

The Tribune

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

CHANDIGARH | GURUGRAM | JALANDHAR | BATHINDA | VOL 140 NO. 290 | 12 PAGES | ₹5.00 | REGD. NO. CHD/0006/2018-2020 ESTABLISHED IN 1881

TRUMP'S FEAR TACTICS TO WIN THE MIDWEST WORLD

FARMERS NEED TO BE CONVINCED, INCENTIVISED FOR STRAW MGMT INFOCUS

PAK FAILS TO FULFIL SIX KEY FATF MANDATES BACK PAGE

MONDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2020



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Bihar elections:
Farm unions to
rally against BJP

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18
Carrying forward their agitation against the three farm laws passed by Parliament, the All-India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee (AIKSCC) has now decided to campaign against the BJP in the Bihar Assembly elections.

'March to Parliament' call by farmers' body for Nov 26 & 27

The AIKSCC is a joint platform of about 250 organisations related to farm labourers and peasants across the country. It has given a call for "March to Parliament" on November 26 and 27, demanding repeal of the farm laws.

"We will campaign for the defeat of the BJP and its allies in the Bihar elections," national general secretary of the All-India Kisan Sabha Hannan Mollah said on Sunday.

"The farmers' organisations will also approach the Central Trade Unions (CTUs), urging them to join the proposed anti-BJP campaign in Bihar," Mollah added. —TNS

House session on farm laws begins today

Capt hints at exemplary action, says all eyes on Pb

RAJMEET SINGH

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 18

At a Congress Legislature Party (CLP) meeting held here on Sunday, Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh is reported to have hinted at "exemplary" action during the Punjab Assembly session that begins on Monday. Sources said the Congress MLAs told the CM that it was imperative to take on the Modi government on the new farm laws, irrespective of the consequences.

They were unanimous in their opinion that the minimum support price (MSP) and 'mandi' system must be protected at all costs and the "unconstitutional" laws, which were against federalism had to be countered.

"This fight will go on. We will fight this till the Supreme Court," Capt Amarinder is reported to have told the MLAs.

CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE



Farmers during a 'rail roko' protest in Bathinda on Sunday. PTI

20 held in Patiala for illegal transportation of paddy

PATIALA, OCTOBER 18

Cracking the whip against those transporting paddy from other states for illegal sale in Punjab, the police have filed 13 FIRs, arrested 20 persons and impounded 32 vehicles carrying about 8,225 tonnes of paddy over the past two days.

SSP, Patiala, Vikram Jeet Duggal said they had received information that a number of trucks carrying paddy from UP and Bihar were entering Punjab.

"Paddy is purchased at low prices in other states and then transported to Punjab to sell it at higher rates," he added. —TNS

DETAILED REPORT INSIDE

Duggal said they had received information that a number of trucks carrying paddy from UP and Bihar were entering Punjab.

"For the bicycle industry, the prolonged agitation has resulted in a severe shortage of inputs, such as rims and pipes. The manufacturers were already grappling with a huge pending demand post lockdown. The farmers' stir has made it worse for

Covid control likely by early '21

Adherence to safety protocols a pre-requisite: Experts

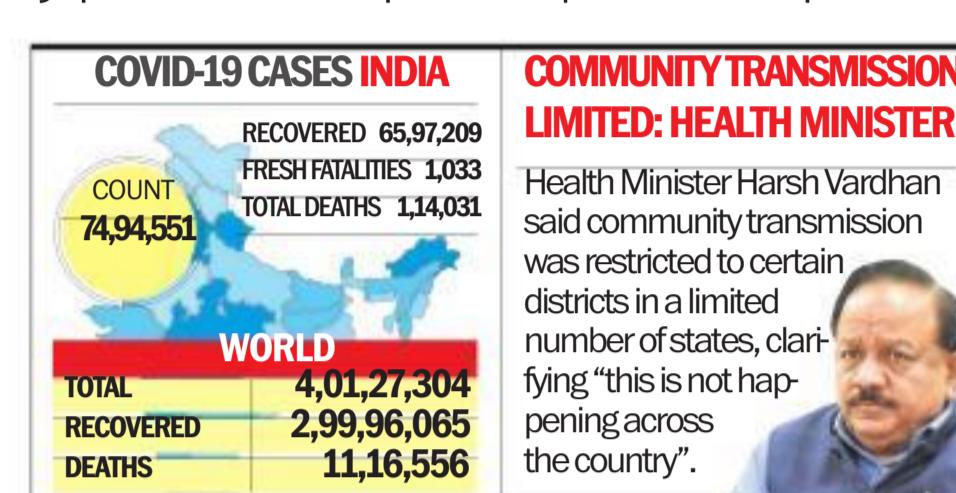
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

Top government experts today said India can control the Covid pandemic by early next year if everyone follows safety protocols with 10.6 million confirmed cases projected until February next. India has 74,94,551 cases as of today.

Led by Prof M Vidyasagar of IIT-Hyderabad, the Covid India National Supermodel Committee, set up by the Centre, said the Covid pandemic had peaked but cautioned of active cases surging to 26 lakh if people became lax during festivities. Current active cases are below 8 lakh.

The committee said 30%



SECOND WAVE CAN'T BE RULED OUT: NITI AAYOG

The number of new coronavirus cases and deaths has declined in the past three weeks as the spread of the pandemic has stabilised in most of the states, Niti Aayog Member VK Paul said on Sunday but did not rule out the possibility of a second wave of infections in the winter season.

people are projected to have developed antibodies to the virus as of today. The Central panel estimated 14% people with antibodies at August-end

CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE

Vardhan junks China's claim on outbreak

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18
Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan on Sunday said there is no evidence that can validate claims on global multiple focal points for the Covid outbreak, amid China claiming that the coronavirus broke out simultaneously in several countries last year.

At an interaction with his social media followers on the sixth episode of "Sunday Samavaad", he said the reported outbreak of Covid from Wuhan in China remains recognised as the first report worldwide. He said China has claimed that there was a simultaneous outbreak of the disease across many nations. —TNS

'Rail roko' pushes Pb industry off track

VIJAY C ROY

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 18

The 'rail roko' protest by Punjab farmers has interrupted supplies. Consequently, industrial production in the state has shrunk by 30 per cent. A severe shortage of raw material has hit the auto parts, hand tools, machine tools, bicycle, agricultural implements and scaffolding industry.

"The protest has caused a

Units out of stock, production down 30 pc



severe disruption in supplies. At least six textile industries have closed operations. In

han, president of the Ludhiana Hand Tools Association, pointing out that freight traffic had been held up for the past two weeks.

"For the bicycle industry, the prolonged agitation has resulted in a severe shortage of inputs, such as rims and pipes. The manufacturers were already grappling with a huge pending demand post lockdown. The farmers' stir has made it worse for

CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE

In Lahaul, ₹1,000 fine for littering

ABHINAV VASHISHT

KULLU, OCTOBER 18

Littering the Lahaul valley will now invite a fine of Rs 1,000. As the opening of Atal Tunnel has resulted in a huge inflow of tourists, the Sissu panchayat in Lahaul has put up boards warning visitors against littering the area and has announced a penalty of Rs 1,000 on offenders. The north portal of the tunnel is



CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE

Haryana mulls quota for sarpanches

GEETANJALI GAYATRI

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 18

After announcing 50 per cent reservation for women in panchayat elections, Haryana is now mulling reservation for one category of the backward classes among the sarpanches.

The Backward Classes (A) category could be given reservation in proportion to their population, sources said. While the Backward Classes category has 27 per cent reservation,

Backward Classes (A) category likely to get reservation

vation, the BC (A) category has 16 per cent reservation and the BC (B) category has 11 per cent reservation. The BC (A) category is more backward than the BC (B).

The sources said 16 per cent seats among the sarpanches will be reserved for BC (A).

BrahMos' naval version test-fired

NEW DELHI: A naval version of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile was successfully test-fired from an indigenous stealth destroyer of the Indian Navy in the Arabian Sea on Sunday, officials said. The missile hit the target with pin-point accuracy. TNS

Ballia firing: BJP leader, 4 others held

BALLIA: BJP leader Dhirendra Pratap Singh and four others have been arrested in the Ballia murder case. The incident took place on Thursday during a meeting over the allotment of ration shops at Durjanpur village. —TNS

Tibetan political prisoner dies at 91

DHARAMSALA: Tibetan political prisoner Tanak Jigme Sangpo (91), who had been in Switzerland since 2003, a year after he completed 37-year sentence in Chinese prisons, died on Saturday, the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) said on Sunday. TNS

Paper for HP bus conductors leaked

SHIMLA: A candidate was detained for clicking the photograph of the paper and forwarding it during an exam for the recruitment of HRTC conductors at a Himachal Pradesh University centre on Sunday. The Congress has demanded cancellation of the paper. INSIDE

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Har Pal Aapke Saath

Covid cases, deaths dip by 75 per cent

Average daily infections drop from 2,000 to 500 | 13 succumb in past 24 hrs

Tribune News Service

CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 18
It seems the Covid graph in the state is finally witnessing a downward trend with the cases coming down to one fourth in comparison to the average daily cases reported last month.

In September, the state reported 55,000 cases. The average daily cases were around 2,000. However, now the number of cases has come down to less than 500. Same is the case with deaths, which have also declined by 75 per cent.

The state reported 476 cases and 13 deaths in the past 24 hours.

As per the government media bulletin, the total



number of cases now stands at 1,27,630 and the number of deaths has reached 4,012. In the district-wise breakup of the Covid count, Ludhiana topped the list with 67 cases, followed by Hoshiarpur

(64), Jalandhar (54), Patiala (52), Bathinda (47), SAS Nagar (41), Amritsar (31).

The number of active Covid cases has declined further to 5,735 and over 1.27 lakh persons have recovered from the disease.

COVID CASES DISTRICT-WISE COUNT

DISTRICT	+VE	DEATHS	DISTRICT	+VE	DEATHS
Ludhiana	19,673	819	Moga	2,430	78
Jalandhar	14,452	454	Fatehgarh Sahib	2,085	99
Amritsar	11,435	428	Tarn Taran	1,930	81
Patiala	12,455	365	Kapurthala	3,885	163
Sangrur	3,808	162	Fazilka	2,802	46
SAS Nagar	11,752	222	SBS Nagar	1,840	58
Gurdaspur	6,692	190	Faridkot	3,057	54
Bathinda	6,655	133	Barnala	1,987	49
Hoshiarpur	5,334	195	Ropar	2,362	104
Ferozepur	4,088	117	Muktsar	2,833	59
Pathankot	4,245	102	Mansa	1,830	34
Total	1,27,630	4,012			

Schools reopen today

RAJESH SACHAR



■ Government schools will open in the state on Monday after remaining shut for over six months due to the Covid-induced lockdown.

■ Heads and staff of schools have put in place all the available resources to follow the guidelines issued by the government.

■ Education Minister Vijay Inder Singh has directed heads of schools to ensure availability of sanitisers and thermal scanners. ■ The schools have been told to allow students from classes IX to XII to come for classroom learning for three hours. OC

Notice to arthiya for bringing paddy from Rajasthan

ABOHAL, OCTOBER 18

The market committee today issued a notice to an arthiya for transporting paddy from other states.

Sources said he had purchased 350 quintals of paddy from Rajasthan below the minimum support price (MRP). It is learnt that Punjab-based traders purchase hundreds of tonnes of paddy, wheat and mustard from neighbouring markets of Sadulshahar and Sriganganagar at lower prices and then sell the same to state and Central agencies at the minimum support price.

Though nakas are laid on the Abohal-Sriganganagar and Abohal-Hanumangarh highways to prevent the movement of trucks coming from other places, link roads connecting Abohal with Rajasthan defeat the purpose. — OC

Crackdown on illegal transportation of paddy

Cops file 13 FIRs, arrest 20 persons; 32 vehicles impounded in past two days

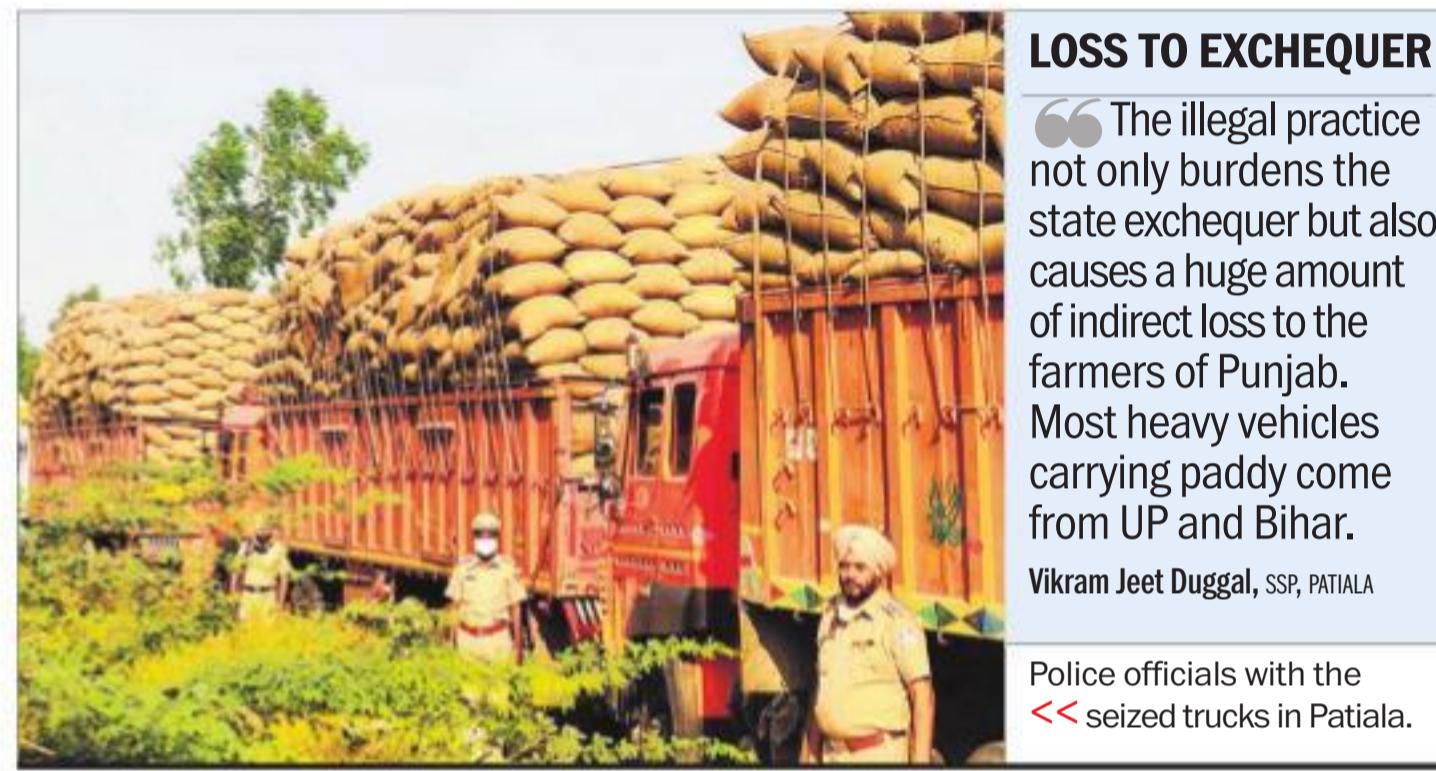
Tribune News Service

PATIALA, OCTOBER 18

Cracking the whip against those transporting paddy from other states for illegal sale in Punjab, the police have filed 13 FIRs, arrested 20 persons, and impounded over 32 vehicles carrying about 8,225 tonnes of paddy in the past two days.

SSP Patiala, Vikram Jeet Duggal said they had received information that a number of trucks carrying paddy from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar were entering Punjab through various inter-state routes. "We identified various in-bound routes across the Punjab-Haryana border such as Shambu, Pehowa, Balbera, Cheeka, Dhabbi Gujran and Patran in Patiala district, and set up

breakup, SAS Nagar topped the list with three deaths, followed by Jalandhar, Patiala and Ropar (two each), and Ludhiana, Pathankot, Gurdaspur and Hoshiarpur (one each).



LOSS TO EXCHEQUER

■ The illegal practice not only burdens the state exchequer but also causes a huge amount of indirect loss to the farmers of Punjab. Most heavy vehicles carrying paddy come from UP and Bihar.

Vikram Jeet Duggal, SSP, PATIALA

Police officials with the seized trucks in Patiala.

nakas to check the movement of such trucks. Teams consisting of police, revenue and mandi officials have been formed to check the illegal practice," Duggal said.

"Preliminary investigations revealed that this

paddy is first purchased at lower prices in other states and then transported to Punjab, where it is sold at a much higher price, thereby giving a huge price margin to the seller. This practice not only burdens the state

exchequer, but also causes a huge amount of indirect loss to the farmers of Punjab. Most heavy vehicles carrying paddy come from UP and Bihar," he said.

"The authorities have done nothing to stop the practice. A number of

traders are buying paddy from other states. This is illegal as paddy grown in Punjab can only be sold in the local mandis. Also, the buyer has to pay fee to the market committee on every purchase. This is clearly a case of tax evasion," member of a farm union said.

"There is a huge difference between the MSP in Punjab (Rs 1,888 per quintal) and states like UP, Bihar and Rajasthan. Farmers in these states are selling their crop to Punjab traders at Rs 900-1,000 per quintal. After paying the freight charges (Rs 150-160 per quintal), it costs the traders Rs 1,150 per quintal. This means they make a profit of nearly Rs 700 per quintal," he alleged, adding that strict action should be taken against dealers buying paddy from other states.

Dispute between contractor, officials causes glut in Fazilka

OUR CORRESPONDENT



was not taking action against the guilty.

As soon as Sampla entered the village, workers of the Kisan Mazadoor Sangharash Committee started raising slogans against the Union Government demanding revocation of the three farm legislations.

The protesters, led by Iqbal Singh Warring, gheraoed Sampla for more than 45 minutes. He was let off when he promised to take up the issue with the Union Government. Sampla alleged the protest was allowed to take place by the police. Earlier, the police had requested the BJP leader not to go to the village in view of the farmers' protest.

Sampla called the incident a major lapse on the part of the state government. He said the government had failed to give due recognition to the family which fought against militants.

The BJP leader faced stiff opposition from farmers in Nagoke village in Khadoor Sahib where he had gone to listen the grievances of an ex-serviceman Kanwaljeet Singh, who alleged his father was killed by residents of the village but the police, under political pressure,

orders of the DFSC. The respondents in the case include the Secretary and Director, Food and Supply and Consumer Affairs, Fazilka; MLA Davinder Singh Ghubaya and his father Sher Singh Ghubaya; DC, SSP and the DFSC.

Ghubaya and his father had staged a protest to get the contract cancelled and finally, their demand was acceded, but the court stayed the proceedings.

"I shall restart lifting only after getting protection from the police as some truck operators who had come to lift paddy a few days ago were allegedly assaulted by the president of the Truck Operators Welfare Society," said Gumber.

During their visit, they got detailed feedback from farmers about their problems and requirements and also shared all schemes and latest techniques with them to prevent farm fires.

Agri officials meet growers, urge them to shun stubble burning

Tribune News Service



BARNALA, OCTOBER 18

After an increase in stubble burning cases, senior officials of the Agriculture Department have started visiting various districts, and are conducting direct meetings with farmers and sharing latest techniques with them.

Dr Rajesh Vasisht, Director, Agriculture Department, along with the Joint Director and other officials, visited various villages in Barnala district on Saturday.

During their visit, they got detailed feedback from farmers about their problems and requirements and also shared all schemes and latest techniques with them to prevent farm fires.

"The state government is working hard to provide all required help to farmers and they should also support us by managing crop residue without burning it," Vasisht said.

Vasisht, along with Joint Director (Input) Baldev Singh, visited Badbar, Dhanau, Raisar and Baloke villages.

Harwinder Singh from Dhanau, who cultivates various crops on his 65 acres without burning the stubble for the past six years, said he had been getting support from the government.

Another farmer Gurjeet Singh also got appreciation from officials for cultivating less water-guzzling crops.

Farm bodies gherao paddy trucks from UP

FATEHGHAR SAHIB, OCTOBER 18

Members of farm organisations today gheraoed four trucks transporting paddy from UP near Sirhind town.

A large number of farmers, led by Baljit Singh Bhutta, former chairman, Zila Parishad, reached the spot and started raising slogans. They alleged their worst fears had come true with paddy from other states being transported to the state mandis. "Rice millers and traders in connivance with officials have started bringing paddy from other states by evading taxes. Only state farmers should be allowed to sell the crop in mandis," the farmers said. — OC

Penalised, farmers seek subsidy on straw management system

JALANDHAR, OCTOBER 18

MACHINE TOO COSTLY

■ Most of the farmers running small and medium units cannot afford the machine. No fine should be imposed on them. Beelu Mulli Nangal, FARMER

ty enough SMS machines on subsidies. Urging the authorities to not impose fines, farmers said combine harvesters without SMS should collect fodder for their cattle from the crop residue.

As the SMS-operated harvester chop the paddy straw

into tiny pieces, the crop then can't be used as fodder.

Surjit Singh, a farmer from Kala Bhakra, Bhogpur, who was also slapped a Rs 50,000 fine, said: "Not only SMS machines are costly and increase the cost of harvesting from Rs 1,200-1,300 to Rs 1,800 per acre, they also leave us with no fodder."

Beelu Mulli Nangal, a farmer who is a member of the Agriculture Production Committee and has been rewarded by the administration for adopting stubble management measures, said it was unfair to levy fines on farmers. — TNS

At Shambhu, 2 stirs, different agenda

RUCHIKA M KHANNA

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 18

At Shambhu village, which is located at the border with Haryana, a small motley group of persons led by a Punjabi actor (a close associate of an MP from the Majha region) sits in make-shift tents, right next to the police barricades from Punjab and Haryana. The protest site is important as it is the entry point to Punjab from Haryana and Delhi. Posters of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and Akali leader Simranjit Singh Mann adorn the pandals, as the speakers address the gathering, talking of autonomy for the state. Speaker after speaker, wearing black 'saropas', highlight the "historical injustices" meted to Punjab, even as a few cops stationed there sit uninterested.

Hardeep Singh from Shahwala Andresa village of Sultanpur Lodhi, who has been camping here since October 5, says they will not stop their



'KEEPING WATCH'

■ We are monitoring several handles on the social media that are promoting separatist ideologies. INTELLIGENCE OFFICER

A poster of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale at Shambhu.

fight till the farm laws are withdrawn. "Hun khud-mukhiyari chahidi hai (we need autonomy). The target of the Centre is to enslave Punjabi farmers. We won't allow this," he says. Seconding Hardeep, Vir Dhillion, who hails from Raike Kalan in Bathinda, refrains from

talking of autonomy.

Intelligence Bureau reports have indicated more such protests across the state, highlighting a separatist agenda.

Close to the protest pandal on the main GT road, a larger gathering of farmers squats on the railway tracks against the farm Acts. Harjot Kaur from Ghanaur, who has been camping here, asks farmers not to get swayed or let politicians take over their more serious agenda of fighting the new farm laws.

Prem Singh Banghu, president, All India Kisan Federation, said, "We, farmers, understand the games being played out by political forces. We won't let the focus shift."

Members of farm organisations today gheraoed four trucks transporting paddy from UP near Sirhind town.

A large number of farmers, led by Baljit Singh Bhutta, former chairman, Zila Parishad, reached the spot and started raising slogans. They alleged their worst fears had come true with paddy from other states being transported to the state mandis. "Rice millers and traders in connivance with officials have started bringing paddy from other states by evading taxes. Only state farmers should be allowed to sell the crop in mandis," the farmers said. — OC

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PUBLIC NOTICES

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I, Venktesh Mishra s/o Shyam Dev Mishra r/o Village Chhanjeh, Bagla, Teh. Vijaypur, Distt. Samba Jammu Kashmir. P/O Jakh 184120, have changed my name to Shubham Mishra for all purposes. (CL20051969)

I, Anil Kumar Arya s/o Sadanand r/o V&PO. Kasauli, Teh. Gohana, Distt. Sonipat (HR) have changed my minor son's name from Chander Shekhar to Avi Bhanwala. (CL20052763)

I, Reeta Devi alias Nikita Jangley w/o Nirmal Jangley r/o # 86, Sec. 19, Panchkula henceforth be known as Reeta Devi for all intents and purposes. (CL20053053)

I, Gurjot Singh s/o Tejinder Singh, holder of Indian Passport No. J0424614, issued at Chandigarh Punjab, India on 01.06.2010, permanent resident of VPO Multan, Teh. Bathinda, Distt. Bathinda, Punjab, India, do hereby change my name from Gurjot Singh to Gurjot Singh Gill, with immediate effect. (CL20053103)

I, Sanjiv Kumar s/o Vasdev r/o 60, Sat Kartar Enclave, Basti Sheik, Jalandhar declare that my son Varun Kumar is out of my control. Therefore, I disinherit him from my all movable/ immovable property. Anybody deals with him will do so at his own risk and

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AMAN SOOD
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

PATIALA, OCTOBER 18

Following the recent accidents and deaths across the state due to stray animals and dog bites, the Punjab Government has invited objections to insert new bylaws according to which "the owner of every animal kept or brought within the urban local bodies, shall, on or before April 1 each year or within seven days of its arrival in the area, get the animal registered at the office of the civic body, failing which a penalty of 10 times the registration fee for such animals shall be imposed" on the owner.

On October 12, the Model Punjab Municipal (registration, proper control of stray animals and compensation to the victim of animal attack) bylaws, 2020, was notified. "After the expiry of the registration period, the owner shall apply for it within a period of 30 days, failing which a penalty of amount so fixed by the urban local body concerned shall be compounded upon the owner for renewal," say the new laws.

The owner shall, along with the application for registration or renewal,



DISQUALIFICATION FROM KEEPING ANIMAL

In case of conviction of the owner of an animal, under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, (59 of 1960) the court may order him to be disqualified from keeping such animal and for holding or obtaining an animal licence for such period as it thinks fit and the licence issued to such owner shall be deemed to have been suspended and of no effect as long as the disqualification continues.

THE COMPENSATION

The amount of compensation in case of disability or death to the victim or legal heirs of the victim of the animal attack may be ₹1 lakh in case of death and in proportionate to the percentage of disability caused as disability certified by a civil surgeon

produce before the licensing authority a certificate from a veterinary doctor that the animal was free from any infectious diseases and fit to be kept within residential/commercial premises meant for the purpose. "On registration, the owner shall get the animal tagged with a token given by the licensing authority or by any

other suitable method of permanent identification as may be specified according to the type of animal, under the supervision of a veterinary doctor at owner's cost, and the branding code shall be recorded in the registration record of the committee/corporation," claim the new bylaws.

"Any animal with or

without branding code of registration, if found straying on the streets or beyond the enclosure of the house of the owner, may be detained in cattle pound at the direction of person authorised by the committee/corporation and shall be disposed of in the manner as may be decided by the committee/corporation, if not claimed within a week," read the new rules.

A senior official said a fee would be liable and recoverable from the owner for such period of detention of the animal in the cattle pound or at a place specified by the committee/corporation, as per the rates notified by the committee/corporation from time to time. In addition to the fee, feed charges for impounded animal during the period of impounding shall also be charged," he stated.

As per the new rules, no one, being the owner or person in-charge of any animal, shall allow it to be at large in any public street or public place without being muzzled and without being secured by the chain lead in any case in which the animal was likely to annoy or intimidate any person.

A team or solo player?

GURDASPUR: The knives are out for Navjot Singh Sidhu following his verbal spat with Cabinet Minister Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa, a known loyalist of CM Capt Amarinder Singh. The former's verbal volley, directed at the minister at Rahul Gandhi's Moga rally, has not gone down well with the CM and his men. A minister said: "Despite the fact that for a major part of his life he remained a cricketer, a team game, Sidhu has never been a team player. If your Captain (pun unintended!) changes your fielding position in a match, will you leave the team in the lurch? This is clearly what happened when the CM changed his portfolio from Local Bodies to Power. Instead of playing ball, the man ditched his team and preferred to run solo."

Paying back to society

ABOHAL: Indian American Shree Saini, who has roots here in Abohal, was last week selected as Miss World America "Beauty with a Purpose" National Ambassador. The organisers have created the title in many countries and Indian American representative from Washington Shree Saini has been selected as the American National Ambassador of the programme. "I've dedicated my life to service and BWAP inspired me to start creating positive change 10 years ago by serving over 100 non-profits," says Shree Saini.



Shree Saini

Caring for stray animals

ABOHAL: For the service and treatment of stray cattle, some social activists had developed a small gaushala near Daulatpura village on the Abohal-Sriganganagar highway

a few years ago. Shri Krishna Gau Samiti has earned the support from farmers, who were upset at the damage to their fields by these stray bulls. The management has hired services of private veterinary surgeons to treat the cattle. A farmer, Prabhpreet Singh Gill, visited the gaushala on Friday to contribute Rs 1.11 lakh to help construct a shed, keeping in view the upcoming winter. He also announced to pay Rs 36,000 monthly salary to the two doctors.



Little champ's big feat

FATEHGANJ SAHIB: Gurkiran Singh (14), son of a truck driver, has brought laurels to Fatehgarh Sahib district as well as the state by getting the second runners-up position in "SA-RE-GA-MA-PA" Little Champs competition of ZEE TV. A student of Sacred Heart Senior Secondary School, Mandi Gobindgarh, he got inspiration to sing from his maternal grandfather, a ragi at a gurdwara in Ludhiana. Sensing his talent for music, his family got Gurkiran trained in Punjabi folk music at Tejwant Kittu Academy in Ludhiana and in classical music from Rajiv Kumar Malik from Assam. This was perfected with continuous practice at home. Recognising his achievement, Amloh MLA Kaka Randeep Singh honoured him at his residence along with many other NGOs.

(CONTRIBUTED BY RAVI DHALIWAL, RAJ SADOSH & SURINDER BHARDWAJ)

Bill to boost investment in House today

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 18

To improve the state's investment and generate employment, the Punjab Cabinet today approved conversion of the Factories (Punjab Amendment) Ordinance, 2020, into a Bill to be tabled for enactment in the Vidhan Sabha tomorrow.

The approval came during a meeting of the Council of Ministers headed by Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh. The Bill provides for changing the existing threshold limit for small units from 10 and 20 to 20 and 40, respectively. The change has been necessitated by the increase in manufacturing activity by small units in the state and is aimed at promoting small manufacturing units.

This would help create more employment opportunities. Consequently, the existing Section 85 of the Act would also stand

To change threshold limit for small units

OTHER BILLS

- Punjab State Vigilance Commission Bill
- Registration (Punjab Amendment) Bill
- Punjab Tissue Culture Based Seed Potato Bill
- Punjab Vesting of Proprietary Rights Bill

amended, according to an official spokesperson. Further, in view of the absence of any provision in the existing law for compounding of offences for violations found at the time of inspection of factories, the Bill will also incorporate Section 106B in the Act. This will facilitate faster settlement of cases and reduction in court action. The Bill is aligned to the advice of Legal Remembrancer, said the spokesperson.

The Centre has increased the rates of DAP (diammonium phosphate) fertiliser by Rs 50 per sack. With the new rates in place, one sack of DAP fertiliser, which was being sold for Rs 1,150 earlier, will now be available for Rs 1,200.

Farmers rued that on one hand the government had increased the MSP for few crops recently, but on the other it had now increased the rates of DAP fertiliser. They claimed it would burden the farmers in the state. They said they had been struggling with the already high cost of farming and the recent move would further escalate the input cost for farming.

Chamkaur Singh, secretary of a Bathinda based co-operative society, said, "The revised rates of DAP fertilisers will be applicable on stock coming after October 1."

An employee of Markfed said they had got the intimation regarding increase in DAP rates.

Singhara Singh Mann, president, BKU Ekta Ugrahan, said, "It's not merely increase in fertiliser rates, but a strategy to push the already struggling farming community to the margins."

Agriculture Development Officer Chanpreet Singh said, "The rates of DAP fertiliser were increased by IFFCO twice recently. But we do not play any role in price fixing or regulation." — TNS

DISCLAIMER

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ASJ's approach negated basic norms of fair trial: HC

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 18

The Punjab and Haryana High Court has ruled that the approach adopted by an Additional Sessions Judge negated the "very basic and fundamental norms of a fair trial". The disapproval came in a case where the accused were denied the right to cross-examine certain witnesses after recalling them.

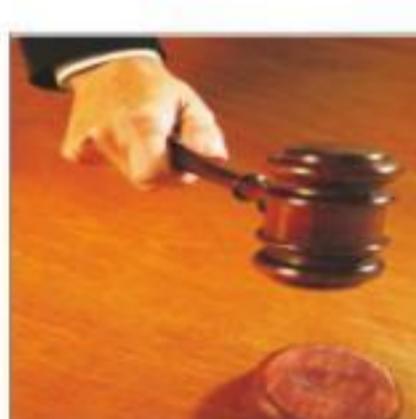
Justice Sanjay Kumar was hearing a petition by Santokh Singh and another petitioner filed in connection with an FIR registered on February 13, 2009, at the Amritsar Vigilance Bureau police station under the Prevention of Corruption Act and the Indian Penal Code.

Justice Kumar observed the state filed an application in the matter under Section 311 of the CrPC to produce certain records relevant to the case. The Tarn Taran Additional Sessions Judge on September 15, 2014, observed that prejudice would not be caused to the accused as they would be given full opportunity to cross examine any official from the department concerned.

Directing the recalling of witnesses, Justice Kumar asserted cross-examination was a valuable right given to the accused and could not be diluted in this fashion.

But the then Additional Sessions Judge vide order dated May 17, 2016, disallowed the plea after observing ground was not made out to allow further cross-examination.

It would be open to the petitioners to lead defence evidence by examining any official.



THE DISAPPROVAL

The disapproval came in a case where the accused were denied the right to cross-examine certain witnesses after recalling them.

examine the witnesses and rebut the record. But the record was apparently taken on file without recalling the relevant witnesses.

Aggrieved, the petitioners

filed an application under Section 311 to recall a DSP and two other witnesses for further cross-examination.

But the then Additional Sessions Judge vide order dated May 17, 2016, disallowed the plea after observing ground was not made out to allow further cross-examination.

BJP getting UP leaders to counter Hooda: Cong

TRENT NEWS SERVICE

TOUGH TIMES
All sections of society, especially the farmers, working class and youth, in Haryana are reeling under the misrule of the BJP-JJP government.

Subhash Chaudhary, CONGRESS LEADER

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18 Senior Congress leader from Haryana and former national president of National Students' Union of India (NSUI) Subhash Chaudhary on Sunday said the Baroda byelection would be a test of the popularity of the Khattar government in the state.

"Going by the army of leaders the BJP has drafted to campaign for the bypoll, the BJP has compelled the people to believe that it is going all out at Baroda," Chaudhary claimed. "The BJP has gone to the extent of roping in leaders from Uttar Pradesh to counter the popularity and hold of former CM BS Hooda in the area," Chaudhary added.

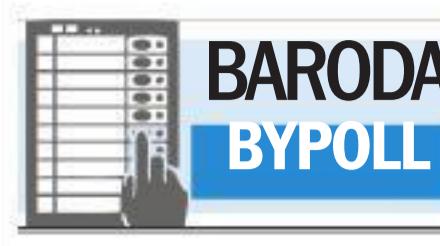
The Congress would win the byelection under the leadership of Hooda, Chaudhary added.

He said that the BJP should have learnt from its "humbling experience" in Delhi Assembly elections where its campaign came a cropper.

All sections of society, especially the farmers, working class and youth, in Haryana are reeling under the "misrule" of the BJP-JJP government, he alleged.

The three farm laws are the latest provocation. The government should repeal them, Chaudhary added. He said the Congress is also capable of unleashing a large number of workers for the campaign.

750 youth have got jobs: MP



TRENT NEWS SERVICE

PANIPAT, OCTOBER 18



Sonepat MP Ramesh Kaushik interacts with media on Sunday.

also present during the media briefing.

Kaushik said the BJP government had started work on providing basic amenities. He said the government had announced upgrade of Janta College in Butana to a university and approved two girls' colleges in the area.

He said the government had decided to establish an

IMT and a rice mill in the area, construct roads and provide drinking water at the doorstep in the constituency.

Taking a dig at previous governments, Kaushik said they had only remained busy in providing jobs and transferring employees.

He said the BJP government had given government jobs to capable youth in a transparent manner.

and had been transferring employees through its online transfer policy without any discrimination. He pointed out that 750 youth had got jobs ahead of the Baroda bypoll.

Kaushik said the byelection would affect neither any party nor the government, but the main motive of the electoral exercise was development of the constituency.

He said people of the Baroda constituency understood that if they voted for an opposition party, their constituency would continue to lag in development.

Appealing to people to elect BJP candidate Yogeshwar Dutt, Kaushik said all communities had adopted him. He said two national highways would pass through the constituency, which would play an important role in its development.

and Geeta Bhukkal.

Jagbir Malik, Shakuntla Khatak, Jaiveer Balmiki, BB Batra, Rajender Joon, Dharam Singh Chhokar, Kuldeep Vats, Shamsher Singh Gogi, Surinder Panwar, Subhash Deswal Ganguli, Ashok Arora, Chakravarti Sharma and Anil Saini have also been included in the Congress list.

Besides Chautala, four other members of his family — Abhay Chautala, Sunaina Chautala, Arjun Chautala and Karan Chautala — also figure in the INLD list.

Nafe Singh Rathi, Prakash Bharati, MS Malik, RS Chaudhary, Naresh Saran, Om Prakash Barwa, Sumitra Devi, Naresh Sharma, Inder Singh and Raj Kumar Balmiki are other prominent campaigners in INLD list.

Chautala among star campaigners for INLD

TRENT NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 18

The Congress and INLD have released lists of 30 star campaigners each for the November 3 Baroda byelection.

While Haryana Congress in charge Vivek Bansal leads the Congress list, which comprises Bhupinder Singh Hooda and Kumari Selja, among others; former Chief Minister Om Prakash Chautala leads the INLD list.

The prominent names in the Congress list include Randeep Surjewala, Kuldeep Bishnoi, Deepender Hooda, Kiran Choudhary, Ajay Yadav, Govind Singh Dotsara, Harinder Malik, Ashish Dua, Virender Rathore, Dharmpal Malik, Phool Chand Mulla, Raghbir Singh Kadian, Kuldeep Sharma

and the prominent names in the INLD list.

Nafe Singh Rathi, Prakash Bharati, MS Malik, RS Chaudhary, Naresh Saran, Om Prakash Barwa, Sumitra Devi, Naresh Sharma, Inder Singh and Raj Kumar Balmiki are other prominent campaigners in INLD list.

Karnal farmers make money from crop residue

TRENT NEWS SERVICE

KARNAL, OCTOBER 18

Amid the rising number of stubble burning cases in the district, a number of farmers are utilising crop residue to make money instead of setting it on fire.

They are selling the crop leftovers at the crop residue collection centres set up at various villages by groups of farmers, who further sell the paddy straw and fodder to various states like Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Delhi and also to various gaushalas after making their bundles and crushing the straw into dry fodder. This fodder is used for livestock feed as well as in various industries like cardboard, brick kiln and others.



A crop residue collection centre at Nigdhu village in Karnal. TRIBUNE PHOTO: SAYEED AHMED

The farmers are getting Rs 2,500-3,000 per acre for paddy straw which is being sold further to other states. "I have sold paddy straw I got from 10 acres at the centre developed by group of farmers. Earlier, I used to set it on fire," said Sahil, a farmer.

Farmers are adopting the manual method of harvesting instead of getting their crop harvested with the help of combine to get better price for their produce.

The farmers say it would help in meeting the demand of dry fodder in the summer. "I used to get my crop harvested with the help of combine. But the paddy harvested with combine get less price in mandi due to breakage of grains. The paddy harvested manually

fetches a good price. So, I started manual harvesting. Manually, the straw of paddy is cut from almost the bottom of the straw, leaving no residue to be burnt," said Vikram Rana, a farmer and owner of a crop

residue management centre at Nigdhu village.

He said that this season, a large number of farmers have shifted to manual harvesting, instead of getting the crop harvested with the help of com-

bines. Jatinder Kumar, another farmer, said that there are 10 centres between Nilokheri and Nigdhu which procure paddy straw and further sell it to other states.

Aditya Dabas, Deputy Director of Agriculture (DDA), said that the manual practice was environment friendly and farmers should earn profit from the straw instead of burning it. He said that as many as 25 ex-situ bailing implements for crop residue management have been given to farmers on subsidy this season. They are using those to make bundles of crop residue.

Deputy Commissioner Nishant Kumar Yadav appreciated the farmers who have been using the eco-friendly method for managing crop residue as well as earning profit. "Pancharats have been roped in to check stubble burning cases. Sarpanch and secretary will be suspended if five or more fire incidents are reported from the village," he added.

Don't use banned fuels, industrialists warned

TRENT NEWS SERVICE

KARNAL, OCTOBER 18

Haryana State Pollution Control Board (HSPCB), Karnal region, has warned industrialists not to use illegal or banned fuel in industries.

It has issued directions to all the industrial units having boiler/furnace telling them not to use any illegal or banned fuel like rubber, polythene, solid waste garbage, leather shoes, slippers, plastic bottles etc. Otherwise, the industry would be sealed and a fine would be imposed.

Besides, the HSPCB has also asked them to make sure their pollution control devices are in running mode.

These industrial units have also announced a reward for information about violating industrialists using illegal fuel. He said that due to wind velocity and less humidity in the past two days, the air quality index (AQI) has improved in the district. While it was 259 on Friday, it reached 125 on Sunday.



only legal fuels like bio-mass, diesel, coal, wood, gas etc.

They have also been directed not to use banned fuel which contributes to environmental pollution," said SK Arora, Regional Officer, HSPCB, Karnal region.

Most of the industrial associations have given their consent to follow the directions and the remaining will submit it a day or two.

Around 300 out of the total of 400 units have submitted their undertaking, assuring the HSPCB that they would adhere to all the guidelines of the board to contribute in reducing pollution.

"We have issued directions to all the industrial units to use

GOVERNMENT OF PUNJAB DEPARTMENT OF ELECTIONS SCO No. 29-32, Sector: 17-E, Chandigarh TENDER NOTICE		
The office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Punjab, Chandigarh invites sealed quotations for disposal of following vehicles:-		
Model	Registration No.	Reserve Price of vehicle
Ambassador-2005	CH01G1-1714	1,31,047/-
Toyota Innova-2008	PB65H-9123	2,62,500/-
Toyota Innova-2008	PB65H-9124	2,62,500/-

The tenderer has to deposit 10% earnest money of reserve price of the vehicle in the favour of Electoral Officer, Punjab payable at Chandigarh in shape of Demand Draft along with his tender. The tender form and terms & conditions can be collected from this office on any working day from 09.30 AM to 04.00 PM before 2nd November, 2020 by paying of Rs. 500/- by cash or by paying of Rs. 600/- by post (on buyer risk). The tender form can also be downloaded from the website of www.ceopunjab.nic.in and tenderer has to deposit Rs. 500/- by demand draft in favour of Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Punjab payable at Chandigarh. The tender form will not be transferable. The undersigned reserves the right to accept or any tender without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd/- (Madhvji Kataria), IAS
Additional Chief Electoral Officer, Punjab
DPR/Pb/90197

INDIAN RAILWAYS DIESEL LOCO MODERNISATION WORKS PATIALA-147 003	
Tel: 2396000, 2396001 Fax: 91-0175-2306413 Notice Inviting Electronic Tenders	

On behalf of President of India Principal Chief Materials Manager/DMW/Patiala invites tenders in electronic form for following items:

e-Tender Notice No. 21 ET/2020-21

S. No.	Tender No.	Description	Qty.	Tender Closing Date
1	21206664	Axle Holder	154 Nos.	06.11.2020
2	21206656	Oil Pump With Motor For Transformer	56 Nos.	12.11.2020**
3	21206583	Set of Motor Suspension Unit	40 Sets.	12.11.2020**
4	21206519	Gear Case Assembly	119 Nos.	12.11.2020**
5	02205319	Winding Wire	17301 Kgs	17.11.2020**
6	20209034	Master Controller	47 Sets.	06.11.2020
7	20208134	Scavenge Blower to MR	104 Sets.	12.11.2020**
8	12204031A	Sealing Adhesive Loctite As Per Set List No. EL 29725148	135 Sets.	30.10.2020**
9	21206518	High Voltage Cable with Plug	41 Sets.	10.11.2020**
10	20208106	Twin Tower Air Dryer	43 Sets.	11.11.2020*
11	20207763	Traction Motor Blower	84 Nos.	12.11.2020**
12	02205993	Complete Stator Assy	410 Nos.	10.11.2020**

Tender closing Time : 15:00 Hrs.

Item marked with *is reserved for procurement from RDSO approved Firms. Item marked with **is reserved for procurement from CLW approved Firms. Item marked with ***is reserved for procurement from CLW & RDSO approved Firms.

The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website <http://www.reps.gov.in> or <http://www.dmw.indianrailways.gov.in> for detailed description of items & other terms and conditions of tender document. Please note that tenderers can submit their quotations only through <http://www.reps.gov.in>.

Corrigendum to E-Tender Notice No. 16 ET/2020-21

Closing date against E-tender No. 20208107 published at SN-13 may be read as 21.10.2020 instead of 07.10.2020.

Corrigendum to E-Tender Notice No. 18 ET/2020-21

Closing date against E-tender No. 21206477 published at SN-07 may be read as 19.11.2020 instead of 19.10.2020.

Corrigendum to Tender Notice No. E-Reverse Auction Notice No.02 E-RA/2020-21

Closing Date against Tender No. 20207873 may be read as 18.11.2020 against Existing Entry.

2258/2020

Serving Customers with a Smile

12 years on, Patvi waste plant to restart operations

NITISH SHARMA
TRENT NEWS SERVICE

AMBALA, OCTOBER 18

The work for the bio-remediation of legacy waste (old waste), which is estimated to be over 5.5 lakh tonnes, at Patvi plant in Ambala is likely to start within a month.

The plant was started in 2008 at a cost of Rs 12 crore to treat 70 metric tonnes of solid waste daily. It was shut down shortly after its inauguration as the Union Ministry of Environment did not give clearance to the project.

Besides treating the waste

The Tribune

ESTABLISHED IN 1881

Remdesivir falls flat

WHO study says currently no drug for Covid

THE novel coronavirus is proving to be a tough bug to crack. In a huge disappointment, the WHO study on the drugs prescribed to prevent and treat Covid-19 has left healthcare providers with no definite medicine for the patients for now. The widely administered remdesivir, hydroxychloroquine, lopinavir, interferon or interferon plus lopinavir have all been found to be ineffective in preventing the Covid-afflicted from dying or even in reducing their recovery time as compared with those without drug treatment. That remdesivir, too, is futile is a massive setback. Since its emergency authorisation on May 1 in the US, it has been the only antiviral drug in use for the severely sick. Notably, in August, it was expanded to include all patients.

The finding of the Solidarity trial puts the spotlight on the dark underbelly of the profit-driven, multi-billion-dollar pharmaceutical industry. It is shocking that lakhs of patients have been given pills that now seem to have been of no value. As they count their losses (in India, Covid beds in private hospitals cost upwards of Rs 50,000 per day), they may also have to deal with the health repercussions of ingesting these medicines. However, unsurprisingly, remdesivir-maker Gilead has cast a doubt on the study, notwithstanding that its sample size is bigger and more inclusive (covering 30 countries, including India) than any other. Interestingly, the company signed a billion-dollar deal with the European Commission to supply remdesivir a week after it was informed of the WHO conclusions.

While the virus shows no sign of receding as it ravages the world in waves — dipping in India and rearing its head again after a lull in Europe and America — scientists are racing to find the vaccine to combat the disease. Hope rests on the clinical trials at advanced stages, with the flattening of the curve or herd immunity being elusive. But universal vaccination is estimated to take a couple of years, necessitating the urgent need for a medicine to manage the disease. Till then, the world has to live with the virus and without paranoia.

Farm fires under scrutiny

Practical steps will be needed to find a solution

WHILE the decision of the Supreme Court to appoint a retired judge as a one-man committee to monitor the measures taken to prevent the burning of crop stubble in the states of Punjab, Haryana and UP needs to be welcomed, there will be reservations over its effectiveness. The court's decision appears to have been prompted by the failure of the state governments to check incidents of farm fires, but clarity will be needed on aspects like the powers delegated to it, the time frame within which it has to submit its report and whether the recommendations would be binding. There have been many instances in the past when reports of judicial panels have been allowed to gather dust. The government, on its part, has said it is sceptical about the panel as the Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority is already tasked to look into the problem, but has failed to explain why repeated prodding has not produced results.

The Supreme Court, on the other hand, has clarified that the appointment of the committee is not an indictment of any agency and that its only concern is that people in Delhi-NCR should be able to breathe clean and fresh air. The panel is expected to undertake physical surveillance of the fields where stubble burning takes place, suggest methods to prevent it and submit fortnightly reports to the court which implies that it will have to depend on the cooperation of the states — ruled by different political parties — which themselves have been unable to check the problem.

Justice Madan B Lokur (retd), with his experience of having headed the Green Bench, will need to take into confidence all stakeholders like farmers and government agencies. With the stir over agriculture reforms persisting, it has been difficult to dissuade the farmers from burning stubble. Incentives and punitive measures have not been much successful and creating awareness will be important, for which the committee will be assisted by NCC cadets, NSS volunteers and Scouts & Guides. Looking for individual success stories may help, for success breeds popularity. The task is cut out for the committee.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

In the absence of justice, what is sovereignty but organised robbery? — Saint Augustine

ON THIS DAY...100 YEARS AGO

The Tribune.

LAHORE, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1920

PANDIT MALAVIYA'S DECISION.

WHILE it is certain that the decision of Pandit Malaviya not to offer himself for election to any of the reformed Councils will cause widespread regret among the minority of Congressmen who, despite the resolution of the Special Congress, have persisted in their determination to go to the Councils, and bitter disappointment among those moderate politicians who have been looking forward to a strengthening of their ranks by a reunion with the Pandit and, through him with other Congressmen, it is equally certain that the reasons given by the Pandit in support of his decision cannot be lightly dismissed. These are two. In the first place, the Pandit feels that composed as the new Councils are now likely to be, it will not be possible for him to use them for the only purpose for which he was anxious to go to the Council, namely, the attainment of full responsible government within the Empire. To quote his own words, "the decision of the bulk of my nationalist fellow workers to boycott the Councils from the ranks of the moderates, I apprehend that a large number of the members will be men of an indifferent character and it will be much more difficult than before to use the Councils to the best advantage of the country, while it will be practically impossible to effectively non-co-operate with the Government as a member of the Council." The position would have been different if the question had been one of conscience with Pandit Malaviya, just as it is a matter of conscience with Mr. Gandhi not to go to the Council. The question with him is only how to make himself most useful, and he finds that he cannot make himself as useful in the new Councils as he originally thought he would be able to do, as he could have done in a Council, the bulk of whose members were committed to the Congress creed.

Pushing Sindh to the brink

Trouble brewing in province following ordinance facilitating takeover of two islands



TILAK DEVASHER

MEMBER, NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISORY BOARD

SINDH became a part of the territories of the East India Company in 1843 through its conquest by General Charles Napier. Napier was under express orders not to capture the area. Despite this, he took the province since he encountered little resistance. After the conquest, he is supposed to have sent to his superiors the short, memorable message, 'Peccavi', the Latin for 'I have sinned' (which was a pun on 'I have Sindh').

On March 3, 1943, in a motion moved by GM Syed, Sindh became the first province in undivided India to support the 1940 Pakistan resolution. On June 26, 1947, the Sindh assembly was also the first to decide to join Pakistan. Most analysts agree that by supporting the cause of Pakistan, the Sindhis were actually looking for autonomy to rule their province. When Syed realised what Pakistan was all about, he left the Muslim League, termed the Partition and the two-nation theory 'unnatural, inhuman and unrealistic' and became an ideologue for Sindh nationalism. He spent many years in prison for doing so.

Punjab did not forget or forgive and used water as a weapon to keep Sindh on the straight and narrow. Due to the construction of dams upstream on the Indus to serve the interests of Punjab, there has been a drastic reduction in water availability downstream in Sindh: as much as 58 per cent shortage during early Kharif in 2018 and around 40 per cent in 2019. The reduction of the historical flow of water has also led to the slow strangulation of the delta. The result has been destruction of the sixth biggest mangrove forest in the world and sea intrusion of over 200 km. Not surprisingly, two tehsils of



FOUL PLAY: The manner in which the islands have been taken over, violating a Supreme Court judgment, leads to suspicions that the Chinese are involved.

There is also an apprehension that this could be the first step for the Pak govt to take control of the entire coastline of Sindh and Balochistan.

Thatta district, i.e., Kharo Chan and Keti Bander, have almost been eliminated from Pakistan in the past three decades. Badin district has also been badly affected leading to mass migration. This is the accumulated 'environmental debt' (a term used by the World Bank) that Pakistan's future generations will have to pay.

The latest in the series is the Centre's takeover of the twin islands of Bundal and Buddo lying off the Karachi coast via an ordinance promulgated on August 31 without consulting either the Sindh government or parliament.

The Pakistan Islands Development Authority (PIDA) ordinance specifically mentions taking control of these two islands to facilitate reclamation and to promote the twin islands as trade, investment and logistics hubs, duty-free areas and international tourist destinations. A Chinese hand seems clearly visible in the formulation.

According to legal experts, the ordinance is a clear violation of the constitution that gives the ownership of the territorial waters (12 nautical miles from the coast) and the islands in them,

to the provinces. Moreover, altering the limits of a province would require a constitutional amendment that has not been done and also the consent of two-thirds of the total membership of the provincial assembly that has also not been done. The Sindh government, not surprisingly, has rejected the ordinance, asked the federal government to withdraw it, and asserted ownership.

Development of these islands had been attempted earlier too. The Musharraf government had tried it in 2000 and 2006, but failed due to public opposition. Later, in 2013, the PPP government had made a similar attempt, but the Supreme Court put a ban on construction.

The Opposition has alleged 'malafide intention' since the government adopted the ordinance route rather than bring the matter to parliament or take the Sindh government on board. It has also claimed that this was another attempt to deprive the provinces of the powers that had been devolved to them under the 18th Amendment. There is also an apprehension that this could be the first step for the Centre to

take control of the entire coastline of Sindh and Balochistan.

The construction of the city and development of islands would deprive around 8 lakh fishermen of their livelihood. This apprehension has brought together fishermen (who are already protesting the arrival of Chinese deep-sea fishing vessels), civil society organisations and Sindhi nationalist parties (concerned about loss of Sindh rights and the islands being sold to the Chinese). They have organised a series of protest marches all over Sindh and in Karachi. A petition has been filed in the Sindh High Court that has sought replies from the federal and provincial governments by October 23.

The surreptitious manner in which the islands have been taken over, violating constitutional provisions and Supreme Court judgment, leads to suspicions that the Chinese are involved. Such suspicions are strengthened by the provision in the ordinance that the PIDA, that is directly responsible to the PM, has been empowered to retain, lease, sell, exchange, rent or otherwise dispose of any land vested in it. In other words, the islands could well be sold to any private person or country, should the PM so decide. Further, the Sindh governor's boast that Bundal could take on Dubai and attract investment of \$50 billion is a clear giveaway. Since Pakistan is bankrupt, it is only China that could deploy such funds as an adjunct to its investments in CPEC and bolster President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative.

For Sindh, coupled with historical grievances, the takeover of its islands is probably the last straw. If the matter were above board, the federal government would not have trampled the constitution, provincial rights, environmental concerns and livelihoods of the fishermen. Given the resentment aroused in Sindh, the last word has not been spoken on the issue yet and Imran Khan may well find that while he could say 'Peccavi' (I have sinned), he would not be able to use the pun (I have Sindh).

Views are personal

Why Rowling returned award

VBN RAM

I HAVE always marvelled at people endowed with an unequivocal resolve to stand firm for their principles, regardless of opposition and the 'manna from heaven' kind of compensation offered to shift their stand. Renouncing knight-hood, Rabindranath Tagore wrote to Lord Chelmsford, the then Viceroy, that he did not wish to prefix his name with a 'Sir'.

Author JK Rowling is the latest to join this club. She was given the Ripple of Hope honour by the Robert F Kennedy Human Rights Organisation last year. The award honours people across nations who have displayed the individual moral courage to overcome injustice'.

Whenever a rigid two-gender classification is made, it outrages the

internationally acclaimed litterateur was particularly incensed because Kerry Kennedy, a human rights activist and the daughter of Robert Kennedy, had in a statement said Rowling had used her remarkable gift to create a narrative that diminishes the identity of trans and non-binary people.

Rowling stoked a gender-based controversy that gained momentum when she chose to describe females as 'people who menstruate'. The controversy draws its logic from the belief that there are humans born as women and later turn into men, and there are men, who after surgical procedures, physiologically acquire female bodies.

Then there is 'Terf' (trans-

transgender, and justifiably so. Humankind in such situations falls foul of the principles of justice or equity. There is merit in this argument. Entry into academic institutions and gender-specific jobs and even recognition by legal protocols facilitating governance would fall flat if applicants are unable to describe their gender as either male or female. And now in India, after considerable struggle, transgender people, or trans, have recognition. There are special privileges for 'women' taxpayers/assessees.

Of course, there are issues for those classified as trans: whether they should use toilets reserved for men, or women. There are no gender-neutral toilets in India, or changing rooms.

exclusionary radical feminist) that consists of women nurturing radical views. Rowling says one such was a mother of a gay child who desired a gender transition to escape bullying, and another who vowed never to visit a clothing brand again because they allowed any man, who claimed the identity of a woman, into women's changing rooms.

Laws under the Indian Penal Code that say the term 'he' can be used for 'she' as well (Section 8), or that 'man' denotes a male human and 'woman' a female (Section 10) have become an irritant. Activists cite provisions of the Constitution that pronounce freedoms sans discrimination.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Death of a hero

Apropos of 'Anti-terror braveheart shot in Punjab', he and his family set an example of patriotism, fighting against terrorism. It was unfortunate that his security was withdrawn and not restored even after many requests by his family. The state government and the Centre are equally responsible for his killing. Things were visible to all, only giving awards was not sufficient. The Centre should have ensured his security in a way that the state government could not have withdrawn it. Steps should be taken to keep the morale high of the people dedicated to the country.

RAVINDER KWATRA, SHAHABAD MARKANDA

Comrade till the last

The killing of Balwinder Singh is painful. His tales of bravery are well-known. He was a fearless leader who hurt the susceptibilities of those whose only strength was gunpowder, and not ideas. He was patriotic and selflessly worked for the poor and weak around him. The extremists might have taken his life but he will go down in North India's history as a sort of legendary comrade who braved 42 attempts of elimination on behalf of the separatist forces active in this border area.

RAJ BHADUR YADAV, FATEHABAD

Hunger pangs

A day after PM Narendra Modi said his government had fed 80 crore people over the past 7-8 months, India has been ranked 94th out of 107 countries on the Global Hunger Index (GHI), even lower than neighbours such as Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Pakistan. The government's claim that not a single person starved to death during the lockdown is unpalatable. The bitter truth is that we are still a third world nation where people are dying of lack of food, even as lakhs of tonnes of foodgrains are being allowed to rot.

BIDYUT CHATTERJEE, FARIDABAD

Inflated MRP

Many life-saving medicines carry five to 10 times more MRP than the cost price whereas it should not have been more than double the cost of production. Some medicines have MRP 100-200 per cent more than the cost of production. The issue has been raised many times, but no action has been taken against erring companies. Poor patients are being allowed to be looted by such companies. This cannot happen without the connivance of officials and ministers who get huge amounts from these

companies as a bribe. Even some doctors recommend costly medicines, for which they get hefty commission. They hardly recommend generic medicines which are cheaper. Shops like Modikhana that sell medicines at prices much lower than the MRP should be opened in all cities. The licence of defaulter companies should be cancelled.

BL GOHAL, NABHA

At what cost!

Refer to 'Remdesivir not effective: Study', so far Remdesivir was considered as a gold standard and a wonder drug for moderate to severe cases. Attendants of patients used to run frantically from pillar to post to buy it, even at the cost of 40,000 or more, against its MRP of about Rs 5,500. And now comes the report that it is not effective. The biggest beneficiaries of this fallacious information have been drug companies who have pocketed billions by now. This is called 'finding opportunity in adversity'.

BALBIR SINGH KAKKAR, JALANDHAR

Online education

Refer to 'Online studies make it worse for special children', online learning has come to the rescue of students in a virtual world, but there is a plethora of issues, too. Students

without devices and proper Internet facility can't rely on e-learning. Those helpless are forced to drop out. And those who are attending the classes also face strain on eyes and suffer headache due to longer screen time. Sometimes, the data is used up midway. Reopening educational institutions seems to be the only solution.

PULKIT JAIN, BANUR

GNDTP land

Refer to the news that PSPCL engineers have opposed the move to 'sell' land of Guru Nanak Dev Thermal Plant at Bathinda at the throwaway price of Re 1/acre, when the market price of the land is over Rs 4,000 crore. The proceeds can be best utilised to infuse equity to acquire assets of supercritical technology under the state sector. The issue has been highlighted by experts in various articles and at other platforms to reduce electricity tariff to give relief to the common man and other sectors of the economy. It is surprising that the decision to hand over the land to PUDA was taken during the tenure of one of their own CMD, who had earlier been advocating that the plant can be run efficiently. Where were these leaders then?

BHUPINDER SINGH, PATIALA

Probe agencies, media mishandled Sushant case



KTS TULSI

SENIOR ADVOCATE AND RAJYA SABHA MP

CRIMINAL law does not allow the victim to prosecute directly because the victim can hardly be expected to take a balanced view. Therefore, the entire investigation and prosecution is put in the hands of criminal law experts to ferret out the truth, i.e. the unvarnished, unbiased truth. The victim cannot dictate terms to the investigation or prosecution in the way that it has sought to do.

A victim cannot interfere in investigation and during the prosecution, is given a supplementary role in assisting the public prosecutor. Allowing all of these to occur has caused an absolute mockery of the criminal justice system. For example, Rhea Chakraborty is being vilified for abetment to suicide without any evidence of intention or positive act on her part to see Sushant dead. The Supreme Court case of *West Bengal vs Orilal Jaiswal* (1994) cautioned about careful factual scrutiny in abetment cases before acquittal or conviction.

If unbridled interference is allowed, no investigation would ever come to a conclusion. Allowing such interfer-

ence at every stage facilitated media access. This caused a reversal of the "innocent until proven guilty" theorem in criminal law. Moreover, despite the absence of an iota of 'reasonable doubt', the media continued to concoct its own John Grisham novel. There is no difference between the mob lynching that occurs via 'extra-judicial killing' and a media trial. In both these cases, agencies other than the court assume the role of judge, jury and executioner. And eventually, even before the court hears the matter, the conjecture around the case causes competing narratives to engulf the public completely.

In *Maharashtra vs Rajendra Jawanmal* (1997), the court ruled that "a trial by press, electronic media or public agitation is the very antithesis of the rule of law." Similarly, in *Manu Sharma vs NCT of Delhi* (2010), the court said, "The media publishes statements which outrightly hold the suspect or the accused guilty even before such an order has been passed by the court."

The Contempt of Courts Act, 1971, says that "prejudicing trial and hindering the administration of justice" amounts to "contempt." In the case of *YV Hanumantha Rao vs KR Pattabhiran* (1975), it was held that "when litigation is pending before a court, no one shall speak on it in such a way that there is a real and substantial danger of prejudice to the prosecution or, such as impact on the defendant, the witnesses or bias against a party to the case in general. Even if the person who makes the statement honestly believes



NOT BASED ON PROOF: Rhea Chakraborty is being vilified in the Sushant case.

it is valid, it is still a court contempt."

Therefore, the actions of the media put them at the risk of having committed contempt. People's perspectives are being made volatile puppets by being tailored by political-interest-fulfilling media houses that dish out narratives to suit whichever political parties they cater to.

There was a tremendous delay in filing the First Information Report (FIR). Until July 27 this year, there were no allegations made in this case. It was only 40 days after Sushant's death that his family made allegations to the Bihar police. The delay in the filing of the FIR clearly shows how this was an after-thought. Legally, the Bihar police should have registered a

zero FIR and then transferred it to the Mumbai police. But nothing of the sort happened. This caused the registration of an FIR at a place where no cause of action arose and was an abuse of the process of criminal law. Expecting the Bombay police to do their bidding was totally uncalled for.

There is also a privacy violation. Debatable, confidential facts about his mental health have been reported by TV channels. Sushant Singh Rajput has been accorded with several mental health conditions such as depression and bipolar disorder. The question that begs an answer here is whether such public disclosure amounts to a violation of the confidentiality which binds a doctor-

patient relationship. There was a tremendous delay in filing the FIR. It was only 40 days after Sushant's death that his family made allegations to the Bihar police. The delay in filing the FIR shows how this was an after-thought. Legally, the Bihar police should have registered a zero FIR and then transferred it to the Mumbai police.

does each state gain jurisdiction?

Setting one agency after another by the government was unfortunate. It only managed to divert the attention from the key issue of whether Sushant's death was suicide or murder. Based on Section 6 of the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946, the CBI cannot carry out an investigation without the consent of the state concerned. There is one exception to this for constitutional courts which exercise their power under Articles 32 and 226: By handing over investigation within the jurisdiction of the state to the CBI — the court went on to exercise the power of a constitutional court.

The Criminal Procedure Code exists to ease investigation in each case with uniformity. The Sushant suicide case seems to have torn the procedural Code to pieces by failing to follow any semblance of what the Code mandates. Allowing the Bihar police to investigate a suicide that occurred in Mumbai amounts to ignoring the concept of federalism.

The case was formerly hijacked by 'outsiders' within the films to masquerade their bravado of having 'made it' despite not being products of nepotism. After this, it was about an easy target and a holy trinity of romance, with men shifting seats at the corners. Then, it moved on to Bollywood's 'drug problem'. Eventually, Sushant's corpse became a vote-catcher for the political parties in poll-bound Bihar. Not once, not ever, was this about the actor himself.

Farm laws should reflect local realities

THE country is seeing intense acrimony among farmers on the new farm laws. These legislations are apparently aimed at transforming agriculture, but the farmers of Punjab, Haryana, and western UP, the original Green Revolution areas, are seeking their recall.

These are, in fact, not farm but trade legislations. After the onset of reforms in 1992, trade has substantially contributed to enhancing the national GDP. Trade as a percentage of the country's GDP was 55.29 in 2019. However, agriculture has largely remained out of the trade network. Even the world trade negotiations have not been able to break the impasse on rule-based global trade in agriculture and services.

Liberalisation of agri-marketing, promotion of contract farming, and easing of restrictions under the Essential Commodities Act is the basis of the new legislation. These are premised on a lack of transparency and competition, and predominance of intermediaries in agriculture markets under the APMC Acts. Deregulation, freedom of choice for farmers and tax-free trading are the other reasons for these Acts. Stakeholders who were not consulted claim these to be utopian.

These premises are not borne out of facts and experience of over five decades in Punjab, Haryana and western UP. The farmers of these states/region, who are just 6 per cent of the country's farming population, laid the foundation of national food security. They could do so owing to the assured purchase of their produce — wheat and rice — under a well-designed MSP regime of the Government of India, and appropriately organised marketing infrastructure of the states under the APMC Acts. The system worked well, fully reflecting upon cooperative federalism. As many as 94 per cent of the



ON WARPATH: Subjecting farmers to the vagaries of the market is an issue that troubles them.

farmers are out of the allegedly restrictive APMC Acts.

The APMC Acts do not promote monopoly but stabilise the market. Given the huge marketable surplus (about 45 million tonnes per annum of rice and wheat in these states), there are not enough buyers, much less any single monopolist in the market. The government buys the produce at the Minimum Support Price (MSP), which is an appreciable trade-off between farmers' financial protection and national food security.

The APMC Acts contain the impact of market vagaries on the farmers, without taking away their freedom of choice. They could sell their produce anywhere they like — provided it was commercially viable. Kinnar and seed

potatoes of Punjab are sold all over the country. Punjab's basmati rice is exported to most Gulf countries.

The APMC markets promoted rule-based transparent trading — both by private or government agencies. Unreported sale-purchase of agricultural produce happened outside these markets, but on a very small scale. True, there are intermediaries i.e. the arthiyas, who are licensed and regulat-

ed to protect farmers. How will intermediaries disappear in unregulated markets under the new legislation? In fact, a new class of unregulated intermediaries is likely to emerge. They may not be licensees of the government but are likely to be marketing agents of big businesses. Nevertheless, is there any trading, agricultural or non-agricultural in this country, that happens without intermediaries? Even financial trading happens through agents. Thus, one can make the case to improve the regulations for intermediaries but freeing farmers from them may prove to be detrimental.

Farmers are expected to reap the benefits of the market through open trading. This should happen, but will this happen? Perhaps not! For this, we need to understand the context of our agriculture.

Indian agriculture is based on peasant farming with nearly 86 per cent of farmers owning less than five acres. It is a unique feature of our system that we achieved food security with such small-scale agricultural operations. Our agriculturists are not only small but they are localised too. They are largely dependent upon support from outside — the government, intermediaries and

the service providers. In many ways, our agriculture is not natural but an economic compulsion, leading to unsustainable operations causing damage to natural resources and biodiversity. However, it still supports over 50 per cent of the country's rural population for their livelihood, though its share in national GDP has decreased to 15 per cent. Above all, it still has the potential to give the country enough food stocks for national food security. The new legislations are unlikely to address the problems of the present agricultural systems. These may, however, jeopardise the financial security of the farmers.

How will the small and marginal farmers compete with trading giants in the completely unregulated markets? How are they going to discover the best price for their crop? Will they not need assistance from some intermediaries to learn about the prevailing prices in far-flung markets? Will it not involve additional transportation costs for farmers unless the government intends to introduce another subsidy to improve farmers' access to distant markets? Maybe, the intermediary such as the National commodities and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX) is enabled through technology, but that too has a price and a regulation. Even in e-NAM and such other digital interventions, the rules of the game would need to be laid down.

Leaving imperfect agriculture markets totally unregulated may not be a good public policy. Commercial trading in agriculture produce can be best achieved with clear statutes protecting the farmers in the market. The Food Corporation of India, should alongside the purchases for the public distribution system (PDS), make commercial purchases to stabilise markets, else a new national Agri-Food Export Corporation should be established for commercial operations in foodgrains. The Cotton

Corporation of India does not buy all the produce, but it does help to stabilise markets to protect growers' interest.

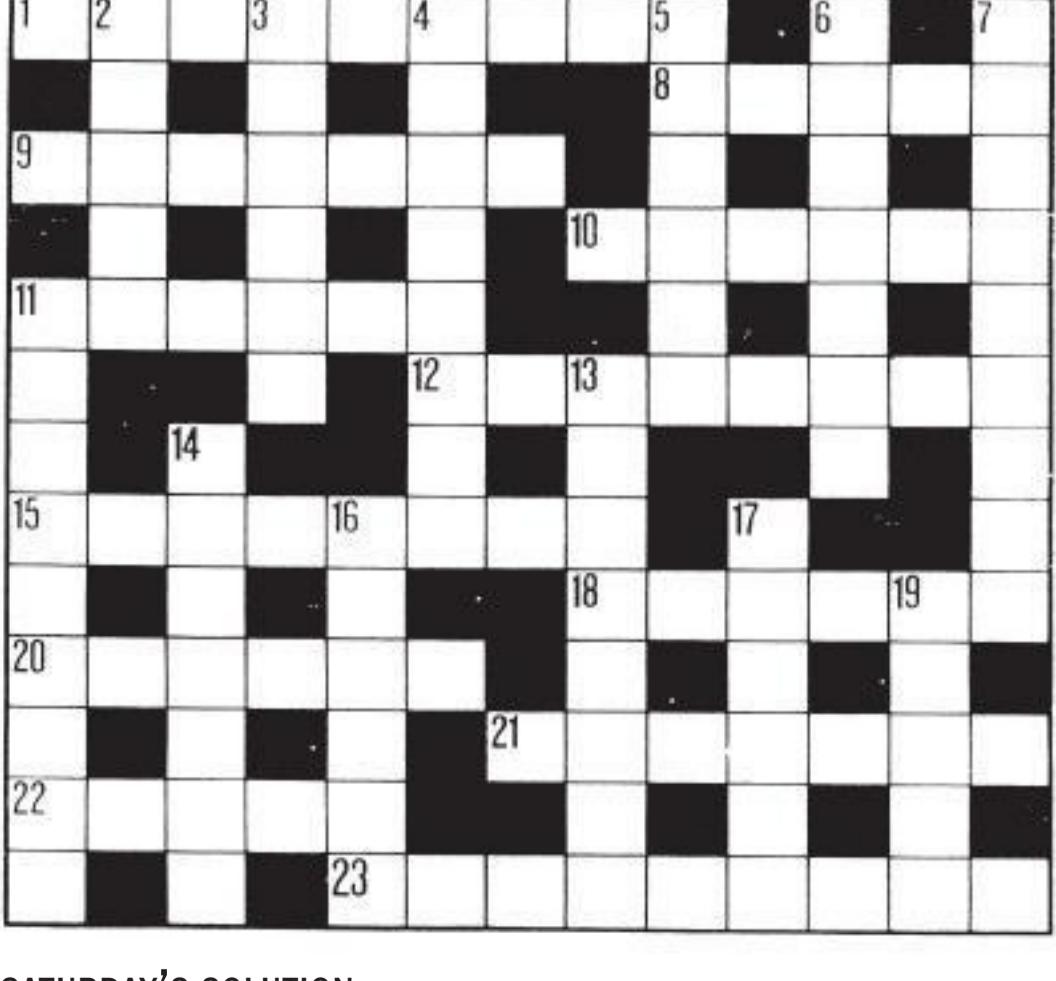
Contract farming is seen as a step towards enabling farmers to access the benefits of the market economy. But the farmers are apprehensive of such an arrangement. In Punjab, the Contract Farming Act was enacted in 2013. The farmers saw it as more of an attempt to corporatise agriculture than as a measure for their economic emancipation. The small farmers were not sure how to secure or receive their full entitlements at contractual or impromptu market-driven prices from big buyers without any external support. They were also apprehensive about their exploitation by big corporates. Some even feared the loss of their land through prolonged litigation. These apprehensions have not been fully allayed even in the new central legislation on contract farming.

Agriculture markets in India cannot be solely guided by the logic of the competitive global economy. The farmers carry out operations with small localised input services and through intermediaries. Inputs are subsidised, but their provisioning, supplies and services are not guaranteed by any law. Instead, at times, these are guided by political gamification, even at the cost of economic logic.

The liberalisation of agriculture markets will succeed only if it fully reflects upon the context of our farming communities. Notwithstanding the economic hypothesis and the experience of other emerging economies, the laws and policies should respond to the requirements, which are much different. The new legislations seem to have failed in this direction and have thus, not captured the imagination and understanding of the farmers.

Views are personal

QUICK CROSSWORD



SATURDAY'S SOLUTION

Across: 1. Algebra, 4. Camel, 7. Idle, 8. Hit it off, 10. Masquerade, 12. Ocelot, 13. Spirit, 15. Stagnation, 18. Corduroy, 19. List, 20. Leech, 21. Dead-end.

Down: 1. Axiom, 2. Galoshes, 3. Apairy, 4. Child's play, 5. Moot, 6. Left out, 9. Out of touch, 11. Artifice, 12. Optical, 14. Age-old, 16. Noted, 17. Free.

SU DO KU



MEDIUM

CALENDAR

OCTOBER 19, 2020, MONDAY

■ Vikrami Samvat	2077
■ Shaka Samvat	1942
■ Ashwin Shaka	27
■ Kartik Parvishite	3
■ Hijari	1442
■ Shukla Paksha Tithi 3, up to 2:08 pm	
■ Ayushman Yoga up to 1:18 pm	
■ Anuradha Nakshatra up to 3:53 am	
■ Moon in Scorpio sign	

SATURDAY'S SOLUTION

7	6	8	1	3	5	4	2	9
3	4	9	7	8	2	1	5	6
5	1	2	4	9	6	7	3	8
2	5	1	3	7	8	6	9	4
8	7	6	5	4	9	2	1	3
4	9	3	6	2	1	5	8	7
1	8	4	9	5	7	3	6	2
6	2	7	8	1	3	9	4	5
9	3	5	2	6	4	8	7	1

FORECAST

SUNSET: MONDAY 17:46 HRS
SUNRISE: TUESDAY 06:29 HRS

CITY	MAX		MIN	
	Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy	Rainy
Chandigarh	34	17	12	10
New Delhi	34	18	10	8
Amritsar	34	15	10	8
Bathinda	35	14	10	8
Jalandhar	34	15	10	8
Ludhiana	34	15	10	8
Bhiwani	33	17	10	8
Hisar	35	14	10	8
Sirsia	34	16	10	8
Dharamsala	26	16	10	8
Manali	24	04	10	8
Shimla	24	13	10	8
Srinagar	26	05	10	8
Jammu	35	16	10	8
Kargil	16	01	10	8
Leh	20	-05	10	8
Dehradun	31	17		

Paper for posts of conductor leaks

Candidate detained | Congress demands exam cancellation | CM for strict action



BHANU P LOHUMI
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, OCTOBER 18
In a case of glaring misconduct, a candidate was detained for clicking the photograph of a question paper during exam for the posts of conductor in the HRTC at a Himachal Pradesh University (HPU) centre and forwarding it.

The examination was held for 568 posts of conductor at 304 centres from 10 am to 12 noon in which thousands of candidates appeared today. The invigilator spotted the candidate who was sitting idle, waiting for the answers.

The invigilator got suspicious and, during search, recovered a mobile phone

and found picture of the question paper (series B) and reported the matter to the police.

A case has been registered under Section 420 of the malpractices Act and the IPC and mobile phone, answer-sheet and other record of the candidate have been taken into custody. The person, hailing from Rohru in Shimla district, has been detained by the police, said SP Mohit Chawla.

Though it is yet to be ascertained that it is a case of cheating or paper leak, the Congress has demanded the cancellation of the paper. Questions are being raised as to how a candidate was able to take the mobile phone inside the examination centre in spite of checking.

The candidates were upset for the fear of cancellation of the examination.

Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur said the guilty would not be spared and strong action would be taken against them. He added that the government would ensure transparency in the written examinations so that such incidents do not happen in the future.

Aspirant caught with phone

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

SOLAN, OCTOBER 18

A candidate was caught with a cellphone during the Himachal Road Transport Corporation's conductor recruitment exam held at Gurukul International Senior Secondary School in Solan today.

Gurukul school principal and centre in-charge Piyush Garg said his cellphone was taken into possession and a report detailing the incident had been sent to the Staff Selection Commission (SSC) in Hamirpur.

The candidate was permitted to take the exam but his exam will not be valid

The candidate was permitted to take the examination. However, since an unfair means cases (UMC) had been slapped against him, his examination sheet would not be valid, said officials.

There were two examination centres at the school where 320 students were supposed to appear for the written exam, but only 196 candidates appeared.

170 fresh cases take caseload to 18,967

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

STATE TRACKER

STATE TRACKER		
SHIMLA, OCTOBER 18		
Active cases 2,630		
Positive cases 18,967		
Deaths 263		
DISTRICT-WISE COUNT		
DISTRICT	+VE	DEATHS
Una	1,473	15
Solan	3,441	35
Kangra	2,786	57
Chamba	1,034	12
Hamirpur	1,094	11
Sirmaur	2,100	16
Mandi	2,405	32
Bilaspur	1,127	5
Shimla	1,966	56
Kullu	1018	19
Kinnaur	237	4
Lahaul & Spiti	286	1
Total	18,967	263

DDU Hospital suicide: Docs threaten to move court

SHIMLA, OCTOBER 18 The Himachal Medical Officers Association has threatened to go to the court against the charge-sheeting of the DDU Hospital Medical Superintendent and the staff in the suicide case of a 54-year-old Covid patient on September 22.

"We reject the inquiry by the Additional District Magistrate. If need arises, we will not hesitate to move the court," said HMOA secretary Pushpinder Verma.

Questioning the inquiry, Verma alleged that the

"How could you complete an inquiry without giving an opportunity to the accused to state their side of the story? We reject the inquiry and demand a judicial probe into the matter"

Pushpinder Verma, HMOA CHIEF

accused were not given any opportunity by the ADM to record their versions. "How could you complete an inquiry without giving an opportunity to the accused to state their side of the story? We reject the inquiry and demand a judicial inquiry into the matter," Verma said.

He further said if healthcare professionals are to be held responsible for the suicide, then someone should be held accountable for more than 500 suicides that happened after the outbreak of the pandemic in the state.

Verma said at a time when healthcare professionals are doing their best while risking their own lives, such "victimisation" would only discourage them. —TNS

Landgrab: Oustees get FIRs filed in R'sthan

RAJIV MAHAJAN

NURPUR, OCTOBER 18

Three Pong Dam oustees from Nurpur got forgery cases registered against the alleged land grabbers in Jaisalmer district in Rajasthan where they had been allotted lands.

After losing their lands that had been sold allegedly by Rajinder Kumar of Anoopathar (Rajasthan) by using fake power of attorneys during the Covid-19 pandemic, they had tried to register forgery cases against all those involved in land grabbing in local Nokh police station in Jaisalmer district (Rajasthan), but in vain.

Following the order of a court, the Nokh police registered three FIRs under Sections 420, 467, 468, 471 and 120 (B) on October 11.

COURT COMES TO RESCUE

- Following the order of a court, the Nokh police registered three FIRs on October 11
- The cases were registered against the mastermind, three land buyers of Bharmas (Pokhran) and local labourers, who had been hired by the complainants for cultivating their lands
- Each victim had been allotted 6.25 hectares land in Nachan of Jaisalmer district
- They had got ownership rights of their land after two decades and were cultivating it through hired labour.

The cases were registered against the mastermind, three land buyers Assu Singh, Bhakhar Singh and Umed Singh of Bharmas (Pokhran) and Mahavir and Munshi Ram, the local labourers, who had been hired by the complainants for cultivating their lands. Each victim had been allotted 6.25 hectares land in Nachan of Jaisalmer district.

They had got ownership

rights of their land after two decades and were cultivating it through hired labour.

The plight of the oustees Gorkha Ram of Bhugnara, Prakash Chand of Talara and Baldev Raj of Sukhar in Nurpur had been highlighted in these columns on September 27 in which they had sought the intervention of the Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh, seeking the lands grabbed by the mafia.

"The notary public, whose stamps, name and signatures were used, had died many years ago. By using these, he first got the lands transferred in his favour in August and further sold to the locals within one week," he said.

They told *The Tribune* that after getting no support from the state government and Rajasthan's local administration, they had moved an application under Section 156(3) of the CrPC in a Pokhran court, seeking police action against the grabbers.

Hans Raj Chowdhary, president of the Pong Dam Oustees' Samiti, said the mastermind had made forged power of attorneys on behalf of the oustees by using their Aadhaar cards and got these attested from a notary public in Sriganganagar.

"The notary public, whose stamps, name and signatures were used, had died many years ago. By using these, he first got the lands transferred in his favour in August and further sold to the locals within one week," he said.

Dry spell leaves farmers worried

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

MANDI, OCTOBER 18

Farmers of Mandi and Kullu districts are worried due to the ongoing dry weather because it can impact the production of pulse crops adversely.

In Mandi district, a large tract of agricultural land is covered under paddy.

But due to the dry weather, its production has been affected.

Farmers Suresh Kumar and Raj Kumar of the Tirthan valley in Kullu district said the weather had affected the production of pulses in the region. The sowing season of wheat, oats, gram and few other crops was going on but it was getting difficult to plough the field to sow these crops, they said.

Kuldeep Verma, Deputy Director of Agriculture Department, Mandi, said: "It is true that a long dry spell of weather leaves an adverse impact on the agriculture crops in the district. It has already affected the production of paddy in rain-fed areas. Now, the sowing season of

wheat, gram, oats, and vegetables is coming, which require moisture in the fields to be sown."

The Agriculture Department would assess the loss occurring to the crops due to the dry spell of weather, he added.

Now, cultivation of heeng begins in Lahaul valley

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PALAMPUR, OCTOBER 18

The CSIR-Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology, Palampur, has started the cultivation of 'heeng' for the first time in the state as well as the country. Dr Sanjay Kumar, director of the institute, initiated the programme by planting 'heeng' seedling at Kwareng village in Lahaul and Spiti, a cold desert district of the state.

Dr Sanjay Kumar said, "The consumption of heeng is the highest in our country but it is still not produced in India. We are dependent on other nations. About 1,200 metric tonnes of raw heeng worth ₹600 crore is being imported from Afghanistan, Iran, Uzbekistan — Dr Sanjay Kumar, DIRECTOR, CSIR-IHBT, PALAMPUR



A heeng sapling planted in Lahaul and Spiti.

"The consumption of heeng is the highest in our country but it is still not produced in India. We are dependent on other nations. About 1,200 metric tonnes of raw heeng worth ₹600 crore is being imported from Afghanistan, Iran, Uzbekistan — Dr Sanjay Kumar, DIRECTOR, CSIR-IHBT, PALAMPUR

Plant Genetics Resources has confirmed that 'heeng' seeds have not been imported into our country in past 30 years and this is the first attempt by the CSIR-IHBT to import its seeds. The institute has joined hands with the state Department of Agriculture to promote its cultivation.

"Its cultivation will be a milestone for increasing the income of farmers, while helping in the reduction of expenditure on its imports," Dr Kumar told *The Tribune* here today.

Scientists of the institute Dr Ashok Kumar and Dr

Ramesh trained farmers in the Madgran, Beeling, Keylong and Kawaring areas of Lahaul and Spiti in collaboration with officers of the State Agriculture Department and set up a demonstration area for the same. Dr Ashok Kumar said 'heeng' was a perennial plant and it took around five years to produce gum resins in its roots. He said the climate in tribal areas of state was suitable for its cultivation and so it could be easily produced. Dr Ramesh gave detailed information about various farming techniques of 'heeng'.

Tribune News Service

MANDI, OCTOBER 18

Additional Deputy Commissioner, Mandi, Jatin Lal said a toll-free "Sanyam Helpline" would be facilitated in Mandi district soon to help people in coming out of drug addiction.

He said it was part of their initiative to achieve meaningful results for the "Drug-free India" campaign in the district. The helpline will provide counselling and assistance to addicts free of cost in a bid to reform them.

The ADC said such peo-

person calling on this helpline will be kept secret. Guidelines in this regard have also been given to the BSNL. Record of any call will not be kept," he maintained.

Staff serving on the helpline will be properly trained so that the person calling on the helpline can get a diagnosis of the problem.

The main objective of starting the helpline is to help youth trapped in the vicious circle of drug addiction and to bring them back to the mainstream," he added.

Many times, the road gets blocked due to slides. As a result, we have to take an alternative route, Kupvi-Sainj khad, to reach the Solan mandi. This road is far more dangerous and the distance becomes almost double," said Arun, vice-pradhan of Noura-Boura panchayat. Dhirta says if the Kupvi-Sainj khad road is metalled, it will provide a huge relief to the people. "As of now, it's a dust track, very narrow and accident prone," he said.

While agreeing that the road has suffered "some" damage, PWD SDO Ajay Gazi said extreme weather conditions were largely responsible for the damage. "The region gets a lot of snow and rains. In such extreme weather conditions, roads do suffer damage," he said. "Besides, people do not give their land to widen the road and construct drains. In the absence of drains, water runs on to the road, causing a lot of damage. Anyway, tarring of the road is due and we will start it next year," he said.



Kangana Ranaut participates in her brother's wedding ritual in Mandi.

MANDI, OCTOBER 18

Actress Kangana Ranaut attended pre-wedding rituals of her brother Akshat Ranaut at Bhamla village in Mandi district today. For the past few months, Kangana was living in her newly constructed house at Manali in Kullu.

Yesterday, she arrived at her native village from Manali to attend the ritual. The actress

was seen along with her family members and relatives to celebrate the occasion.

After the suicide of actor Sushant Singh Rajput, the actress has been in the limelight for raising her voice against nepotism and drug abuse in Bollywood. She was seen in a family function after a long time. — TNS



SUBHASH RAJTA
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

SHIMLA, OCTOBER 18

For the people of Kupvi, a remote tehsil in Shimla district, the joy of having a metalled road after waiting for many decades did not last long. "The surface had started breaking up even as the construction work was on. In less than six months after the work was completed last year, the road became full of potholes and at various stretches it has turned into a dust track," said Lokinder Chauhan, a native of Boura village.

The Kupvi-Haripurdhar road links the tehsil to Solan, where the locals have to go quite often in connection with health issues and to sell their farm produce. This stretch, from Kupvi to Sainj, was metalled at a cost of ₹9.5 crore, with funds com-

ing from NABARD. "The money has gone down the drain. The road is now even worse than it was before metalling," said Chauhan. Upset with the quality of work, the locals have raised the issue during the Jan Manch held last year before the then Education Minister Suresh Bhardwaj. "We had

apprised the minister about how the road had deteriorated in just six months," said Sudarshan Dhirta, a native of village Kanda Banah. "The minister assured us that the road would be repaired within six months, but nothing has happened even after a year."

The potholes have made



Potholes on the road being filled up last year, ahead of the Jan Manch, presided over by the then Education Minister. TRIBUNE PHOTO

'TURNED INTO DUST TRACK'

"The surface had started breaking up even as the construction work was on. In less than six months after the work was completed last year, the road became full of potholes and at various stretches it has turned into a dust track." Lokinder Chauhan, a native

Entrance exam



As many as 30,000 candidates appeared in an entrance exam, conducted by the BSF, at Humhama near Srinagar on Sunday.

The second round of recruitment was held at its nine centres in Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. PTI

CRPF man injured in militant attack

Srinagar, October 18 An assistant sub-inspector (ASI) of the CRPF was injured in a grenade explosion in Pulwama district district of Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday, police said.

Militants hurled a grenade on the CRPF personnel near the Tral bus stand in Pulwama district of South Kashmir, a police official said.

He said the explosion caused minor injuries to ASI Asim Ali. The injured CRPF personnel was shifted to Tral hospital, the official said, adding, a hunt has been launched to nab the attackers. — PTI

Ensure security to political leaders: Congress

JAMMU, OCTOBER 18

Senior Congress leader Tara Chand on Sunday urged the Central Government to restore statehood of Jammu and Kashmir and ensure

proper security to leaders of mainstream political parties to facilitate their free movement. He also asked the Lieutenant-Governor's administration to remove all hurdles

for free movement at Lakhnepur — the gateway to J&K — as he said scores of people, including Vaishno Devi shrine pilgrims, businessmen and patients were facing

lengthy procedures to enter the Union territory from Punjab. He was speaking at a day-long workers convention at Khour in Chamb constituency here. — PTI

MORE FESTIVAL SPECIAL TRAINS-2020

In order to clear extra rush of passengers during forthcoming Festival Season, Railways have decided to run the following Festival Special Trains as per details given below:-

09717/09718 Jaipur - Daulatpur Chowk - Jaipur Special Train (Tri-Weekly) | 36 Trips

Train No. 09717		STATIONS		Train No. 09718	
ARR.	DEP.	ARR.	DEP.	ARR.	DEP.
---	19:30	JAIPUR	06:40	---	---
12:15	---	DAULATPUR CHOWK	14:05	---	---

DAYS OF RUN: 09717 Ex Jaipur from 20.10.20 to 29.11.20 on every Tuesday, Friday & Sunday and 09718 Ex Daulatpur Chowk from 21.10.20 to 30.11.20 on every Wednesday, Saturday & Monday.

STOPPAGES: Gandhinagar Jaipur, Dausa, Bandikui Jn, Raigarh, Alwar Jn, Khairthal, Rewari, Jhajjar, Rohtak Jn, Julian, Jind Jn, Uchana, Narwana Jn, Kaithal, Kurukshetra Jn, Ambala Cant Jn, Chandigarh, Sahibzada Ajit Singh Nagar (Mohali), Morinda, Rupnagar, Anandpur Sahib, Nangal Dam, Una Himachal & Amb Andaura stations.

ACCOMMODATION: 1st AC, AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Second Seating (Reserved).

04888/04887 Barmer - Rishikesh - Barmer Special Train (Daily) | 84 Trips

Train No. 04888		STATIONS		Train No. 04887	
ARR.	DEP.	ARR.	DEP.	ARR.	DEP.
---	06:45	BARMER	20:30	---	---
10:30	---	RISHIKESH	18:05	---	---

DAYS OF RUN: 04888 Ex Barmer from 20.10.20 to 30.11.20 on Daily and 04887 Ex Rishikesh from 21.10.20 to 01.12.20 on Daily.

STOPPAGES: Baytul, Balotra, Samdari Jn, Jodhpur Jn, Pipar Road Jn, Merta Road Jn, Nagaur, Nokha, Bikaner Jn, Lalgarh Jn, Lunkaranas, Mahajan, Suratgarh Jn, Pilibanga, Hanumangarh Jn, Sangaria, Mandi Dabwali, Bathinda Jn, Bathinda Cantt, Bhuchchu, Rampura Phul, Barnala, Dhusn Jn, Nabha, Patiala, Rajpura Jn, Ambala City, Ambala Cantt Jn, Yamunagar Jagadhri, Saharanpur Jn, Roorkee, Jwalaipur, Hardiwark, Motichur & Rawalha Jn stations.

ACCOMMODATION: 1st AC, AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Second Seating (Reserved).

04519/04520 Delhi Jn. - Bathinda Jn. - Delhi Jn. Special Train (Daily) | 84 Trips

Train No. 04519		STATIONS		Train No. 04520	
ARR.	DEP.	ARR.	DEP.	ARR.	DEP.
---	14:00	DELHI JN.	12:15	---	---
21:15	---	BATHINDA JN.	05:00	---	---

DAYS OF RUN: 04519 Ex Delhi Jn. and 04520 Ex Bathinda Jn. from 20.10.20 to 30.11.20 on Daily.

STOPPAGES: Delhi, Kishanganj, Shakurbasti, Nangloi, Bahadurgarh, Sampal, Rohtak Jn, Kalanaru Kalan, Bhiwani, Bawani Khera, Hansi, Satrod, Hisar, Mandi Adampur, Bhattu, Ding, Sirsa, Kalanwali & Raman stations.

ACCOMMODATION: 1st AC, AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Second Seating (Reserved).

02471/02472 Shri Ganganagar - Delhi Jn. - Shri Ganganagar Superfast Special Train (Daily) | 84 Trips

Train No. 02471		STATIONS		Train No. 02472	
ARR.	DEP.	ARR.	DEP.	ARR.	DEP.
---	05:55	SHRI GANGANAGAR	20:35	---	---
13:35	---	DELHI JN.	13:05	---	---

DAYS OF RUN: 02471 Ex Shri Ganganagar and 02472 Ex Delhi Jn. from 20.10.20 to 30.11.20 on Daily.

STOPPAGES: Abohar, Malout, Giddarbaha, Bhatinda Jn, Mau, Mansa, Budhlada, Jhalka Jn, Narwana Jn, Jind Jn, Rohtak Jn, Sampal, Bahadurgarh & Shakurbasti stations.

ACCOMMODATION: AC 3 Tier, AC Chair Car, Chair Car & Second Seating (Reserved).

02331/02332 Howrah Jn. - Jammu Tawi - Howrah Jn. Superfast Special Train (Tri-Weekly) (Via Dankuni) | 36 Trips

Train No. 02331		STATIONS		Train No. 02332	
ARR.	DEP.	ARR.	DEP.	ARR.	DEP.
---	23:55	HOWRAH JN.	11:30	---	---
13:10	---	JAMMU TAWI	22:45	---	---

DAYS OF RUN: 02331 Ex Howrah Jn. from 20.10.20 to 28.11.20 on every Tuesday, Friday & Saturday and 02332 Ex Jammu Tawi from 22.10.20 to 30.11.20 on every Thursday, Sunday & Monday.

STOPPAGES: Ansalsi Jn, Chittaranjan, Madupur Jn, Jasidih Jn, Jhajha, Jamui, Kiul Jn, Mokham Jn, Bakhtiyarpur Jn, Patna Sahib, Patna Jn, Danapur, Ara, Buxar, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Jn, Varanasi Jn, Jaunpur, Sultanpur, Nihalgarh, Lucknow, Bareilly, Moradabad, Saharanpur, Yamunanager Jagadhri, Ambala Cant Jn, Ludhiana Jn, Phagwara Jn, Jalander Cantt, Pathankot Cantt, & Kathua stations.

ACCOMMODATION: 1st AC, AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Second Seating (Reserved).

02422/02421 Jammu Tawi - Ajmer Jn. - Jammu Tawi Superfast Special Train (Daily) | 84 Trips

Train No. 02422		STATIONS		Train No. 02421	
ARR.	DEP.	ARR.	DEP.	ARR.	DEP.
---	18:10	JAMMU TAWI	08:15	---	---
12:20	---	AJMER JN.	14:05	---	---

DAYS OF RUN: 02422 Ex Jammu Tawi from 20.10.20 to 30.11.20 on Daily and 02421 Ex Ajmer Jn. from 21.10.20 to 01.12.20 on Daily.

STOPPAGES: Kathua, Pathankot Cantt, Jalandhar Cantt, Ludhiana, Ambala Cantt, Karnal, Delhi Jn., Delhi Cantt, Gurgaon, Garhi Harsaru, Rewari Jn, Kharial, Alwar, Rajgarh, Banduki Jn., Dausa, Ganganagar, Jaipur Jn, Phulera Jn, & Kishangarh stations.

ACCOMMODATION: 1st AC, AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Second Seating (Reserved).

02237/02238 Varanasi - Jammu Tawi - Varanasi Superfast Special Train (Daily) | 84 Trips

Train No. 02237		STATIONS		Train No. 02238	
ARR.	DEP.	ARR.	DEP.	ARR.	DEP.
---	12:40	VARANASI	12:30	---	---
11:05	---	JAMMU TAWI	14:00	---	---

DAYS OF RUN: 02237 Ex Varanasi from 20.10.20 to 30.11.20 on Daily and 02238 Ex Jammu Tawi from 21.10.20 to 01.12.20 on Daily.

STOPPAGES: Jaunpur City, Sultanpur, Nihalgarh, Lucknow, Shahjehanpur, Moradabad, Saharanpur Jn., Ambala Cantt, Ludhiana Jn., Jalandhar Cantt, Pathankot Cantt, & Kathua stations.

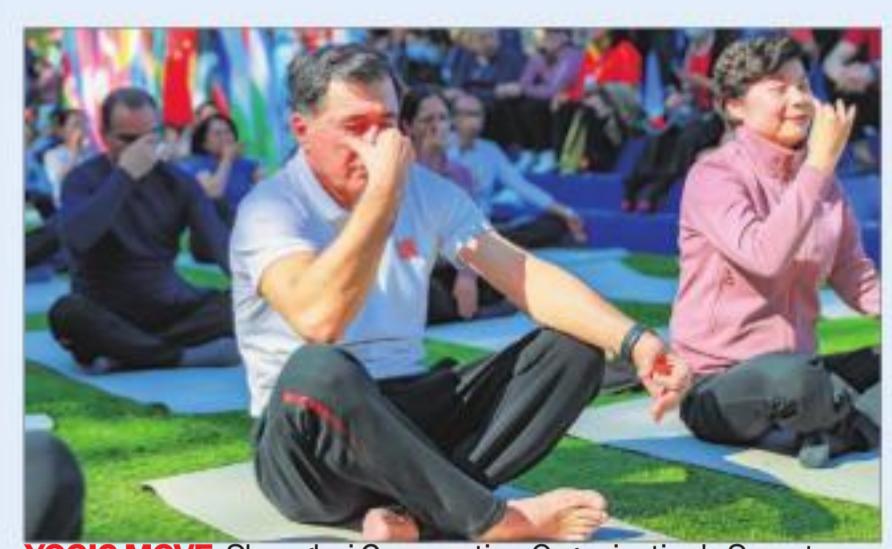
ACCOMMODATION: 1st AC, AC 2 Tier, AC 3 Tier, Sleeper & Second Seating (Reserved).

04041/04042 Delhi Jn. - Dehradun - Delhi Jn. Express Special Train (Daily) | 84 Trips

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GLOBE TROT



YOGIC MOVE: Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's Secretary General Vladimir Norov participates in a yoga event in Beijing. PTI

UK woman accuses UAE minister of sexual assault

LONDON: The chair of Britain's Hay literary festival said on Sunday the event would not return to Abu Dhabi after one of the festival's curators alleged that she was sexually assaulted by Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, the tolerance minister of the United Arab Emirates, while working with him. The UAE Foreign Ministry said it does not comment on personal matters. AP

Seven shot at in Arizona, 1-year-old critically hurt

MESA: The police in the Phoenix suburb of Mesa said on Saturday that several young children, including a 1-year-old who is in critical condition, were shot at while eating dinner with their families on Friday night. The police don't have any suspect or know the motive. The cops are looking for any help finding the suspect. AP

UK frees Sikh who killed three in self-defence

LONDON, OCTOBER 18 An Indian-origin builder who was arrested in connection with the killing of three men, also of Indian origin, following a deadly knife fight on the streets of east London will not face any murder or manslaughter charges as the incident was deemed to be an act of self-defence.

Surjeet Singh, 29, had been arrested by the Metropolitan Police in connection with the killing of Narinder Singh Lubhaya, 29, Harinder Kumar, 30, and Malkit Singh Dhillon aka Baljinder Singh, 37, back in January. The three murdered men, originally from Punjab, were found to have set upon Surjeet Singh at Seven Kings in Redbridge area of London and were killed in the ensuing street fight.

"Surjeet Singh was arrested on January 20 on suspicion of murder. He was charged with possessing an offensive weapon in a public place. Later, the jury found him not guilty," the Metropolitan Police said. — PTI

US Prez Trump takes to fear tactics in bid to win Midwest

JANESVILLE, OCTOBER 18

President Donald Trump leaned into fear tactics on Saturday as he accused the Left of trying to "destroy the American way of life" in a late re-election pitch to voters in Michigan and Wisconsin — two Midwestern states that were instrumental to his 2016 victory but may now be slipping from his grasp.

In back-to-back rallies, Trump accused the Left of wanting to "erase American history and purge American values." He claimed, with no basis, that Democratic rival Joe Biden would put communities at risk.

Trump faces headwinds not only in national polling, which shows Biden leading, but also in key battleground surveys. His comments come after his campaign, with far less cash than Biden's, largely retreated from TV advertising in the Midwest, shifting much of its money to Sun Belt states



Trump supporters being attacked by protesters after a rally near the Civic Centre in San Francisco, California. REUTERS



Outrage as Kamala's name mispronounced

Democratic vice-presidential nominee Kamala Harris' supporters have started an e-campaign with the hashtags 'MyNameIs' and 'IStandWithKamala' after Senator David Perdue mispronounced her name at a Trump rally.

Covid threat, which hospitalised him for several days earlier this month.

Trump continued to call on Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, a Democrat, to roll back restrictions that remain in place to try to halt the spread of the virus, prompting the crowd to break into a "Lock her up!" chant. — AP

More Indo-US lawmakers likely in new Congress

WASHINGTON, OCTOBER 18 The US elections can see expansion of the so-called Samosa Caucus, a term coined by Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi for informal grouping of Indian-American lawmakers. The Samosa Caucus comprises five Indian-American lawmakers.

In the House of Representatives, senior most Dr Ami Bera, Congressmen Ro Khanna and Krishnamoorthi along with Pramila Jayapal, who is the first and the only Indian American women in the House, are projected to be re-elected on November 3.

Former State Department Diplomat Sri Preston Kulkarni is leading by 5%. All eyes are on the Senate race in Maine, where the Democrats are pinning hope on Indian-origin Senator Sara Gideon to win the seat against powerful Republican Senator Susan Collins.

Kamala Harris is the first Black and African-American to be nominated as a vice presidential candidate by a major political party. — PTI

Stir intensifies, Thai PM for talks

BANGKOK, OCTOBER 18

Thousands of anti-government protesters took over key intersections in Bangkok on Sunday, defying a ban on protests for the fourth day with chants of "down with dictatorship and reform the monarchy."

Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-o-cha, an ex-junta leader the protesters seek to oust, is concerned about the spreading protests and the government wants to talk, his spokesman said. Demonstrations have persisted despite arrests, use of water cannon and shutdowns in a bid to quell over three months of street action.

Protesters accuse the PM of



A pro-democracy protest in Bangkok, Thailand. REUTERS

engineering last year's election to keep the power he seized in

a 2014 coup — an accusation he denies. — Reuters

Bomb attack kills 13 Afghans

KABUL, OCTOBER 18

A suicide car bombing on Sunday killed at least 13 people and wounded around 120 others in Afghanistan's western Ghor province, officials said.

Interior Ministry spokesman Tariq Aran said the car bombing struck near the entrance of the provincial police chief's office and other nearby government buildings in the area. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack in Ghor.

The blast damaged and partially destroyed a few government buildings, including the police chief's office. — AP

Britain expects Covid vaccine by January

LONDON, OCTOBER 18

One of the UK's senior-most medical chiefs has indicated that a Covid vaccine could be ready to be deployed by the beginning of the New Year, according to a media report on Sunday.

Jonathan Van-Tam, England's Deputy Chief Medical Officer, has reportedly told the Members of Parliament that the vaccine created at Oxford University and being manufactured by AstraZeneca could be ready for rollout soon after Christmas.

In China, health officials said they had found Covid virus on the outer packaging of imported frozen marine fish in Qingdao.

TRACKING VIRUS	
NATIONS	DEATHS
US	224,389
BRAZIL	153,730
MEXICO	86,059
UK	43,646
PERU	33,702

WORLDOMETER TILL OCT 18, 10 PM



People demonstrate against Covid restrictions at the Old Town Square in Prague, Czech Republic, on Sunday. REUTERS

INFOCUS AGRICULTURE

PADDY RESIDUE MANAGEMENT

Farmers need to be convinced, incentivised

BALDEV SINGH DHILLON & VS SOHU

Though technology offered to farmers for crop residue management is disruptive in the sense of being contrary to what they have been practising, the farming community had rapidly adopted the technology offered to them in the late 1960s that helped the nation in increasing foodgrain production — the unparalleled feat of the Green Revolution. It would be a learning experience to compare these technologies.

Productivity advantage GR: The semi-dwarf varieties of wheat and paddy had a distinct (at least 30%) grain yield advantage over the existing varieties. This made it easier to convince the farmers to adopt these varieties, even though



THE HAPPY SEEDER NOT ONLY CUTS AND LIFTS PADDY STRAW, BUT ALSO SOWS WHEAT INTO THE SOIL.

their grain type and appearance were not acceptable.

PRM: Paddy residue management technology has more of 'ecological' benefit with no crop productivity/monetary advantage. Rather, it may have a little productivity penalty in some initial years. Farmers are very well aware and do understand the environmental and health consequences of residue burning as well as the long-term benefit of residue retention/incorporation on soil health and productivity. However, their immediate concern is to achieve higher productivity and livelihood.

Investment issues

GR: A farmer could start with a few kilos of seed of the high-yielding variety (HYV); once satisfied, he could scale it up. There were practically no risks once the technology was refined and adapted. The HYVs were able to achieve higher productivity in almost all farmers' fields due to wider adaptability. Further, the farmer did not have to invest

much to shift from one to a better HYV. The higher grain yield potential of GR varieties led to higher productivity and profitability, and tempted the farmers to invest more in farm development and inputs like farm machinery, irrigation facilities, application of fertilisers, etc.

PRM: Over the years, farmers have got used to a convenient method of disposal of paddy residue through burning without any cost. On the other hand, the PRM machines are costly. Further, most of the machines are large and for their operation, high-powered tractors are needed, the purchase of which will render the already available tractors useless. Landholdings of farmers have become smaller over time and they cannot afford costly machines. Though custom-hiring is being promoted, there is no surety of getting enough customers, as it happened during 2019. The purchase of costly machines and the use of high-powered tractors will add to the input costs and lower the profit margins of the farmer.

Further, most of the machines do not have universal application. With evolving technology, better machines will become available but it is costly to shift from one machine to the other. Thus, in spite of subsidies, the new technology did not embolden the farmer to make heavy investment.

Supporting role

GR: The adoption of semi-dwarf varieties of wheat and rice was facilitated by the availability of matching crop production technology (e.g. herbicide Machete for weed control in rice) and farm machinery (e.g. drummy threshers for wheat threshing).

PRM: Though several farm machines for residue management are available, the supporting technology to facilitate the operation of these machines (e.g. microbes for rapid biodegradation) is not yet available.

Government assistance

GR: The GR technology was cheaper, yet the government pro-

vided very strong policy support and incentives driven by the concern for national food security. These included remunerative support price, assured procurement, development of irrigation facilities, supply of fertilisers at subsidised rates, road and marketing infrastructure, electrification, input credit, etc.

PRM: Subsidy is being provided to purchase machines. But multi-pronged policy support and government interventions are earnestly needed. One should not expect that only the development of machines will solve residue management issues.

Technology refinement

GR: The PAU developed and released the first semi-dwarf wheat variety PV 18 in 1966. Farmers were convinced of its yielding ability but being red-grained, they reluctantly adopted it, envisaging problems in the consumption and disposal of produce. The real breakthrough came when PAU released the first amber-grained semi-dwarf wheat variety Kalyan in 1967, later named Kalyansona. This variety was adopted swiftly by farmers due to its amber grain and it continued to rule for the next more than 10 years.

The bottlenecks in the cultivation of these varieties were addressed by the simultaneous refinements in the production technologies. To address poor germination due to shorter coleoptiles, shallower sowing depth was advocated. The dates of sowing and scheduling of the first irrigation (coinciding with the crown root initiation stage) were also modified.

In the case of paddy, after the initial failure of IR 8, farmers were advised to sow the nursery

one month earlier, in about mid-May, and a system was developed to provide electricity for early sowing of the nursery since there used to be power shortage at that time. The results were wonderful: early sown crop yielded up to 7-8 tonnes/hectare compared to about 3 tonnes/hectare of the indigenous varieties. Thus began Punjab's march towards becoming an important paddy-growing state.

PRM: Refinements are being made in various machines to take care of the limitations and drawbacks noticed in their adoption under different situations. As several stakeholders are involved in this exercise, there has been a multiplicity of machines and terminologies (Happy Seeder, Turbo Seeder, Super Seeder, King Seeder, mulcher/chopper/shredder, etc.). This has added to the confusion and made it difficult for the farmers to decide which machine to buy. Consequently, farmers have adopted a wait-and-watch approach till a refined machine becomes available.

An overview of the trends in the adoption of GR technology gives us a cue that the adoption of residue management technology is likely to pick up with their fine-tuning/refinement but more importantly with increased and consistent government support to financially enable farmers to adopt the technology. Farmers need to be convinced, motivated and incentivised.

The authors are, respectively, Vice Chancellor and Principal Wheat Breeder, Department of Plant Breeding and Genetics, PAU, Ludhiana

BRIEFLY

ST. ANDREWS (SCOTLAND)
Sharma gives away early gains, Chawrasia slips

Indian golfer SSP Chawrasia had a disappointing outing after two good days, as he shot a 4-over 76 to drop to tied-51st from tied-18th at the Scottish Championship. Shubhankar Sharma, 4-under through 13 holes, shot a 2-under 70. He rose to tied-43 at 3-under. Chawrasia was 2-under. Matt Wallace carded a bogey-free 66 to open up a three-shot lead heading into the final round.

PANAJI
ISL: Jeje Lalpukhlu joins East Bengal

SC East Bengal today announced the signing of national team striker Jeje Lalpukhlu ahead of the upcoming Indian Super League season. The 29-year-old Jeje has played more than 50 matches for India since making his debut in 2011. He was a free agent after leaving Chennaiyin FC earlier this year.

COLOGNE
Zverev wins year's first title; fourth for Rublev

Top seed Alexander Zverev bagged his first ATP crown of the year after beating Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime 6-3 6-3 to win the Cologne Indoors title. Victory gave Zverev his 12th ATP title and his third on home soil after he won the Munich Open in 2017 and 2018. Meanwhile, Russian third seed Andrey Rublev won his fourth ATP Tour title of the year when he beat Croatia's Borna Coric 7-6(5) 6-4 to lift the St Petersburg Open trophy.

BARCELONA
La Liga: Barca, Real lose as Atletico win

Barcelona and Real Madrid lost for the first time this season against modest Spanish league opposition. Barcelona had their first defeat under Ronald Koeman when they lost 1-0 at Getafe, right after Madrid were beaten 1-0 at home by recently promoted Cadiz. Sevilla also lost, leaving Atletico Madrid, who beat Celta Vigo 2-0, as the only one of Spain's top teams to celebrate a victory.

MANCHESTER
Good day for City, United as Liverpool frustrated

Liverpool were left frustrated after a 2-2 draw at Everton in the Merseyside derby with VAR ruling out a potential winner from Jordan Henderson in stoppage time and key defender Virgil van Dijk suffering a knee injury. Raheem Sterling grabbed the winner as Manchester City beat Arsenal 1-0 and a late equaliser earned Southampton a 3-3 draw away to Chelsea. Manchester United recovered from an early own goal to beat Newcastle United 4-1.

BERLIN
Dortmund dig deep while Bayern enjoy stroll

Borussia Dortmund needed substitutes to dig them out of a hole for a 1-0 win against Hoffenheim, while Bayern Munich beat Arminia Bielefeld 4-1 in Bundesliga. AGENCIES

TODAY ON TV

IPL
CHENNAI VS RAJASTHAN
STAR SPORTS 7:30PM

EPL
WEST BROM VS BURNLEY 10PM

LEEDS VS WOLVES 00:30AM (TUESDAY)

STAR SELECT

Pacer takes 2/2 in Super Over to set up win for KKR

ABU DHABI, OCTOBER 18

Lockie Ferguson produced one of the most incredible bowling performances of this IPL edition to lead Kolkata Knight Riders to a thrilling Super Over win over Sunrisers Hyderabad today.

Ferguson took just three deliveries to dismiss David Warner and Abdul Samad in the Super Over, leaving KKR with only a three run-target to chase.

The match was pushed to the Super Over after SRH scored 17 runs off the final over, bowled by Andre Russell, to level the scores at 163.

Ferguson was magnificent during the regulation 20 overs also as his 3/15 in 4 overs had SRH in all sorts of trouble. He dismissed Kane Williamson with a short ball, got rid of Priyam Garg with a slower one and saw the back of Manish Pandey with a yorker.

His five wickets in the game got KKR the much-needed two points, while Sunrisers are in serious danger of missing the playoffs.

Earlier, ex-captain Dinesh Karthik and skipper Eoin Morgan helped Kolkata Knight Riders score 163/5 after being put in to bat. Karthik (29 not

Lockie's super over



Kolkata Knight Riders' Lockie Ferguson celebrates the wicket of Sunrisers Hyderabad's David Warner in the Super Over in Abu Dhabi on Sunday. PTI

out) and Morgan (34 off 23 balls) joined forces at 105/4 and added 58 runs in the last five overs.

T Natarajan (2/40) was the most successful bowler but it was Vijay Shankar (1/20) who was the most economical.

Rahul Tripathi (23 off 15 balls) gave the first charge in the Powerplay, while Shubman Gill (36 off 37 balls) struggled to time the ball.

Chasing a 164-run target, Jonny Bairstow (36) and

IPL STANDINGS

Team	P	W	L	Pts
Delhi	9	7	2	14
Mumbai	8	6	2	12
Bangalore	9	6	3	12
Kolkata	9	5	4	10
Hyderabad	9	3	6	6
Chennai	9	3	6	6
Rajasthan	9	3	6	6
Punjab	8	2	6	4

*Read under Team, Played, Won, Lost, Points

Williamson (29) gave SRH a

great start, adding 58 for the opening wicket. But things slowed down as SRH lost wickets at regular intervals before a late onslaught from Warner (47 off 33) and Samad (23 off 15) helped SRH even the scores.

Brief scores: KKR: 163/5 (Gill 36, Morgan 34, Karthik 29*; Natarajan 2/40);

SRH: 163/6 (Warner 47*, Bairstow 36; Ferguson 3/15).

Super Over: SRH: 2/2 (Ferguson 2/2); KKR: 3/0.— PTI

Narine's bowling action cleared

Kolkata Knight Riders' West Indian spinner Sunil Narine was today cleared by the IPL's suspect bowling action committee after being reported last week. Narine was reported for a suspect action last Saturday and another such instance could have led him to being barred from bowling in the league.

Bravo out for couple of weeks?

Chennai Super Kings' Dwayne Bravo could be "out for a few days or a couple of weeks" due to a groin injury, according to head coach Stephen Fleming. Bravo's inability to bowl the final over cost CSK the game on Saturday as Delhi Capitals knocked off the required 17 runs. PTI

MI score 176 against KXIP

DUBAI: Electing to bat, Mumbai Indians scored 176/6 in their IPL match against Kings XI Punjab here today.

Brief scores: MI: 176/6 (Quinton de Kock 53, Krunal Pandya 34, Kieron Pollard 34*; Mohammed Shami 2/30, Arshdeep Singh 2/35).

Elavenil wins gold in online shooting event

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

India's Elavenil Valarivan, ranked world No. 1 in the women's 10m air rifle, won gold in the Sheikh Russel International Air Rifle Championship, organised online by the Bangladesh Shooting Sport Federation. Elavenil picked up \$1,000 for winning gold in the event today.

India's Shahu Tushar Mane won silver in the men's event, earning \$700.

In the 60-shot competition in which shooters from six nations participated, Elavenil shot a modest 627.5 to come out on top. Shiori Hirata won silver with 622.6, while Indonesia's Vidya Toyiyiba won bronze with 621.1.

Japan won the gold in the men's event as Naoya Okada shot a solid 630.9 to leave India's Shahru (623.8) behind. Baki Abdullah Hel won bronze for the hosts with an effort of 617.3. — TNS

Indian men qualify for last-8 in Asian chess

CHENNAI: The Indian men today qualified for the quarterfinals of the Asian Online Nations (Regions) Cup Team Championship after finishing sixth in the preliminary round. The top seeds lost to Philippines, beat Bangladesh and drew Australia today. PTI

Wrestlers at camp

- **50kg** Nirmala Devi, Pinki, Ankush
- **53kg** Vinesh Phogat, Anju
- **57kg** Anshu Malik, Sarita Mor, Pooja Dhanda
- **62kg** Sonam Malik, Navjot Kaur
- **68kg** Divya Kakran, Anita

August, just before she was to receive the prestigious Khel Ratna award in a virtual ceremony. Vinesh later recovered and joined the national camp.

"All the wrestlers have tested negative. We will begin with light training from tomorrow. The focus will be on general fitness, gym train-

ing, running and exercise. The mat training will only start next week (starting October 26)," national coach Kuldeep Malik said.

Olympics medallist Sakshi Malik (62kg), Seema (50kg), Lalita (53kg) and Nisha (68kg) will join the camp on October 25. "The four missing wrestlers were to join from Tuesday but the Sports Authority of India and the Wrestling Federation of India have asked them to join from October 25," Malik said.

The camp was postponed twice due to the Covid pandemic and will now continue till December 31. — PTI

Bagan get I-League trophy after 7 months

KOLKATA: Seven months after they emerged I League champions, Mohun Bagan players were finally presented the winner's trophy at a ceremony here today. The Mariners had clinched the title in March but the celebrations had to wait because of Covid-19. Mohun Bagan, who have now

joined Indian Super League, had organised the ceremony at a hotel in the presence of selected invitees, keeping in mind the Covid-19 health protocols. But what followed were delirious scenes on the streets when the trophy was taken out in an open vehicle in their vic-

tory procession as thousands of fans celebrated the triumph, paying little heed to the health guidelines. PTI



Mohun Bagan fans flout safety norms on Sunday. PHOTO: MOHUN BAGAN

health protocols. But what followed were delirious scenes on the streets when the trophy was taken out in an open vehicle in their victory procession as thousands of fans celebrated the triumph, paying little heed to the health guidelines. PTI

Nearly 75, Egyptian grandfather is football's oldest professional



Ezzeldin Bahader before the match. REUTERS

scored a goal from the penalty spot in his debut match in March. He planned to play a second 90-minute match the same month to claim his

record, but the suspension of sports activities to contain the spread of Covid-19 put his plans on hold. Bahader had previously told media he was 75, which he attributed to "rounding up". Having him on the team had allowed 6th October to gain sponsors and publicity, he said. Some of Bahader's six grandchildren attended Saturday's match, chanting "Come on, Grandpa" from the touchline.

The record was previously held by 73-year-old Israeli Isaak Hayik. — Reuters



For further details including extension of date, clarification, amendment, addenda, corrigenda etc. please visit www.hsiidc.org.in. HSIIDC reserves the right to withdraw any or all the sites from the e-auction and to accept or reject any or all the bids or cancel /postpone the e-auction without assigning any reason thereof.

CANCELLATION / PARTIAL CANCELLATION / SHORT TERMINATION/ SHORT ORIGINATION/RESCHEDULING/DIVERSION OF TRAINS

It is notified for the information of all concerned that Railways have decided to Cancel / Partially Cancel / Short Terminate/Short Originate/Reschedule/ Divert following Passengers Special Trains / Puja Special Trains/Cargo Parcel Express Trains in view of the Kisan Agitation:-

CANCELLATION OF SPECIAL TRAINS

Train No. & Name	Date of cancellation (from the Originating Station)
02425/02426 New Delhi-Jammu Tawi-New Delhi Rajdhani Special	19.10.2020 to 20.10.2020
02053/02054 Amritsar - Haridwar - Amritsar Express	20.10.2020 to 21.10.2020
22439/22440 New Delhi-Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra-New Delhi Vande Bharat Exp.	19.10.2020
02462 Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra-New Delhi Express	19.10.2020 to 20.10.2020
02461 New Delhi -Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Express	20.10.2020 to 21.10.2020
02011/02012 New Delhi-Kalka-New Delhi Shatabdi Express	19.10.2020 to 20.10.2020
02029/02030 New Delhi-Amritsar-New Delhi Shatabdi Express	19.10.2020 to 20.10.2020

CANCELLATION OF PUJA SPECIAL TRAINS

Train No. & Name	Date of cancellation (from the Originating Station)
02422 Jammu Tawi-Ajmer Express	20.10.2020
02421 Ajmer-Jammu Tawi Express	21.10.2020
02231 Lucknow - Chandigarh Express	20.10.2020
02232 Chandigarh - Lucknow Express	21.10.2020
04887 Barmer - Rishikesh Express	20.10.2020
04888 Rishikesh - Barmer Express	21.10.2020
04519/04520 Delhi Jn. - Bathinda - Delhi Jn. Express	20.10.2020
02471/02472 Shri Gangotri - Delhi Jn. - Shri Gangotri Express	20.10.2020

PARTIAL CANCELLATION OF SPECIAL TRAINS

B'desh invites Modi to its I-Day event

NEW DELHI: Bangladesh has invited PM Narendra Modi to visit Dhaka on March 26 next year to jointly celebrate the country's Independence Day with his counterpart Sheikh Hasina, according to Bangladesh media. "We've invited him and they agreed in principle," reports quoted Bangladesh Foreign Minister DAK Abdul Momen as having said after meeting new Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Vikram Doraiswami on Sunday. There was no confirmation from the MEA so far. "Our victory is India's victory. We should celebrate together," said the foreign minister.

CBI books 6 customs officers in Bengaluru

BENGALURU: The CBI has booked six customs officials in connection with the alleged disappearance of gold weighing 2.6 kg from a warehouse at the airport in the city. The gold was seized at the Kempegowda international airport here from 13 passengers between June 8, 2012, and 26 March, 2014. The six officers who were in charge of the mishandled baggage godown were entrusted with the gold seizure from the passengers, the CBI pointed out. PTI

Pakistan fails to fulfil 6 key mandates of FATF

No action yet against Masood Azhar, Hafiz Saeed

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

Pakistan's failure to fulfil six key obligations of the FATF, including action against two of India's most wanted terrorists Maulana Masood Azhar and Hafiz Saeed, and the sudden disappearance of more than 4,000 terrorists from its official list will most likely lead to its continuation in the "grey list" of the global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog, officials said on Sunday.

The virtual plenary of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), to be held on October 21-23, will take the final call on Pakistan's continuation on its grey list after a thorough review of Islamabad's performance in fulfilling the global commitments and standards in the fight against money laundering and terrorist financing.

The FATF had given Pakistan a total of 27 action plan obligations for completely checking terror financing of which so far it has cleared 21, but has failed in some of the key tasks, an official privy to the developments said.

LIKELY TO REMAIN ON GREY LIST

- The FATF's virtual plenary on Oct 21-23 will take the final call on Pak's continuation on its grey list after reviewing its performance in fulfilling commitments in fight against terror financing
- To avoid the blacklist, Pak needs support of three countries, China, Turkey and Malaysia are its supporters
- Four nominating countries — US, UK, France and Germany — are also not satisfied with Islamabad's commitment to taking action against terror groups



The mandates which Pakistan has failed include action against all UN-designated terrorists like JeM chief Azhar, LeT founder Seed and the outfit's operational commander Zakir Rehman Lakhvi.

Besides, the FATF has strongly noted the fact that there was sudden disappearance of the names of more than 4,000 terrorists from its original list of 7,600 under Schedule IV of its Anti-Terrorism Act.

"Under these circumstances, it is almost certain that Pakistan will continue in the FATF grey list," the official said.

Besides, the four nominating countries — the US, Britain, France and Germany — are also not satisfied with Islamabad's commitment to taking strong action against the groups operating from its soil.

Azhar, Saeed and Lakhvi are most wanted terrorists in India for their involvement in terrorist acts, including the 26/11 Mumbai terror strikes and the bombing of a CRPF bus at Pulwama last year.

With Pakistan's continuation in the grey list, it is increasingly becoming difficult for Islamabad to get financial aid from the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, Asian Development Bank and the European Union. — PTI

The Tribune INTERVIEW: EMMANUEL LENAIN, FRANCE'S AMBASSADOR TO INDIA

France backs India's strategic autonomy'



INDIA and France have helped each other in fighting Covid-19 and commitments such as the on-time delivery of Rafale jets were kept despite the pandemic, says France's Ambassador to India Emmanuel Lenain. In an exclusive interview to *The Tribune*, the Ambassador answers questions related to Indo-French ties, why India deserves a permanent seat in the UN Security Council, and more. Excerpts:

■ **This is your first official trip outside of Delhi since the outbreak of the pandemic. What brings you to Chandigarh?**

We see India as a major, responsible power that is committed to a rules-based multilateral order. In an era of rising tensions, the world needs countries like India that have both the means and the willingness to defend collective solutions and international law.

■ **How do you see Indo-French relations at the moment and in the context of India's border stand-off with China?**

These past months have

shown that the Indo-French friendship is even stronger in tough times. We have helped each other in fighting Covid-19 and commitments such as the on-time delivery of Rafales were kept despite the pandemic. Regarding the border situation, it is important that de-escalation and disengagement be achieved through dialogue, which is the path chosen by India. France will always support India's strategic autonomy.

■ **Is there a possibility of French involvement in the Quad group of nations? How do France and India cooperate in the Indo-Pacific?**

France is itself a nation of the Indo-Pacific. We do not view cooperation in this region as being about formats, but rather shared values and willingness to achieve concrete results. That is the basis of our ambitious cooperation with India: We share intelligence analysis, we ensure our navies can operate together, we support each other in regional organisations.

■ **What is the future of Indo-French defence cooperation? Does it remain limited to being a seller-buyer relationship?**

Our defence cooperation is first and foremost based on mutual trust. Take the Rafale fighter jet for instance: it takes great trust on both sides to share a military asset that is so close to the core of our sovereignty. Moreover, Indian companies will benefit from offsets amounting to 50 per cent of the Rafale contract, including through technology transfer. French defence companies have contributed to "Make in India" for decades, and will continue to do so.

■ **France has been supporting India's candidature for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council. What would India's presence at the high table mean to France?**

We see India as a major, responsible power that is committed to a rules-based multilateral order. In an era of rising tensions, the world needs countries like India that have both the means and the willingness to defend collective solutions and international law.

Is suppressing oppressed families new 'raj dharma' Sonia asks BJP

To protest farm laws, Cong to hold protest on Oct 31

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE



Atrocities on Dalits have reached a new zenith. Instead of granting adequate protection to country's daughters, BJP governments are siding with the criminals

Sonia Gandhi, CONGRESS CHIEF

and the country had been pushed into the abyss of the Covid-19 pandemic by sheer ineptitude and mismanagement of the government.

Sonia gave a call for a national agitation against the BJP with AICC general secretary organisation KC Venugopal later saying fasts would be observed at all district headquarters on October 31, the birth anniversary of Sardar Patel and the death anniversary of former PM Indira Gandhi.

"In line with the concerted opposition to the anti-farmer legislations and our committed fight for justice for the rape victim in Hathras, it has been decided to observe October 31 as 'Kisan Adhikar Divas' and Satyagrah and fasts will be held at every district headquarter between 10 am and 4 pm against anti-farmer and anti-labour laws," Venugopal said. He said on November 5, the party will observe Mahila and Dalit Upidan Virodi Divas with protests at every state headquarters.

a government, which is systematically bartering the interests of our citizens at the altar of profiteering by handful of crony capitalists. The current BJP government has attacked the very foundation of our resilient agrarian economy by bringing in three anti-agriculture black laws."

Sonia said a conspiracy had been hatched to defeat the gains of "Green Revolution"

In safe hands



Municipal Corporation personnel carry an infant during an operation to move flood-affected people to a safer place at Hafiz Baba Nagar in Hyderabad on Sunday. PTI

NIA chargesheets 12 in trafficking case

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 18

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) today filed a chargesheet against 12 persons, including nine Bangladeshis, for their alleged involvement in trafficking girls from across the border for prostitution.

Agency officials said the chargesheet had been filed in a special court, Hyderabad, under the IPC, Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act and the Foreigners Act.

Ruhul Amin Dhali of West Bengal, Asad Hasan and Shariful Shaik of Maharashtra

have been named along with Bangladeshi nationals—Mohd Yusuf Khan, Bithi Begum, Mohd Rana Hussain, Mohammed Al Mamun, Sojib Shaik, Suresh Kumar Das, Mohd Abdulla Munshi, Mohd Ayub Shaik and one absconding accused Abdul Barik Shaik.

The case was originally registered under sections of the IPC and the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act on September 21 last year following the arrest of 10 human traffickers on the same day from two brothels in Hyderabad. — TNS

Nitish, Sushil launch joint poll campaign, hit out at Lalu

BIHAR, OCTOBER 18

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and his deputy Sushil Kumar Modi held joint election campaign on Sunday and launched a blistering attack on rival Lalu Prasad highlighting the crime situation and lack of development during his RJD rule in the past.

Reeling out comparative data during 15 years under

the RJD and an equal period under the NDA now, the two leaders sought another chance from voters to speed up development work in the state in the next five years.

The two started the day with a public meeting at Buxar, where the BJP has fielded Parshuram Chaturvedi as its candidate. He is pitted against sitting MLA Sanjay Kumar

Tiwari of the Congress.

After launching a separate campaign since beginning of this week, Kumar and Sushil Modi moved together on Sunday and sought support for the BJP as well as JD-U nominees on four seats of Buxar, Dumraon, Tarari and Jagdishpur.

In the Buxar rally, former state police chief and JD(U)

leader Gupteswar Pandey was not present. But, Chaturvedi said he enjoyed his support and blessings.

Chaturvedi himself had taken premature retirement as Assistant Sub-Inspector in the Bihar Police in 2003 and joined politics. — PTI

Bihar CM Nitish Kumar addresses a gathering in Buxar on Sunday. PTI >



Capthints at exemplary action

"The Centre may 'dismiss' the Congress government if it wants, but we will do everything possible to protect the farmers," state Congress chief Sunil Jakhar said after the meeting.

The Council of Ministers, which met after the CLP meeting, authorised the Chief Minister to take any legislative/legal decision that he deemed fit to protect the farmers' interests.

Stressing that the "whole world is watching Punjab with a lot of expectations", the Chief Minister sought the opinion of his ministers as well as MLAs on a draft legislation to be tabled on the second day of the session which could be extended till Wednesday (October 21).

A decision in this regard would be made at a Business Advisory Committee meeting on Monday.

Covid...

as against 7% projected by the ICMR. Prof Vidyasagar said 30% prevalence was good news and the reason why new cases were dropping.

Mandated to study the efficacy of the lockdown, the panel found that in the absence of the lockdown, active cases could have peaked to 140 lakh in June with 26 lakh deaths by August-end as against under eight lakh cases in September with one lakh deaths.

"Without the lockdown, the peak would have been 15 times higher than now. National lockdown lowered the peak load, pushed the peak to September and geared health systems to respond better. Had the lockdown been imposed from April 1 to May 1, 40 to 50 lakh peak active cases are projected by June with 7 to 10 lakh deaths by August-end," Vidyasagar said adding total cases could have been 204 lakh by February 2021 without the lockdown.

In Lahaul, ₹1,000 fine for littering

near Teiling village in Sissu.

Sissu panchayat president Suman Thakur said visitors were threatening the ecology of the area by littering the place. Due to lack of infrastructure to cope with the increasing number of visitors, steps have to be initiated at the local level to keep the valley clean.

Local youths have been roped in for the cleanliness drive initiated by the Adventure Sports and Tourism Society in Sissu. A local resident, Kamaljeet Rashpa, said the garbage left behind tourists is

being collected and disposed of in a scientific manner. Hoardings have been put up at various places to spread awareness among tourists.

A large number of people are pouring into the Lahaul valley after the opening of the tunnel. The footfall has gone up with visitors coming from nearby areas too. Now, residents of Kullu district are covering the touristy and religious spots in Lahaul in a daylong trip. Earlier they had to cross the Rohtang pass, which took around three to four hours more.

them," said Pankaj M Munjal, Chairman, HMC, a Hero Motors Company.

Upkar Singh Ahuja, president of the Chamber of Industrial and Commercial Undertakings, said the manufacturers dependent on imported raw material had been hit most, with their containers of raw material stuck at Punjab's dry ports. Unable to meet the orders, they

Main accused Dhirendra Singh
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

BJP leader, 4 others held in Ballia case

BALLIA/LUCKNOW, OCTOBER 18

The UP Police have arrested the main accused — a BJP leader — and four others in the Ballia murder case, officials said on Sunday.

The incident had taken place on Thursday during a meeting over the allotment of ration shops at Durjanpur village in Ballia's Reoti area.

A local BJP leader, Dhirendra Pratap Singh, allegedly shot 46-year-old Jai Prakash Pal Gama. The UP Government had suspended the SDM, circle officer and other policemen present at the spot.

According to officials, Dhirendra was arrested by the UP Special Task Force from Lucknow while Santosh Yadav, Amarjeet Yadav, Ajay Singh and Dharmendra Singh were held from Ballia.

The STF in a statement said the BJP leader carried a cash reward of Rs 50,000. — PTI

Colonel who took up ration issue loses out on promotion

Had sent notice to Defence Secy; AFT orders retirement

Rajendra Menon and Lt Gen Philip Campose observed that the board had not recommended the officer, Col Mukul Dev, for promotion and there was no reason to permit him to continue in service.

Last month, Col Dev had moved the Delhi HC contending that his retirement be stayed till the results of the promotion board, held in December 2019, were out. On September 29, a day before his scheduled superannuation, the HC had granted him protection till the tribu-

nal heard the matter further. Directing that the petitioner, currently posted at Bathinda, would be deemed to have retired from service on September 30, his original date of superannuation, the tribunal ruled that the retirement shall be subject to any final order passed on merits after hearing all concerned.

After the government had stopped issue of free ration to officers in 2017, Col Dev had sent a legal notice to the Defence Secretary, terming the move to be illegal. He was awarded a "displeasure" by the Corps Commander for violating the Army's rules and regulations by sending the notice directly to the Defence Secretary.

5 Naxals killed in gunfight with cops

NAGPUR, OCTOBER 18

Five Naxals, including four women, were killed in an exchange of fire with the police in Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra on Sunday, officials said.

"The C-60 commandos of the Gadchiroli police were conducting a combing operation

in the forest area in Dhanora taluka, when Naxals opened fire," it said in a statement.

"However, the Naxals soon fled from the spot after the police team launched a retaliatory attack," it said. — PTI