facebook?

No. The privacy policy does not change the way WhatsApp treats personal chats. WhatsApp remains end-to-end encrypted — no third party can read them. In a statement, WhatsApp said: "The update does not change WhatsApp's data sharing practices with Facebook and does not impact how people communicate privately with friends or family... WhatsApp remains deeply committed to protecting people's privacy."

What data will WhatsApp share with Facebook?

Data exchange with Facebook is in fact, already taking place. While users in the European Union can opt out of data-sharing

with Facebook, the rest of the world does not have the same choice.

WhatsApp shares the following information with Facebook and its other companies: account registration information (phone number), transaction data (WhatsApp now has payments in India), service-related information, information on how you interact with others (including businesses), mobile device information, and IP address. It is also collecting more information at a device hardware level now.

Why does this data exchange with Facebook matter?

The policy gives reasons for the data-sharing with Facebook: from ensuring better security and fighting spam to improving user experience, which were there in the previous policy as well.

But the new policy is a further sign of WhatsApp's deeper integration into the Facebook group of companies. CEO Mark Zuckerberg in 2019 talked about his cross-platform vision across Facebook Messenger, Instagram and WhatsApp — he called it "interoperability".

Instagram's Direct Messages and Facebook Messenger have already been integrated. Facebook wants to bring more serv-

ices to WhatsApp, and has added a feature called Rooms. The integration has been taking place for a while now.

Does it mean WhatsApp will use your data for ads?

WhatsApp doesn't show ads yet, and the reported plans appear to have been shelved. If you are worried that personal messages will be used to target ads on WhatsApp, that won't happen because they are encrypted.

But the increased data sharing with Facebook will be used to improve ad experience across other products of the company.

Is WhatsApp storing messages?

No, says WhatsApp. According to the privacy policy, once a message is delivered, it is "deleted" from the company's servers. WhatsApp stores a message only when it "cannot be delivered immediately" — the message can then stay on its servers "for up to 30 days" in an encrypted form as WhatsApp continues to try to deliver it. If undelivered even after 30 days, the message is deleted.

What does the policy say about data shared with businesses?

The new policy explains how businesses get data when a user interacts with them on

the platform: content shared with a business on WhatsApp will be visible to "several people in that business". This is important because WhatsApp now has over 50 million business accounts. For WhatsApp, this is a potential monetisation model.

The policy says that some "businesses might be working with third-party service providers (which may include Facebook) to help manage their communications with their customers". To understand how the business is handling the information you share with them, WhatsApp recommends that users read the "business' privacy policy or contact the business directly".

Do you *have* to accept the privacy policy?

Yes, this is standard practice for most software. If you don't want to, you can delete your account and switch to another service.

A lot of people seem to be switching to Signal from WhatsApp.

Signal is another messaging app, free and end-to-end encrypted, and which has gained a popularity push in light of the new WhatsApp policy. WhatsApp uses Signal's protocol for its encryption. But Signal is not owned by any corporation, and is run by a nonprofit.

How a WNBA team helped a Black Democrat make Senate history

SHIVANI NAIK
MUMBAI, JANUARY 8

THAT PLAYERS of Georgia's Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) team Atlanta Dream — named after Dr Martin Luther King Jr — campaigned for a Black Democrat in the state's Senate runoff race, isn't surprising.

What made this latest statement in the months of quiet, persistent protests fascinating was that the Democratic candidate, the Rev. Raphael Warnock, was contesting against the co-owner of Atlanta Dream, the sitting Republican Senator Kelly Loeffler.

Warnock defeated Loeffler in the January 5 runoff, becoming the first Black Democratic Senator from the US South.

A pastor since 2005 at the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Warnock preaches from the same pulpit that Dr King occupied from 1960 until his assassination in 1968. The funerals of both Dr King and the civil rights icon Congressman John Lewis were held at this historic church.

Loeffler had asked the 67 per cent Black-majority WNBA to stay away from Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests. Appalled, her team responded by wearing "Vote Warnock" shirts at televised warm-ups through the summer.

The defiance of Atlanta Dream found raging support in other WNBA teams.

So what exactly did Loeffler do?

In July 2020, as a renewed wave of BLM protests raged across the US and sportspeople around the world came out in solidarity, Loeffler wrote to WNBA Commissioner Cathy Engelbert urging her to "remove politics from sports", and to drop the league's decision to dedicate the season to social justice.

At a time when the delayed season was re-assembling, and the mood of protest was front, right and centre on the playing courts, Loeffler, seeking to pander to pro-Trump Georgia Republicans, denounced the women players for their support to the BLM and Say Her Name movements triggered by the police murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor.

How did Atlanta Dream players react?

Aghast that their owner would seek to stifle their voices, the team's players consulted lawyers and players unions in August to decide on a strategy. Union president Nneka Ogwumike of the Los Angeles Sparks and Seattle Storm's champion player Sue Bird suggested the team should check out Loeffler's Senate competition in the November elections.



Atlanta Dream players (from left) Blake Dietrick, Elizabeth Williams, Betnijah Laney, Glory Johnson, Chennedy Carter in Warnock shirts. *Elizabeth Williams via The NYT*

At the time, Rev. Warnock was still not widely known. Stacey Abrams, the respected Democratic political organiser who had narrowly lost the race for Governor earlier, helped players across the league meet with Warnock over Zoom. Once assured, the league got behind the Democratic nominee.

What did the players actually do?

From August, the Dream donned

Warnock's name on their warm-up gear in televised games. For a whole week, other WNBA teams from New York, Seattle, Chicago, and Phoenix too, wore "Vote Warnock" shirts during warmups in televised games.

Dream guard Renee Montgomery sat out the 2020 WNBA season to focus on social justice initiatives and mass voter education about the Black victims of police brutal-

ity. They sustained the movement right up to this week, urging voters to track online if their vote had been counted.

How did the league respond?

After Loeffler dubbed BLM "mob rule", the league distanced itself, clarifying she wasn't part of day-to-day operations of the team. "The WNBA is based on the principle of equal and fair treatment of all people and we, along with the teams and players, will continue to use our platforms to vigorously advocate for social justice," the league said.

The views of Loeffler — who has also taken positions against abortion rights while owning a women's franchise — invited calls for a sanction from WNBA superstars Bird, Natasha Cloud of the Washington Mystics, and Skylar Diggins-Smith of the Phoenix Mercury. Dream players never mentioned Loeffler by name or attacked her — they just grew stronger in support of Rev. Warnock.

The league kicked off the season with uniforms bearing names of Floyd and Taylor, a leap from 2016 when black shirts were fined. WNBA — which Penn State professor Amira Rose Davis told *The New York Times* was "coded as younger, more urban, more woke" — had taken up cudgels at least two years before the NBA stirred to BLM. The league has 144 players who have fought

for equal pay for years, and "developed this backbone", Bird said.

How did the players' support help Warnock in the Senate runoff?

Within three days of the players coming out sporting Warnock shirts, his campaign raised more than \$236,000 in online donations, *The NYT* reported.

Warnock would eventually win the January 5 Senate race with 92 per cent of the Black vote — and also give a leg-up to his fellow Senate runner, Georgian Democrat Jon Ossoff, the son of Jewish immigrants, who won the second runoff.

What about the basketball team's ownership now?

Loeffler has said she has no plans to sell, even though NBA legend LeBron James has announced that he has put together a consortium willing to buy.

Loeffler — who was accused last year of benefiting from privileged Covid-19 information in unfair stock trades — did an about-turn on plans to challenge Biden's victory in the Senate after the January 6 invasion of the Capitol by Trump's mob.

Defeated, and her personal integrity in a shambles, it remains to be seen if she can hold on to the Dream.

15 ECONOMY



GOLD

₹49,763



RUPEE

₹73.24



OIL

\$55.42



SILVER

₹67,518

Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market; gold per 10 g, silver per 1 kg; Brent crude as of 2200 IST

SENSEX: 48,782.51 ▲ 689.19 NIFTY: 14,347.25 ▲ 209.90 NIKKEI: 28,139.03 ▲ 648.90 HANG SENG: 27,878.22 ▲ 329.70 FTSE: 6,866.78 ▲ 9.82 DAX: 14,072.91 ▲ 104.67

International market data till 1900 IST

INDUSTRY WATCH
STEEL PLANT EXPANSION

Mittal's wish list for Hazira project: cheap land, fast allotment, waivers, subsidies

JAY MAZOOMDAAR
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

IN AN elaborate wish list submitted to the Chief Minister's office, ArcelorMittal and Nippon Steel (India) Ltd has sought a slew of concessions from the Gujarat government as "expected assistance" for expansion of its project in Hazira, Surat. These include land at 2006 rates, land allotment within six months, condonation for violation of allotment conditions in the past, relaxation of compensatory requirements in lieu of using forest land, single-window clearances, special subsidies etc.

AMNS(I) is a 60:40 joint venture of ArcelorMittal and Nippon Steel Corporation, the world's largest and third-largest steel producers, respectively. In December 2019, the JV took over Essar Steel under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) by paying its creditors Rs 42,000 crore and injecting Rs 8,000 crore in the bankrupt company.

The *Indian Express* has reviewed the 8-page wish list handed over by AMNS(I) CEO Dilip Oommen at a meeting held on November 9 at the Chief Minister's office. In a hand-written note, Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister Nitin Patel referred the list to MK Das, Additional Chief Secretary (Industry and Mines) in the CMO, for "discussion".

Oommen did not comment on the specifics of the wish list. "We are getting full support and cooperation from the government of Gujarat. So far, land acquisition process is also on the right track. We do not see any roadblock or any major issue at the moment. We are coordinating with the government agencies at the state and the Centre. They are fully aware of our plan for development," he told the newspaper in an emailed statement.

Das is yet to respond to multiple phone calls, messages and emails. His office said that the queries emailed by *The Indian Express* were forwarded to the relevant officer.

The list of "expected cooperation" from the state government "to resolve certain difficult issues" facing the planned investment of Rs 35,000 crore by AMNS(I) include:

■ Fix the price of 72.62 hectares land pending with the Collector at the rates of 2006 when the application was moved by Essar Steel. Allocate another 35 hectares at 2008 rates.

■ Land allotment orders to be made available within six months of application. The forest department needs to allocate land identified for the expansion project located in the vicinity of the plant on a priority basis.

■ Waiver of the existing

DISCUSSIONS ON
AT CM'S OFFICE

■ In an 8-page wish list handed over by AMNS(I) CEO Dilip Oommen to the Chief Minister's office on November 9, the company has sought a slew of concessions from the Gujarat government to expand its project in Hazira, Surat

■ Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister Nitin Patel referred the list to Additional Chief Secretary (Industry and Mines) in the CMO, for "discussion"

condition of transferring double the area under the Forest Act and allow the same area of land to be transferred for compensatory afforestation in lieu of diverted forest land.

■ Appointment of a single nodal officer to ensure a single point of contact and a single-window system for timely approvals from the departments of industry, finance, revenue forest & environment, energy & petroleum, ports & transport, water supply etc.

■ A general notification expected from the CMO for all departments to expedite such approvals. The Chief Minister is expected to expedite approvals at various stages for proposals of AMNS(I) for allotment of government land and transfer of forest department lands at the earliest.

■ Given the quantum of the investment, the state is expected to provide subsidies and special concessions under the industrial policy and any other special concessions available.

The company also sought condonation of non-compliance or violation by Essar Steel of any prescribed conditions in land allotment orders with relief to AMNS(I) as a special case for any breach of such conditions under the Forest Act, 1980. AMNS(I) has indemnity from the past criminal liabilities of Essar Steel.

In December 2019, the Centre appointed the IBC to ring-fence corporate debtors from criminal proceedings against any offence committed prior to the commencement of the insolvency resolution process.

In the submission, AMNS(I) said its Hazira operations were "steadily picking up speed" following a lull during April-May 2020. The proposed Rs 35,000-crore investment would enhance the current production capacity of 8.6 MMTPA to 18 MMTPA in two phases, create jobs and "also lead to the development of the Hazira area", it claimed.

30-SHARE INDEX SOARS 689 POINTS TO 48,782

Biden confirmation, FPI inflows propel Sensex to all-time peak

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, JANUARY 8

DOMESTIC STOCK markets on Friday staged a strong rally amid strong global cues in the wake of clarity on the Joe Biden administration taking over in the US by January 20, the path for which has been now cleared by the Congress. With expectations of economic recovery and good corporate results adding to the buoyancy, the Sensex soared 689 points, or 1.43 per cent, to 48,782.51 and the Nifty50 jumped 210 points, or 1.48 per cent, to 14,347.25 on sustained buying support.

Foreign portfolio investors pumped in over Rs 6,000 crore into domestic stocks on Friday, signalling that inflows are set to continue in the coming weeks. If foreign inflows – which were at a record Rs 1,70,000 crore in 2020 – continue at this level, the Sensex is likely to cross the 50,000 mark in the coming days, said an analyst.

According to Vinod Nair, head of research at Geojit Financial services, the rally led by IT and auto stocks guided the domestic

EXPLAINED
Global cues help too

TRACKING OPTIMISTIC global cues, the Sensex started the day on a buoyant note and settled with healthy gains. Almost all the sectoral indices participated in the move, with IT, auto and oil & gas witnessing noticeable traction. The broader market, too, followed suit and ended higher in the range of 0.7-0.9 per cent.

market to discover new highs which was due to improved quarterly outlook. The expectations of TCS quarterly result – which was released later in the day – helped in cheering investors' mood. "Support from strong global indices also helped in raising domestic market sentiments. The official certification of Biden's presidency by the US Congress and easing of the political unrest as Trump promised a smooth

transition of power, have created an upbeat movement in the western market. The focus of Indian markets has shifted to third quarter earnings, ignoring high valuations," Nair said.

Tracking optimistic global cues, the benchmark started the day on a buoyant note and settled with healthy gains. Almost all the sectoral indices participated in the move with IT, auto and oil & gas witnessing noticeable traction. The broader market too followed the suit and ended higher in the range of 0.7-0.9 per cent.

Asian shares rose to record highs on Friday with Japan's Nikkei hitting a three-decade peak as investors looked beyond rising coronavirus cases and political unrest in the US to focus on hopes for an economic recovery later in the year. Most Asian equities were set to notch their biggest weekly gains in many months on Friday. European markets traded higher, too.

Meanwhile, the rupee staged a smart recovery from the day's lowest level to end 7 paise higher at 73.24 against the US dollar on Friday, tracking the rally in domestic equities.

S&P, Nasdaq at record highs; crude gains 2%

REUTERS
NEW YORK, JANUARY 8

THE S&P 500 and the Nasdaq scaled new highs on Friday, as hopes of more economic stimulus to ride out a pandemic-led downturn eclipsed concerns over a significant loss of pace in US labour market recovery.

The S&P 500 closed above 3,800 points for the first time on Thursday. At 11:36 a.m. ET the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 80.08 points, or 0.26 per cent, to 30,961.05, the S&P 500 gained 6.19 points, or 0.16 per cent, to 3,809.89 and the Nasdaq Composite gained 78.76 points, or 0.60 per cent, to 13,146.27.

Oil prices hit 11-month highs and were on track for a weekly gain on Friday. Brent crude climbed 1.04 cents, or 1.9 per cent, to \$55.42 a barrel by 11:33 a.m. EST, the highest since late February.

VIRTUAL INTERACTION WITH PM

Economists call for accelerated privatisation and simpler GST

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

AHEAD OF the Budget for FY22, a group of economists on Friday asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to rationalise direct and indirect tax regimes, undertake further bank capitalisation, accelerate privatisation and boost public spending on infrastructure projects to create jobs.

In the video conference, also attended by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, officials from Prime Minister's Office, Finance Ministry and NITI Aayog, economists also asked for measures to bridge the gap in poverty alleviation programmes by implementing technology for better targeting

AMID COVID

'Electric two-wheeler sales tepid despite govt subsidy'

Sales of electric two-wheelers (e-2W) in India remains tepid despite near-term outlook remaining unchanged and government's subsidy, Icra Ratings said

2% of target: Under the three year tenure of FAME-II scheme – FY20-FY22 – e-2W sales have been only 2 per cent of the targeted 10 lakh unit sales as on September 30, 2020 halfway mark

<1%: Share of e-2W sales within total two-wheeler sales in FY20

Reasons for low response to FAME-II scheme:

- Minimum localisation requirement
- Exclusion of lead-acid based e-2W
- Lack of consumer awareness about subsidy
- Low acceptability led by lack of product knowledge
- After-sales service concerns

Why is it important: Demand and volumes of e-2Ws have seen very lackadaisical growth in recent years, despite the Centre's thrust on adoption of electric vehicles through the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles in India (FAME-II) scheme

Source: Icra Ratings/PTI

TCS net rises 7.2%

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, JANUARY 8

OVERCOMING SEASONAL headwinds, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), India's largest software exporter, posted a 7.2 per cent increase in net profit at Rs 8,701 crore for the quarter ended December 2020 as against Rs 8,118 crore in the same period a year ago. On a quarter-on-quarter basis, the net profit rose by 3.2 per cent from the September quarter.

Revenue increased by 5.4 per cent to Rs 42,015 crore from Rs 39,854 crore a year ago.

Rajesh Gopinathan, MD and CEO, said: "Growing demand for core transformation services and strong revenue conversion from earlier deals have driven a power-

TCS declared an interim dividend of ₹6 per share

ful momentum that helped us overcome seasonal headwinds and post one of our best performances in a December quarter."

The sequential growth was led by North America (3.3 per cent), India (18.1 per cent), UK (4.5 per cent) and Continental Europe (2.5 per cent). Other markets grew as well with Asia Pacific growing 2.6 per cent, MEA 6.7 per cent, and Latin America 3.1 per cent. "We are entering the new year on an optimistic note...our confidence reinforced by the continued strength in our order book and deal pipeline," he said. TCS declared an interim dividend of Rs 6 per share.

BRIEFLY

SBI concession on home loans

Mumbai: State Bank of India on Friday announced an interest concession of up to 30 basis points on home loans and a 100 per cent waiver on processing fees. The new home loan interest rates are linked to CIBIL score and start from 6.80 per cent for loans up to Rs 30 lakh and 6.95 per cent for loans above Rs 30 lakh, a bank release said. **PTI**

Boeing to pay \$2.5 billion

Washington: Boeing will pay \$2.5 billion to settle a US Justice Department investigation and admit that employees misled regulators about the safety of its 737 Max aircraft. **AP**

After tie-up reports, Hyundai says in early talks with Apple on EV

HEEKYONG YANG
& HYUNJOO JIN
SEOUL, JANUARY 8

HYUNDAI MOTOR Co said on Friday it was in early talks with Apple, after local media reported the firms were discussing an electric car and battery tie-up, sending the South Korean automaker's shares surging 25 per cent.

The report comes weeks after Reuters reported Apple was moving forward with self-driving car technology and aimed to produce a passenger vehicle that could include its own breakthrough battery technology as early as 2024.

Earlier on Friday, *Korea Economic Daily TV* said the iPhone maker and Hyundai were in discussions to develop self-driving electric vehicles by 2027 and develop batteries at US factories op-



Apple, which aims to produce a passenger vehicle as early as 2024, refused to comment. *File*

erated by either Hyundai or its affiliate Kia Motors Corp. The broadcaster didn't cite sources.

"Apple and Hyundai are in discussion, but as it is early stage, nothing has been decided," Hyundai said in a statement. It didn't say what the talks were about and omitted a reference in an earlier statement to Apple being in discussions with other global au-

tomakers as well as Hyundai.

In a regulatory filing issued later, the automaker said it was "getting requests for cooperation on joint development of autonomous electric vehicles from various companies", without identifying any of them.

Apple declined to comment. The iPhone maker is known to keep product plans under tight wraps. An Apple-branded car could be a big challenge to electric vehicle (EV) leader Tesla Inc. It remains unclear who would assemble such a car, but analysts have said they expect the company to rely on a manufacturing partner. "We continue to strongly believe Apple ultimately announces an EV strategic partnership in 2021 that lays the groundwork to enter the burgeoning EV space," Wedbush analysts said in a note. **REUTERS**

Office of the Chief Engineer (East) cum Addl. Secretary, C.A.D., Jaipur
Phone 0141-2709487, Email:- ceedajipur@rajasthan.gov.in
No.- F-147/CE(E)/CAD/T/NIT/2020-21/3779 दिनांक :- 4.1.2021

E-TENDER NOTICE No. 02/2020-21
On behalf of Governor of Rajasthan E-Tenders are invited from "AA" Class category or equivalent contractors/firms registered in CAD/Water Resources Department and State Government/Other State Government/Authorized organizations of Central Government/CPWD/Post and telegraph department/ Railway etc. for the **Balance work of Revamping work of Palayathia Sub Branch & its minors off taking from KM 0.00 to 12.30 km, RMC Chambal, CAD Kota** amounting to Rs. 2651.11 Lac. The tender documents & other details may be downloaded and uploaded from the following websites:
1 <http://www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> 2 www.dipronline.in
3 <http://www.spppraj.nic.in> Sd/- (Ashim Markandey)
Chief Engineer (East) Cum Additional Secretary C.A.D. Jaipur
UBN- CAD-2021 WLOB 00198
DIPR/C/108/2021

SKN College of Agriculture, Jobner (Jaipur)
No.F/ RKVY/Estt/SKNCOA/2021/2084 Dated: 05.01.2021

WALK-IN-INTERVIEW
A walk-in-interview for the contractual position of Senior Research Fellow (SRF) under RKVY-11 under head 2-contractual services will be held to engage on fixed emoluments basis in the RKVY-11 project, **SKN College of Agriculture Jobner, Jaipur on 13.01.2021 at 10.00 A.M.** The engagement shall be purely on contract basis and is co-terminus with the project. However, it can be terminated without prior notice at any time. The details about qualifications, experience, emoluments and other terms & conditions may be seen at the University Website: www.sknaau.ac.in

DEAN SKN
COA, Jobner, Jaipur
R.O.No.: Samwad/C/8629/2020-2021

RAJASTHAN RAJYA VIDYUT PRASARAN NIGAM LIMITED
Office of the Superintending Engineer (Proc.-II), Jaipur

NOTICE INVITING e-BIDS
Online e-bids are invited from interested bidders for purchase of 220 kV and 132 kV Control & Relay Panels (BN-9016002013, UBN- VPN2021GLOB01399) up to 15:00 hrs. dated 16.02.2021, 33 kV Isolators (BN-9016002014, UBN- VPN2021GLOB01400) up to 15:00 hrs. dated 12.02.2021, 120 kV Lightning Arresters (BN-9016002015, UBN- VPN2021GLOB01401) up to 15:00 hrs. dated 12.02.2021, Marshalling Kiosks (BN-9016002016, UBN- VPN2021GLOB01402) up to 15:00 hrs. dated 24.02.2021, 33 kV RVTs (BN-9016002017, UBN- VPN2021GLOB01403) upto 15:00 hrs. dated 24.02.2021 and 33 kV Series Reactors (BN-9016002018, UBN- VPN2021GLOB01404) upto 15:00 hrs. dated 02.03.2021. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (<http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>, <http://sppprajasthan.gov.in>) of the state and <http://energy.rajasthan.gov.in/rvpnl>

Superintending Engineer (Proc.-II), Jaipur
Raj, Samwad/C/8617/2020-21 R.R.V.P.N./TR-5039/2021

THE FERTILISERS AND CHEMICALS TRAVANCORE LIMITED
PIONEERS IN PROGRESS (A Government of India Enterprise)
FACT-PD ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING, UDYOGAMANDAL- 683501, KOCHI, KERALA
Phone: 0484-2568122 / 2568123
E-mail: eldose@facttd.com / jayakumar@facttd.com, Website: www.fact.co.in

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDERS
Online competitive two bid tenders are invited for the following works through www.eprocure.gov.in

1). Tiling work in connection with the renovation of MKK Nair hall in FACT Udyogamandal Township
Tender No : 3009/2020-2021/E22788 e-tender ID : 2021_FACT_608441_1
2) Providing Pay loaders with operators & without fuel at Willington Island, FACT-CD
Tender No : 4200/2020-2021/E22782 e-tender ID : 2021_FACT_608139_1
Last date & time for submission of bid : 29.01.2021 at 11.00 hrs.
The complete bidding process will be online (e-tendering) only. All the notifications, Time extension, Corrigendum, Addendum etc. if any, regarding this tender hereafter will be hosted in the website only and will not be published in newspapers. Sd/-
Date: 08.01.2021 SM (Mat C)

Government of Rajasthan
Commissionerate of Horticulture,
Pant Krishi Bhawan, Jaipur-05
Tel. No. 0141-2227606; E-mail: jdh.hort@rajasthan.gov.in Dated: 01.01.2021
No. F1(DH)/PMKSY-MI/RG/2020-21/3689

Notice
Offers are invited for online registration from Micro Irrigation System Manufacturers for installation/supply of BIS marked Drip/Sprinkler sets to the cultivators of Rajasthan under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchay Yojana- Micro Irrigation for the year 2020-21 to 2022-23. It may be noted that this is not a Government purchase. Online application needs to be performed at RajKisan Saathi Portal/ Application (<http://rajkisan.rajasthan.gov.in>). This application functionality will open from 11.01.2021 for the registration seeking firms. The details of terms and conditions are available on the website (www.horticulture.rajasthan.gov.in) of Department of Horticulture, Rajasthan.

Sd/-
(Dr. Om Prakash)
Commissioner Horticulture
DIPR/C/149/2021

V. O. CHIDAMBARANAR PORT TRUST
CIVIL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
Tuticorin – 628 004.

No. (C) 57 / 19 / 2020 – EST Dated: 08.01.2021
NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER CUM e-AUCTION No. EST – 1 / 2020 – 21 (only through e-Tendering mode)

a) Name of Work	Allotment of port land for 30 years lease period on upfront payment basis in V.O.Chidambaranar Port for promoting port related industries under Coastal Employment Unit (CEU).
b) Period of Lease	30 Years
c) Earnest Money Deposit	EMD will be 10% of the Reserve Price per SQM for 30 years as mentioned in Table – I and Table – II of Annexure – “A” to be paid upto Rs.25,00,000/- (Rupees Twenty Five Lakhs only) through RTGS only in favour of V.O. Chidambaranar Port Trust and balance through Bank Guarantee from any Nationalized bank / Scheduled bank as per the format prescribed in Annexure – “D” in favour of FA&CAO, V.O. Chidambaranar Port Trust payable at Tuticorin. (Bank A/c details given in the document clause No.1.14 in Chapter-1).
d) Downloading of Tender document from website	From 11-01-2021 to 10-02-2021
e) Pre-Bid Queries	Tenderers may send queries in advance on or before 20-01-2021 upto 17:00 hours to e-mail ID: ce@vocport.gov.in
f) Pre-Bid Meeting	Pre-bid meeting 22-01-2021 at 11:00 hrs through video conference.
g) Last date & Time of submission of tender online	10.02.2021 at 15:00 Hrs.
h) Opening of Technical Bid online Date & Time	10.02.2021 at 15:30 Hrs.
i) Validity of Tender	180 Days

The e-tender cum e-auction documents can either be downloaded from Port website www.vocport.gov.in and www.tenderwizard.com / VOCPT

Sd/-
CHIEF ENGINEER & ESTATE OFFICER
V.O. Chidambaranar Port Trust

This is to inform to the Public at large that the Original Builder/Buyer Agreements dated 22-Feb-1992 & 08-April-1994 executed by Arya Shamali Jaipalmit Pvt. Ltd., Jaivav Samkoti & The D&S Registered Stockholders (I&S) Association Ltd. through Mr. Vikram Sheel Gupta in favor of M/s Integer Management Services Pvt. Ltd. through Mr. Somnath Arya and thereafter assigned to M/s Precision Equipment through its proprietor Sh. Parmeshwar Dayal Agarwal, of Property bearing Unit No. 502 & 503, Avantika Complex, 13, L.S.C. -3 Block, Sector, New Delhi-110017, has been lost/misplaced by my client Sh. Parmeshwar Dayal Agarwal who has tried his best to find the same but those are not traceable. Thereafter, he made online complaint to P.R. Crime Branch, Delhi vide LR No. 55573/2020 dated 09-Sep-2020.

Any/anyone finds, please contact at 9810393645

Sanjeev Kumar Mallik
(Advocate)

Enl. No.: D/41/2000
Ch-109, Patiala House Court
CN-110001, Mob. 9818959292



HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT

CHENNAI KANYAKUMARI INDUSTRIAL CORRIDOR PROJECT

BID NOTICE NO. OCB/CKICP/MC-4/EPC-09/01, Dated.07.01.2021

1. The Superintending Engineer (H), PIU, CKICP for and on behalf of Governor of State of Tamil Nadu invites bids for "Upgrading Mayiladuthurai-Thiruvannur Section of SH23 from Design Chainage Km 4+500 to Km 7+430, Km 10+130 to Km 20+925, Km 21+591 to Km 25+400 & Km 27+400 to Km 35+632 to two lane with paved shoulders and construction of two bypasses for a length of 4.70 Km from Km 7+430 to Km 10+130 and Km 25+400 to Km 27+400 and maintenance of entire Project stretch (30.466 km) for 7 years under Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) Mode".
2. The bid document will be available online in the website, www.tntenders.gov.in from 11.01.2021 at 16.00 hours (IST).
3. Pre-bid Meeting will be held on 25.01.2021 at 11.30 hours (IST). Kindly refer the Invitation For Bid (IFB) uploaded in www.tntenders.gov.in for further details.
4. A non-refundable fee of **Rs.20,000/-** (inclusive of tax) is required to be paid towards Bid Document Fee.
5. Deadline for online submission of bids: on or before 15.00 hours (IST) on 23.02.2021.
6. Online Technical Bid opening at 16.00 hours (IST) on 23.02.2021.
7. Further Addendum in this regard will be available only in e-procurement portal www.tntenders.gov.in, if any.

Superintending Engineer (H),
PIU, Chennai Kanyakumari Industrial Corridor Project
CKICP Complex, HRS Campus, 76 Sardar Patel Road, Guindy,
Chennai- 600 025, Tamil Nadu, India. Telephone No: +91 44 2235 0610
Email: supeckicp@gmail.com / Website: www.ckicp.tnhighways.gov.in

DIPR/137/Tender/2021

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

E-Tender Notice No.: Sr. DEE/RS/ELS/CNB/2020-21/RET-07 **Date: 0**


E-Tender Notice

Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer/RS/North Central Railway/Kanpur, for and on behalf of the President of India, following open E-Tender for the following work up to Tender Opening Date & Time. The details of the tenders are as follows:-

Tender No.	Name of work	Advertised Value ₹
ELS-CNB-2020-21-RET-07	Washing & cleaning of complete loco body, both cab, corridor path, look out glass, elliptical glass and cattle guard of conventional and 3 phase Electric Locomotives at Electric Loco Shed, North Central Railway, Kanpur for period of three years QTY. 6000 Nos.	27.02,64,000 (Twenty Seven Lakh Two Thousand Six Hundred Forty only)

Completion period of Work: 03 Years. **Tender Document Cost:** ₹ NIL **Tender Opening Date & Time:** 29.12.2019, 15:30hrs. **Note:** 1. The complete information along with tender document of above e-Tenders is available on www.ireps.gov.in up to due date & time of tender opening. 2. Bids, other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against Tenders. For this purpose, tenderers are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website. Digital Signature Certificates issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. 3. Offer rates quoted in the form of e-tender sheet signed digitally shall be final. No other documents related to offer rates shall be entertained. Tenderers are to attach any document related to offer rates (except undertaking(s) asked). These documents shall be treated as void and shall not be considered for evaluation of offer. 4. Documents being attached should be signed by the tenderer. 5. This tender notice has also been uploaded on www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in in case of any difficulty alloted on the website of IREPS may be approached.

North central railways
 @ CP



कार्यालय अतिरिक्त मुख्य अभियन्ता

जनस्वास्थ्य अभियांत्रिकी विभाग, जयपुर क्षेत्र-द्वितीय, गांधीनगर, जयपुर

Telephone: 0141 2702700 E-mail: ace.region2jaipur@yahoo.com

क्रमांक:-अमुज/जव/क्षेत्र (द्वितीय)/2020-21/7894-905
दिनांक:-

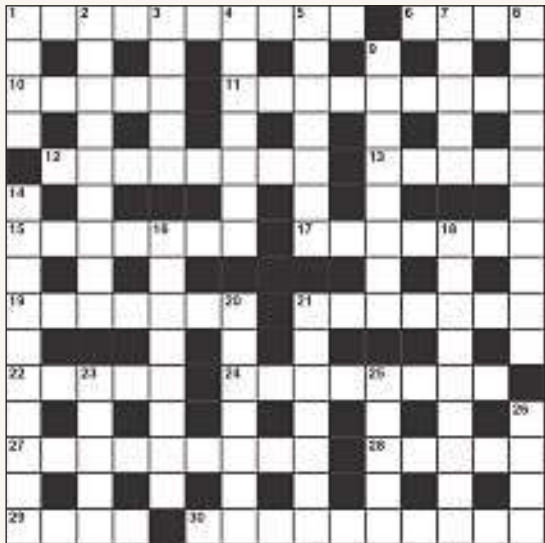
निविदा सूचना

राजस्थान के राज्यपाल महोदय की ओर से निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु जन स्वास्थ्य अभियांत्रिकी विभाग एवं राज्य सरकार के अधिकृत संदर्भनी/केन्द्रीय लोक निर्माण विभाग/डाक एवं दूरसंचार विभाग/रेलवे इत्यादि में उपयुक्त पंजीकृत संवेदकों से निर्धारित प्रपत्र में ई-प्रोक्यूरमेंट प्रक्रिया द्वारा निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं।

S. No.	NIT No.	Name of work	Estt. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Bid Security	Tender Fee (Rs.)	Tender document download starting Date	Last dt. online submission of bids	Technical Bid Opening date
1	05/2020-21	“Work of Construction of OHSRs, CWS, Pump House including electro-mechanical works, P/L/J of rising main Pipeline from Pump House to OHSRs, P/L/J of Pipeline from OHSRs to VTCs, P/L/J of Internal Village distribution network and providing Functional Household Tap water connection (FHTCs) including 5 years O & M on Single point responsibility, Turnkey Basis, in 13 villages and Dharies of MLA Constituency Dudu of District Jaipur, from Pachewar Pump House, under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)”	1836.21	In lieu of security a Bid Security declaration shall be given. The bid security declaration shall be given in the pre-scribed form uploaded on the Website http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in in http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in with stamp duty of Rs. 50/- + 30% surcharge as prescribed.	20000	1.1.2021 At 03.00 PM	13.1.2021 Up to 06.00 PM	15.1.2021 At 03:00 PM

हस्ता./-
(मनीष बेनीवाल)
अतिरिक्त मुख्य अभिन्ता
जन स्वास्थ्य अभियांत्रिकी विभाग
जयपुर क्षेत्र-द्वितीय, जयपुर

CROSSWORD 4323



ACROSS

1. Best part of a collection of horse nails (5,5)
6. The money's right as well (4)
10. Unfortunately the lady's upset (5)
11. Nogo data for forensic riot (9)
12. You do what you like with it (4,4)
13. The very bottom of a broken drain (5)
15. Variety of red rose seen in church (7)
17. Record-holders (7)
19. Demands its sins be found out (7)
21. The case of the diplomat's aide (7)
22. Fall into part of the main current (5)
24. A bit over-developed and not at all successful (8)
27. Found to be less habit-forming (9)
28. There may be a few (5)
29. Young leader in wild set makes painful sight (4)
30. Break away from the craft (5,5)

DOWN

1. Girl in glasses (4)
2. Military command to requisition weapons (5,4)
3. Pen has the French way of writing (5)
4. They take the blow and shake in panic (7)
5. Lots may be held in them (7)
7. Audibly permitted (5)
8. Sweets I'd served up in a grievous condition (10)
9. A wing consisting of ten parts (8)
14. First race I organise for craftsmen (10)
16. Give an account of French writer (8)
18. Eve's vicar is upset when the order's changed (4,5)
20. Servile as East Europeans? (7)
21. One more metamorphosis on earth (7)
23. She's out in a yacht (5)
25. Everything unqualified (5)
26. Present her with a key (4)

Solution Crossword 4322 Across: 1 Ordeals, 5 Elbow, 8 Sugarbeet, 9 Rod, 10 Trap, 12 Adhesion, 14 Regain, 15 Strand, 17 Sunshine, 18 Pets, 21 Ski, 22 Cigarette, 24 Sharp, 25 Overall, Down: 1 Onset, 2 Dog, 3 Ais, 4 Steady, 5 Entreaty, 6 Barricade, 7 Widened, 11 Argentina, 13 Nightcap, 14 Resists, 16 Adagio, 19 Swell, 20 Free, 23 Tea.

JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.
Creativity is allowing yourself to ___ mistakes. Art is knowing which ones to ___ - Scott Adams (4,...,4)

REDYE



AACDMP



LMYAE



ACHUKK

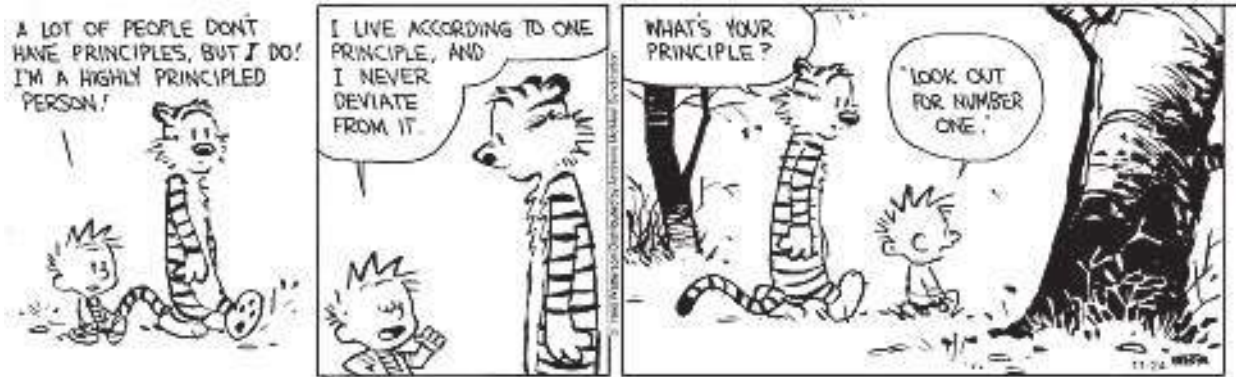


SOLUTION: REDYE: NEEDY, MEXLEY, MADCAP, CHURCHKA
Answer: Creativity is allowing yourself to make mistakes. Art is knowing which ones to make.
- Scott Adams

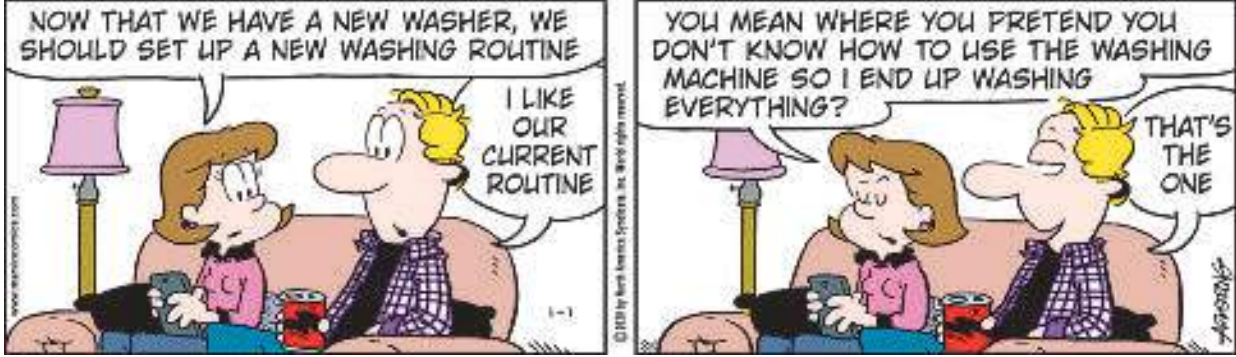
OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



Difficulty Level 5s

Instructions
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level

1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius



SOLUTION SUDOKU 4346



JAWAHARLAL NEHRU PORT TRUST
(TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT)
ISO 9001:2015, ISO 14001:2015, ISO 27001:2013, ISO 45001:2018 CERTIFIED
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST : JNP/CM(T)/ICD/EOI/Dwarf-Depot/2021/1
Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust invites the Expression of Interest (EOI) for Management, Maintenance and Operation of Dedicated Dwarf Container Depot (D-Depot) inside the Port Area at JNPT. The JNPT does not constitute any binding/commitment to invite any or all the parties in the subsequent bidding process. JNPT will not be responsible/liable to any party in any way for costs associated in preparation and submission of EOI. Detailed "EOI" may be seen on <http://www.jnport.gov.in> Interested parties may submit "EOI" online on CPP Portal <http://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app> Chief Manager (Traffic)

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH MOHALI
(Established by Ministry of Education, Govt. of India)
Sector-81, Knowledge City, P.O. Mansuli, S.A.S. Nagar-140306 (Ph.) Ph.: +91-172-2240086 & 2240121 • Fax : +91-172-2240124, 2245266 • <http://www.iisermohali.ac.in> • Email: stores@iisermohali.ac.in PAN NO. - AAAAH1781K GST No.- 03AAAHH1781K22S
ISERM/1419/2021 Pur Dt: 08.01.2021
Online tender(s) are invited on behalf of the Director, IISER Mohali at E-procurement portal i.e. <http://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app> for the following items.
Tender Ref. No. Description
ISERM/1419/2021 Pur Supply, installation and commissioning of Three-Channel NMR Spectrometer with accessories The items / services are reserved for exclusive purchase from Local Domestic supplier.
Last date & time for upload the tender: 4th February, 2021 up to 11am
For detail and apply online, please visit the website <http://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>.
http://www.iisermohali.ac.in. Bids(s) shall be accepted only through online mode and no manual submission of the same shall be entertained except tender fee and EMD. Late tenders will not be accepted. This is a domestic Tender according to the DPMT Order dated 15/07/2017 and subsequent amendments to the order for Public Procurement Preference & PROVISION FOR LOCAL SUPPLIERS TOWARDS PREFERENCE TO MAKE IN INDIA. -sd- Assistant Registrar (S&P)

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH MOHALI
(Estd. by Ministry of Education, Govt. of India)
Sector-81, Knowledge City, P.O. Mansuli, S.A.S. Nagar, Mohali-140306, Punjab Ph.: 0172-2240086 Fax: 0172-2249124 Email: stores@iisermohali.ac.in ISERM/1415/2021 Pur Dated: 08.01.2021
Short E-Tender Notice for Catering Services
Online tenders(s) are invited on behalf of Director, IISER Mohali at E-Procurement Portal i.e. <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app> for the following items :-
e-Tender Ref. No. Description Last Date & Time for Upload the Tender
ISERM/1415/2021 Pur Catering Service for Hostel No. 5, 7 & 8 Pay and Eat System 01.02.2021 upto 11 a.m.
For detail and apply online, please visit the website <http://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app> ; <http://www.iisermohali.ac.in> Bids(s) shall be accepted only through online mode and no manual submission of the same shall be entertained except tender fee and EMD. Late tenders will not be accepted. Assistant Registrar (S&P)

आगरा विकास प्राधिकरण, आगरा
ताजनगरी आवासीय योजना में निर्मित क्लब के संचालन हेतु अनुभवी संचालकों के चयन हेतु
ई-ऑफर सूचना
क्लब का विवरण- कुल आच्छादित क्षेत्रफल लगभग 1366.50 वर्ग मी० (भूतल, प्रथम तल एवं द्वितीय तल)। स्वीमिंग पूल, विल्ड्रेन प्ले एरिया, स्नूकर टेबिल, बास्केट बाल, कैरम, शतरंज, म्यूजिक, डांस, जिमनेजियम 'मीटिंग', योगा/मेडिटेशन/एरोबिक्स, कैफेटेरिया, ब्यूटी पार्लर स्पा आदि क्रिया कलाओं के लिये अनुमत्य व स्थान का प्राविधान।
निविदा प्रपत्र मूल्य- 2800/- धरोहर धनराशि- 3,50,000/- अनुबन्ध अवधि- 07 वर्ष
● जैसा है, जहाँ के आधार पर।
● उक्त ऑफर/निविदायें दिनांक 30.01.2021 को आमंत्रित की जाती है। निविदा प्रपत्र दिनांक 11.01.2021 के अपराह्न 12.30 बजे से 29.01.2021 के अपराह्न 3:00 बजे तक ई-निविदा पोर्टल www.etender.up.nic.in पर डाउनलोड/अपलोड की जा सकती है।
● निविदा सम्बन्धी विस्तृत शर्तें एवं अन्य विवरण प्राधिकरण की वेबसाइट www.adaagra.in पर देखी जा सकती है। मुख्य अभियंता

ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL, SHANKAR VIHAR
(NEAR MAHIPALPUR) DELHI CANTT-10
Tele No - 011-26153559
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)
EOI is solicited from the leading vendors for supply and installation of CCTV Cameras in all classrooms. Details for the above and EOI form are available at school counter against cash/draft/on line transfer/POS of ₹ 500/- each. Forms duly filled be submitted by 25 Jan 2021.
Chairman

राष्ट्रीय जलविज्ञान संस्थान, रुड़की
(जल शक्ति मंत्रालय, जल संचयन, नदी विकास और गंगा संरक्षण विभाग के अंतर्गत भारत सरकार की संसाधन विभाग)
निविदा संख्या: S(XV)/NIH-2020-Pur-10 दिनांक: 08.01.2021
निविदा आमंत्रण निवेदन: NOTICE INVITING TENDER
निवेदन, राष्ट्रीय जलविज्ञान संस्थान रुड़की की ओर से निम्नलिखित उपकरण खरीदने हेतु सौकर्य निविदायें (Technical and Commercial Bids) प्राप्त में निम्नलिखित आ आ उनके अधिकृत अधिकारी से प्राप्त की जाती है। (Director, National Institute of Hydrology, Roorkee invites Sealed Bid in two bid (Technical and Financial) from reputed Manufacture or their authorized dealers in India to purchase of the following equipment:
Sl.No. Name of Hydrological Instrument Quantity
1. SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF STANDALONE AIR TEMPERATURE AND HUMIDITY AND RAIN GAGE SENSORS WITH DATA LOGGER 07 SET
2. SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF SOIL TEMPERATURE, SOIL MOISTURE AND ELECTRIC CONDUCTIVITY SENSOR WITH DATA LOGGER 06 SET
3. SUPPLY OF USDIH-48 SEDIMENT SAMPLERS WITH WADING RODS 02 SET
4. SUPPLY OF HAND-HELD FLOW PROBE 01 SET
निविदा से संबंधित दस्तावेज संस्थान के द्वारा अनुमान से प्राप्त करें अथवा संस्थान की वेबसाइट www.nihroorkee.gov.in से डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है। निविदा चयन करने की अंतिम तिथि 29.01.2021 दोपहर 3.00 बजे तक है। प्राप्त निविदा दिनांक 29.01.2021 को सां 4.00 बजे खोली जाएगी। (The tenders may be obtained from the office of Purchase Officer on payment of Tender Cost or the same may be downloaded from the website of NIH www.nihroorkee.gov.in. The tender shall be received in the office of Purchase Officer on or before 29.01.2021 up to 3.00 PM and Technical Bids will be opened on 29.01.2021 at 4.00 PM. द्वारा अधिकारी/Purchase Officer

SEARCH FOR KIDNAPPED PERSON
General public is hereby informed that this person namely Sardar Ravinder Singh S/o Late Sh. Dilip Singh R/o E-75, 3rd Floor, Lajpat Nagar 1st, Delhi Age : 54 years, Height : 5'5", Face : Oval, Complexion : Wheatish, Built : Thin, wearing Navy blue colour turban, blue colour shirt, black colour pant and black colour leather shoes in feet, has been missing since 24.09.2018 from near Dr. Shroff Eye Hospital, Darya Ganj from the jurisdiction of P.S. Darya Ganj, Delhi. In this regard DD No. 19-A dated 26.09.2018 has been lodged at P.S. Darya Ganj, Delhi.
Any person having any information or clue about this missing person may kindly inform to the following:-
E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in SHO : P.S. Darya Ganj, Delhi
Website: <http://cbi.nic.in> Ph. : 011-23279331,
Fax: 24368639, 23274683
Tel.: 24368638/24368641

UNIDENTIFIED DEAD BODY
General Public is hereby informed that an one male person was found dead at Rain Basera, Padam Nagar, Delhi dated 18.12.2020. In this regard a vide DD No. 31-A, dated 18.12.2020 has been registered at P.S. Sarai Rohilla, Delhi. The description of the dead body is given as under Name: Subhash Das, S/o: Nityanand, R/o: Unkonwn, Age: About 40 years, Height: 5'4", Complexion: Sallow, Built: Thin, Face: Long, Wearing: Cream Colour Jacket and Black Colour Pant. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the dead person but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about this dead person please inform undersigned.
SHO P.S. Sarai Rohilla, Delhi
DP/861/N/2021 Ph.: 011-23693611, 7058074133

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ
L.No.C/132/PUBLICITY/UNSOLICITED/2021 Date : 06.01.2021
OPEN TENDER
On behalf of The President of India, Divisional Railways Manager (Commercial) North Central Railways/Jhansi invites open tenders for Installation and maintenance of Yatri Pratikshalay along with publicity right for the period of five years at Jhansi Railway station of Jhansi division under Signal packet system as per following details:-
Tender No. Name of Work
166-UNSOLICITED-21 Installation and maintenance of 06 nos of Yatri Pratikshalay along with publicity right outside Jhansi Railway station.
Period of Contract : 05 Years, Minimum reserved L/Fee of contract for First Year (in ₹) Exl. GST : 2,40,000/-, Total Advertise area (sqft) : 289, Earnest Money (in ₹) : 25,000/-, Cost of Tender Form (in ₹) Inc. GST : 2360/-, Tender closing date and time : 08.02.2021 At 15:00 hrs.
On line tenders will only be accepted. Manual/Postal/e-mail, FAX by hand tenders will not be accepted. Bidders are advised to obtain class III digital signature certificate with company name & register the same with www.ireps.gov.in in Tender document cost & Earnest money can be paid only through online e-payment gateway as provided in www.ireps.gov.in For further details please visit the website www.ireps.gov.in. 20/21 (SP)
North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @CPRONCR

कार्यालय उपायुक्त, गुरुग्राम (लघु सचिवालय),
कार्यालय दूरभाष 0124-2321144, फैक्स नं. 0124-2325500
RECRUITMENT
Application for the following post is invited separately for each post to be filled. Application duly filled in alongwith self attested copies of necessary documents must reach by Regd Post/Speed Post /by hand delivery only to the Deputy Commissioner, Gurugram on all working days (except Saturday, Sunday and holiday) during office hours from 9.00 A.M. to 5.00 P.M. Application received upto 20.01.2021.
Sr. No. Name of Post Number of Post Fixed Remuneration (Per Month) Qualification
1. Tehsildar 1 40,000 Atleast 15 years service as Tehsildar, Naib Tehsildar out of which 5 years as Tehsildar in the Revenue Department and must be a graduate.
2. Kanungo 1 25000 Atleast 10 year service as Field Kanungo in Revenue Department
3. Patwari 1 22000 Atleast 10 years service as Field Patwari in Revenue Department
4. Assistant 1 25000 Atleast 5 years service as Assistant in Revenue Department and must be Graduate
NOTE: 1. Sr. No. 1 to 4 shall be recruited on contractual basis out of the retired officers of the Revenue Department of Haryana, as per outsourcing policy of the Government.
हस्ता/-
कृते उपायुक्त, गुरुग्राम।
13357/HRY

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
SHER-I-KASHMIR INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, SOURA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MECHANICAL
E-mail: mechanicalskims@gmail.com
SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING E-TENDERS
Gist of e-NIT No. 59 of 2020-21 Dated. 06.01.2021
For and on behalf of Lt. Governor U.T. of Jammu & Kashmir, Executive Engineer, Mechanical, SKIMS, Soura Srinagar, invites online e-bids in two (02) cover system from OEM or his Authorized Representative/ Authorized Dealers or Registered/Reputed/Experienced Firms having expertise as detailed in the tender document for the following works:
Sr. No. Name of the Work Estimated Cost (in Rs.)
1. Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Hot and Cold, Inverter Technology based high Wall Mounted Split Type Air Conditioning Units at various areas of SKIMS, Soura. Rs. 10,50,000/-
The complete tender document is available at website <http://jktenders.gov.in>. Interested Bidders/Tenderers may view, download the e-bid document, seek clarifications and submit their bids online upto the date and time mentioned in the table below. Tender Document contains qualifying criteria for bidders. Specifications, Bills of Quantities & Terms and conditions of the contract and other relevant details.
i) Date and Time of Downloading/Sale of Tender Documents (Starting Date) 07.01.2021 at 11.00 Hour
ii) Date & Time of Bidding Queries/Clarification/Pre-bid meet 12.01.2021 upto 14.00 Hours
iii) Last Date & Time of Bid Uploading 13.01.2021 upto 16.00 Hour
iv) Date of Submission of Hard Copies (Original EMD/FDR & DD only) 14.01.2021 upto 14.00 Hour
v) Date & Time of Commercial/Technical Bid (Cover-I) Opening 15.01.2021 at 11.00 hours (or next convenient day)
vi) Date & Time of Financial Bid (Cover-IInd) Opening Shall be intimated separately
vii) Cost of e-Bid Document Rs. 500/- (Rupees Five Hundred only)
viii) Amount of Earnest Money Deposit (CDR/FDR) Rs. 21000/- (Rupees Twenty One Thousand and only)
ix) Completion Time 15 Days
x) Budget Head CD-165 for the Year 2020-21
No. SIMS 139 EX/MECH/2019-20/530/21-3499-3509-5900-03 Sd/-
Dated: 06.01.2021 SIMS-5902 Executive Engineer, Mechanical, SKIMS

DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)
If you are to broaden your support or extend your horizons over the coming months, you'd better start now. Try arousing emotional sympathy, but without in any way slipping into self-pity. Other people are hardly likely to support you if they don't think you're concerned about them.
TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)
It's bound to be a little longer before you fully recover from last year's minor setbacks. In part, that's a tribute to the power of your memory. Today's lunar position offers travel as an escape route, but also advises you to check out the ethical implications: you want to do the right thing.
GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
The Sun and Mercury command you to stick to hard work today - and that's an order. Yet, other planets give completely contradictory advice, and if you're determined to enjoy yourself then you should aim for imaginative pursuits, not to mention those which could bring in extra cash.
CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
The art of compromise doesn't always come naturally, which is why you may now have a slight difficulty fitting in with others' plans. However, fit in you must. Also, be prepared to spend to support your romantic dreams. I don't mean that you should waste your cash, just utilise whatever is necessary.
LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)
The Sun and Jupiter combine to stimulate the extravagant regions of your horoscope. This is a wonderful aspect for those of you who imagine that money grows on trees. The rest of you, take care. If Mars and Neptune mean anything, then it's that you're likely to lose control. Don't.
VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sept 23)
For once, you may surrender yourself to total enthusiasm and give yourself over wholeheartedly to a special venture. If there's a choice between over-committing yourself or going without, you may go for the first option. You can sort out the details later.
LIBRA (Sept 24 - Oct 23)
One way or another, you'll soon have to put the collective good before private interest. It's a fine time for everyone who is working to make the world a better place, or is otherwise dabbling in a charitable enterprise. Your reputation for honesty will do you good in the long run.
SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 22)
It's an ideal day for traditional occupations, perhaps because the future seems to be so dangerous. It's also a deeply significant moment for family relationships, with indications that things may never be quite the same again. Make sure that they're better.
SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 - Dec 22)
There'll be a minor clash of interests between home and work, or private ties and public ambitions. In actual fact, any difficulties may be in your imagination. You may continue to juggle all your commitments and keep all balls in the air at the same time.
CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)
Family members are certainly going to be stuck fast unless they turn to you for help, advice and assistance. But then they may have trouble pinning you down. By all accounts your solar chart is in a peculiarly restless, adventurous and imaginative phase.
AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)
You may as well forget your responsibilities and have fun - but only if you have a team of servants and staff to make sure that practical matters are well taken care of. As you can see, it's a complicated moment. No matter what your individual predilections, don't let others hold you back without good cause.
PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)
You're very free with your ideas, but not always with your feelings or plans. Partners who imagine you're being very straightforward and open may therefore be profoundly mistaken! At the very least you should make a point of being honest with yourself.

BRIEFLY

Olympics remain uncertain: senior IOC member Pound

Tokyo: A senior member of the International Olympic Committee has said he can't be certain the postponed Tokyo Olympics will open in just over six months because of the surging pandemic in Japan and elsewhere. The comments by Canadian IOC member Richard Pound to British broadcaster the BBC came as Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga declared a state of emergency on Thursday for Tokyo and surrounding prefectures. "I can't be certain because the ongoing elephant in the room would be the surges in the virus," Pound said speaking about the future of the Tokyo Games. Japan's emergency order which is largely voluntary will be in force until the first week of February. Tokyo reported a record of 2,447 cases on Thursday a 50 increase from the previous day _ which was also a record day Japan has attributed over 3500 deaths to COVID19. **AP**

Indonesian shuttlers banned for fixing

New Delhi: The Badminton World Federation (BWF) handed life bans to three Indonesian shuttlers for involvement in match-fixing, match manipulation and betting. The sport's governing body said "eight Indonesian players who knew each other, and competed in lower-level international competitions mostly in Asia up until 2019, breached BWF Integrity Regulations related to match fixing, match manipulation and/or betting on badminton." The BWF also suspended a Malaysian citizen, who is a representative of an equipment brand that sponsors badminton players, from all badminton-related activities for life after he was found guilty of offering money to international players to manipulate matches. "The BWF Integrity Unit had been investigating the individual for a number of years," the federation said. "Due to the nature of the breaches and this person's access to and influence over players his company sponsored, the Independent Hearing Panel suspended the individual for life." **PTI**

Fifa prez under fire for Saudi PR video

London: Human rights activists are denouncing FIFA President Gianni Infantino's starring turn in a promotional video for the Saudi Arabian government in which he claims the kingdom has made important changes. The three-minute PR campaign was posted on *Twitter* by the Saudi ministry of sport featuring Infantino participating in a ceremonial sword dance. "It's an amazing scenery it's an incredible history," Infantino says in part. "This is something that the world should come and see." The video which features Infantino praising how a lot has changed in Saudi Arabia was filmed while on a trip that saw him meet with the crown prince who has been credited with introducing social changes while cracking down on activists who pushed for reforms. "It should be abundantly clear to everyone at FIFA that Saudi Arabia is attempting to use the glamour and prestige of sport as a PR tool to distract from its abysmal human rights record," Amnesty International said in a statement. **AP**

With classy fifty, Shubman triggers talk of being the 'real deal'

SRIRAM VEERA
JANUARY 8

HAS ONE seen a more aesthetically pleasing Test opening pair than Shubman Gill and Rohit Sharma? It can be mulled really long without a convincing answer. Aesthetics can't, of course, be a reason to pair up two gorgeous batsmen; runs, talent, and temperament will decide but it's a nice coat-peg to kickstart conversations and it seems Gill is going to trigger more than a few chats in the days to come.

From 'real deal, bro!' to 'lambi race ka ghoda, bhai (one for the longer run)! ' to 'Machi, seme sarakku iruku (he has the goods)' – the raves have already been flowing across the country. Wiser heads have pleaded for less hype but such sane emotions feel like a kill-joy in the here and now.

A crack of doom, the soundtrack for a shot that echoed at the SCG to a smattering of masked fans in particular has made it to the world of GIFs. Gill punched a back-of-length

ball from Pat Cummins on its head, a rasping short-arm jab finished with no follow-through. There is something about a curtailed follow-through that thrills the cognoscenti – Tendulkar's on-the-up punch that would ricochet on impact, Zaheer Abbas's check-drives, Damien Martyn's inside-out cover drive... this shot from Gill, and his short-arm pull can also make it to that list.

Childhood nostalgia too seeped into some of his shots. At one point, Gill suddenly arched back to a shortish ball from Cummins to upper-cut it up and over the slip cordon. When he was a boy, his father would have his farmhands bounce at him at his village. "Once they realised I wasn't getting out, they would bounce at me a lot! And I developed the upper-cut there as I didn't have the strength as a boy to pull," he told this newspaper couple of years ago, when he mentioned that he allows himself a chuckle at the childhood memory whenever he plays that shot.

Who would have thought that faraway Sydney can trigger nostalgia in a boy who grew up in a village in Punjab and is barely



Shubman Gill, 21, batted like he belonged in Test cricket. **AP**

Golden arm stops run machine

Jadeja's (4/62) brilliant run out of Steve Smith (131) a highlight during high-quality day of Test cricket

SANDIP G
JANUARY 8

AT THE Sydney Cricket Ground, a classical day of Test cricket played out. Steve Smith produced a greatness-affirming hundred to keep Australia alive. Ravindra Jadeja ascertained his all-round value with a four-wicket haul and a devilish direct hit to keep India afloat, Shubman Gill stroked a graceful half-century, and Pat Cummins bowled robustly to end a see-sawing day on an even keel, with India progressing to 96/2 after Australia posted 338.

But for Smith's captivating knock, Australia would have faltered; but for Jadeja's 4/62 on a sluggish surface, India would have fumbled. Their direct combat barely threw up excitement – Smith dealt him with routine assuredness – but how they left their individual stamp on the game was the day's moving narrative. It was akin to a movie with parallel heroes connected by the same plot.

Coming on the heels of his recent slump in form, Smith clarified to the broadcasters in a chat during the break: "Being out of runs is not the same as being out of form." He, clearly, is judged by his own lofty standards, and hence the run of 14 innings without a hundred was enough to raise doomsday alarms. Rubbish, he seemed to announce with every splendid stroke. It was a flawless, inscrutable exhibition of batting.

Not at any micro-point of his 132-run stay did Smith betray any hint of labour. There were times when he wore caution and shackled himself, when he counterattacked, when he had to shift gears, when he had to grit out, grind down and guide the lower order, but he donned each role with consummate perfection. His innings was a masterful display on a day when no other batsman hinted at permanency.

Smith saw his colleagues flounder around him, to the wits of Jadeja. It was far from a cracking-up, dust-spewing Jadeja-kind of a surface, the sort of wicket on which he could be a wild destructive force of nature. It was one where his guiles rather than explosiveness mattered.

Jadeja smartly assessed the nature of the pitch. It was probably where he had to revert to pace and change of pace, flight and lack of flight, good length and change of length. The odd ball did kink and kick off the surface, but one couldn't expect that on a consistent basis. His wickets owed more to sharpness of mind than tweaks and twerks of his fingers.



Ravindra Jadeja ran in from deep square-leg and hit the stumps with a one-handed pick up throw to run out Steve Smith on Day Two. **Reuters**

Smith, clearly, is judged by his own lofty standards, and hence the run of 14 innings without a hundred was enough to raise doomsday alarms. Rubbish, he seemed to announce with every splendid stroke.

The left-arm spinner struck at uncanny moments too. Labuschagne was batting freely, nearing a century, and the 70-over-old ball was just a lump of leather when Jadeja sucked him into a playing a fatal cut shot. The ball was short, but not quite short for Labuschagne to cut behind point, as he had done earlier in the same over. The edge flew to Ajinkya Rahane at slip.

The wicket precipitated a collapse. Six overs later, the impetuous Matthew Wade perished attempting to chip Jadeja over mid-wicket. Wade had just straight-driven him for a boundary, before sweeping him firmly for a brace. But Jadeja sensed it was a matter of time before the left-hander stepped out – like he had to Ravichandran Ashwin in Melbourne – and flung a flatter, faster one at him, that was misused, just before the new ball was due, Australia self-destructed.

Soon, Smith grew more urgent. With sup-

port at the other end dwindling, he grew more expansive. Ashwin was swept behind square; Jadeja pummelled either side of the point fielder. So efficient was Smith that he seemed to have a symbiotic bond with the gaps. But the new ball accounted for Cameron Green and Tim Paine, both comfortably set up by Jasprit Bumrah. The usual double-bluff of peppering them with short-of-length balls before slipping a fuller, inward-bending delivery reaped rewards.

Stroke of the day

Unflustered, Smith produced his best stroke of the day, when he stood up tall and punched Bumrah through the covers off the backfoot. Navdeep Saini was then whip-driven through midwicket. At the other end, Pat Cummins was blocking assuredly. At that precise moment, when it seemed that the pair was dealing with the new ball-armed pacers efficiently, Rahane re-drafted Jadeja, who proved that maybe he should be trusted more often to wipe off the tail. He bowled Cummins with a floated delivery that dipped and snuck through beneath the bat. A full, fast ball cannonned into Nathan Lyon's toe and he was adjudged LBW.

For the second time in the game, Jadeja had stamped his match-swaying quality. But Smith intervened again. Past his hundred, he unpacked his full range of strokes. He

out of his teens? Or a boy who used to devour Domino's Pizza ("Pizza mania something") before every age-group match with friend Abhishek Sharma will one day be dining on snarling Aussie bowlers? It's some journey for a boy of routine who couldn't find Domino's in the 2018 U-19 World Cup in New Zealand and settled for an aural-treat instead, listening to *Star Boy* by *The Weeknd* during every bus journey to the grounds.

For a few years, not that long back, Gill would religiously check the website Cricketarchive, a haven for cricket tragiocs, to see what Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma and Cheteshwar Pujara did at his age. "Especially Kohli! *Yaar, Virat Kohli jab 16 years tha, toh kya karta tha?* How many runs he used to make? I would open up his record and check!" And what did he find? "*Achcha itna... insey toh hamara jyaada hai yaar! Matlab sahi ja raha hai!*" (Ah, I have more runs than him. It means it's going well!) and he broke in a lovely ambition-tinged laughter of innocence.

Neither Gill nor his family know his cricketing failures. If he hasn't hit a hundred in a

while, his sister would taunt, "*Ab toh tere sey sau bhi nahi ban rahen!*" (You are not even able to hit hundreds now). Until couple of years ago, he couldn't even remember a phase where he failed in three innings in a row. As the astonishment sunk in, and one squeaked out concern about how he would handle it when it comes, Gill smiled, "*Socha nahin* (Not thought about it!) I would handle it then!"

Abhishek Nayar, his friend and coach at Kolkata Knight Riders in the Indian Premier League, vouches that he has rarely seen a talented youngster who is so sorted mentally. "He is aware that he is good and that comes from confidence and hard work. He also knows that the game is bigger than him. He is not someone who requires advice around mental aspects."

When he was five, the price of his wicket, laid down by his father to anyone who scalped him, was 100 rupees. The bounty kept increasing as he aged, and the reaction of the Aussies at his dismissal suggested it's now priceless.

How Smith foiled Siraj's 'LBW plans'

SANDIP G
JANUARY 8

IN 136 innings, only 20 times has Steve Smith been trapped leg before wicket, though his early shuffle conveys an impression that he is a sure-shot LBW candidate to balls bending back into his pads. But that didn't stop Mohammed Siraj from laying and persisting with an LBW trap with the second new ball. He was almost rewarded.

So far in the series, Indian bowlers have looked to bowl at Smith's body, the outside-the-off-stump trajectory was often a plan to quieten him. But as soon as the second new ball was taken, Siraj began to operate in the fifth-stump channel at good length.

The ball would move away or hold its line after pitching. Smith would just keep leaving, as Siraj kept getting his line closer to the stumps. Smith, the master batsman that he is, read the trap perfectly. The moment Siraj changed his line to the stumps, he would work the ball away to the legside, the wrists whirring away. Smith is not someone who falls over when playing on the legside though his movements concede such an impression.

Siraj was undeterred. After the lunch break, he resumed his plan but with minor tweaks. He bowled closer to the off-stump, slightly fuller, inviting Smith to push or drive. He made one swing back into the batsman, but the Australian managed an inside edge onto his pads.

Two overs thus rolled by. Siraj laying an elaborate trap and Smith foiling it without much fuss. So far, there had been no signs of exaggerated inward movement, or even late movement. One ball crept along the carpet, but that landed on a spot in the fifth-stump line. There were no undue worries. But that didn't dissuade Siraj. He was almost taken out of the attack, before he pleaded with his captain for one more over. Ajinkya Rahane obliged, and with the first ball of his fresh over, Siraj almost nailed Smith.

This one was faster, fuller and swung belatedly to hit his back thigh. Siraj immediately appealed, but the umpire remained disinterested. He implored Rahane to review, but the latter wisely turned him down. Later, the replay showed the ball would have flown comfortably over the stumps, besides hitting the batsman just outside the line of the off-stump.

EXPLAINED

DESPITE THE PANDEMIC

7 nations, 16 tournaments, numerous tests: Newest GM Leon's journey

NIHAL KOSHIE
NEW DELHI, JANUARY 8

AFTER CRISS-CROSSING seven European countries to play in 16 tournaments, undergoing innumerable Covid-19 tests, staying in budget accommodation, dealing with the unpredictability of changing travel restrictions and curfews, 14-year-old Leon Mendonca became a chess Grandmaster last fortnight.

From mid-March till now, Leon, with his father Lyndon in tow, have been on the road in Europe chasing the coveted FIDE title in the nightmarish pandemic.

On the morning of March 18, Leon and Lyndon had rushed to the Budapest airport to fly to Delhi via Doha after a tournament the previous day. But airline staff told them they would not be able to complete the final leg of their flight before India closed borders just before the lockdown.

They were stuck in an apartment in Budapest for two months till Leon got a lucky break at a chess festival nearby. He jumped at the opportunity to play over-the-board when almost everyone was playing in front of a

screen. Leon won with a round to spare.

The father-son duo had registered with the Indian high commission in Budapest for a 'Vande Bharat Mission' flight back home. The Hungarian capital was not on the priority list of repatriation flights, so the wait kept prolonged. Fortuitously, tournaments were returning to the Schengen region.

The teenager and his father decided to aim for three Norms needed to become a Grandmaster. The first two were earned within three weeks of each other by mid-November. On December 30, he finished second at Italy's Vergani Cup in Bassano del Grappa, to win his third and final norm.

"The first thing I did was play in the snow," Leon related. Playing chess while taking Covid-19-related precautions was fraught. Wearing a mask resulted in the bespectacled youngster's glasses fogging up when sitting across the board.

"Going through so many PCR tests and staying away from home for so long has been challenging," the youngster said. Hungary, Serbia, Greece, Italy, Slovakia, Germany, Czech Republic and Spain were covered by rail, with Budapest being the base camp since



Leon Mendonca, 14, with his father Lyndon in Greece.

March. Having his father Lyndon to take care of everything – from booking train tickets, cheap Air bnbs, cooking all meals, checking pandemic restrictions for each city – made the European stay easier. "I just focus on my

chess, while he takes care of everything," Leon said.

Lyndon, a marine engineer now on a sabbatical (unpaid break), was fully-prepared, though the extended stay was not in the initial plan. "I carried an induction stove, rice cooker, pressure cooker and all sorts of pots and pans," Lyndon said. Dal, rice, rajma, soups, pasta and pizza has been the staple during these months. "There is the cost factor and also it is about health (diet) and hygiene. Right now in the apartment in Italy there is an oven. So I am able to make bakes which he loves," the father said.

Violin-chess connect

Because of lugging along all the utensils, some things had to be left behind, like Leon's violin. Appearing for the Grade-5 test at Trinity College was put on the backburner. He also had to find new ways to unwind between playing. "I could not play the violin, so I compensated by listening to a lot of western classical on my laptop. It (playing the violin) is a form of relaxation and de-stressing after a long and strenuous game," Leon said.

Being musically inclined also helped Leon

become more instinctive on the board, his coach Vishnu Prasanna said. The coach, who stays in Chennai, and his ward have been video-calling each other.

"He plays the violin which makes chess more creative for him. Instead of sloggng it out, I told him to come up with spontaneous ideas. You have to prepare obviously. I encouraged him to be more intuitive. Like they say in music, you have to play with the feel. Same in chess too. He hated mechanical repetition. Chess can also be approached as an art form. There have been chess players who have been musicians. It goes well together. He would often get into time trouble because of overthinking and trying to play without mistakes," Prasanna said.

On his return home, he is looking forward to seeing his elder sister Beverly, against whom he first started playing chess, and mother Anita who is a doctor at the Goa Medical College. "My sister Beverly inspired me and I first played against her. My only ambition was to outbeat her in all her endeavours."

The Mendoncas have 'scrounged' and dipped deep into their savings to make Leon India's 67th Grandmaster.

Despite support from Geno and Microsense, they stuck to low-cost accommodation and didn't waste a penny. However, there were unexpected expenses.

"Right from June and July we have been doing nothing but tests. The worst one (most expensive) was in Spain where they charged us 145 euros each for a PCR. This was in Stiges in the Barcelona region when he travelled for a tournament. At some tournaments we were fortunate because they asked for an antigen test," Lyndon said.

'Nothing short of a miracle'

Looking back, Lyndon, says the year has been nothing short of a miracle.

"There was no question of planning because things changed not by the day or hour, but by the second. So there was unpredictability. Even if we thought of planning to go for a tournament, we did not know if they were going to have the tournament or not because other players also have to travel. Everyone had to test negative. We have always gone through that risk of uncertainty. We would go to the station, book a train ticket and just go. God has been kind to us."