

The Tribune

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

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WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

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Information Brochure is available at leading bookstores (see website) and application forms can also be downloaded from our website

**Government of Punjab
Department of Transport
Tender Notice**

Tenders are invited for establishment and operation of 06 Automotive Testing Stations (ATS) in Punjab at Batala, Patiala, Ludhiana, Faridkot, Ropar and Barnala. Tender Document can be accessed from **11.00 A.M. on 16.09.2020** onward from the website www.eproc.punjab.gov.in/nicgapp and last date for submission of tender is **28.10.2020 till 05.00 P.M.**

Bidders are required to submit necessary documents/certificates and EMD in support of their eligibility as per the eligibility criteria stated in the terms & conditions. Bidders shall be required to meet the eligibility criteria in both technical and financial eligibility. Bidders fulfilling the eligibility criteria shall be shortlisted for further opening of their financial bids.

For any information please contact Nodal Officer ATS at nodalatpsb@gmail.com Phone No.: 0172-2771194.

Sd/- State Transport Commissioner, Punjab,
S.C.O. 177-178, Sector 17-C, Chandigarh.

DPR/HP/76525

PRESS NOTICE ON SHORT TERM BASIS FOR E-TENDERING

The Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division No. II, Kullu at Bhuntar invites online tenders on short time basis on behalf of Government of Himachal Pradesh from approved eligible contractors for the following works through e-tendering process:

Job No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	EMD Cost of Tender	Time of completion (months)	Cost of form
1.	Command area Development work for LIS sound Hathiyan Khokhan Jamot Hat in Tehsil Bhuntar, Distt. Kullu H.P. (SH:- Laying, Jointing of HDFC pipes correction of system deficiency and C/o Outlet chamber for distribution) Phase - 1st	40,70,160/-	68552/-	Six Months	800/-
2.	Command area Development work for LIS sound Hathiyan Khokhan Jamot Hat in Tehsil Bhuntar, Distt. Kullu H.P. (SH:- Laying, Jointing of HDFC pipes correction of system deficiency and C/o Outlet chamber for distribution) Phase -2nd	66,023,87/-	98524/-	Six Months	800/-
3.	Command area Development work for LIS sound Hathiyan Khokhan Jamot Hat in Tehsil Bhuntar, Distt. Kullu H.P. (SH:- Laying, Jointing of HDFC pipes correction of system deficiency and C/o Outlet chamber for distribution) Phase -3rd	63,21,617/-	95717/-	Six Months	800/-

Last date submission of tender:- **22.09.2020 up to 5:00 P.M.** and opened on **23.09.2020 up to 12:30 P.M.**

The tender forms/NIT and other detailed conditions can be downloaded from the website www.hiph.org or from office of the Executive Engineer up to date specified above.

(Er. Ravinder Kumar Sharma),
Executive Engineer,
Jal Shakti Division No. II,
Kullu at Bhuntar.

DPR/HP/2997 HIM SUCHANA AVAM JAN SAMPARK

**TENDER NOTICE
HIMACHAL PRADESH FOREST DEPARTMENT
(Nai Raahain Nai Manzilein)
e-Procurement Notice
INVITATION FOR BIDS**

Tender Reference No.:

1. The Divisional Forest Officer, Palampur Forest Division, Distt. Kangra on behalf of Governor of HP invites online bids on item rate, in e-tendering system, in 2 cover system for the undermentioned work from the eligible and approved contractors/firms. Eligible bidders are contractors registered with HPPWD/CPWD.

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Earnest Money	Cost of Tender	Time Allowed
1	Providing and laying Rubberized landing tiles (JSR Japan synthetic rubber Form) including surface dressing and concreting etc. (complete in all respect) at Paragliding take off site billing in Bir Range under Palampur Forest Division, Distt. Kangra (H.P.)	40,000/-	500/-	Two months

2. Availability of bid document and mode of submission: The Bid Document is available online and bid should be submitted in online mode on website <http://htptenders.gov.in>. Bidder would be required to register in the website, which is free of cost. For submission of bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate from one of the authorized certifying Authorities.

3. Key Dates:-

Sr. No.	Activity	Date and Time
I	Date of online publication	From 11.09.2020 at 05:00 p.m.
II	Downloading of e-tender document	From 12.09.2020, 10.00 a.m. to 05.10.2020 up to 5:00 p.m.
III	Date of submission of e-tendering	From 12.09.2020, 10.00 a.m. to 05.10.2020 up to 5:00 p.m.
IV	Physical submission of Earnest Money Deposit and cost of tender document and other technical documents.	Up to 05:00 p.m. on 05.10.2020
V	Date of Bid opening.	11:00 a.m. on 06.10.2020

4. Tender Details:-

The e-tender documents shall be uploaded online in 2 (two) covers:-

i) Cover-1 shall contain scanned copies of "Eligibility document/Eligible information".

ii) Cover-2 shall contain "BoQ/Financial Bid" where contractors will quote his offer for each item.

5. Cover-1 shall contain scanned copies of following "eligibility information" (Scanned copies to be uploaded).

i) The Earnest Money only in the shape of small saving instruments, or Fixed Deposit, duly pledged in favour of Divisional Forest Officer, Palampur.

ii) The cost of tender form only in the shape of Demand Draft in favour of Divisional Forest Officer, Palampur of work.

iii) Certificate of registration with any State/Central Govt. in appropriate class and discipline

iv) Latest Income Tax Certificate, Copy of EPF, ESI, PAN and GST registration.

v) Work experience of five years for executing similar type of works (adventure/sports activity).

vi) Turnover of minimum 20 Lakhs per annum for last three years.

6. Cover-2 shall contain BoQ where contractor will quote his offer for each item.

7. The tenders of the contractors/firms who fail to fulfil the eligibility information (as per Cover-1) will be summarily rejected.

8. Submission of original document:- The bidders are required to submit:-

i) Original Demand Draft towards the cost of bid document.

ii) Original bid security/EMD in the favour of DFO, Palampur and other Technical document as mentioned in point No. 5, in the O/o Divisional Forest Officer, Palampur Forest Division, Distt. Kangra (HP) as specified in key dates as mentioned in point No. 3, failing which the bids will be declared non-responsive.

9. Bid opening details: The bids shall be opened on **06/10/2020** in the O/o Divisional Forest Officer, Palampur Forest Division, Distt. Kangra (HP) by the authorized officer. In their own interest the tenderers are advised to be present along with original documents at the time of opening tenders.

10. If it happens to be holiday on the date of opening of bid as specified, the bid will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue and no separate notice will be given in this regard.

11. The bids for the work shall remain valid for acceptance for a period not less than **120 days** after the deadline for bid submission.

12. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents. The Officer inviting tenders shall not be held liable for any delays due to system failure beyond its control. Even though the system will attempt to notify the bidders of any bid updates, the employers shall not be liable for any information not received by the bidder. It is the bidder's responsibility to verify the website for the least information related to the tender.

13. The competent authority on behalf of Governor of HP reserved the right to reject any or all the tenders received without assigning any reason.

14. Registration of HP Sales Tax/GST is essential: Other details can be seen in Bid document.

Divisional Forest Officer,
Palampur Forest Division,
Palampur (Distt. Kangra).

NOTICE FOR OFFLINE TENDER

The Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division, Bharmour invites tenders on behalf of Government of Himachal Pradesh from approved eligible contractors for the following work(s) through e-tendering process.

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	Earnest Money	Time Limit	Cost of tender form
1	Improvement of WSS Bimbu in GP Hadsar, Tehsil Bharmour, Distt. Chamba (H.P.) (SH:- Excavation laying, jointing and testing of GI pipe RD 0 to RD 4080)	786283/-	15726/-	Six Months	250/-

Last date of sale of tender form from Jal Shakti Division, Bharmour on dated **16.09.2020**. The tender shall be received on **17.09.2020 till 3:00 p.m.** and shall be opened on the same day at **3:30 p.m.** in presence of tenderers or their authorized representatives.

www.hiph.org

No. EE-JSD-BMR-GA-Tender/2020-3466 Dated: 11.9.2020

Executive Engineer,
Jal Shakti Division, Bharmour.

DPR/HP/2980

HIMACHAL PRADESH JAL SHAKTI VIBHAG

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division, Baggi invites tenders on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh from approved eligible contractors for the following work(s) through e-tendering process:-

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	Earnest Money Deposit	Cost of Tender Form	Time of Completion
1	C/o 3 Nos. Tubewells in Kummi area in GP. Kummi, Tehsil Balmi, District Mandi (HP). (SH:- C/o Civil work i.e. Pump houses cum Chowkidar rooms, Toilet for pump house staff, barbed wire fencing, Overhead sump wells 20000 Ltr. capacity for Tubewell No. 2, Tubewell No. 3 and Tubewell No. 4).	Rs. 35,25,905/-	Rs. 60,400/-	Rs. 400/-	Six Months

Last date of filling/uploading the tender through e-tendering: **16/09/2020 up to 05.00 p.m.** The tender form and other detail and condition can be obtained from the website [https://htptenders.gov.in](http://htptenders.gov.in) or from office of Jal Shakti Division, Baggi up to the date specified above.

Executive Engineer,
Jal Shakti Division, Baggi.

DPR/HP/2974

**HIMACHAL PRADESH
JAL SHAKTI DEPARTMENT**

"NOTICE INVITING E- TENDER"

Online bids on items rate basis are invited by the Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division, Kaza, District Lahaul and Spiti Himachal Pradesh on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh, in electronic tendering system in three covers for the undermentioned works from the contractors/firms of appropriate class enlisted with Himachal Pradesh Jal Shakti Department/PWD/CPWD/other departments and Govt. undertaking departments.

Sr. No.	Name of Work	E/Cost	E/Money	Cost of Form	Time
2	Providing L.I.S to Village Khurik in G/P Khurik in Tehsil Kaza, Distt. L&S (HP) Sh:- C/o P/House and attendant Quarter, C/o Sump Well, C/o Toilet, with P/House and Boundary wall around the P/House and Sump Well.	Rs. 33,29811/-	Rs. 57450/-	Rs. 800/-	Six Months

Sr. No.	Name of Work	E/Cost	E/Money	Cost of Form	Time
3	Providing LWSS to Village Pangmo Chomo Gonpa in G.P. Hull in Tehsil Kaza, Distt. L&S (H.P.) (Sh:- C/o Pump House & Attached Toilet with P/House & R.C. Main S/Tank of 20,000 litre Capacity Providing & Fixing Barbed wire fencing around civil Structure C/o boundary wall around P/House)	Rs. 130,8137/-	Rs. 26170/-	Rs. 400/-	Six Months

1. tender documents and other instructions can be downloaded or viewed online from the portal <http://htptenders.gov.in> by the firms/individual registered on the website which is free of cost.
2. As the bids are to be submitted online are required to be encrypted and digitally signed, the bidders are advised to obtain Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from suitable vendors or from any authorized agency at the earliest.

KEY DATES WILL BE AS UNDER:-

1	Date of online publication	11/9/2020, 5.00 P.M.
2	Downloading of e-tender Documents	From 11/9/2020 at 5.00 P.M. up to 17.9/2020 at 5.00 P.M.
3	Date of submission of e-tendering	From 11/9/2020 at 5.00 P.M. up to 17/9/2020 at 5.00 P.M.
4	Physical submission of earnest money deposit and cost of tender form	Up to 17/9/2020, 11.00 A.M.
5	Date of opening bid	11:30 A.M. on 18/9/2020
(I)	Cover-1 Eligibility Criteria and Technical Bid	
(II)	Cover-2 Financial Bid	Should be intimated separately
6	Site Visit	
7	Pre-Bid Meeting	

**HIMUCHALA PRADESH
JAL SHAKTI VIBHAG
NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER**

US BANS IMPORT OF FIVE
CHINESE GOODS WORLD

ADB PAINTS GLOOMY PICTURE OF
DEVELOPING ASIAN ECONOMIES BUSINESS

GST FUND PARTLY USED TO PAY
OLD DUES: ANURAG BACK PAGE



WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

China can't alter status quo: Rajnath

Blames PLA for LAC flare-up | Says tension bound to hit trade | Assures LS of border security

AJAY BANERJEE
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15
India today blamed China for breaching all border agreements between the two countries and causing the resultant flare-up along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh.

Speaking in the Lok Sabha, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said India, however, was ready to resolve all issues through dialogue. At the same time, he assured the House that the country was ready to deal with all contingencies. "No one should doubt our determination to safeguard our borders," he maintained.

Referring to the June 15 Galwan clash, he said Indian soldiers had inflicted costs, including casualties, on the Chinese side. "China can't unilaterally change LAC status quo. The amassing of troops by China (since April) goes against the 1993 and 1996 pacts, which call for respecting and strictly observing the LAC. Disturbing peace along the border is bound to have implications," the minister said in what was seen as a message to China that hostilities and trade couldn't go together. While Indian forces never violated border pacts, a similar reciprocation didn't

CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE



WINTER WARM-UP: IAF transport aircraft C17 brings in essential supplies at a base in Ladakh. PTI

UNUSUAL FACE-OFF

There have been prolonged LAC stand-offs in past too, but situation is different this year in terms of scale of troops involved and number of friction points.

Rajnath Singh,
DEFENCE MINISTER

BACK PAGE
TAKE AWAY SALARY, RESTORE
MLAD FUNDS: OPPN MPs
NO DATA ON DEAD HEALTHCARE
STAFF: HARSH VARDHAN

SSB in for long haul along Bhutan

MUKESH RANJAN
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15
The Ministry of Home Affairs is learnt to have told the ITBP and SSB brass to prepare their personnel for a long winter haul at high-altitude border with China and Bhutan. Both the forces have been asked to place their demands for essentials and stock these for the next six months.

Sources in the ministry said a detailed plan had been chalked out to rush bulk sup-

Told to submit 6-month demand for essentials

pplies of essential commodities, including winter tents, heaters, warm clothes, sunglasses and packaged food.

"The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), which guards borders with China, and Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), deployed along the boundary with Bhutan and Nepal, have been asked to place their

AGREEMENTS BREACHED

- Pacts inked in 1993 and 1996 called for minimum strength of troops at the LAC, but China violated both
- From late 1990s to 2003, both sides unsuccessfully tried to confirm the LAC
- Post 2003, China didn't show any interest, said Rajnath

INDIA'S 3-POINT STAND

- 1 Both sides should strictly respect and observe the LAC
- 2 Neither side should attempt to alter the status quo
- 3 All agreements must be fully abided by in their entirety

demands as early as possible. The government wants to make available all commodities in 10 days," sources said.

The move comes against the backdrop of ongoing tensions with China in Ladakh and the Indian forces have been told to ensure unprecedented arrangements to ensure Beijing doesn't attempt any border incursions during winter.

Sources said directions had also been issued to the forces to stay put at respective locations through the winter.

LS clears one of 3 farm Bills, SAD says wasn't consulted

VIBHA SHARMA
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

WILL MOVE COURT: CAPT

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15
The state Congress will challenge the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2020, amid strong objection from Opposition MPs, who termed the move "anti-farmer and pro-hoarding".

Capt Amarinder Singh,
PUNJAB CM

on a state subject, thus eroding the federal structure of the country.

These ordinances should not have been brought without discussions. The SAD has always worked in the interests of the farming community," he said, invoking the contribution of his father Parkash Singh Badal as a farmer leader to press his claim.

Sukhbir said: "Before bringing the ordinances, parties and groups representing farmers should have been consulted. In the past two months, I have talked to many farmer organisations and listened to their concerns over the matter."

He said the ordinances would affect farmers in Punjab and Haryana where the mandi system existed. "I don't know about others, but our concerns have not been addressed," he said, urging the Union Government to reconsider the matter.

Sukhbir's assertion was ridiculed by AAP's Sangrur MP Bhagwant Mann, who said: "I am surprised he (Sukhbir) is objecting to the Bills, while his wife is occupying a ministerial berth at the Centre. They (Akalis) should have sacrificed the ministry if they were against the Bills."

In his reply, Minister of State for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Raosaheb Patil Danve claimed that the legislation would help farmers progress. He said the amendments to the Essential Commodities Act were made in accordance with recommendations of the high-level committee, of which states like Punjab and Haryana were a part. "Before bringing the ordinances, a high-power committee of chief ministers of states like Punjab, Odisha, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh was formed," he said, adding that Punjab was represented by its agriculture minister.

MORE INSIDE

Caseload crosses 5 mn; count dips for 2nd day

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

COVID-19 CASES INDIA

NEW CASES	83,809
RECOVERED	38,59,399
FRESH FATALITIES	1,054
TOTAL DEATHS	80,776

WORLD

TOTAL	2,96,17,178
RECOVERED	2,14,19,484
DEATHS	9,35,946

INDIA'S ROLE CRUCIAL IN VACCINE SUPPLY: GATES

New Delhi: Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates said India's willingness to play a "big role" in manufacturing Covid-19 vaccine and allowing its supply to other developing countries would play a critical role in containing the pandemic globally. "All of us want to get a vaccine out in India as fast as we can," he said. PTI

Fake news led to mass lockdown migration: Govt

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

A day after telling Parliament it had no data on migrant deaths and so the question of compensation for loss of lives did not arise, the government again shocked the Lok Sabha today by blaming fake news for mass migration during the Covid clampdown.

Are you saying there were no deaths: Rahul

The Home Ministry, in a reply to a question by TMC's Mala Roy, said, "The migration of a large number of workers was triggered by panic created due to fake news on lockdown duration."

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi attacked the government over lack of data on migrant deaths. "If you have not counted, have the deaths not happened? Only the Modi government is not aware of deaths," he tweeted. — TNS

Doval walks out of SCO meet over fictitious Pakistan map

SANDEEP DIKSHIT
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

RUSSIA SLAMS PAK ACT

This is a violation of the SCO Charter. The Russian side tried hard to persuade Pakistan not to do so. Its NSA Nikolai Patrushev conveyed that Russia didn't support what Pakistan had done. Moscow hoped that Pak's provocative act wouldn't affect India's participation in SCO and impact Patrushev's rapport with NSA Doval, sources said.

to the advisory by the host against it and in violation of the norms of the meeting".

"After consultation with the host, the Indian side left the meeting in protest," admitt-

ted MEA spokesperson Anurag Srivastava. It was claimed that India had also raised objections during a test call three days back.

After Doval walked out, the meeting carried on with the "new map" of Pakistan on display. The MEA said the Pakistani NSA had "deliberately projected a fictitious map".

In Geneva, UN Human Right Council chief Michelle Bachelet's observations on Kashmir were sought to be rebutted by diplomat Indra Mani Pandey, who stated people in J&K had been enjoying the same rights as people in the rest of country ever since changes were rung in on August 5 last year.

Army jawan killed, Major among 2 hurt in Pak firing

JAMMU, SEPTEMBER 15

An Army jawan was killed, while two others, including a Major, suffered injuries as Pakistani troops violated ceasefire by using heavy fire and mortar shells along the Line of Control (LoC) in Sunderbani, Rajouri district.

Jammu-based defence spokesperson said, "In the afternoon, Pakistan initiated the unprovoked ceasefire violation. Some injuries have been reported." The violation was reported in the Mala area, manned by 17 Madras Unit of 28 Infantry Brigade, at around 1.20 pm.

One of the injured soldiers succumbed to his injuries, while two others were shifted to a hospital. — TNS

Active cases are now one-fifth of the total, while recoveries have surged to 78.28 per cent after 79,292 patients were discharged in the past 24 hours.

"India's recovery rate is nearing 80 per cent and active cases are 20 per cent, although absolute infections are rising per million (3,704). Deaths per million are 58 against the global average of 118, among the lowest," Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said, while crediting aggressive testing and effective case management for India's rising recovery cases.

Early signs of stability sur-

Saini gets protection from arrest in '91 Multani case

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

The Supreme Court today granted interim protection from arrest to former Punjab DGP Sumedh Singh Saini in the 1991 Balwant Singh Mulla murder case.

"This case is of 1991. After 30 years, what is the hurry to arrest him... We will grant you time to file a reply," a

three-judge Bench led by Justice Ashok Bhushan said, adding he would not be arrested till further orders.

Saini was, however, asked to cooperate in the probe.

Saini has challenged the Punjab and Haryana HC's September 7 order dismissing his anticipatory bail plea in the Multani case. — TNS

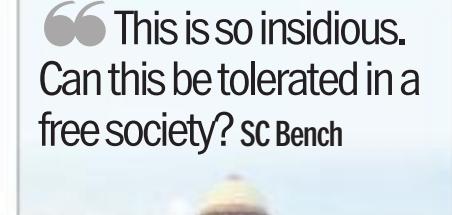
SC stops telecast of 'UPSC Jihad' show

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

The Supreme Court today restrained Sudarshan TV from telecasting further episodes of its controversial programme "UPSC Jihad" that alleged Muslims were "infiltrating" civil services in a planned manner.

"Episodes broadcast till now show nature and objective of the programme... Pending further orders of this court, Sudarshan News stands injunction

"This is so insidious. Can this be tolerated in a free society? SC Bench



from making any more broadcasts on this subject in any other name too," a Bench led by Justice DY Chandrachud said.

"Edifice of a stable democratic society and observance of constitutional rights and duties are based on co-existence of communities. Any attempt to vilify a community must be viewed with disfavour," it said.

Earlier, the court had refused to ban the show and issued notice to the Centre and Sudarshan TV on a petition filed by Firoz Iqbal Khan who alleged the programme would lead to communal tension. — TNS

Complications haunt patients post recovery

SUMEDHA SHARMA
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

SYMPOMS VARY

GURUGRAM, SEPTEMBER 15
Having successfully battled Covid-19, nearly 80 per cent of the recovered patients are thronging local hospitals with complications like chronic fatigue, inflammation, pneumonia, pulmonary fibrosis, cardiac issues, etc.

In view of the alarming situation, many hospitals have planned to start post-Covid OPDs. Dr Virender Yadav, CMO, Gurugram, said: "The disease is leaving its footprints, the enormity of which differs from patient to patient."

Dr Virender Yadav, CMO, Gurugram

two or three days due to cardiac arrest. Many were rushed back in a critical condition, they said.

Dr Yashpal Sharma, Head of Cardiology Department, PGIMER, Chandigarh, said: "Many patients have complained of cardiac issues after recovery. A number of them were even asymptomatic and had normal cardiac health prior to contracting the virus. It is thus important for all recovered patients to get a cardiac analysis done."

"Many people report minor symptoms like fatigue, while others are found suffering from complicated pulmonary conditions," said Dr Manoj Goyal, a pulmonologist.

Fearing shortage, locals stock up medical oxygen cylinders

MAHESH SHARMA

MANDIAHMEDGARH, SEPTEMBER 15

Alarmed over the trouble faced by the family of his friend, who got infected with Covid-19, in arranging a medical oxygen cylinder, Rajesh Kumar (name changed), a local resident, bought two such cylinders to meet any emergency situation.

He said: "I saw the plight of my friend's family members

in the wake of shortage of oxygen and his deteriorating condition. I thus decided to keep a couple of oxygen cylinders at home."

Rajesh is not alone. The Tribune has found that a number of residents are stocking medical oxygen.

A local chemist said: "The demand for medical oxygen and other equipment required with it has gone up. Fearing shortage, locals are

NO ILLEGALITY

There is no restriction on residents getting the facility installed at their homes. Dr Surveen, EPIDEMIOLOGIST

buying it even if there is no requirement as of now."

Giving in to the panicky situation, another local resident, Piyush Goyal (name changed), has also kept an oxygen cylinder at his home. He said: "Given the rise in the number of cases, it is better to be prepared for any situation. Many people suffering from flu-like symptoms have installed the facility at their homes."

Epidemiologist Dr Surveen and District Nodal Officer for the pandemic Dr Upasna Bindra claimed that there was no reason to worry. Dr Surveen said: "There is no scarcity of medical oxy-

gen in the district. There is also no restriction on residents wanting to install the facility at their homes."

Meanwhile, suppliers are finding it difficult to meet the rising demand. "It is profitable for us to sell medical oxygen in retail. We have started getting orders to install the facility from neighbouring areas. We are thus finding it a little difficult to meet the demand," said a supplier.

Sources said there had been instances where patients after testing negative and being discharged from hospitals died within



Angry farmers lay siege to highways

FARM BILLS Protest at Badal village | Start six-day agitation in CM's hometown



SHOW OF STRENGTH: Farmers block the Jalandhar-Chandigarh highway near Ropar and (right) the Bathinda-Amritsar National Highway in Bathinda on Tuesday. TRIBUNE PHOTOS: MALKIAT SINGH & Pawan Sharma

Tribune News Service

CHANDIGARH/BATHINDA/
PATIALA, SEPTEMBER 15

Farmers across Punjab today upped the ante against the farm Bills presented by the Central Government in Parliament and blocked the Bathinda-Amritsar National Highway, the national highway to Delhi at Rajpura and Khanna and state highways at several places.

Farmers vowed to make "any sacrifice" to stop the controversial Bills, which allegedly threaten the MSP regime, from being implemented.

In Bathinda district, agitating farmers blocked the Bathinda-Amritsar National Highway (NH-54) and demanded that the Bills be withdrawn immediately.

Farmers under the aegis of the Bhartiya Kisan Union (Ekta Ugrahan) took out a march from Ghudda to Badal village and laid siege to the residence of Union Food

'THERE'S NO LOOKING BACK NOW'

The Centre is forcing the farmers to become the slaves of multinational companies... let's unite and speak up, once and for all. There's no looking back for us now. — Harinder Singh Lakhawal, GENERAL SECRETARY, BKU (LAKHAWAL)

Processing Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal.

Kaka Singh Kotra, secretary, BKU (Sidhpur), feared that after the implementation of these Bills, the minimum support price and assured market systems would be dismantled, and farmers would be at the "mercy" of big corporates.

Lashing out at the Centre for its "anti-farmer" decisions, the BKU (Lakhawal) claimed that they blocked roads at 35 points in the state against the ordinances.

"The Capt Amarinder Singh government had promised to wipe out drug, mining and liquor mafias and waive farm loans, but it has failed to implement any of its pre-poll promises," he said. Ugrahan added that the Badal clan too had also failed the farmers by not opposing the new ordi-

Members of the BKU (Ekta Ugrahan), along with their family members, started their six-day agitation against the state government.

Senior farmer leader Joginder Singh Ugrahan said they stood with the farmers and not with any political outfit. He said the farmers would continue their protests till the Central Government rolled back the new Bills.

"The Capt Amarinder Singh government had promised to wipe out drug, mining and liquor mafias and waive farm loans, but it has failed to implement any of its pre-poll promises," he said. Ugrahan added that the Badal clan too had also failed the farmers by not opposing the new ordi-

AKALIS MUST VOTE AGAINST BILLS: AAP

The anti-farmer Bills are a step towards privatising the farming industry. The Bills will give a free hand to the private players. If the Shiromani Akali Dal really wants to support farmers' rights, then it must vote against the Bills.

Bhagwant Mann, AAP MP

nances, despite protests by the farming community.

All Covid-19 related guidelines went for a toss as thousands gathered at the PUDA ground and raised slogans throughout the day. Food was prepared at a makeshift kitchen set up at the venue.

Traffic was also disrupted in

Khanna, Khamano and Neelon as farmers blocked the highways. Traffic from Dora-ha-Neelon had to be diverted via Bija-Samrala routes and that of Ludhiana-Patiala via Payal-Malerkotla routes. The BKU (Lakhawal) claimed farmers halted the traffic on 25 highways with the support of 11 farmer organisations.

Meanwhile, several farmer organisations under the aegis of the All-India Kisan Sangharsh Committee, are meeting in Ludhiana on Wednesday to chart their plan of protest against the farm Bills.

Earlier, the Centre had tabled the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, Farmers' Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, and Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill in the ongoing session of Parliament. The last one was passed by the Lok Sabha today.

On the contrary, I want to reassure the farmers that the BJP will never take such a decision. The party believes in improving the lot of the peasants and wants them to have a choice to sell their produce at the highest price available anywhere in the country," the BJP leader said. — TNS

Farmers being misled: BJP

Chandigarh: The BJP is committed to safeguarding the economic interests of the farmers and will never abolish the minimum support price (MSP) provision, said BJP state unit president Ashwani Sharma here on Tuesday.

"It's unfortunate that the Opposition parties are misleading the farmers by spreading a false propaganda by saying that the ordinances on agriculture will do away with the MSP," said Sharma.

"On the contrary, I want to reassure the farmers that the BJP will never take such a decision. The party believes in improving the lot of the peasants and wants them to have a choice to sell their produce at the highest price available anywhere in the country," the BJP leader said. — TNS

Capt: Conspiracy to destroy farmers

Tribune News Service

DEMANDS APOLOGY FROM UNION MINISTER

CM Capt Amarinder Singh on Tuesday demanded an unconditional apology from Union Minister Raosaheb Patil Danve for allegedly misleading the nation on the farm ordinance issue.

SAYS SAD ENACTING FARCE ON BILLS

The Chief Minister has said tabling of the farm Bills in Parliament had exposed the SAD which was giving contradictory versions on the MSP. He said SAD president Sukhbir Singh Badal knew all along that the Bills would be presented in the House.

ment, along with the other two farm Bills that the Centre had tabled in the Lok Sabha, was in line with the recommendations of the Shanta Kumar committee, he pointed out the same committee had also suggested dismantling of the MSP system, he said.



Members of the BKU (Ekta Ugrahan) outside Union Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal's residence in Muktsar. TRIBUNE PHOTO

Harish Rawat to visit state on Sept 20-21

Tribune News Service

CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 15 AICC general secretary and in-charge of Punjab affairs Harish Rawat will meet party leaders during his visit to the state on September 20 and 21. Interacting with the media in Delhi, Rawat said internal differences among state party leaders was a big issue and there should no communication gap among them.

He is learnt to have met Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh, who was on a short visit to Delhi today, besides party MPs to elicit their response on the issues related to the state.

Sources close to the CM said he was on a personal visit to Delhi. In the coming days, Rawat is expected to meet party workers, besides MLA Navjot Singh Sidhu.

SGPC men clash with protesters over missing 'saroops', many hurt

Tribune News Service

AMRITSAR, SEPTEMBER 15 Turbans were tossed and several persons received injuries at the Golden Temple complex today when the SGPC taskforce attempted to prevent activists from joining a sit-in against the alleged inaction in the missing 'saroop' case. Even mediapersons were manhandled by the SGPC taskforce, which damaged their cameras.

Numerous passages leading to the shrine and SGPC-run inns were obstructed since early morning with tin sheets.

Activists of the Satkar Committee and other Sikh bodies staged a protest throughout the night outside the main entrance gate of Teja Singh Samundri Hall. Their talks with SGPC officials failed to yield any conclusion yesterday.

The situation took an ugly turn in the morning when



An injured activist after members of Sikh organisations clashed with the SGPC taskforce in the Golden Temple complex. TRIBUNE PHOTO

some Sikhs activists and Nihang organisations, which were to join the agitation, were intercepted by the SGPC taskforce.

Much to the inconvenience of devotees, the three

sides that lead to the Golden Temple were blocked.

Sri Guru Granth Sahib Satkar Committee head Balbir Singh Muchhal claimed the manager of the Golden Temple had submitted an apology on

behalf of SGPC men who misbehaved with his colleagues.

The protesters demanded that the SGPC should disclose the whereabouts of 328 missing 'saroops', initiate criminal proceedings against the erring officials and make the investigation report public as they feared that many influential officials and political leaders were involved in the issue.

SGPC spokesperson Kulwinder Singh said, "There were five or six persons donning the 'Nihang bana' who created a ruckus in the Golden Temple complex. When they were intercepted by the taskforce, they used abusive language which ultimately led to the clash."

The Satkar Committee members who were conducting the protest in a peaceful manner are in contact with the SGPC management and talks are on to clarify their queries."

Include Punjabi as J&K's official language: Sukhbir

In Lok Sabha, Abdullah says it's widely spoken in UT

Tribune News Service

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15 SAD chief Sukhbir Badal today accused the government of "deleting" Punjabi from the list of official languages of Jammu and Kashmir. This comes a day after Anandpur Sahib MP Manish Tewari raised the issue of not including Punjabi as an official language in the Union Territory.

"It used to be an official language of J&K, Farooq Abduljalil will confirm," Badal said pointing towards Abdullah, senior National Conference leader in the Lok Sabha. "He also speaks excellent Punjabi," Sukhbir said in his brief statement in the language.

Supporting him, Abdullah said Punjabi was spoken by many in J&K. He urged the government to also consider



SAD MP Sukhbir Singh Badal speaks in the Lok Sabha during the ongoing monsoon session of Parliament in New Delhi. PTI

adding Pahari and Gujarati as official languages of the UT.

Tewari had yesterday said though many of Punjabi dialects were spoken in adjacent Jammu and Kashmir, the government "deliberately" kept Punjabi out as the official language in the UT. Discrimination against

Punjabi should be stopped in Jammu and Kashmir and the language should be included as the official language, Tewari said. The Union Cabinet recently approved a Bill under which Kashmiri, Dogri and Hindi, apart from the Urdu and English, would be the official languages in J&K.

Bathinda e-challan project in limbo

Tribune News Service

BATHINDA, SEPTEMBER 15 The Bathinda police e-challan project has been lying in abeyance since it was started with much fanfare on August 15 last year by the then Inspector General of Police (IGP), Bathinda Range, MF Farooqui and then SSP Nanak Singh.

The trial run was conducted at Hanuman Chowk and within 2 months, 128 hi-tech optical cameras were to be installed at 44 points across the city. But the company which was given

from the department.

A control room was made for the project at Police Lines and the company got the new cameras approved from the Police Department. However, till date, these have not been installed. The department has spent Rs 1 crore on this project while Guru Gobind Singh Refinery gave Rs 20 lakh for the project under its Corporation Social Responsibility (CSR).

SSP Bhupinderjit Singh Virk said he had recently joined and in between, he was down with Covid-19, but he would take up the matter soon.

Agricultural university conducts entrance exam

Tribune News Service

JUDHIANA, SEPTEMBER 15 The Punjab Agricultural University (PAU) conducted the Common Entrance Test (CET) 2020 on Tuesday for admission to various undergraduate programmes.

Dr NK Khullar, Controller of Examinations, PAU, said a total of 2,239 students, out of 3,007, appeared for the CET. In view of the Covid-19 pandemic, the university set up eight examination centres in different parts of the state, including Amritsar,

4 booked for torturing man

Abohar, Bathinda, Faridkot, Gurdaspur, Ludhiana, Sangrur and Sri Muktsar Sahib, for the convenience of the students and smooth conduct of the exam."

"It is for the first time that the university had set up examination centres outside the campus. At Ludhiana, four centres were set up at PAU and one each at RS Model School and KVM School," he stated. Dr RS Sidhu, Registrar, PAU, said the results would be posted on the university website. No arrest has been made. — OC

Woman dies of 'drug overdose' in Bathinda

BATHINDA, SEPTEMBER 15 A woman has allegedly died of drug overdose. The deceased has been identified as Karamjit Kaur (30), alias Kareena, of Mohalla Kikar Dass. Subsequently, he and his mother found Kareena lying in an unconscious state, and Aman and another woman in an inebriated condition.

Kareena was taken to a private hospital, where she was declared dead. Singh alleged that Aman and the other woman had given drugs to his sister. Both women have been booked under Sections 304 and 34 of the Indian Penal Code. However, no arrests have been made so far. — TNS

Court allows key Behbal accused to turn approver

Tribune News Service

FARIDKOT, SEPTEMBER 15

The District and Sessions Court today allowed the request of a special investigation team (SIT) seeking pardon for Inspector Pardeep Singh, a prime accused in the Behbal Kalan police firing case. On September 10, IGP Kunwar Vijay Pratap Singh had appeared in the court and claimed making Pardeep an approver would strengthen the prosecution's case against the main culprits.

Resham Singh, brother of one of the persons killed in the firing, and Charanjit Singh Sharma, a former SSP and one of the prime accused in the case, had opposed the SIT move to make Pardeep an approver.

The SIT had claimed it was up to the probe agency, prosecution and court to take a call on whether to allow an accused to turn approver in a criminal case. Neither Resham nor the other accused had the right to raise an objection.

WILL HELP UNRAVEL FIRING CASE: SIT

- The SIT had claimed prime accused Pardeep Singh would be a key witness for the prosecution to unravel the sequence of events relating to the incidents
- The duty magistrate had on September 3 recorded Pardeep's statement, a day after the SIT moved the court seeking pardon for him
- Pardeep had named a DGP-rank officer and a senior Akali leader as accused in the police firing incidents at Kotkapura and Behbal Kalan, sources said

The duty magistrate had on September 3 recorded Pardeep's statement, a day after the SIT moved court seeking pardon for him.

Sources said in his 18-page statement in the court, Pardeep had named a DGP-rank officer and a senior Akali leader as accused who allegedly played an instrumental role in the police fir-

ing at Kotkapura and Behbal Kalan on October 14, 2015, in the aftermath of the desecration of Guru Granth Sahib at Bargarhi and Burj Jawahar Singh Wala villages.

The SIT had claimed Pardeep would be a key witness for the prosecution to unravel the sequence of events relating to the incidents and also unmask the perpetrators at Behbal Kalan and Kotkapura.

Opposing the SIT, Resham Singh had claimed Pardeep had played a major role in the police firing, so he could not be granted pardon. The counsel for Charanjit Singh Sharma had said proper procedure was not followed in recording Pardeep's statement in the court.

The IGP who is leading the SIT probing the Kotkapura and Behbal Kalan police firing cases, said they had moved an application under Section 306 of the Code of Criminal Procedure in the Behbal Kalan firing case, which had been accepted by the Faridkot court.

CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 15 The Punjab Police have busted yet another pro-Khalistan terror module with the arrest of two persons allegedly operating in connivance with five criminals, including a Khalistan Zindabad Force (KZF) operative currently lodged in an Amritsar jail.

The Pakistan-backed module was busted on the basis of inputs about the nefarious designs of certain pro-Khalistan elements trying to disturb peace and harmony in the state by

Pro-Khalistan elements trying to disturb peace: DGP

launching terror attacks, said DGP Dinkar Gupta.

Gupta said following the inputs, the police launched a drive to ensure thorough frisking and checking of those entering the state from various parts of the country. This led to the arrest of Harjeet Singh, alias Raju, and Shamsher Singh, alias Shera, both

residents of Mianpur village in Tarn Taran district.

Six sophisticated weapons — a 9mm pistol, four .32 calibre pistols and a .32 revolver — eight live rounds of ammunition, several mobile phones and an Internet dongle were seized from the two, who were nabbed at a checkpost near Hotel Jashan on the Rajpura-Sirhind road by a police team comprising ASI Gurdarshan Singh, Head Constable Jora Singh and Home Guard Pritpal Singh. — TNS

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(3) Instructor Workshop - 01

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90 more succumb, 2,481 fresh cases

COVID-19 CASES DISTRICT-WISE COUNT

DISTRICT	+VE	DEATHS	DISTRICT	+VE	DEATHS
Ludhiana	14,176	607	Moga	1,918	50
Jalandhar	10,149	271	Fatehgarh Sahib	1,506	60
Amritsar	6,969	269	Tarn Taran	1,239	46
Patiala	9,212	253	Kapurthala	2,191	106
Sangrur	2,895	116	Fazilka	1,518	23
SAS Nagar	7,171	139	SBS Nagar	1,052	32
Gurdaspur	4,354	99	Faridkot	2,054	33
Bathinda	4,201	75	Barnala	1,496	32
Hoshiarpur	3,114	98	Ropar	1,408	45
Ferozepur	2,456	79	Muktsar	1,829	25
Pathankot	2,417	39	Mansa	1,106	17
Total positive	84,482		Deaths	2,514	

Tribune News Service

Patiala (204), Gurdaspur (197), Pathankot (189), SAS Nagar (188), Hoshiarpur (154) and Bathinda (120).

Ludhiana reported 19 deaths, followed by Jalandhar (12); Amritsar (10); Gurdaspur and Kapurthala (eight each); Hoshiarpur (six); Ferozepur (five); Fatehgarh Sahib and Patiala (four each); Muktsar (three); SBS Nagar, Pathankot and Ropar (two each); and Barnala, Bathinda, Faridkot, Sangrur and Tarn Taran (one each).

Apart from this, 42 officials in the Punjab and Haryana High Court have tested positive and several others have been quarantined. Prior to this, nearly 800 judicial officers, their families and staff in the two states and Chandigarh were quarantined, indicating the impracticality of permitting physical functioning of the courts. Besides, 44 judicial officers and court officials have been quarantined.

Besides, 31 judicial officers and officials in the subordinate judiciary across Punjab and Haryana have tested positive in the past three weeks. No less than 85 other judicial officers and officials have been quarantined.

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Jurisdiction

Special Leave Petition (Civil) No.

24958 of 2018 with prayer for interim relief

Chaman Lal (D)

Through LRs and others

...Petitioners(s)/Appellant(s)

Versus

Kasturi Lal (D)

Through LRs and others

...Respondent(s)

To

1. Smt. Daya Kaur w/o wd/o

Sunder Singh s/o Bhagwan Singh,

Mohalla Lahaurian Umrar, P.S.

Tanda Dasuya, District Punjab, PID:

72664/2020 for R(1) in SLP(C) No.

24958/2018 for R(2) in SLP(C) No.

72665/2020 for R(15) in SLP(C) No.

24958/2018 (See IV-B). 2. Inderjit

s/o Mehma Ram, Ayiapur, District

Hoshiarpur, Punjab. PID:

72667/2020 for R(1) in SLP(C) No.

24958/2018 (See IV-B). 3. Urmair

Umrar, Tehsil Dasuya, District

Hoshiarpur, Punjab. PID:

72668/2020 for R(13) in SLP(C) No.

24958/2018 (See IV-B). 4. Mehma

Ram s/o Rakha Ram, Ayiapur,

Tehsil Hoshiarpur, Punjab. PID:

72669/2020 for R(16) in SLP(C) No.

24958/2018 (See IV-B). 5. Umar

Umrar, Tehsil Dasuya, District

Hoshiarpur, Punjab. PID:

72670/2020 for R(18) in SLP(C) No.

24958/2018 (See IV-B). 6. Smt.

Sudershan Saini, lady Doctor Tanda,

Tehsil Dasuya, District Hoshiarpur,

Punjab. PID: 72669/2020 for R(16) in

SLP(C) No. 24958/2018 (See IV-B).

7. Amrit Lal s/o Baldev Raj,

Umrar, Tehsil Dasuya, District

Hoshiarpur, Punjab. PID:

72671/2020 for R(19) in SLP(C) No.

24958/2018 (See IV-B). 8. Jai

Baghwan, LR of Parkash r/o H.no.

1105, Preet Nagar, Darapur, Umrar,

District Hoshiarpur, Punjab. PID:

72671/2020 for R(20) in SLP(C) No.

24958/2018 (See IV-B). 9. Mehma

Ram s/o Sunder Das, r/o Village

Umrar, Tehsil Dasuya, District

Hoshiarpur, Punjab. PID:

72672/2020 for R(20) in SLP(C) No.

24958/2018 (See IV-B). 10. Desh Raj

s/o Kaka Ram r/o Ward No. 1, Pre

Gal, Ayiapur Umrar Tanda, Tehsil

Hoshiarpur, Punjab. PID:

72674/2020 for R(24) in SLP(C) No.

24958/2018 (See IV-B). 12. Bhagwan

Singh S/o Banta Singh R/o Village

Umrar Tehsil Dasuya, District - Other

PID: 72675/2020 for R(25) in SLP(C) No.

24958/2018 (See IV-B). 13. Rakha

Ram S/o Dhabra Ram, R/o Village

New Cong in charge to address factionalism

SUSHIL MANAV
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

EVERY VOICE WILL BE HEARD: BANSAL

CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 15 Vivek Bansal, newly appointed in charge of the state Congress, considers factionalism as a major challenge and exposing failures of the BJP-JJP government as the top priority for him.

Bansal will visit Chandigarh for the first time on Thursday for interaction with state Congress leaders and sharing his priorities with them.

Former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda, state Congress president Kumari Selja and other senior leaders are expected to attend the meeting.

In a telephonic interview with *The Tribune* today, Bansal said there was factionalism in every organisation and the state Congress was no exception.

"Fractionalism cannot be allowed to come in the way of interests of the organisation. When infighting starts ham-

pering the organisation, steps have to be taken to address it. I will ensure that the voice of every worker is heard," Bansal said.

Bansal said he would inter-

Palwal-Sonepat rail corridor okayed

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 15 With 2,493 fresh cases, the Covid tally in the state reached 98,622 on Tuesday. A total of 26 deaths were reported — five from Karnal, four from Panchkula, three from Kaithal, two each from Faridabad, Gurugram, Hisar, Kurukshetra, Fatehabad and Ambala and one each from Sirsa and Bhiwani.

Among fresh cases, the maximum cases were reported from Gurugram (324), followed by Faridabad (270), Hisar (195), Ambala (190), Panchkula (181), Fatehabad (173), Rohtak (151), Karnal (149), Kurukshetra (145), Yamunanagar (123) and Panipat (121).

The Development and Panchayat Department at Sector 28 in Chandigarh was closed from September 16 to 18 for sanitisation. A number of cases had been reported from the department.

This would give connec-

121 KM LONG

- The 121.7 km project is estimated to cost ₹5,617 crore and proposed to be completed in five years
- Palwal, Nuh, Gurugram, Jhajjar and Sonepat districts will benefit from the rail line

tivity en route to the existing Patiala station on the Delhi-Rewari line, Sultanpur station on the Garhi Harsaru-Farukhnagar line and Asaudha station on the Delhi-Rohtak line, an official release said.

The districts of Palwal, Nuh, Gurugram, Jhajjar and Sonepat would benefit from this rail line. It would provide high-speed seamless connectivity to the dedicated freight corridor network, resulting in reduction of cost and time of transportation for export-import traffic from the NCR to ports of India.

Panel to be set up in 5 weeks: State to HC

SAURABH MALIK
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 15 Over nine months after the term of the state committee for regulating admission and fee in private technical institutions came to an end, the HC asked Haryana to constitute the panel. A five-week deadline was set for the purpose.

The direction on the basis of an undertaking given by the state before the Division Bench of Justice Rajiv Sharma and Justice Rajesh Bhardwaj came during the

hearing of a petition by Tinku and others against Haryana and other respondents.

The Bench observed the state panel for regulating admission and fee in private technical institutions was formed by the state vide a notification dated December 13, 2016, but its term expired on December 14, 2019.

Out to take bath, six drown

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

PANIPAT, SEPTEMBER 15 Six persons, including two girls and a woman, drowned in the Yamuna near Jalma village of Bapoli block of Panipat district today. Three bodies have been fished out, while search is on for the remaining three.

Sushil of Jalma village along with his wife Sonia (32), son Sagar (12), daughter Payal (10), two close relatives — Badal (15) of Chandoli village and Saurabh (16) of Karhans

and drowned. Sushil started crying for help when he saw them drowning after which some villagers on the other side of the Yamuna jumped into the river but failed to save them. Besides, scores of villagers gathered at the spot and informed the administration.

The divers fished out the bodies of Sarita, Sonia and Badal after three hours. The search for Sagar, Payal and Saurabh is still on. The bodies have been sent to the General Hospital for post-mortem.

BKU (Charuni) boycotts meet with Union Minister

CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 15 The Bharatiya Kisan Union (Charuni) on Tuesday took a U-turn and boycotted the meeting with Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Tomar in Delhi. However, a delegation of farmers' organisations of Haryana met Tomar to discuss the Centre's three new ordinances.

State BJP chief OP Dhankar, Agriculture Minis-

ter JP Dalal along with Haryana MP Brijendra Singh, Kurukshetra MP Nayab Saini and Bhiwani-Mahendragarh MP Dharambir Singh were present in the meeting.

The delegation put up eight demands before Tomar. These included assurance on the MSP, procurement under old system, safeguarding farmers from fraud by purchasers, power to SDM to resolve dis-

pute among farmers and purchasers, e-platforms to be owned by the government or under its strict observance so that farmers aren't duped and get direct payment.

As per the BJP statement,

Tomar assured the farmers that the MSP would stay and purchase would happen under the old system in grain markets. He said the ordinances were in favour of farmers.

Meanwhile, clearing the union's stand on skipping the meeting, Rakesh Kumar Bains, BKU (Charuni) spokesperson, said: "We reached MP Dharambir's house at 11 am on Tuesday. Gurnam Singh Charuni asked him whether the ordinances could be stopped till the talks were on, to which he refused. So, we decided to boycott the meeting." —TNS

Paddy buying norms unjust, says Selja

CHANDIGARH, SEPTEMBER 15 State Congress president Kumari Selja has questioned the new conditions for giving paddy to rice millers for custom milled rice.

She accused the BJP-JJP government of harassing people during the pandemic. She said after the lathicharge on farmers and labourers in Kurukshetra, other sections were on target.

If these new conditions were implemented, farmers and rice millers would suffer, she said. "They will face difficulty in selling paddy." She said the government wanted to give paddy to only 600 of 1,400 rice mills. She claimed that if the policy was not changed soon, millers could refuse to purchase paddy, which would directly affect farmers. TNS

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The Tribune

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Death without data

Scraping of Question Hour negation of accountability

PARLIAMENT without Question Hour is a mere debating society, where men and women of privilege congregate to help conduct government business. People's will and aspirations are expressed and the government made accountable when questions are asked of the rulers, their follies exposed and curative prescriptions debated. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Prahla Joshi quoted data of time wasted during Question Hour — 60 per cent in Rajya Sabha and 40 per cent in Lok Sabha — to justify the Covid-time decision to do away with the all-important parliamentary practice. A question often jolts a minister and his bureaucracy awake to the misdemeanours of the department; and the apprehension of pointed supplementaries to a starred question forces even an insensitive government to offer replies and solutions. Suspension of Question Hour is the negation of accountability.

Or else, the government would not have dared to vacuously respond in writing that it does not have data on deaths of migrant labour due to the lockdown. The reverse migration of honest, hard-working labourers, often on foot, from cities to villages was a story of their rectitude and also one of untold suffering inflicted by a government decision, which only has a parallel in the Partition of 1947. Deaths were reported by the Railway Protection Force and by the media, as in the case of sleeping workers getting mowed down on a railway track or deaths by suicide of penniless breadwinners. But the labour ministry has no data. Nor does it have any on job losses during the lockdown. The World Bank had pointed at the loss of livelihood for 40 million migrants in April. The Centre for Monitoring of Indian Economy has assessed the loss of 21 million salaried jobs, which are difficult to regain.

Meanwhile, at the opening of the monsoon session, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reminded parliamentarians that they have a special responsibility to support the country's brave soldiers. Sure, they do; but the government has a greater responsibility to explain why 20 soldiers, including their Commanding Officer, were killed in Ladakh. Let there be answers.

Furore over farm Bills

Centre should initiate a national debate to allay fears

POLITICAL parties in India are well aware that the farming community is too important a vote bank to be trifled with. The ruling party at the Centre is no exception. The BJP-led NDA government has come up with a series of measures in the past six years to financially support farmers and boost their income. Modi Sarkar has even expanded the Direct Benefit Transfer scheme, launched during UPA-II rule, with the objective of freeing the *annadata* from the clutches of middlemen. No wonder it is paradoxical that the BJP finds itself under fire over three 'farmer-friendly' Bills. Initially promulgated as ordinances, these Bills have sparked protests by farmers and farm unions across the country, right from Punjab to Telangana, besides inviting the ire of the governments of non-BJP-ruled states.

Agriculture is a State subject. The Centre is constitutionally bound to consult the states and develop consensus before going ahead with any legislation that impacts farmers. Due process has apparently been bypassed in the instant case, leading to accusations from the Opposition of legislative overreach and an assault on federalism. The Modi government has repeatedly stated that the new laws are not aimed at tinkering with or doing away with the Minimum Support Price (MSP) regime, but the trust deficit persists. Assured procurement of wheat and paddy at the MSP has played a key role in making India food-surplus, even as farmers are contending with diminishing returns amid rising input costs and limited options to sell their harvest. The move to empower them by enabling barrier-free trade makes sense, provided they don't have to settle for unremunerative prices.

If the Centre's initiative is indeed well-intentioned, it should go all out to convince various stakeholders of the potential benefits. A national debate is the need of the hour to dispel apprehensions about the Bills, particularly the dreaded corporatisation of agriculture. The feedback ought to be utilised to make changes or improvements in the laws. Ignoring farmers' concerns can be politically suicidal as well as economically disastrous. It's hoped that better sense will prevail.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

To put everything in balance is good, to put everything in harmony is better. — Victor Hugo

ON THIS DAY...100 YEARS AGO

The Tribune.

LAHORE, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1920

THE PUNJAB RESOLUTION.

WE have already commented upon the decision of His Excellency the Viceroy not to allow either of Mr. Shastri's alternative resolutions on Punjab affairs to be moved in the Council. Unfortunate as such a decision would have been at any time, it is a blunder at the present time when, in the words of the *Times of India*, "the country is moved as it has not been moved for nearly two generations," when the forces making for estrangement between the bureaucracy and the articulate section of the community have very nearly reached their culminating point. To those of us who, not of course, in the interests of the bureaucracy, but in the best interests of the country, with which are also bound up the best interests of the British connection itself, have been endeavouring to the best of their ability to stem these forces, it must be a matter of infinite regret that the head of the British Government in India, instead of strengthening their hands by a policy of large-hearted statesmanship, could have chosen to take a step, the only effect of which can be to materially weaken their hands and to carry the process of estrangement a step further. We can think of one and only one set of circumstances in which this action, however regrettable in itself, would not have been without an element of plausibility. Had the resolution of Mr. Shastri been really such that they would not be discussed without further embittering the already bitter racial feeling, then, whatever our personal feeling might be, we should have readily admitted that the Viceroy's action had something to be said for it. As a matter of fact, there was nothing of a racial character in the resolution. They were not directed against the British Government. They were not directed against the British race. They were not directed against the British community in India as such.

Communal peace for progress

Violence sows seeds of discord which may not be bridged for generations



NN VOHRA

FORMER JAMMU & KASHMIR GOVERNOR

EXPERIENCE in the post-Independence period has demonstrated that, other things being equal, meaningful growth and development is achieved when there is political stability and public order is maintained in the country. Domestic entrepreneurs and foreign companies shall make investments and be able to function profitably only if peace and normalcy prevail. For securing such an environment, it is imperative that the governance apparatus works with speed and efficiency, law and order is maintained, corruption is controlled and the well-being and safety of all our people is safeguarded. Thus, if progress is to be achieved on all fronts and our country is to advance rapidly towards the attainment of its avowed goals, it is of the highest importance that clean and efficient governance is delivered and an environment of trust, safety and security prevails across the land.

First and foremost, if stability and public order are to be maintained and rapid advancement achieved on all fronts, we cannot afford to have recurring incidents of communal disturbances of the kind we recently witnessed in the national capital, which resulted in violence, killings and large-scale property losses. It is cause for grave concern that, as widely reported in the media, these disturbances occurred because the beliefs and socio-cultural practices of one community were allowed to be questioned and derided by political elements of another community, essentially with the objective of creating religious divisiveness.

It must be remembered that, besides resulting in the immediate loss of lives and large economic losses, every incident of communal violence also leads to many longer-term consequences: it



GREAT PERIL: We can ill afford to have recurring incidents of communal disturbances of the kind we recently witnessed in the national capital.

In the recent past, two universities in the Capital witnessed unprecedented violence.

generates suspicion, fear and hatred among people of different castes and faiths and lays the seeds of discord which may not be bridged for generations to come. Also, as was the case in the Delhi incidents, such occurrences create an irreparable divide among people of different religions who had been living happily together, in the same clusters and colonies, for decades past. Sadly, the communal virus, once it gets into the societal bloodstream, is extremely difficult to eradicate.

It is singularly unfortunate that efforts have also been made to inject the cancer of discord and divisiveness in educational institutions. In the recent past, two universities in the Capital witnessed unprecedented violence, besides irreparable disruption of academic schedules. Instead of providing the best opportunities to the student community and tapping India's youthful demographic profile to achieve rapid economic gains, efforts are being made to misdirect the youth for electoral advantages.

The numerous and far spread communities which comprise our vast population represent religious, linguistic and cultural differences that make India a land of unbounded diversities.

These differences were sensitively recognised by the founding fathers of our Constitution when they set out the rights and privileges of citizens and the Directive Principles of State Policy.

In their public speeches and statements, political leaders invariably refer to the several thousand years of our country's civilisational past and express rightful pride in pointing to the enormous strength we draw from our 'unity in diversity'. However, it appears that as a people, our sensitivities to the manifold diversities in our society have been getting progressively dimmed. This erosion is due to certain political parties creating divisiveness among the castes and religions of our people to secure electoral gains.

We need stability to achieve growth, eradicate poverty and inequality and advance towards becoming an economically and militarily strong nation. We cannot afford any disruption of communal harmony which, as has been repeatedly demonstrated, leads to devastating consequences. Instead, we must maintain sustained societal harmony and draw strength by reviving our traditional forbearance of the differences in race, religion, language and culture.

In recent years, in the search of jobs,

young men and women in different parts of our country have moved far away from their homes. Today, we have Mizo, Naga and Manipuri youth working in the mountains of J&K and in the deserts of Rajasthan, and Punjabis and Haryanvis working in Kerala and the Andamans. This is a most welcome development as it helps to promote cultural integration. It is our duty to educate our children about the background and cultures of the people they have never seen before. They must learn to respect not only their religions, cultures and languages, but also the eating habits, clothing styles and even the haircut patterns of the many new faces we are getting to see and meet every day.

In recent years, there have been ugly incidents arising from caste and religion clashes, kangaroo trials and roadside lynchings. No government must allow such incidents to recur.

Our polity must recognise the dangers which lie ahead if the faults in the functioning of the governance apparatus are not remedied soon. Taking stock of the existing failures and the arising challenges, the executive and the legislature must urgently commence discharging their true constitutional roles. And the judiciary should not wait anymore to fully regain its supreme responsibility to defend, protect and fearlessly enforce the Constitution. The very long pending electoral reforms, which are required to remedy the many ills from which our democratic framework is suffering, must be implemented with the highest priority. Side by side, the polity must accept the need for self-purification, a thorough cleaning up of the entire administrative machinery and reforming the functioning of the multitudinous minnows of the state.

It shall require enormous political will and unflinching determination to carry through the required reforms, without which we cannot deliver satisfactory governance to the people of India. One hopes that our polity will muster courage and pick up the gauntlet.

— Excerpted from the centenary year Sir Syed memorial lecture delivered online on Sept 9. Concluded For the full text, go to <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/opinion/comments>

Bond of bliss with the banyan

RITU KAMRA KUMAR

THERE is a colossal banyan tree across the road in front of my home. In the morning, when I open the front door, its swaying branches welcome me and its lush-green leaves spread mirth as the sun-sieved criss-cross pattern of leaves fills my courtyard with beautiful mosaic and motifs. A thing of beauty is a joy forever, indeed.

The tree and I have been companions for decades. As I rush through the morning chores in the kitchen, I listen to the constant chirping and preening of birds on the tree. They fly across the horizon and perch back on its stout and sturdy branches, their home. Some birds perch on its limber twigs and they sway with glee as birds hop from

one branch to another. In winters, every twig of the tree gets laden with cerise berries and twittering birds who devour the fruit in sheer delight, as do bulbul, koel, sparrow and squirrel. Squirrels with their fluffy, bobbly tails scamper in the warm sun, exuberant in their climb, looking mesmerising.

The tree offers unbridled surprises. Pedestrians take shelter under its gigantic frame being caught in unpredictable rain, roadside vendors strike up conversation sitting under it, labourers partake siesta under its soothing shade. The tree gives a peep into a saner pace of life, away from the constant onslaught of social media updates and notifications.

Passing through it, I came across a large meticulously woven spider web, trapped in it was a beautiful butterfly,

fluttering its wings, making enormous effort to disentangle itself from the web of potential death. I had a strong urge to help it, but felt I shouldn't intervene in the way of nature. The tree has been witness to many a birth in nests and many lives lost in tantalising trapings, torments and tempests. If I could converse with it, it would reveal umpteen tales and squabbles absorbed into its colossal form, tales of mirth and misery, blissfully shouldering and sheltering many a life and watching silently the loss of many others.

As the dusk sets in, the setting sun begins lifting its golden veil from the tree top. The tree comes alive with agile twittering birds. When the crimson in the sky deepens, the chirping of birds subsides and darkness descends on the horizon, with stars,

the moon and clouds playing hide and seek. The tree's shadows stir silently as if cradling the birds sleeping in its bosom. At night, too, the tree offers its own charm and warmth.

I come inside, looking forward to the morning, harbinger of the mighty and magnificent sun, when the sky on the east exhibits a rainbow of white, purple, blue... golden clouds strewn like tufts of feathers filled with vivacious and vibrant hues. The tree would be suffused with winged chirpy birds, their music akin to tinkling tambourines and clinking anklets of a newly married woman, immersed in jocund joy, heralding a new day, a new beginning, a new hope. Quietly, I share the festive fair and green abundance embracing felicity in its blissful ecstatic ambience.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Scourge of corruption

'Politicisation of administration' (Sept 15) depicts the true aspect of the political atmosphere prevailing in the country. Corruption is the result of unfettered powers. Democratic values take a back seat. Corruption has, in fact, crept into our blood and can be compared to a horizon — the further you go, the farther it goes. Under such circumstances, the workforce has to abide by the pulls and pressures of the masters. No improvement in our system/administration can be given shape unless there is accountability of the performance of all functionaries from top to bottom. India can rise from the overall sagging situation if the government shrugs off its authoritarian approach and conceives constructive policy changes for the betterment of the country and its citizenry.

SARDUL SINGH DHAWAN, CHANDIGARH

Who appointed them?

Refer to '65 ineligible extension lecturers dismissed' (Sept 15); who recruited the ineligible lecturers in violation of the Haryana Government policy and the UGC guidelines? Responsibility should be fixed on those brazen officials who allowed such illegal and irregular appointments, thereby causing a huge loss to the public exchequer. Salary paid to these ineligible lecturers

should be recovered from the delinquent officials. Unfortunately, the State Education Department follows a flip-flop policy. There is no coordination and uniformity between the department and state universities. Both have failed to implement the mandatory provisions of the Haryana Affiliated Colleges (Security of Service Act) 1979 in private-aided colleges to the detriment of teachers. Several non-government recognised and 95% aided colleges are functioning without validly constituted governing bodies. The authorities are not only mute spectators but also party to such irregularities. In 1988, the government decided that teachers of non-government colleges can't be transferred in the absence of any common cadre and joint seniority. However, the government allows arbitrary, malafide transfers in 13 recalcitrant DAV Colleges due to the clout of non-statutory DAV management in Delhi. The apex court has held that society does not acquire a corporate status.

ANIL BHATIA, HISAR

A political stand

Apropos of the Sept 15 editorial "Naomi's masked statement", sportspersons have taken a political stand earlier, too, but it hasn't been easy, as international sports federations discourage it. Elsewhere, Greek player

Stefanos Tsitsipas displayed support for Black Lives Matter in his attire. Earlier, Moeen Ali, who plays cricket for England, had run into trouble for sporting a wristband with 'Free Palestine' message on it. This surge in political consciousness and desire to use sports for politics is welcome and can also bring about a change in the attitude of sports federations.

MS KHOKHAR, BY MAIL

Labour data

The recent statement by the government in Parliament regarding not maintaining any record of the actual number of deaths of migrant labourers during the lockdown is immature and illogical. On the one hand, the government announced a package of Rs 20 lakh crore to meet the losses that occurred during the lockdown and for giving infinite advertisements regarding the financial package, and on the other, it has denied sharing the actual position of the labourers. The labour class, like farmers, is the backbone of the economy, and if this class remains unemployed, the GDP of the nation will never recover. The government must seriously consider the situation as the GDP is at an all-time low. The government must maintain actual data which would help make economic policies and budget.

NAVNEET SETH, DHUARI

Oxygen supply

The Punjab Government's decision to augment oxygen supply chain is a delayed response, as it was known from the beginning of the epidemic that the mainstay of the treatment is oxygen supply to affected patients, whether by mask, nasal twangs, non-invasive positive pressure ventilation, high flow nasal oxygen or by ventilators. At least all district hospitals should have had their own oxygen plants functioning by now to ensure uninterrupted oxygen supply to patients. All efforts were made to project that my district/state is the best in taking care of the pandemic, but in reality, no concrete steps were taken at the ground level to augment healthcare facilities.

SANJEEV JINDAL, SANGRUR

Congress' Waterloo

Refer to 'Congress at crossroads'; owing to the pandemic-driven crisis, the economy has nose-dived, business and industrial production has touched its lowest ebb. Shunting of workforce is further increasing unemployment. Though limping, the Congress has failed to use the situation to refurbish its image. Its house is not in order. A party which is unable to elect its permanent president is doomed to meet its Waterloo.

KARNAIL SINGH, KHARAR

SSR slugfest rooted in Maharashtra politics



NEERJA CHOWDHURY

SENIOR POLITICAL COMMENTATOR

THE soap opera that has unfolded after Sushant Singh Rajput's alleged suicide on June 14 is less about justice for the late Bollywood actor and more about politics. It is also not so much about Bihar as about Maharashtra.

Of course, there is a Bihar angle to the story. The BJP has put up 30,000 posters with the slogan, 'Na bhule hain, na bhulne denge', seeking 'justice for Sushant'.

The party is eyeing the Rajput vote, the caste to which SSR belonged, in the poll-bound state. Identifying Sushant with Bihar, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar cast the net wider, expressing the hope that the CBI, which is probing his death, will deliver justice to Sushant, his family, and to the people of Bihar.

Union Minister from Bihar Ravi Shankar Prasad said that had he lived, Sushant would have been another Shah Rukh Khan. Not to be left behind, RJD's Tejashwi Yadav did his bit to stir the pot in Bihar.

When Sushant's father, a resident of Bihar, filed an FIR in Patna, the Bihar police went to Mumbai. Normally, there is cooperation between the police forces of two states in such cases, but in this instance, it

became a loud Bihar-versus-Maharashtra battle for reasons that were too obvious to miss.

Political parties in Bihar hope that they can turn 'SSR' into a major poll plank in the November elections.

Now, with the case no longer just about suicide or murder, but also about drug consumption, it has taken on a different dimension. Sushant's girlfriend Rhea Chakraborty was arrested for allegedly procuring marijuana for Sushant, who was, according to her, on drugs. Whatever be the truth that finally emerges, will the sympathy for the young Bihar let down by the Mumbai badlands remain undimmed, with the drug angle coming to the fore? And will it yield the political parties the electoral dividends that they are looking for?

Even without SSR, the JD(U)-BJP stood a good chance of winning. Not because there isn't dissatisfaction with the Nitish regime, but because Tejashwi Yadav — or anyone else — has not been able to emerge as the pole around which the Opposition could coalesce.

Other political outfits have also jumped on to the SSR bandwagon. The Trinamool Congress has charged the BJP with vilifying Rhea because she is a Bengali. It has also emphasised the identity of her father, an Armyman. And elections are due in West Bengal next year, with a vicious battle for the state already under way.

The Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh has offered full security to Kangana Ranaut, who belongs to the state. The state BJP has offered Kangana's mother a political role.

Kangana took up cudgels on behalf



ON THE BANDWAGON: The SSR case has become a Bihar-vs-Maharashtra battle.

More than Bihar, or for that matter, the Hindi belt, where the BJP may like to use the services of Kangana Ranaut, if and when she is ready, the post-SSR drama is about Maharashtra. The BJP's main adversary is CM Uddhav Thackeray. Kangana's attack was calculated to weaken his authority in the Shiv Sena.

More than Bihar, West Bengal or Himachal Pradesh, or for that matter, the Hindi belt, where the BJP may like to use the services of Kangana Ranaut, if and when she is ready, the post-SSR drama is about Maharashtra.

It is about the Thackerays, and who will lead the government in Mumbai. The BJP's main adversary today is Uddhav Thackeray — and his son Aaditya — and Kangana's 'tu' attack was calculated to weaken his authority in the party. The Sena under his father 'Tiger' Balasaheb Thackeray used to be feared in the city at one time.

The BJP will have to damage the two Thackerays to breach the Sena, and bring down the government. The latest in the string of Uddhav Thackeray's travails is the court's stay on the Maratha reservations in jobs and education, with the Marathas threatening to go on the warpath.

In 2019, Devendra Fadnavis was confident of a second term, but that is not the way things turned out. A desperate BJP formed the government with Ajit Pawar but it lasted only a few hours. The BJP has been eyeing the state, the second largest in the country, with Mumbai its financial hub. And it is bidding its time.

It is also about who will control the cash-rich BMC, with elections to the local body due in 2022. The BMC confers the Shiv Sena the power it wields in India's financial capital. The Sena just managed to retain the BMC the last time but this time, the BJP will put up a no-holds barred fight for its control.

The demographic profile of Mumbai is undergoing a change, with the non-Marathi-speaking people —

Gujaratis, UP natives, Biharis, South Indians — adding up to roughly 40 per cent of the population, and the BJP hopes to galvanise them. But this time, Uddhav Thackeray may also get the support of the minorities, being in alliance with the Congress and the NCP. Unless, the coalition collapses before that.

Above all, the post-SSR drama is about the control — and character — of Bollywood. For all the problems that beset it, B-Town has been one of the foremost multicultural institutions in the country.

Bollywood always draws eyeballs in India. Add to it the pathos of a suicide by a young and upcoming actor, an 'outsider' supposedly battling the stranglehold of established dynasties, embellish the drama with two glamorous women, Rhea and Kangana, and that too in Covid times when people want to get away from uncertainty and fear, and telecast it by hyperactive anchors and warring channels — and you have a sure shot potboiler-in-the-making. That is hardly surprising.

What has surprised is the complete bankruptcy of ideas in the political class. This, at a time when life-and-death issues agitate a vast mass of people. There is an unprecedented economic crisis at hand, a loss of 20 million jobs, a 24 per cent slump in the GDP, a huge health crisis with no end in sight, and a worrying situation escalating on our borders with China.

And yet, political parties believe they have to latch on to the SSR case to gather votes. It only shows the extent to which the dumbing down of our political institutions has taken place.

Proactive approach can ease congestion in jails

UPNEET LALLI
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE OF CORRECTIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Although imprisonment is a major element of the conventional punishment system, the correctional authorities cannot control the flow into prisons. The use of early release programmes along with support to released persons to facilitate successful reintegration into the community has been found to be effective. It is also time to start a new stage of criminal justice policy that uses prisons parsimoniously.

GLobally, the prison population is increasing and a record 11 million were in jails worldwide. Not only does it have financial costs, it also affects social cohesion of societies. This increase is driven by a more punitive approach to criminal justice. India too reflects similar trends. The total prison population as per the latest statistics released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) was 4,78,600 by the end of 2019, an increase of around one lakh from 2009.

Global women prison population was 700,000, around 5.6% of the prison population. In India, women comprise 4.2% (19,081) of the total prison population. The proportion of convict to undertrial prisoners has, however, been almost the same. There were 1,44,125 convicts and the undertrial prison population stood at 3,30,487, that is 69% of the total prison population. A decade back, undertrials were around 66% of the total prison population.

Covid-19 has brought to attention the hazards of prison overcrowding, and its implications for public health. Prisons in over 124 countries exceed their maximum occupancy rate (Global Prison Trends 2020). Imprisonment rates vary between different regions of the world and between different parts of the same region. Haiti continues to be the most overcrowded with 454% occupancy rate. In India, the occupancy rate is at 118.5%, it was slightly better in 2010 at 115%.

The authorised capacity has increased in India over the years and was 4,03,739 with new prisons, and additional barracks. Last year, there were 1,350 prisons while in 2010, there were 1,393 prisons with fewer capacity of 3,20,450 inmates. New prisons have been constructed in a number of states while the old prisons



NEED TO UNLOCK: Overcrowding of prisons has implications for public health.

have been shut down. Overcrowding in some states continues to remain high. Tihar prisons had an occupancy rate of 174.9% and UP 168% while it was 150% in Maharashtra and MP prisons. These are also the states that have had relatively more Covid-19 infections in prisons. The overcrowded Arthur Road jail in Maharashtra had reported nearly 182 cases of Covid-19 till last month.

Prison population is influenced by penal policies and also fluctuations in non-convicted (remand) prisoner admission, convicted prisoner admission, length of sentence, availability and use of release mechanisms.

All over the world, the trend indicates that it is the remand prison population and not the convicted prisoners that boost the prison population and results in overcrowding. More than 3 million people are detained as undertrials in the world (Global Prison Trends 2020). In most countries, the proportion of the total prison population who are pre-

trial/remain is between 10% and 40% of the prison population. Studies also show that the rate of imprisonment and crime may evolve independent of each other.

Despite some legal changes and judicial interventions, the trend of high proportion of undertrials in India has been continuing over the last 20 years. It is the undertrial population that is the main reason for prison overcrowding. In 2000, undertrials constituted 71.2%, which reduced to 64.7% in 2011 and has now risen again to 69%. This huge proportion of undertrials has implications for the justice system, society and the prison system in particular. Much of the day-to-day management is on their prison admission, production before courts (44,516,79 times in 2019), release and issues of legal aid. Extension of remand period, which is more of a routine exercise is mainly being done through video-conferencing. The number of undertrials released last year was 15,98,218. The movement of inmates to courts for case

trial/remain is between 10% and 40% of the prison population. Studies also show that the rate of imprisonment and crime may evolve independent of each other.

hearings remains largely restricted these days due to the pandemic.

As per *Crime in India*, 50,746,34 persons were arrested under the IPC and special and local laws in 2018. It has been repeatedly pointed out that many of the arrests are unwarranted.

The police often arrest first and investigate later, resulting in the defendants being in detention for prolonged periods. Police may be prompted to take such action by the pressures to 'resolve' pending cases and sometimes to fulfil arrest quotas for certain offences.

The undertrials mark their days inside without a calendar and a clock, and hope they will be released on bail or that the trial will conclude soon. Prison officers find it hard to maintain security, as there is not much of disciplinary measures that can be imposed on undertrials. There are no work programmes for a majority who spend their time talking or watching TV. The initial period is the most stressful for almost all age-groups.

Majority of the inmates are in the productive age-group of 18-30 years. Therefore, its economic implications are extremely felt. In case they have a job, they lose it. The stigma reduces their chances of getting new employment. Idleness, lack of work opportunities often reinforce the maxim that idleness breeds discontent and disruptive behaviour. As the period of detention increases, more the chances of earning a degree in crime.

This pandemic is also an opportune time to reflect and review on the use of pre-trial detention. To contain the pandemic in prisons, the first measure is decongestion. A state like Punjab released almost 11,500 prisoners, with 5,000 undertrials being granted interim bail. Since the new

remand population is also increasing and the numbers would eventually even out, a prison is a costly sanction. Lok adalats inside prison have been found helpful. Speedy justice for undertrials is essential so that the rule of law remains intact.

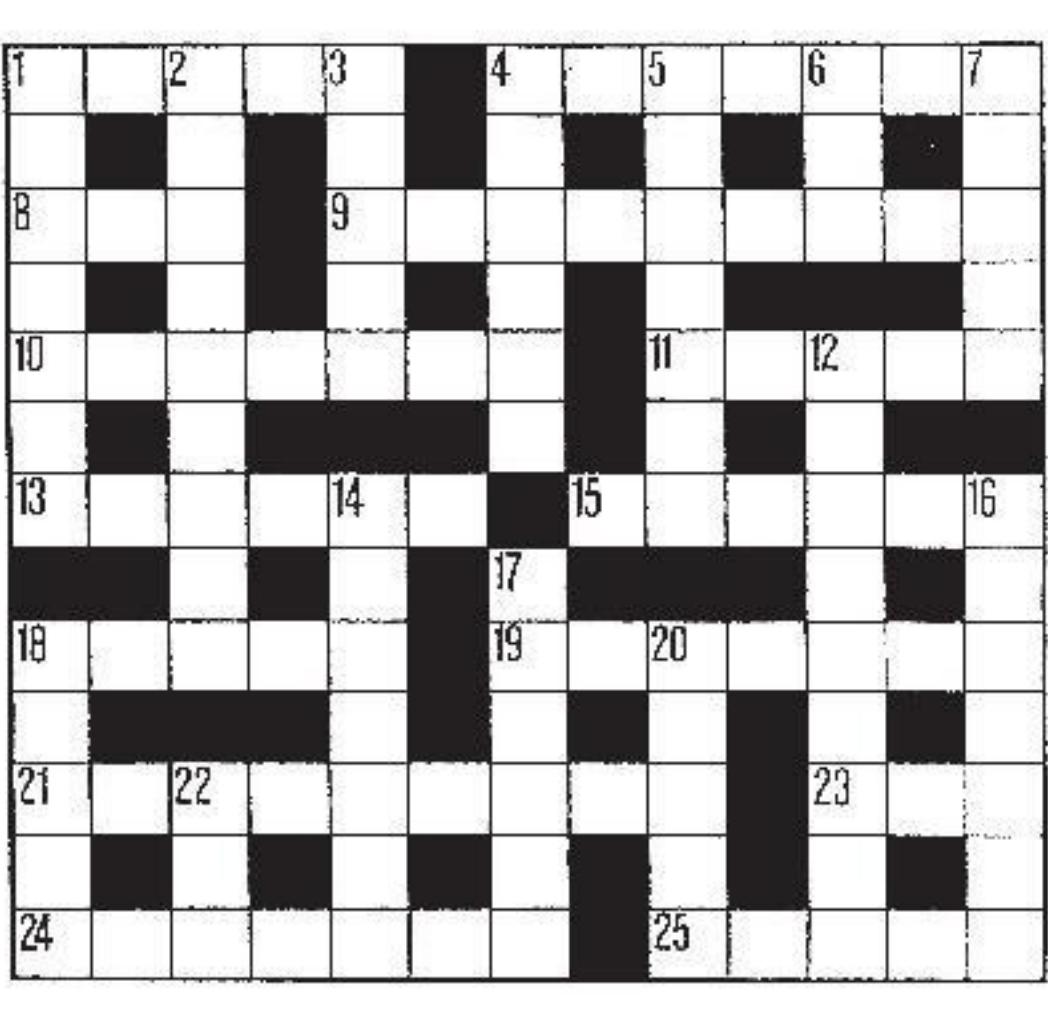
Although imprisonment is a major element of the conventional punishment system, the correctional authorities cannot control the flow into prisons. Now is the time to act to adjust detention to cases that comply with the principles of legality, necessity, proportionality and reasonableness. The use of early release programmes along with support to released persons to facilitate successful reintegration into the community has been found effective for crime prevention. This element is missing in India. More importantly, it is also time to start a new stage of a sound criminal justice policy that uses prisons parsimoniously.

Overcrowding in prisons is a recurring theme that need not be inevitable. Crime prevention, restorative policing, decriminalisation of certain offences and non-custodial measures, all aim to limit the number of people coming into contact with the criminal justice system.

Successful strategies must be mindful of past efforts and outcomes as well as the potential for implementing policy changes. A constant dialogue, common understanding and action involving policy-makers, legislators, judges, police, prosecutors and prison authorities will help develop a better action plan. The right balance between protection of society, reparation of the harm done to victims and dealing with the needs of reintegration of the offenders is required.

Views are personal

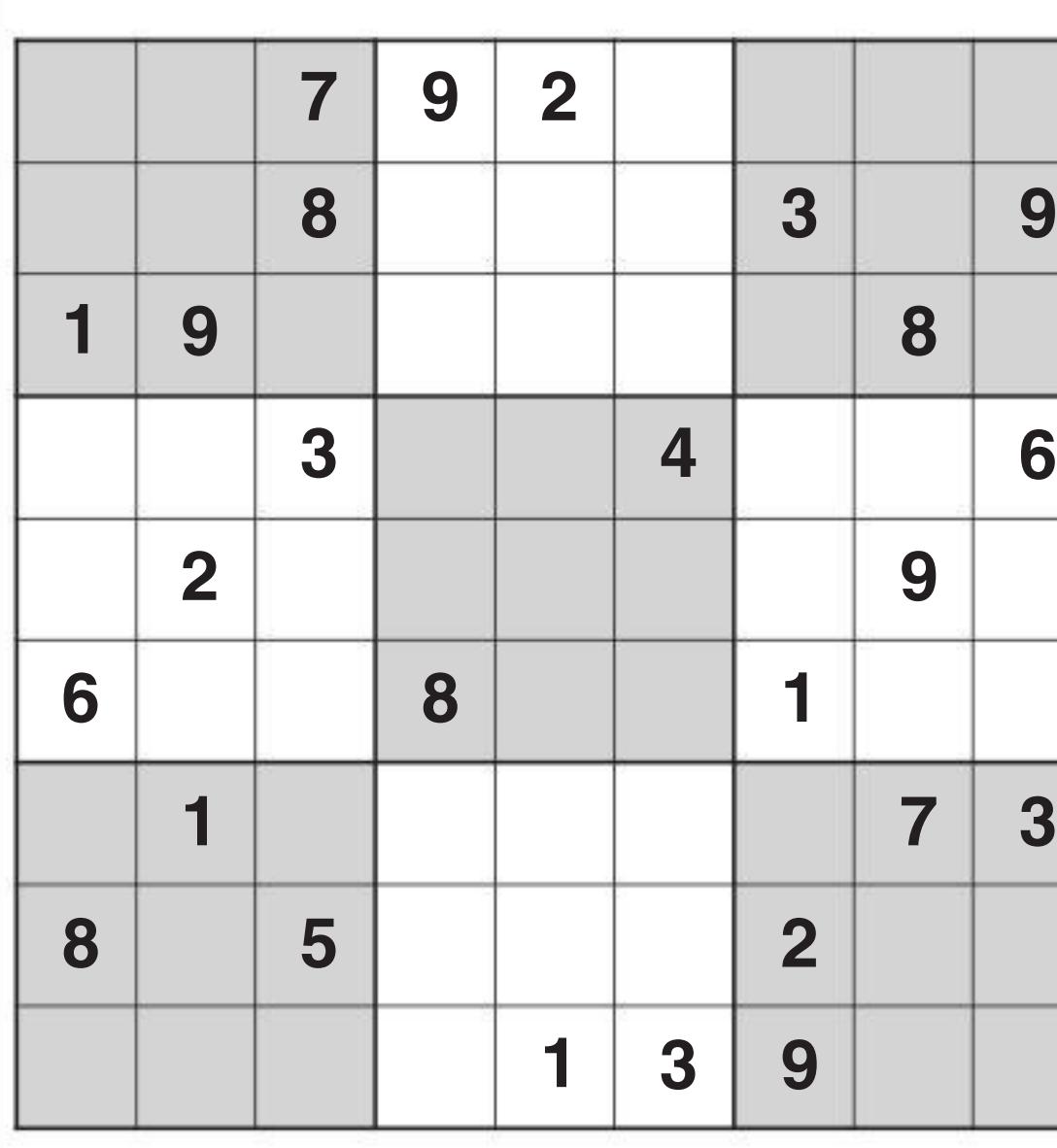
QUICK CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

ACROSS: 1 Wax lyrical, 8 Meant, 9 Bushido, 10 Digress, 11 Upend, 12 Sampan, 14 Reason, 17 Occur, 19 Baggage, 21 Compile, 22 Feign, 23 Chew the fat.
DOWN: 2 Amalgam, 3 Lite, 4 Robust, 5 Costume, 6 Loire, 7 Golden mean, 8 Midas touch, 13 Airline, 15 Stamina, 16 Abject, 18 Comic, 20 Gaffe.

SU DO KU



MEDIUM

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 16, 2020, WEDNESDAY

■ Vikrami Samvat 2077

■ Shaka Samvat 1942

■ Bhadrabudha Shaka 25

■ Ashwin Parvishite 1

■ Hijari 1442

■ Krishna Paksha Tithi 14, up to 7.57 pm

■ Siddhya Yoga up to 7.40 am

■ Sadhyha Yoga up to 3:54 am

■ Magha Nakshatra up to 12.21 pm

■ Gandmool up to 12:21 pm

■ Moon in Leo sign

■ Dharmasala 27 17

■ Manali 25 14

■ Shimla 25 16

■ Srinagar 30 14

■ Jammu 35 25

■ Kargil 21 10

■ Leh 36 09

■ Dehradun 32 24

■ Mussoorie 25 16

FORECAST

SUNSET: WEDNESDAY 18:27 HRS

SUNRISE: THURSDAY 06:08 HRS

Sunny Partly Cloudy Cloudy Rainy Foggy

CITY MAX MIN

Chandigarh 32 26

New Delhi 38 25

Amritsar 36 26

Bathinda 37 28

Jalandhar 36 26

Ludhiana 36 26

Bhiwani 37 27

Hisar 37 27

Sirsia 37 27

Dharamsala 27 17

Manali 25 14

Shimla 25 16

Srinagar 30 14

Jammu 35 25

Kargil 21 10

Leh 36 09

Dehradun 32 24

Mussoorie 25 16

TEMPERATURE IN °C

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

Non-Himachalis allowed to purchase land in 674 cases



SHIMLA, SEPTEMBER 15

The government has given relaxation in the purchase of land by non-Himachalis under Section 118 of the Tenancy and Land Reform Act in 674 cases in the last two years.

Urban Development Minis-

ter Suresh Bhardwaj stated this while replying to a question asked by Ramesh Dhawala during the Question Hour in the Vidhan Sabha today. "There are 87 cases pending with the government while in 122 cases,

papers have been sent back to the Deputy Commissioners concerned for the completion of some formalities," he said.

Bhardwaj said that between January 1, 2018, and August 31, 2019, the permission was granted for the

residential purpose in 388 cases and for various other purposes in 417 cases. He added that the previous Congress government in its five-year rule had granted permission under Section 118 in 1,387 cases. —TNS

MUNICIPAL CORPORATION CHANDIGARH			
E-TENDER NOTICE			
Sr. No.	Name of Work	Bid Submission Schedule (Online)	Opening Technical Bid (Online)
1.	Supply of PAC 2010 (Poly Aluminium Chloride) including carriage loading, unloading and stacking in the store at Water Works, Sector-39 and Sector-12, Chandigarh for period of 12 months (Ch to: Revenue Head i.e. 2215 - Non Plan) - RE-INVITE Estimated Cost: Rs. 54,37,500/- EMD: Rs.1,08,750/- Time Limit: 12 Months	15.09.2020 To 21.09.2020 upto 10.00 A.M.	21.09.2020 11.00 A.M.
2.	Providing liquid chlorine gas cylinders each containing 900 Kg at Water Treatment Plant Sector 39, Chandigarh and other Water Works for period of 12 months (Ch to: Revenue Head i.e. 2215 - Non Plan Head) - RE-INVITE Estimated Cost: Rs. 29,88,000/- EMD: Rs. 59,766/- Time Limit: 12 Months	15.09.2020 To 21.09.2020 upto 10.00 A.M.	21.09.2020 11.00 A.M.

All terms & conditions of the DNTs are uploaded on the website <https://etenders.chd.nic.in/nicgep/app>

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
M.C.P.H. Divn. No. 1, Chandigarh

HARYANA SHEHRI VIKAS PRADHIKARAN, GURUGRAM

Visit us at www.hsvphy.org.in

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR OUSTEES

All the applicants/land owners are hereby informed that the after preliminary scrutiny of documents of their claim for allotment of oustees plot in lieu of their acquired land. The draw of lots in this regards has fixed by Estate Offices (details given below) who had already submitted their application online in pursuance of earlier advertisements published in this matter in leading newspapers i.e. The Tribune (4.09.2018), Dainik Jagran (05.09.2018), Times of India (06.09.2018), Amar Ujala (07.09.2018).

Sr. No.	Urban Estate	Date	Time	Venue
1.	Rewari Dharuhera & Narnaul	21st September 2020	11:00 A.M. onwards	Estate Office, Rewari
2.	Estate Office-I, Gurugram	22nd September 2020	11:00 A.M. onwards	Estate Office-I, Gurugram
3.	Estate Office-II, Gurugram	24th September 2020	11:00 A.M. onwards	Estate Office-II, Gurugram

All the eligible applicants/land owners are hereby invited to attend the draw of lots on fixed date time and venue as mentioned above. The applicants who are found successful in draw of lots, their eligibility shall be checked finally before issuance of allotment letter. The list of applicants prima facie shortlisted for draw would be displayed on the notice board of respective Estate Office.

Dated: 15.09.2020 Jitender Yadav, IAS, Administrator, HSVP, Gurugram.

For further details, contact:-

Sh. Bharat Bhushan Gogia, HCS
Estate Officer-I,
HSV, Gurugram.
0124-2321253
eoggihuda@gmail.com

Sh. Vivek Kalia, HCS
Estate Officer-II,
HSV, Gurugram.
0124-2371346
eoggihuda2@gmail.com

Sh. Vijay Rathi
Estate Officer,
HSV, Rewari.
01274-225284
eorewarihuda1@gmail.com

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE

PRDH/82796

PRDH/82793

PRDH/82799

BWF postpones Thomas and Uber Cup Finals

Event postponed to next year after many teams pull out



Saina Nehwal had also raised concerns about the timing of the event. FILE PHOTO

Setback for sport: Vimal Kumar

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15 The Badminton World Federation (BWF) today postponed the Thomas and Uber Cup Finals in Denmark to next year following withdrawals by many teams due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

India had announced both the men's and women's squads for the prestigious event which was scheduled to be held in Aarhus from October 3 to 11.

However, after Indonesia and South Korea joined Thailand, Australia, Chinese Taipei and Algeria in pulling out due to Covid-19, the sport's governing body held a virtual emergency council meeting on Sunday.

"The Badminton World Federation, in full consultation and agreement with local host Badminton Denmark, has made the tough decision to postpone the Thomas & Uber Cup Finals 2020 in Aarhus, Denmark," BWF said in a statement. "The decision comes follow-

ing the withdrawal of a number of participating teams," it added.

BWF had tried to rope in Singapore and Hong Kong as replacements but they declined the invitation. There were also reports that Japan was contemplating withdrawing from the event, while China too was awaiting government's approval. September 18 was the last date for confirmation.

Saina Nehwal had also raised concerns about the timing of the event, asking whether it would be safe to go ahead with it in the middle of the pandemic.

Saina and PV Sindhu were supposed to lead the 10-member women's team in Uber Cup, while Kidambi Srikanth would have spearheaded the men's campaign in Thomas Cup.

However, the team's

preparations were not progressing smoothly with a proposed camp cancelled a few days ago due to the players' refusal to accept the quarantine norms set by the Sports Authority of India.

The Thomas and Uber Cup Finals were supposed to mark the resumption of international badminton after it came to a halt in March because of the dreaded virus.

Indians 'confused' about Denmark Open participation

In another decision, BWF has decided to proceed with the Denmark Open, to be held on October 13-18 in Odense.

The decision to go ahead with the BWF World Tour event has left a few Indian players, including Sindhu, Saina and Parupalli Kashyap, confused. "We are still confused what to do under the circumstances,"

Kashyap said. "Saina has got a visa for Denmark and I have applied for it but we are still undecided about participation. There are many questions like what happens if I test positive? Will I be sent back home or will I have to stay there for 14 days? Who takes care of the expenses?"

The Badminton Association of India today wrote to the players who have sent their entries for the Denmark Open, stating that they would be "travelling or participating at their own responsibility due to the current pandemic" and "have to send their consent by September 17".

The participation of Sindhu also looks doubtful. "We have sent our entry but we have to wait and see because going for one event, taking tests and following quarantine rules... we need to discuss with the coach, look at last year's result (for ranking points) and then take a decision," Sindhu's father Ramana said. — PTI



Tour de France director Christian Prudhomme takes pictures of the riders at the start of the 16th stage. Prudhomme is back on the race after testing negative for coronavirus. AP/PTI

Kaenna wins 16th stage, Roglic retains lead

VILLARD DE LANS (FRANCE) Lennard Kaenna claimed his first Tour de France victory when he outwitted Giro d'Italia champion Richard Carapaz to win the 16th stage, a 164-km ride. Primoz Roglic retained the overall leader's yellow jersey. REUTERS

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar State Institute of Medical Sciences, Sahibzada Ajit Singh Nagar (Mohali), Punjab

PUBLIC NOTICE

No./AIMS/Mohali/52/759

Dated: 15.09.2020

Applications on the prescribed proforma are invited for the faculty (Retired Professor for posts of Professors (04 post) as re-employed, Associate Professor (16 post) and Assistant Professor (23 post) on deputation with Amended Selection Criteria. The details of posts, Application form etc. are available on the website www.punjabmedicaleducation.org /Mohali.

Last date of applications is 24.09.2020 till 12:00 Midnight.

DPR/Pb/77179

Sd/- Director-Principal.

NORTHERN RAILWAY

TENDER NOTICE

Invitation of tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)

1. Name of work & its location	Metalizing & Painting of major bridges over UMB Division for the year 2020-2021 & 2021-2022 in the jurisdiction of AXEN/BL/UMB.
2. Approx. Cost of work	Rs. 15859560.03
3. Earnest Money	Rs. 229300.00
4. Completion period of the work	(18) Eighteen Months
5. Cost of Tender form	Rs. 5000/- Note:- Cost of EMD & Tender Form should be in the form of net banking or payment gateway only. FDR will not be accepted as cost of tender invited on IREPS as per Railway Boards letter no 2015/CE-I/C/5/1 dated 31.08.2016
6. Date & Time for submission of tender & opening of tender	Upto 15.00 hrs. on 05.10.2020 Opening of Tender after 15.00 hrs. on same day.
7. Website particulars where complete details of Tender can be seen & downloaded.	Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in

Tender Notice No: 32-W/METL-PAINT-UMB-20-22 Date : 14.09.2020 2001/2020 SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT-CUM-MEMBER SECRETARY RKS DR. RAJINDRA PRASAD GOVT. MEDICAL COLLEGE HOSPITAL KANGRA AT TANDA.

No. HFW-H(DRPGMC)Purchase/MS/RKS/2020-

Dated:

Notice Inviting E-Tender

E-tenders are hereby invited in two bid system for providing hospital furniture article for use in Dr. RPGMC Kangra at Tanda. The detail of tender documents can be viewed and downloaded from website: <https://www.hptenders.gov.in> as per schedule given below:

Description	Date of publication of tender	Tender cost (in Rupees)	EMD (in Rupees)	Performance Security (in Rupees)	Last date of submission of tender	Date and Time of Opening of Technical bid
Tender for hospital Furniture articles	18.9.2020	Rs. 2500/-	Rs. 10000/-	Rs. 2,50,000/-	9.10.2020 at 11:30 a.m.	9.10.2020 at 3:00 p.m.

Sd/- Medical Superintendent-cum-Member Secretary RKS, Dr. RPGMC Kangra at Tanda (HP)

DI-9637

POSTGRADUATE INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH, CHANDIGARH

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER

Online percentage rate bids are invited on behalf of the Director, PGIMER, Chandigarh from the Original equipment manufacturer/Authorized dealer/Specialized agencies dealing in similar type of work on two bid system (Eligibility-cum-Technical Bid and Financial Bid).

NIT No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	Earnest Money	Period of Completion	Last date and Time of submission of bid	Date and time of submission of original EMD as uploaded	Date and time of opening of Eligibility-cum-Technical Bid
PGI/Engg/RAC/2020/75	Three Shift OPMC of Central AC Plant installed at Advance Trauma Center, PGIMER, Chandigarh	Rs. 44.77 Lac	Rs. 89,540/-	Twelve Months	23.9.2020 Up to 15.00 hrs	23.9.2020 Up to 15.30 hrs	24.9.2020 at 15.30 hrs
PGI/Engg/RAC/2020/76	SITC of two nos. Cabinets having six Body chambers in each cabinet, Mortuary Complex, PGIMER, Chandigarh	Rs. 19.33 Lac	Rs. 38,660/-	One Month	24.9.2020 Up to 15.00 hrs	24.9.2020 Up to 15.30 hrs	25.9.2020 at 15.30 hrs

The tender forms and other details can be obtained from the website: www.eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app and official website of the PGIMER www.pgimer.edu.in. Press notice is also available on www.eprocure.gov.in. Contractors are requested to get their firm registered on the website www.eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app for participating in e-tendering process. Helpdesk for registering 0120-4200462 and 0120-6277877

Website: <http://PGIMER.nic.in>, <http://eprocure.gov.in>

DI-9607

HOSPITAL ENGINEER (RAC)

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Principal Chief Materials Manager

Headquarters Office, Baroda House, New Delhi-110001

Mail ID : salenr365@gmail.com

No. 117-S-Sales-Auction Programme-2020-21

Dated. 11.09.2020

e-AUCTION NOTICE NO. OCTOBER/20

E-Auction will be conducted for disposal of Ferrous Scrap, Non Ferrous Scrap, Other Misc Scrap, Condemned Loco, Coaches and Wagons, Including Scrap Rail and other scrap P Way material. Auction programme is as under :-

e-AUCTION Schedule for October, 2020

S. Depot/Divisions N. conducting auction	1 st round	2 nd round	3 rd round	4 th round	5 th round
1 DY.CMM/AMV/LKO 0522-2451257	06.10.2020	13.10.2020	20.10.2020	27.10.2020	--
2 DY.CMM/SSB 011-27015387	07.10.2020	14.10.2020	21.10.2020	28.10.2020	--
3 DY.CMM/JUDW 01732-252388	05.10.2020	12.10.2020	19.10.2020	26.10.2020	--
4 Sr.DMM/LKO 0522-2234756	05.10.2020	12.10.2020	19.10.2020	26.10.2020	--
5 Sr.DMM/FZR 01632-244154	07.10.2020	14.10.2020	21.10.2020	28.10.2020	--
6 Sr.DMM/UMB 0171-2611203	01.10.2020	08.10.2020	15.10.2020	22.10.2020	29.10.2020
7 Sr.DMM/MB 0591-2413141	01.10.2020	08.10.2020	15.10.2020	22.10.2020	29.10.2020
8 Sr.DMM/DLI 011-23365311	06.10.2020	13.10.2020	20.10.2020	27.10.2020	--

1. E-Auction will be held from 12:00 AM on wards as per above programme

2. The details of item to be sold in auction will be available in catalogue at www.ireps.gov.in.

3. The intending purchasers may inspect the scrap material before the auction during working hours at nominated locations. In this regard details are available at ireps

4. To register for e-auction, purchasers need to visit website 'www.ireps.gov.in'. In case any difficulty in registering purchasers may contact Dy. CMM/S&P

(Perhlaid Singh)

Dy. CMM/S&P

(Perhlaid Singh)

Dy. CMM/S&P

(Perhlaid Singh)

(Perhlaid Singh

GST fund partly used to pay pending dues, says Anurag

Some states against borrowing options to meet shortfall: MoS



Tribune News Service

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15
The Centre today revealed that the GST compensation cess it had collected in the current financial year has already been partly utilised.

Stating that the GST compensation cess collected in the current financial year is insufficient to release to states the admissible GST compensation for April to July period, Minister of State for Finance Anurag Thakur said in a written reply that some of this

'CESS COLLECTED NOT SUFFICIENT'

GST compensation cess collected in FY 2020-21 is not sufficient to release admissible GST compensation for April-July, 2020. The GST compensation cess collected till July 2020 has been partly utilised for the purpose of compensation released to states till March 2020

Anurag Thakur, MINISTER OF STATE FOR FINANCE

money had been "partly utilised" to compensate states for the previous financial year.

The Centre stuck to its stand that states will have to choose one of the two options for receiving GST compensation and revealed the entire opinion of the Attorney General of India in this regard. Thakur said this while replying to a spate of questions,



including from Elamaram Kareem (CPM), V Vijayasai Reddy and Kethi Reddy Suresh Reddy (both TRS). In written replies, Thakur maintained that the future course of action to meet the GST compensation shortfall was discussed by the GST Council on August 27 where the states were given two options to meet their GST

compensation shortfall for the current financial year from market borrowing.

Thakur said five questions were put to the AG. On the question that in case the balance in the GST compensation fund is not adequate to meet the compensation, the AG said states are entitled to receive the full amount of compensation during the "transition period".

But in case the balance in the fund is insufficient, the AG said there is no express provision in the Compensation Act for the Centre to bear the liability of making good the shortfall. While the AG agreed that the GST Council can recommend extension of period for compensation, in reply to two questions he made it clear that the Centre will have the last word on any borrowing by the states.

In RS, Jaya Bachchan slams those vilifying Bollywood



'IT IS A SHAME'
Entertainment industry people are being flogged by social media. People who made their name in the industry have called it a gutter. It's a shame

Jaya Bachchan, RAJYA SABHA MP

Kangana seeks ₹2 cr damages from BMC

ing state and unemployment at the worst level.

"Just because there are some people, you can't tarnish the image of the entire industry. I am really embar-

Nonexus between film industry, drug mafia, says govt

Tribune News Service

RESSED AND ASHAMED THAT yesterday one of our members in the Lok Sabha, who is from the film industry, spoke against it. It is a shame," she said, adding that there were some people in the film industry who bite the hand that feeds them.

Kangana issue raised in LS
New Delhi: Mandi MP Ram Swaroop Sharma on Tuesday raised the issue of treatment meted out to Bollywood actor Kangana Ranaut by the Shiv Sena-led Maharashtra Government.

"The Shiv Sena is no longer a Sena of Shivaji Maharaj but Congress," Sharma alleged, pointing to the demolition of her Mumbai office last week. Sharma was speaking in the Lok Sabha on the day RS MP Jaya Bachchan took on BJP MP Ravi Kishan for his statement in the lower house over drug abuse in Bollywood on Monday.

Asked by K Sudhakaran of the Congress whether the government has conducted a detailed inquiry into the nexus between people in the film industry and those involved in drug trade during the Covid-19 lockdown, a written reply by the Union Home Minister said a case in this regard has been registered by the NCB's Mumbai zonal unit.

Till date, 10 persons have been arrested in this case and drugs such as ganja, hashish, tetrahydrocannabinol and lysergic acid diethylamide have been seized in the operation.

Tribune News Service

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

The first Covid-era special

mentions in the Rajya Sabha

on Tuesday witnessed an emotional Jaya Bachchan seeking government support in face of Bollywood being flogged in the social media.

"People in the entertainment industry are being flogged by the social media. People who made their names in the industry have called it a gutter. I completely disagree. I hope that the government tells such people not to use this kind of language," she said.

Bachchan also gave a zero hour notice in the Rajya Sabha over "the alleged conspiracy to defame the film industry".

She pointed out that the entertainment industry provides direct employment to 5 lakh persons and indirect employment to 50 lakh. But a campaign on social media has started when the financial situation is in a depress-

RS nod to statutory tag for aviation regulators

RAVI S SINGH

Tribune News Service

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

The Rajya Sabha on Tuesday passed the Aircraft (Amendment) Bill, 2020, clearing the decks for its enactment into a law by Parliament. The Bill sought to ensure higher safety and security of passengers, aircrafts, airports and others in line with international standards. The Lok Sabha had passed it during the Budget Session.

The bill sought to transpose the three regulatory bodies — Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) and the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) — under the Ministry of Civil Aviation into statutory bodies.

Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri introduced the Bill in the House yesterday which was considered today. The minister said the amendments would fulfill the requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), which had raised questions of safety and security in its audit. The reflection of the body had necessitated amendment to the Aircraft Act, 1934. The Act regulates the man-

ufacture, possession, use, operation, sale, import and export of civil aircraft and licensing of aerodromes.

Taking part in the discussion, Puri rebutted charge of Opposition parties that the government was promoting crony capitalism through the route of privatisation of airports.

Awarding management of airports to private parties was started by the UPA regime in 2006 in the form of Mumbai and Delhi airports.

He supported participation of private parties to manage airports saying it helped to raise revenues which are ploughed back in development of other airports. With regard privatisation of Air India, the national carrier, Puri said that with it being in debt of Rs 60,000 crore, the choice was between running it or halting it for good.

Hand in hand



INS Talwar on mission-based deployment in northern Arabian Sea undertook refuelling with US Navy fleet tanker USNS Yukon under Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement. PTI

China can't alter...

FROM PAGE 1

come from China, he said, listing recent friction points in eastern Ladakh, including Gogra, Kongka La and north and south banks of Pangong Tso.

China has currently mobilised a large number of troops and armaments along the LAC as well as in depth areas. India too had made appropriate counter deployments, he pointed out.

Referring to his meeting with Chinese counterpart General Wei Fenghe in Moscow on September 4 and the subsequent meeting between the foreign ministers of the two countries, Rajnath Singh said India had stuck to three key principles: both sides should strictly respect and observe the LAC; neither

PM MISLED NATION: CONG

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday accused PM Narendra Modi of misleading the nation on Chinese aggression. "...when will you recover Indian Territory from China?" Rahul tweeted. In the Lok Sabha, the Congress MPs staged a walkout, accusing the government of not allowing them to seek clarifications. TNS

side should attempt to alter status quo and all agreements must be respected.

About the recent incidents along the southern bank of Pangong Tso, a 135-km glacial melt lake, the Minister said the Chinese side engaged in provocative military manoeuvres on the night of August 29 and 30 in an attempt to change the status quo. — PTI

Take away our salary, but restore MPLAD funds, say Oppn MPs

Tribune News Service

'VISTA PROJECT MUST BE CANCELLED'

We will be happy to give up our entire salary, but the ₹20,000-crore Central Vista project must also be cancelled. I would rather prefer a hospital with all facilities

Supriya Sule, NCP MP

No data of dead healthcare staff: Harsh Vardhan

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

After failing to come up with data on the number of migrants killed while making their way back to villages, the government said it did not have the complete data on the number of healthcare staff, including doctors, nurses, support staff and ASHA workers, who have been affected by and died of Covid. However, the government said kin of 155 healthcare staff, including 64 doctors, had sought relief under the PM Garib Kalyan Insurance Package, which provides relief in case of death of healthcare providers.

Kin of 32 nurses, 14 ASHA workers and 45 others, presumably drivers and cremation staff, also applied for insurance. UP accounts for maximum deaths of doctors (eight), Gujarat in case of nurses (six deaths), Telangana for ASHA workers (three) and Maharashtra accounted for half of the 45 dead in others' category. "Health is a state subject. Such data is not kept at the Central level. However, it is maintained at the national level under the PM scheme," Health Minister Harsh Vardhan told Binoy Viswan (CPI) in a reply. — TNS

questioning "the logic behind increasing petrol and diesel prices" while people in the country were reeling under the impact of Covid-hit economy, advised the Modi government to reduce its expenditure. "We are all together on this (the Bill), but why are you not reducing your expenditure?" she said.

Alleging "lack of transparency" in the PM CARES fund, she said: "What are you hiding? We will be happy to give up our entire salary, but the ₹20,000-crore Central Vista project must also be cancelled." She added that she would rather prefer a hospital with all facilities like ventilators etc.

In April, the Cabinet gave its nod to the government's decision to suspend MPLAD scheme for two

years, along with a 30 per cent cut in salaries of sitting MPs to mobilise money to fight against Covid-19.

The suspension of the MPLAD scheme, especially during a pandemic, has invited much criticism from several MPs, who asked the government to "give back people their rightful money".

Congress' Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury questioned if any BJP MP can say he or she does not need MPLAD funds. "No one from ruling side said nothing about MPLAD. We should pass a unanimous decision for restoring the funds," Chowdhury said.

AAP MP Bhagwant Mann also said the government should take away the salary, but give them the public funds money with "guidelines on expenditure".

Scattered seating, somnolent debate

SANDEEP DIKSHIT

Tribune News Service

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15
The government today told the Lok Sabha that the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) has received no actionable inputs that suggest a nexus between people in the film industry and drug traffickers.

Asked by K Sudhakaran of the Congress whether the government has conducted a detailed inquiry into the nexus between people in the film industry and those involved in drug trade during the Covid-19 lockdown, a written reply by the Union Home Minister said a case in this regard has been registered by the NCB's Mumbai zonal unit.

Till date, 10 persons have been arrested in this case and drugs such as ganja, hashish, tetrahydrocannabinol and lysergic acid diethylamide have been seized in the operation.



Parliamentarians attend the monsoon session amid the pandemic in New Delhi on Tuesday. PTI

an air of a somnolent debate in the middle of a lengthy session

about by the pandemic.

Some MPs utilised the opportunity to saunter over to the Lok Sabha chamber to have a feel of the place as during normal sessions, they

political scores have to be settled.

Special Mentions saw Naidu keeping a strict vigil while members' names were called out. He repeatedly noted the changes brought

Chairman Harivansh, firmly masked, stood at a more-than-usual distance waiting for Naidu to vacate the Chair.

As the transition was taking place, a marshal moved in swiftly to spray sanitiser on the vacant chair. But MPs were unhappy. "Many elements of a democratic system are missing," said one.

NIA arrests key ISI aide in Vizag espionage case

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15

The National Investigation Agency today said it has arrested key accused Giteli Imran in connection with its probe into the Vishakhapatnam Naval Ship espionage case, who, it alleged, was working for Pakistan's external intelligence agency ISI.

Officials said Imran (37) of Gujarat's Godhra was arrested on Monday in connection with the case registered

under the IPC, Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and the Official Secrets Act.

A spokesperson alleged that

Imran was found to be involved in "snooping activities" for espionage purposes and serve his masters in Pakistan's ISI. "The case relates to an international espionage racket in which Pakistan-based spies recruited agents in India for collecting sensitive and classified information regarding locations of Indian naval ships and submarines and other defence establishments," he added.

Probe revealed that few Navy personnel allegedly came in contact with Pakistani agents through social media platforms. The official said they shared classified information for which money was deposited into their bank accounts through ISI's Indian associates. — TNS

the US assessment of IAN and shared the US perspective on the Afghan peace process.

The two sides discussed future steps and possible cooperation between India and the US in furthering the Afghan peace process.

They also deliberated upon how to promote regional and international cooperation with regard to Afghanistan. Today's discussions are a reflection of the India-US strategic partnership which provides for close consultations between the two countries on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest, said the sources.

During the four-day talks, the two sides are expected to discuss the issues relating to crimes on the borders and coordination between the two border guarding forces, the BSF said in an official statement.

US' Afghan envoy meets EAM, Doval

Tribune News Service

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15
The US Special Representative on Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad visited India today and called on External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in the presence of NSA Ajit Doval and Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla, said sources.

Khalilzad had visited India on a similar mission on May 7. This was his fifth visit to India since January 2019.

Khalilzad appreciated India's participation in the Intra-Afghan Negotiations (IAN) held in Doha on September 12. He briefed about

India, B'desh DGs begin talks today

Tribune News Service

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 15
The 50th Director General (DG)-level border co-ordination talks between the Border Security Force (BSF) and the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) will begin in Dhaka on Wednesday. While the Indian delegation will be led by BSF DG Rakesh Asthana, the Bangladesh side will be headed by BGB DG Md Shafeenul Islam.

During the four-day talks, the two sides are expected to discuss the issues relating to crimes on the borders and coordination between the two border guarding forces, the BSF said in an official statement.