



PEOPLE'S PARLIAMENT, ALWAYS IN SESSION



GOVERNOR'S
JIBE



JOHNSON UNDER
PRESSURE FOR
FULL LOCKDOWN

P6

P10



BARRETT BATS
AWAY DEMS'
TOUGH QUESTIONS

P10



NOW, NEYMAR
IS SECOND
ONLY TO PELE

P12

WEATHER

Partly cloudy sky. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 34 and 21 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: NIL

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 93% Min: 48%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 34.4°C (+1) Min: 23.7°C (+4)

SUN RISES 06:22 hrs MOON RISES 05:32 hrs

SUN SETS 17:52 hrs MOON SETS 17:11 hrs

THUMBNAILS



Volunteers of Sulabh's School Sanitation club with the help of Delhi Traffic Police take part in a 'Handwashing' campaign to mark Global Handwashing Day which is being observed on October 15, in the capital on Wednesday. SNS

Coal block scam: The CBI Wednesday urged a Delhi court to award life imprisonment to former Union minister Dilip Ray who was convicted in a coal scam case pertaining to irregularities in the allocation of a Jharkhand coal block in 1999. Special Judge Bharat Parashar reserved the order for October 26. Besides Ray, the CBI also sought life imprisonment for other convicts in the case, including two senior officials of the Ministry of Coal at that time.

Mulayam positive for Covid: Samajwadi Party patriarch Mulayam Singh Yadav has tested positive for the novel coronavirus, the party said on Wednesday. The 80-year-old leader is admitted to the Medanta Hospital in Gurgaon. "Samajwadi Party founder Mulayam Singh Yadav has tested positive for COVID-19 and is being monitored by doctors. As of now, there are no Covid symptoms in him," it tweeted. "The health of netaji (Mulayam Singh Yadav) is stable," the Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav tweeted.

63K Covid-19 cases, 730 deaths in a day

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 14 OCTOBER

With the addition of 63,509 fresh Covid-19 cases, India's count of Coronavirus infections reached 72,39,390 on Wednesday, according to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW).

With as many as 730 people succumbing to the disease in the last 24 hours, the toll due to the disease is at 1,10,586 in the country. This total Covid-19 count includes 8,26,876 active cases, and 63,01,928 cured cases. The daily rise in Covid-19 cases has generally been on the decline over the past week; just around 56 thousand cases were reported yesterday.

ICMR DG Balram Bhargava, meanwhile, informed that so far there has been three cases of re-infection of Covid-19 identified.

According to the data from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), India conducted 11,45,015 sample tests

fied in India - two in Mumbai and one in Ahmedabad. The current recovery rate stands at 87.05 per cent and the fatality rate is 1.53 per cent, the data from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare said.

Three states account for the maximum case-load in the country - besides Maharashtra which continues

to be the worst-hit with a total of 15,43,837 cases including 40,701 deaths; it is Karnataka and Kerala. In fact, Kerala, which till two weeks back, did not feature in the top list, is now in the third spot.

It was after nearly two months that the daily caseload had dropped below 60,000 on Tuesday. India had recorded a spike of 97,894 cases on September 17.

According to the data from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), India conducted 11,45,015 sample tests in a single day on Tuesday, taking the total samples tested so far to 9,00,90,122.

Delhi adds 44 more Covid fatalities, 3,324 new cases: Delhi today recorded 3,324 positive cases of Covid-19, which pushed the cumulative number of such patients in the national capital to 3,17,548, according to the health bulletin issued by the Delhi government. The tests conducted to detect these fresh coronavirus infections in the city were 56,950, with the positivity rate being 5.84 percent, the bulletin said. The Covid patients who recovered and got discharged from various city hospitals over the last 24 hours numbered 2,867, which raised the cumulative figure of such recovered patients in Delhi to 2,89,747. The city recorded 44 Covid-related deaths.



Freed Mehbooba to attend J&K Opp meeting

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, 14 OCTOBER

Just-freed former chief minister and PDP chief, Mehbooba Mufti, on Wednesday accepted National Conference chief Farooq Abdullah's invitation to participate in a meeting of all opposition parties in Srinagar to firm up a joint strategy to struggle for restoration of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir that was abrogated by the Modi government on 5 August last year.

Almost all opposition leaders who a day before their arrest on 5 August 2019 signed the Gupkar Declaration pledging to collectively fight for restoration of the Article 370 will be meeting on Thursday afternoon at the residence of Farooq Abdullah to chalk out



a strategy to move ahead. Farooq Abdullah, accompanied by his son and former CM Omar Abdullah, called on Mehbooba at her residence this afternoon. Along with a photo of the three leaders, Omar tweeted; "My father & I called on Mehbooba Mufti Sahiba this afternoon to enquire about her well-being

after her release from detention. She has kindly accepted Farooq Sb's invitation to join a meeting of the Gupkar Declaration signatories tomorrow afternoon".

Mehbooba replied: "It was nice of you & Farooq Sahab to come home. It gave me courage to listen to him. I'm sure together we all can change things for the better".

Farooq and Omar, who have been vocal in demanding Mehbooba's release, met her a few hours after she was freed on Tuesday night from her 14-month-long detention.

Soon after her release, Mehbooba in a scathing attack on the Modi government, said no one of us can forget the "insult and humiliation" we faced on 5 August when the Article 370 was repealed "illegally and undemocratically". "Abrogation of Article 370 was a black Day", she said.

Criticising the Centre for abrogating the special status of Jammu and Kashmir and splitting the state into two Union Territories, Mehbooba, in an audio message posted on Twitter, said: "We need to take back what the Delhi Dur-

Punjab govt convenes Assembly session on 19 Oct to negate Centre's farm laws



The representatives of farmers organisations from Punjab tearing up copies of farm laws after walking out of a meeting at Krishi Bhavan in the Capital on Wednesday.

SNS & PTI
CHANDIGARH/NEW DELHI,
14 OCTOBER

The Punjab government today decided to convene a special session of the Punjab Assembly on 19 October to "bring in legislation to counter the dangerous anti-farmer farm laws of the Central government".

A decision in this regard was taken at a meeting of the Punjab Cabinet, chaired by chief minister Captain Amarinder Singh, through video conferencing.

Captain Amarinder had earlier announced that his government will fight the "anti-federal and vicious farm laws" tooth and nail through legislative, legal and other routes. He had said some days ago that he would call a special session of the Assembly to bring in necessary amendments to the state laws to negate the "dangerous impact of the central legislations, which are designed to ruin the farmers as well as the state's agriculture and economy".

The previous session of the

15th Punjab Assembly concluded on 28 August in which a resolution was passed by a majority to reject the contentious farm legislations including the Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation), Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services, and Essential Commodities (Amendment) legislations besides the proposed Electricity (Amendment) Bill 2020.

Meanwhile, farmers' organisations from Punjab today boycotted a meeting called by the Union agriculture ministry in New Delhi to resolve their concerns over new farm laws and accused the government of playing double standards with no minister present to hear them out. The representatives from 29 farmers' organisations, including Joginder Singh-led Bharati Kisan Union, were miffed at the absence of Union agriculture minister Narendra Singh Tomar or even his minister of state for agriculture in the meeting.

The meeting was convened

at the Krishi Bhavan amid police security to avoid any protest. After the meeting, agitated farmers' representatives were seen shouting slogans and tearing copies of new farm laws outside Krishi Bhavan.

More than 30 representatives, who had come in a bus, were mostly senior citizens but had not even worn face masks despite the Covid pandemic.

No proper discussion took place. Neither Union agriculture minister nor junior ministers were present to hear our concerns. We asked why the minister is not meeting us, why the government is playing double standards by calling us here and ministers holding virtual meetings in Punjab. There was no proper response," Darshan Pal, member of the coordination committee of 29 farmers' organisations, said after the meeting.

Since there was no response from Union agriculture secretary Sanjay Agrawal, who was chairing the meeting, farmers' organisations decided to boycott the meeting, he said.

SEE ALSO INSIDE PAGES



Agencies will be created for independent evaluation in the education system

PRAKASH JAVADEKAR
UNION I&B MINISTER

Strict action against any agency violating anti-pollution rules: Rai

Delhi environment minister says it doesn't matter which agency, PWD or MCDs, is the violator and that all will have to take measures to curb dust pollution as it is related to public health

SNS & PTI

NEW DELHI, 14 OCTOBER

Delhi environment minister Gopal Rai today asserted that strict action was being taken against those flouting dust-pollution control guidelines, be it the Delhi government's Public Works Department (PWD) or the Municipal Corporations of Delhi (MCDs).

Rai pointed out that the issue of pollution is related to people's health and all agencies are equally responsible for its prevention and control.

"It doesn't matter which agency it is ... be it PWD or MCDs, all have to take measures to prevent dust pollution. Strict action is being taken against those not following the government's directions," the minister told reporters during his 'surprise inspection' of the Chandni Chowk Redevelopment Project site in the city.

Rai had yesterday issued



Delhi environment minister Gopal Rai inspects redevelopment work in Chandni Chowk as part of the government's anti-dust pollution drive. In the Capital on Wednesday.

directions to impose a fine of Rs 20 lakh on the North Delhi Municipal Corporation for violating dust control guide-

lines at Bhalswa landfill site. He has asked common people and private and government agencies, which have under-

taken construction works, to take adequate measures to prevent dust pollution, "else strict action will be taken

against them". He had asked them to follow five steps including installing windshields and barriers at the periphery of construction and demolition sites, covering debris with tarpaulin, using green net to prevent dust from blowing out, water sprinkling and covering trucks carrying construction material. Rai said all construction and demolition sites, irrespective of their sizes, will have to compulsorily take the five steps.

He also said the government has started "micro monitoring" of all the 13 pollution hotspots in the city and will soon deploy environment marshals to check violations of environmental norms. The environment department has constituted 14 inspection teams to check violations of pollution rules.

At the Chandni Chowk site, Rai found that the dust control guidelines issued by the Delhi government were being followed. He said four water tankers were found on the spot to prevent dust pollution. People in the vicinity

dump debris on the road at night.

Rai directed the PWD to clean the debris in collaboration with the MCD.

The minister said, "We got several complaints regarding the violation of anti-dust pollution guidelines, but today when I visited the spot no violation was found. Officials here told me that to prevent dust pollution four water tankers have been installed and water sprinkling is going on. They said the people of the area dump debris here at night, so we instructed the officials to clean up the debris. To do this, the PWD and the MCD will work together."

Rai said, "I have directed the authorities to maintain every precautionary measure as it is a very populated area. When I visited the spot I found that water sprinkling was happening but we will separately monitor the matter too. We will also monitor whether e-rickshaws are contributing to dust pollution in the area or not."

Abject inaction of BJP-led government in Haryana prime cause for Delhi's pollution: AAP

PTI
NEW DELHI, 14 OCTOBER

Senior Aam Aadmi Party leader and national spokesperson Raghav Chadha on Wednesday claimed that the 'abject inaction' of BJP-led government in neighbouring Haryana is a prime cause for Delhi's increasing pollution.

He further claimed that despite Environment Pollution Control Authority enforcing the Graded Response Action Plan, Haryana has refused to ban diesel gensets, furthering air pollution.

"The abject inaction of BJP-led government in neighbouring Haryana is a prime cause for Delhi's increasing pollution and the resulting poor AQI," Chadha said.

"As GRAP will come into force from 15 October, the use of diesel gensets will be banned in the regions of Delhi-NCR. While Delhi government has dutifully followed the rules set forth by EPCA, our neighbours in Haryana don't seem to want to take any action."

"Their government has written 'distress letters' to EPCA repeatedly, saying that they can't enforce the ban in their state," he told reporters.

"They tell the Supreme Court-constituted body called



AAP leader Raghav Chadha addressing a press conference in the Capital on Wednesday. SUBRATA DUTTA

EPCA that Gurugram and Faridabad have several thousand homes that don't get electricity, that these homes are wholly dependent on diesel gensets, which is why a ban won't be conducive," he added.

Chadha further claimed that because the Haryana government had failed to provide electricity to its residents, the latter have been compelled to resort to an unnatural and extremely polluting form of electricity.

"In my understanding, this is a failure on part of the Haryana government, who could not give its residents in the hugely populous cities of Gurugram and Faridabad supply of electricity, and compel the use of gensets," he said.

Classified

LEGAL NOTICES

**IN THE COURT OF
SH. SANJAYAN PRASAD
Additional District Judge-I
East District
Room No. 1st Floor
Karkardooma Courts, Delhi
PC No. 12/2020**

G. K. Pandey, s/o Late Prem Narayan Pandey, r/o E-11, Indraprastha Apartment, Plot No. 114, I. P. Extn. Patparganj, Shakarpur, East Delhi, Delhi-110092.

Mob : 9811776104,
Email ID : girjkant2@hotmail.com

— Petitioner

1. State of NCT of Delhi.
2. Shyama Pandey, w/o Late Prem Narayan Pandey, r/o E-11, Indraprastha Apartment, Plot No. 114, I. P. Extn. Patparganj, Shakarpur, East Delhi, Delhi-110092.

Mob : 9811610495,
Email ID : girjkant2@hotmail.com

3. Usha Kulkarni, w/o Bindu Bandopant Kulkarni, r/o 502, M Building, Cosmos Margarashtra City, Pune City, Maharashtra.

Mob. No. 9410280140
Email : kulkarni19@gmail.com

4. Radhikant Pandey, s/o Late Prem Narayan Pandey, r/o E-11, Southmeads Close, Oadby, Leicester, England, United Kingdom, LE2 2LT

Mob : 0044-7990598125
Email ID : monty-pandey@hotmail.com

— Respondents

PETITION FOR GRANT OF
SUCCESSION CERTIFICATE I/S
372 OF THE INDIAN SUCCESSION
ACT, 1925

Whereas an petition under Section 372 of the Indian Succession Act, 1925 for grant of Succession Certificate has been filed by the petitioner.

Whereas in the aforesaid petition, the applicant/petitioner has applied for Succession Certificate in respect of Share Certificate No. 22505 issued by Britannia Industries Limited & left behind by Late Mr. Prem Narayan Pandey.

Whereas the 18-11-2020 at 10 O'Clock in the forenoon has been fixed for hearing of the case, notice is hereby given to the person having a right to receive it that the administration of the concerned matter if he/she desire appear in this Court of the said 18-11-2020 and see the proceedings before the grant of Succession Certificate.

Given under my hand and the Seal of this Court on this 13-10-2020.

Additional District
Judge-01
East District

Room No. 8, 2nd Floor
Karkardooma Courts,
Delhi
Seal of the Court

DEBTS RECOVERY
TRIBUNAL-I, DELHI

4th Floor, Jeevan Tara
Building, Parliament Street,
New Delhi-110001
OA No. 617/2019

LIC Housing Ltd. — Applicant

Versus
Shri Sunil Kumar Dahiya &
Others. — Respondents

To,
1. Shri Sunil Kumar, r/o Flat
No. 2704, Sector-46, Gurgaon,
Haryana.

2. Mrs. Neelam, w/o Shri
Sunil Kumar, r/o Flat No. 2704,
Sector-46, Gurgaon, Haryana.

3. M/s. Maxworth Infra-
structure Pvt. Ltd., 30-31, First
Floor, MGF Megacity Mall, M.
G. Road, Gurugram-122002,
Haryana, Through its Directors.

Whereas the abovenamed applicant has instituted a case for recovery of Rs. 50,62,348.7/- (Rupees Fifty Lacs Sixty Two Thousand Three Hundred Forty Eight and Paise Seventy Seven only) against you and whereas it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it

is maintained inside the shops. The traders have thermal machines to check the temperature of every individual entering their shops. They are using sanitizers and also ensuring that people wear masks properly," Bhargawa said.

Shopkeepers have pasted a sticker outside their shops, urging people to maintain social distancing for their own safety, he added.

"We can only ensure the norms are followed inside the shops, but we are not sure about the outside premises. In recent days, the footfall has increased which is a good sign for business ahead of the festive season. People are coming out of their houses with masks and also maintaining social distancing," Bhargawa said.

On Monday, Deputy Commissioner of Police (North) Anto Alphonse had visited the Chandni Chowk market and reviewed security arrangements there. Police officers also met with representatives of the different market associations.

The officers discussed about the necessary measures to be taken for the security of traders as well as of visitors to the market.

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Till Tuesday, Delhi Police has issued 5,854 COVID-19 challans for not wearing masks and 31,874 challans for violation of social distancing norms. The force has distributed 3,56,899 masks to people.

Atul Bhargava, president of New Delhi Traders Association, said the footfall in the markets has increased, and consumers are taking all precautions before stepping out.

"As the festive season is approaching, the traders are making all efforts in view of the COVID-19 pandemic and also cooperating with police regarding the security. We have ensured social distance

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Be vigilant in the wake of the flood situation, more so in Krishna and Guntur districts as the inflows into the Prakasam barrage are expected to reach 7.5 lakh cusecs due to incessant rains in Telangana regions.

Y.S. JAGAN MOHAN REDDY
ANDHRA PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, THURSDAY 15 OCTOBER 2020

03

Sukhbir slams Modi govt for 'betraying' farmers

The SAD chief accuses the BJP-ruled Centre of 'betraying' farmers' organisations on pretext of holding talks, warning that its blunders on farm laws may have serious consequences in Punjab

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 14 OCTOBER

With a large number of farmers' organisations from Punjab walking out of a meeting with Union agriculture secretary Sanjay Agrawal in New Delhi today—which was convened by the Centre to discuss its contentious farm laws—Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) president Sukhbir Singh Badal accused the Narendra Modi government of "betraying" farmers and their organisations on the pretext of holding talks with them on its new agriculture sector laws.

Addressing a Press conference, Badal said the BJP-led Union government was repeating the "blunders" of the past Congress rulers vis-a-vis Punjab and was "resorting to the same anti-Punjabi and anti-farmer conspiracies to provoke farmers and youth".

This may have serious consequences for peace in the sensitive border state of Punjab as well as for stability in



the country since farmers' struggle is a national issue, he warned. Significantly, such remarks made by the SAD chief echoed his principal bete noire and Punjab chief minister Capt Amarinder Singh's statements in this regard.

The oldest ally of the BJP, the SAD pulled out of the Modi ministry before quitting the BJP-led NDA last month in protest against the Centre's "anti-farmers" legislations.

The SAD president today also asserted that the Prime Minister should have found

time to meet the farmers instead of sending a bureaucrat to "preach at them."

"If the PM was too busy on this day, the meeting could easily have been rescheduled. The farmers did the right thing by coming out and refusing to walk into the conspiracy," the Akali leader said iterating the SAD's "total, unflinching and unconditional support to the farmers struggle".

The leaders of the Punjab farmers organisations boycotted the meeting in the

national capital today since even Union agriculture minister Narendra Singh Tomar or any junior minister was not present there.

The SAD president demanded that all the "black laws" (new farm laws) against farmers must be scrapped and the farmers organisations be consulted on the way forward. "The farmers' loss is the loss of the entire nation. The black laws are against not just farmers but also khet mazdoors, mandi labour, arthiyas, small traders and

shopkeepers as well as the overall business, trade and industry in the country," he asserted.

Badal also charged that the Punjab CM was "acting totally at the behest of the BJP government in trying to sabotage the farmers' movement".

"Amarinder sent his ministers to farmers to mislead them into withdrawing their just struggle and end the road and rail protests," he said.

"The Centre has messed up a great opportunity. The opportunity had been created by the farmers' organisations through their large-hearted and constructive response to the Union government's invite," Badal said.

"But the Centre chose to play games and indulge in double speak. The whole purpose of the exercise had already been defeated by the BJP designating senior and powerful ministers to visit Punjab and prove that the farmers were wrong in demanding a change in the three Acts of the Government of India," he said.

HP University to start online admissions for PG courses

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 14 OCTOBER

Himachal Pradesh University on Wednesday started the process of admissions for Post Graduate (PG) courses, announcing that students will have to apply online by 20 October. AHP University officials said the admissions in PG courses will be given on merit basis and the varsity will release the first cut-off list on 21 October.

"The University will declare UG final year results of around 37,000 students by 15 October and they can submit their marks online till 20 October. The university had received awards of all students in the examination branch on 12 October and the process to prepare results was almost complete," he added. The official said the HP University will

Himachal launches awareness campaign against Covid

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 14 OCTOBER

complete the admission process for PG courses by 31 October. The official further stated that HP University Vice-Chancellor Sikander Kumar had announced to increase of 10 percent seats in the existing seats for the Economically Weaker Section (EWS) candidates for admission to the campus based PG courses in all teaching departments/Institutes from the academic session 2020-21. "The increased seats will be filled up from the existing candidates who have already applied for admission through online mode and a chance is given to the candidates to add the EWS category to their online form by opening the portal. If these seats remain vacant then these seats neither be filled with other categories nor these will be carried forward," he added.

The state government is advocating various preventive and curative measures to tackle the present Covid situation. In the current scenario, when various business, economic and other routine activities have started after the process of unlocking, some people are taking it lightly and not following the guidelines issued from time to time. We need to be more alert at this

time," said Secretary, Health and Family Welfare Amitabh Awasthi. Awasthi said during the campaign, which will continue till 31 October, that the public will be made more aware regarding various aspects of safety from Covid-19 like the correct use of masks, maintaining social distance, hand hygiene, health care of the elderly and the co-morbid persons. Various publicity mediums will be used optimally under this campaign.

He informed that the recovery rate of corona infected people has increased in the state in recent times and majority of deaths due to this epidemic are occurring in patients with co-morbidity or in elderly people. "In such a situation, their health care is of utmost importance," he said. He emphasized that everyone needs to understand the symptoms of corona. "Nobody should take it lightly. People should immediately contact the nearest health institute for medical attention as soon as the symptoms appear," he said. The Secretary, Health called upon the general public to maintain restraint, not let mental tension and negative thoughts domi-

nate them.

"At this time, take full care of yourself and your family's mental health. For this, you should do regular yoga exercises, engage your family in creative work with positive thinking. There is a need to strengthen your physical, mental and emotional health," he said.

He said every person must ensure their participation in this awareness campaign to make it a mass movement.

All should practice the basic tenets of social distancing, masking and hand hygiene and advocate the same to nears and dears so that the epidemic is not able to affect your loved ones," he said. So far, Himachal Pradesh have reported 17762 Covid positive cases, including 249 deaths.

Another HP minister tests Covid positive

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 14 OCTOBER

A day after Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur tested positive for COVID-19, Technical Education minister Ramlal Markanda too tested positive for the viral disease.

Markanda was one of the primary contacts of CM and he too had come in contact with COVID-19 positive person during inauguration of Atal Tunnel Rohtang that was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 3 October.

Markanda was tested for the viral disease after he developed symptoms for Coronavirus whose report came positive on Tuesday night. State Technical Education minister had been shifted to IGMC Shimla for further medical treatment and his condition is said to be stable. Chief Minister Jai Ram

Thakur expressed concern over Markanda testing positive for the viral disease in a statement and wished speedy recovery for him.

Earlier, Urban Development minister Suresh Bhadrwaj, Power minister Sukhram Chaudhary and Jal Shakti minister Mahender Singh Thakur had contracted the disease.

However, Chaudhary and Thakur had been cured of the disease while Bhadrwaj was still undergoing treatment for COVID-19 in IGMC Shimla. It is worth mentioning here that the number of COVID-19 cases had increased to 17,860 in the hill state with 98 more persons testing positive for the disease on Wednesday.

Though there were only 2,436 active cases in the state as 15,153 persons had been cured of the disease and 250 persons had lost their lives due to the deadly disease so far.

Chief Minister has thanked Dalai Lama for his good wishes.

Dalai Lama wishes HP CM speedy recovery

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 14 OCTOBER

Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama on Wednesday wished Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur a speedy recovery. Thakur has been under home quarantine after testing positive for COVID-19.

In a letter written to the Chief Minister, Dalai Lama said, "I pray for your speedy recovery and hope we may see an early end to challenges that COVID-19 pandemic represents as they pose a threat to every nation across the world".

Chief Minister has thanked Dalai Lama for his good wishes.

Hydropower projects have hurt Kinnaur ecosystems: Study

ARCHANA PHULL
SHIMLA, 14 OCTOBER

Hydropower proliferation in the name of 'clean energy' in the tribal area of Kinnaur in Himachal Pradesh has brought rapid land-use changes, adversely impacting local terrestrial ecosystems and communities inhabiting them, according to a research paper recently published in the international journal 'Land Use Policy'.

Authored by Manshi Asher and Prakash Bhandari, researchers from Himdhar Environment Research and Action Collective based in Himachal Pradesh and supported by the Duleep Mathai Nature Conservation Trust, the paper 'Mitigation or Myth-Impacts of Hydropower Development and Compensatory Afforestation on forest ecosystems in the High Himalayas' is based on a study conducted between 2012 and 2016. It uses information from government

data and ground research to examine the extent, nature and impact of forest land diversion for hydropower projects in the remote, ecologically vulnerable Kinnaur Division of Himachal Pradesh in the Western Himalayas. The study's key component included an exercise to investigate the 'success' and efficacy of plantations carried out as mitigation measures to compensate for the loss of forests to hydropower projects.

Manshi Asher said the study found that out of the total area of 'forestland' diverted to non-forest activities between 1980 and 2014, 90% was transferred for hydro-electric projects (HEP) and transmission lines (TL). This led to change in land-use, fragmentation of forests and loss of biodiversity in the Kinnaur region, which is already considered as vulnerable from the point of view of its ecology, geology and climatic changes. 'Our study found that the 'compensatory afforestation' carried

out as a 'mitigation' measure for loss of forests and a mandatory condition for forest clearance for forest diversion, has not been able to fulfil its stated objective.

While plantation work was undertaken only in 12% of the proposed area, this was ridden with issues like abysmally low presence of surviving saplings (upto 10%) interspecies conflict, infringement on local land usage, and damage by wildfires and landslides." Himachal Pradesh, with the highest pace and magnitude of hydropower development in India, also has the highest installed capacity of more than 10000 MW. Amongst its five river basins, the Satluj valley has the highest planned potential and if all planned projects materialize, 22% of the river would be dammed and 72% flowing inside tunnels. Kinnaur, a remote tribal district known for its vulnerability to climate induced disasters like landslides and flash floods located in the upper reaches of Satluj basin, is the state's hydropower hub, with 53 planned hydropower projects, of which 17 are large projects (above 25 MW). Fifteen projects of varying capacities, totaling to 3041 MW, have already been

commissioned (are operational), which is the highest among all districts of the state.

The study found that the notion of 'mitigation', propelled by the global 'green' growth narrative and implemented through top-down domestic governance processes rooted in the colonial past, relies on the fallacy that ecological damages in one region can be simply compensated by repair measures in another and needs to be confronted urgently. The study called for a detailed, independent and multi-disciplinary inquiry into the eco-systems alteration due to hydropower projects, especially in the fragile Himalayas, while their further expansion is put on hold. "All planning, impact assessment and decision-making processes need to be contextualised in local ecologies and democratised through involvement of local communities who inhabit these ecosystems," it said.

Man-eating leopard shot dead in Tehri

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
DEHRADUN, 14 OCTOBER

A man-eating leopard, which had been active for the past four days at two villages near Agrakhal in Tehri district, was shot dead by a specialised shooter on Tuesday night. The leopard had killed two kids in four days, unleashing terror in the area.

Specialised shooter Joy Hukil eliminated the man-eater. The feline had killed seven-year-old Smriti at Saldogi village on 11 October. The death sparked anger among the local residents and the forest department was forced to deploy specialised shooters. The forest team and specialized shooter Joy Hukil were conducting a

The feline had killed seven-year-old Smriti at Saldogi village on 11 October. The death sparked anger among the local residents and the forest department was forced to deploy specialised shooters.

Specialised shooter Joy Hukil said, "The lower canine of the leopard was missing. The male feline was about 6-7 years old."



Specialised shooter Joy Hukil with the dead man-eating leopard at Kasmoli village in Tehri district on Wednesday.

Schools to reopen in phases in Uttarakhand from 1 Nov

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
DEHRADUN, 14 OCTOBER

Schools will start reopening in Uttarakhand in phases from next month. The Uttarakhand Cabinet today took a decision in this regard and announced it.

In the first phase, class 10 and 12 will resume operation from 1 November. In the next phase, new classes will be included.

the Uttarakhand government started the process of reopening schools in the hill state. For this the government had asked its 13 district magistrates to send a report by interacting with academics, parents, etc. for resuming academic activities in the schools. The decision to resume classes for class 10 and 12 was taken after receiving reports from the 13 district magistrates.



We will publish 10-12 such treasures in black and white, preserved in all these years in the 'Sandesh' pujo sankhya.

FILMMAKER SANDIP RAY

REFERRING TO UNSEEN STILLS FROM SATYAJIT RAY'S FILM 'SONAR KELLA'

Cabinet approves STARS project under NEP 2020

PARAKH an independent and autonomous institution will be set up, officials said

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 14 OCTOBER

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the STARS project under the new National Education Policy to support states in strengthening the school education system, Union Minister Prakash Javadekar said.

The government has started implementing the new NEP and as part of the process it has approved the Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States (STARS) project, Javadekar told a press conference after the Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

According to Education ministry officials, the World Bank-supported STARS project, estimated to cost ₹5,718 crore, seeks to support the states in developing, implementing, evaluating and improving interventions with direct linkages to improved education out-

comes and school to work transition strategies for improved labour market outcomes.

"India has started seriously implementing the new National Education Policy and therefore a new programme-STARS-been cleared today by the Cabinet as the base of the policy is not rote learning but learning with understanding," Javadekar said.

"Learning outcomes are important so there has to be teaching and learning. We have to improve board exams which will be competency based. This will impact the processes of education in early childhood and fundamental literacy has to be achieved. We have to train teachers and a separate assessment board or institution will come into force. The programme has been supported by World Bank which will provide financial support of up to ₹3,700 crore," he added.



PARAKH, an independent and autonomous institution, will be set up under the ministry's Department of School Education and Literacy, officials said.

Among the tasks of such a centre would be to leverage the experiences of states selected for the operation by collecting, curating and sharing these experiences with other states through online por-

jects aligned with the objectives of NEP of focusing on quality based learning outcomes. The project envisions improving the overall monitoring and measuring activities in the Indian school education system through interventions in selected states," a senior ministry official said.

"The project also shifts focus from the provision of inputs and maintaining of outputs to actual outcomes by linking the receipt and disbursement of funds to these outcomes," the official added.

The centrally sponsored project will cover six states-Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala and Odisha. The states will be supported for various interventions for improving the quality of education.

National data base of students: Besides this project, it is also envisaged to implement a similar ADB-funded project in five states-Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, Jhark-

hand and Assam. All states will partner with one other state for sharing their experiences and best practices.

"The project aims at strengthening the ministry's national data systems to capture robust and authentic data on retention, transition and completion rates of students. The project also includes a Contingency Emergency Response Component (CERC) under the national component which would enable it to be more responsive to any natural, man-made and health disasters," the official said.

"It will help the government respond to situations leading to loss of learning such as school closures and infrastructure damage, inadequate facilities and use technology for facilitating remote learning. The CERC component would facilitate the rapid re-categorization of financing and utilization of streamlined financing request procedures," the official added.

NPRD to sue Khushboo for 'mentally retarded' remark

CHENNAI, 14 OCTOBER

Less than a day after she joined BJP deserting Congress, the actor-turned-politician Khushboo Sundar is now facing the wrath of a different kind for her jibe against her former party colleagues.

The association of differently-abled people has decided to sue her for her unwarranted remarks like "mentally retarded" to criticise the Congress leadership in the state. In a statement issued to the media the Tamilnadu affiliate of the National Platform for the Rights of the Disabled (NPRD) said that they are lodging FIRs in all districts of Tamil Nadu against Khushboo for derogatory comments on infirmities.

The statement alleged that speaking to the media on 13 October 2020 at the Chennai airport, Khushboo has used derogatory terms like "mentally retarded" to attack the party she left.

"While Khushboo Sundar has every right to politically take on her opponents, usage of terms that invoke a negative portrayal of disability are unacceptable," said the statement. While condemning the actions of Khushboo, NPRD said the country and people like Khushboo need to be reminded that such insults and humiliation are also prohibited by law. As per section 92 (a) of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016,

"Whoever, "intentionally insults or intimidates with intent to humiliate a person with disability in any place within public view" shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term not less than six months but which may be extended to five years and with fine".

Humiliation of disabled people would not be tolerated, the association said. SNS

TENDER

CORRIGENDUM NOTICE

Subject: Tender No. OP2/2020/21 - DNIT for replacement / Installation of LT CT Meter Boxes, Current Transformers (CTs), Cables and allied accessories for Smart Metering Project under Electy 'OP' Sub Division No. 5, Electricity Wing of Engineering Department, U.T. Chandigarh (EWDC).

The subject cited tender due to be opened on dated i.e. 14.10.2020 at 16.00 Hrs. is hereby extended upto 21.10.2020 at 14.00 Hrs. for uploading and opening date i.e. 21.10.2020 at 16.00 Hrs. due to some administrative reason.

All the other terms and conditions shall remain the same.

DAV-

—Sd—
Executive Engineer,
Electricity (OP) Division No. 2
Chandigarh, U.T.

WEAR MASK, WASH YOUR HANDS, WATCH YOUR DISTANCE IN BOX FORMAT

HIMACHAL PRADESH JAL SHAKTI VIBHAG NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

Online bids on item rate basis are invited by the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Division, Ghumarwin on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh, in electronic tendering system in two covers for the under mentioned work from the contractor/firms of appropriate class enlisted with HP JAL SHAKTI VIBHAG.

S. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	EMD Cost of Tender	Time of completion	Cost of form
1	Augmentation/Retrofitting of LWSS Kot Dehra Hatwar in Ghumarwin Constituency to Provide Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC) to left-out households Under Jal Jeevan Mission- Hr. Ghar Nal Se Jal (SH:- C/o RCC Sump Well 11000 Ltrs Capacity and 104000 Ltrs Capacity .C/o. Pump House 2 Nos. C/o. Wire Crate, C/o Court Yard of Pump House, P/F Fencing Panel, P/F MS gate, P/F Barbed Wire Fencing, C/o. R/Wall & RCC storage tank 106700 Ltrs capacity and C/o. 2 No. Toilets). Job No. 1.	5847058/-	91100/-	9 month	800/-

1. Tender document and other instruction can be downloaded or viewed online from the portal <https://htenders.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.

3. Key Dates :-

- Date of online publication : 14.10.2020 05:00 PM.
- Downloading of e-tender Document : From 14.10.2020 05:00 PM. up to 5:00 PM 26-10-2020
- Date of submission of e-tendering : From 14.10.2020 05:00 PM. up to 5:00PM 26-10-2020
- Physical submission of Earnest Money Deposit and cost of tender document : Up to 5:00 PM 26-10-2020
- Date of opening Bid : Up to 11:30 AM 27-10-2020

Conditions:-

- The e-tender documents shall be uploaded online in 2 covers:-
 - i) Cover-1 shall contain scanned copies of "eligibility information".
 - ii) Cover-2 shall contain "Financial Bid" on the prescribed form.
 2. Cover-1 shall contain Scanned copies of following "eligibility information" (Scanned copies to be uploaded)
 - Earnest money in the shape of NSC/saving account on any of the Post offices in Himachal Pradesh/Time Deposit Receipt of any nationalized bank, demand draft duly pledged in the name of Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division, Ghumarwin or certificate of exemption of Earnest Money Deposit or through e-payment. However in case of e-payment physical submission of documents is not required.
 - Cost of tender Form in the shape of demand draft of Rs.800/-only or through e-payment.
 - Certificate of registration with Jal Shakti Vibhag in appropriate class and latest renewal thereof.
 - Income Tax & GST registration and latest clearance certificates thereof.
 - A scanned copy of undertaking that I have carefully studied all the terms and conditions stipulated in form PWD 6 & 8 as well as special terms and conditions appended along with schedule of quantity and NIT before quoting the rates in the BOQ chart and that I have Visited the site of work before quoting the rates
 - v) A Scanned copy of Valid EPPF Number and authorized dealership certificate for pumping machinery from Principal manufacturers.
 - vi) Similar work means "Water related project" which include any of the following components:
 - i) C/o RCC sump well
 - ii) RCC storage tank
 - Cover-2 shall contain BOQ where contractor will quote his offer for each item.
 3. The tenders of the contractors/firms who fail to fulfill the eligibility information will be summarily rejected.
 4. The contractor will submit the original document in respect of Earnest money and cost of tender document in the office of Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division, Ghumarwin before 26-10-2020 up to 5:00 PM.
 5. The negotiation/clarification, if any will be taken from the successful contractor only in respect of error and omission, technical aspects and in no case on financial bid.
 6. Earnest money of L1, L2 and L3 may be retained for a period of 120 days.
 7. The representatives of the firm should inspect the site himself and make conversion with the site conditions.
 8. If opening day is a holiday, the tenders shall be opened on next working day at the same time.
 9. The offer of the tender shall be kept open for 120 days.
- NOTE: - In case of failure of supply/ net connectivity problem, the tenders shall be downloaded on the restoration of the same.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Jal Shakti Division, Ghumarwin (HP)
Telephone No. 01978255287
e-mail: xeniphgmr@rediffmail.com

3738/2020-2021 HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMPAK

NORTHERN RAILWAY Corrigendum to Tender Notice	
Sr. DEE/Chg/DLI office tender notice for the following work due for opening on 16.10.2020 at 15:30 hrs. is cancelled due to some technical reason.	
Tender No.	30-Elect-3T-Chg-2020-21
Description of work	Supply & fixing of jumper cable support link assembly (Stainless Steel) for LHB AC coaches.
Tender Document Cost by online	Rs. 3,540/-
Contract Value (Rs.)	Rs. 50,81,280/-
Earnest Money (Rs.)	Rs. 1,01,600/-
Period of completion	04 Months
No. 30-Elect-3T-Chg-2020-21 Date : 14.10.2020 2219/20 SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE	

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LIMITED	
Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001 Corporate Identity Number: U40109PB2010SGC033813 Website: www.pspcl.in	
E-Tender Enquiry No.: 289 / P-2 / EMP-W 11740 dt. 12-10-2020 & ID: 2020_POWER_54597-1.	
Scope of work: To carry out Assistance in Routine Breakdown / Preventive / Outage mtc. works of Motorized & Pneumatic operated valves and Gear boxes along with associated Electrical / Pneumatic Actuators of 4 x 210 MW GGSSTP Units, Rupnagar.	
Time period: As per NIT.	
EMD: Rs. 64,000.	
Date & time up to which tender shall be received : 19-11-2020 & 11:00 a.m.	
Date & time of opening of tender : 26-11-2020 & 11:30 a.m.	
Tender specification can only be downloaded from website: https://eproc.punjab.gov.in & no hard copy of the same will be issued by this office.	
Note:	
1. In case any difficulty regarding uploading of the tender the prospective bidders are requested to get clarification from this office or M/s. e-Procurement System Government of Punjab. Contact No.: +91-(172)-2970284/63. It is also requested to get their digital signature well in time so as to submit tenders through e-tendering only.	
2. It is informed that in case tender process is not completed due to any reason, no corrigendum will be published in newspapers. Details regarding corrigendum may be seen on website: eproc.punjab.gov.in Dy. CE / Monitoring GGSSTP, Rupnagar	

Annexure-B	
PRESS NOTICE TO BE ISSUED FOR PUBLICATION IN NEWS PAPERS FOR OFFLINE TENDERS	
The Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division, Paonta Sahib invites tenders on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh from approved eligible contractors for the following work(s) through offline process:-	
JOB No.1	
Name of Work: C/O Irrigation Borewell of Sh. Mahinder Singh Pal S/O Sh. Jeet Ram village Gangwala & Sh. Gurmani Singh S/O Sh. Rajra Ram Village Krishankot in Tehsil Paonta Sahib District Sirmour (HP) (SH:- Drilling of 7" Bore well 40 mtr. deep) Deposit Work	
Estimated Cost: - 17,691/-	
Earnest Money: - 3,550/-	
Cost of Tender Form: - 250/-	
Time of completion: - Three Months	
Last date of submission to tender: 22/10/2020 up to 02:30 NOON.	
Last date of sale of tender from divisional office: - 21/10/2020 up to 05:00 P.M.	
JOB No.2	
Name of Work: C/O Irrigation Bore well in The field of Sh. Mahinder Singh etc. village Kunja Matratlon G.P. Kunja in Tehsil Paonta Sahib, District Sirmour (HP) (SH:- Drilling lowering of assembling & development of 1 Tubewell 55 mtr. deep) Deposit Work.	
Estimated Cost: - 4,97,922/-	
Earnest Money: - 10,000/-	
Cost of Tender Form: - 250/-	
Time of completion: - Two Months	
Last date of submission to tender: 22/10/2020 up to 02:30 NOON.	
Last date of sale of tender from divisional office: - 21/10/2020 up to 05:00 P.M.	
JOB No.3	
Name of Work: C/O Irrigation Bore well of Sh. Gian Chand S/O Sh. Kishan Ram village Khara & Sh. Gurmani Singh S/O Sh. Julli Ram Village Bain Kuan in Tehsil Paonta Sahib, District Sirmour (HP) (SH:- Drilling of 7" Bore well 50 mtr. deep) Deposit Work.	
Estimated Cost: - 4,06,160/-	
Earnest Money: - 8,150/-	
Cost of Tender Form: - 250/-	
Time of completion: - Two Months	
Last date of submission to tender: 22/10/2020 up to 02:30 NOON.	
Last date of sale of tender from divisional office: - 21/10/2020 up to 05:00 P.M.	
JOB No.4	
Name of Work: C/O Irrigation Bore well of Sh. Jagdish Chand S/O Sh. Gianti Ram Village Bhedewala G.P. Amarkot & Sh. Jaishi Ram S/O Sh. Ulttan Singh village Kartarpur in Tehsil Paonta Sahib, District Sirmour (HP) (SH:-Drilling of 7" Bore well 50 mtr. deep) Deposit Work.	
Estimated Cost: - 4,06,160/-	
Earnest Money: - 8,150/-	
Cost of Tender Form: - 250/-	
Time of completion: - Two Months	
Last date of submission to tender: 22/10/2020 up to 02:30 NOON.	
Last date of sale of tender from divisional office: - 21/10/2020 up to 05:00 P.M.	
The tender forms and other detailed conditions can be downloaded from the website www.hppb.org or from office of above Executive Engineer up to date specified above.	
3690/2020-2021 HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMPAK	

Electricity generators banned in Delhi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 14 OCTOBER

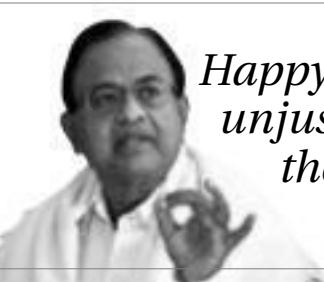
The AAP government has banned use of electricity generators, except those needed for essential or emergency services, in the national capital as anti-pollution measures under the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) come into force from Thursday in the Delhi-NCR region.

GRAP, which comes into effect in Delhi and its vicinity towns according to the severity of air pollution, was first notified by the Ministry of Environment and Forests in 2017 for implementation through the Supreme Court-mandated Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority.

The DPCC also directed power companies to ensure an uninterrupted power supply to the consumers. It also issued an order implementing EPCA's

directions to enforce GRAP from Thursday.

The EPCA had earlier directed that large construction projects, including highways and metro, will have to provide undertakings to pollution control bodies that they will assure adherence to the prescribed norms for dust management. Industries, particularly in the Red and Orange category, will provide an undertaking that they will use only authorised fuel and will not operate without adequate pollution control measures.



Happy that Ms Mehbooba Mufti has been finally released after 14 months of unjustified detention. Sad that the central government... (has) not yet realized the enormity of the abuse of law

CONGRESS LEADER P CHIDAMBARAM

WELCOMING THE RELEASE OF FORMER J&K CHIEF MINISTER MEHBOOBA MUFTI FROM DETENTION

The Statesman

05

NEW DELHI, THURSDAY 15 OCTOBER 2020

THUMBNAILS



At a community Durga Puja pandal, in Kolkata on Wednesday. **IANS**

Kerala gold smuggling case: M. Sivasankar, former principal secretary to Kerala chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Wednesday approached the Kerala High Court seeking anticipatory bail in a case filed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with the gold smuggling case.

Dolphin found dead: A highly endangered Fresh water dolphin was found dead in river Ganges in Narora area of district Bulandshahar, exactly five days after the death of another. Death of two dolphins in just five days has added to the concern of the forest officials. This is also the third death of a dolphin in the Upper Gangetic Basin in the past ten months.

Tanishq ad row: A Tanishq jewellery showroom in Gandhidham town of Gujarat put up a note on its door, apologising to Hindus over the brand's controversial TV ad, police said. The handwritten note in Gujarati also condemned the TV commercial, which has been withdrawn after being viciously trolled across social media platforms. **PTI**

Four arrested for smuggling marijuana: Four persons were arrested in connection with interstate marijuana smuggling racket from Sodepur, North 24 parganas today. According to police, the accused were part of an interstate racket that was trying to smuggle over a kg of marijuana in a vehicle which had an "Advocate" sticker. Following a specific tip-off, cops from Kharda PS chased the car and intercepted it near Panighat. **SNS**

Special Punjab Assembly session to negate farm laws

BJP using attack on its Punjab chief to divert farmers' angst over the farm laws: Amarinder Singh

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 14 OCT

The Punjab government on Wednesday decided to convene a special session of the Punjab Assembly on 19 October "to bring in legislation to counter the dangerous anti-farmer farm laws of the Central government".

A decision to this effect was taken at a meeting of the Punjab Cabinet chaired by Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh on Wednesday through video conferencing.

The CM had earlier announced that his government will fight the anti-federal and vicious farm laws tooth and nail through legislative, legal and other routes.

The previous session of the 15th Punjab Assembly concluded on 28 August in which a resolution was passed by majority to reject the contentious farm ordinances viz.

To fulfill CM Amarinder Singh's promise of providing one lakh government jobs to youth in the remaining term of his government, the Punjab Cabinet also approved a State Employment Plan 2020-22, to fill vacant jobs in government departments, boards, corporations and agencies in a phased time-bound man-



2020 besides the proposed Electricity (Amendment) Bill 2020, promulgated by the Union government.

To fulfill CM Amarinder Singh's promise of providing one lakh government jobs to youth in the remaining term of his government, the Punjab Cabinet also approved a State Employment Plan 2020-22, to fill vacant jobs in government departments, boards, corporations and agencies in a phased time-bound man-

ner. The recruitment will be done on Central government pay scales. Women will now have reservation at the direct recruitment state in the Punjab Civil Services, with the state cabinet approving the Punjab Civil Services (Reservation of Posts for Women) Rules, 2020, to provide such reservation for women for direct recruitment to posts in Government, as well as recruitment to Boards and Corporations in Group A, B, C and

D posts. Meanwhile, a day after the president of Bharatiya Janata Party's Punjab unit Ashwini Sharma was attacked by a group of unidentified persons, Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh on Wednesday slammed the BJP for the party's provocative and inflammatory actions, aimed at disturbing the state's law and order following the attack.

Slamming Sharma's rabble-rousing statements and baseless accusations against the

Punjab Congress, the CM said the BJP Punjab unit president seemed bent on spreading false propaganda to promote the interests of his party.

These actions were clearly aimed at diverting the attention of the people from the farmers' angst against the BJP over the farm laws, he said, adding the police has already identified several farmer union members as being responsible for the attack on Sharma.

'Common interests of India, China far outweigh frictions'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 14 OCTOBER

China today expressed its willingness to resolve its differences with India through dialogue and consultations, saying the common interests of the two countries far outweigh the frictions.

"Recently, the bilateral relations have encountered some difficulties and challenges. As two major neighboring countries, it is normal to have differences. We need to put differences in an appropriate place in bilateral relations, properly manage and resolve them through dialogue and consultation and not allow differences to become disputes," Chinese Ambassador to India Sun Weidong said at an online symposium on the 110th birth anniversary of Dwarakanath Kotnis.

His comments came a day after India and China concluded the 7th round of corps commander level talks on the military stand-off in eastern Ladakh. The talks, however, ended in a deadlock with the two sides deciding to maintain dialogue and communication through diplomatic and military levels.

The Chinese envoy said he believed that both countries have the wisdom and ability to overcome difficulties and bring bilateral relations back on track to forge ahead.

Over 70 years ago, China and India helped and supported each other in the struggle for national liberation and independence and forged deep friendship. Today, the two countries were facing the common task of achieving economic and social development and improving people's livelihood. "We need to enhance mutual trust and strengthen cooperation more than ever to write a new chapter in China-India friendship," he said.

In June this year, Union home minister Amit Shah had addressed the first virtual rally with his eye on the upcoming assembly elections in Bihar. In the days to come to come, other political parties followed suit and began focusing on online poll campaigns to connect with the voters.

The Election Commission too recommended such campaigns while restricting the number of audience at the actual physical election rallies to be addressed by the political parties. The poll body strictly told the political parties how the social distancing norms have to be strictly maintained and necessary health items like masks, sanitizers and thermal scanners to be arranged at the rally grounds for the persons attending the rallies.

Initially, the political parties launched extensive campaigns by holding "virtual rallies" through digital platforms but as

things stand today, they have once again gone back to the old mode of election campaigns with the digital campaigns failing to leave their impact.

The political parties, especially the ruling JD-U and BJP, have gone all out to address election rallies in their last-ditch attempt to get the attention of the voters. Many have alleged the leaders' bid to address election rallies, however, have dealt a serious blow to the health department's efforts to check the coronavirus spread as was seen during a BJP rally in Gaya where majority of the people attend-

ing the rallies were not only seen without face masks but also ignoring the social distancing norms.

BJP president JP Nadda was the first leader to launch actual election rally from Gaya town on 12 October. Since then, every party has now focussed their campaigns on actual rallies, rather than "wasting their time and energy" on holding virtual rallies. Nadda is scheduled to address several other such election rallies in the next two days beginning tomorrow. Other top BJP leaders, such as party's Bihar in-charge Bhupinder

Virtual rallies falling flat, Bihar parties campaign the old-fashioned way

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
PATNA, 14 OCTOBER



Yadav, Union Minister of State for Home Nitinand Rai and Bihar's deputy chief Sushil Kumar Modi too have been regularly addressing physical rallies across the state for the past few days. Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar too is not much behind them and has been addressing several rallies in a day.

Reports said the parties were compelled to shift to "actual rallies" from "virtual" for two reasons. First, their message was not reaching out to the traditional voters not comfortable with smart phones and technology and secondly, the general voters were not taking seriously the poll campaigns being launched through social media which have lost much of their credibility for supplying "fake news". "Social media has lost much of its credibility now and hence no one believes the content that is in circulation. The situation is such that the people are refusing to believe even the facts," said Rajiv Kumar, state coordinator for Association for Democratic Reforms.

Kerala Cong (M) Mani faction to join LDF

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, 14 OCTOBER

Jose K Mani faction of Kerala Congress (M) on Wednesday announced its decision to join the CPI-M-led ruling Left Democratic Front (LDF).

Speaking to media persons at the party headquarters in Kottayam, Jose K Mani said a decision in this regard was taken considering the approach of the LDF towards the proclaimed policies of the Kerala Congress (M). Earlier, an emergency meeting of the parliamentary board members of Kerala Congress (M), held in Pala has decided to work with the Left Democratic Front (LDF). Jose also announced he is resigning as member of Rajya Sabha, which he got through UDF quota, upholding morals in politics. **SNS**

TENDER

Government of Himachal Pradesh
Himachal Pradesh Public Works Department
HIMACHAL PRADESH GRAM SADAK DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
O/o E-in-C, Nirman Bhawan, Nigam Vihar, Shimla-2

Invitation of Expression of Interest for Empanelling of DPR consulting agency

Chief Engineer(PMGSY) , HP PWD , Nirman Bhawan , Nigam Vihar , Shimla-2, on behalf of Himachal Pradesh Gram Sadak Development Agency, Shimla-2, invites Expression of Interest for Empanelling of DPR Consulting Agency. Complete RFP Document is available @ "hppwd.gov.in" under "TENDERS" section. Last date for submission of Technical & Financial Proposal is 10/11/2020 upto 3:00 PM.

Chief Engineer (PMGSY)
HP PWD, (HPGSDA) Nirman Bhawan,
Nigam Vihar, Shimla-2
Himachal Pradesh
Phone No. (0177) 2621402
Fax No. (0177) 2629312

3691/2020-2021 HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMPAK

NORTHERN RAILWAY
(E-Tender Notice)

The Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager / Coaching, Northern Railway, Delhi Division, New Delhi invites online e-tender through website <https://ireps.gov.in>, for the parking contract, for the period of 3 (Three) years, to be closed on 06.11.2020 at 15:00 hrs, at the following stations/locations :-

SN	Name of work with its location/ Railway Station	Advertise value/Reserve Price of one year in (Rs.)	Cost of Tender document & 18%GST (In Rs.)	Earnest Money Deposit (In Rs.)	Website particulars where complete details of tender document can be seen
1	Parking contract of Cycle-Scooter at Tughlakabad Railway Station (TKD), "D" Category, with measuring an area of 1109.95 sq. mtrs.	7,17,432/-	3540/-	43,100/-	https://ireps.gov.in/tender_no/Parking89-2020
2	Parking contract of Cycle-Scooter at Rohtak Railway Station (ROK), 2 nd Entry "A" Category, with measuring an area of 338 sq. mtrs.	5,94,000/-	2360/-	35,700/-	https://ireps.gov.in/tender_no/Parking90-2020
3	Parking contract of Cycle-Scooter and Car at Badli Railway Station (BHD), 1 st Entry "D" Category, with measuring an area of 795 sq. mtrs.	9,20,156/-	3540/-	55,300/-	https://ireps.gov.in/tender_no/Parking91-2020
4	Parking contract of Cycle-Scooter at Bhalsabagh Railway Station (BVH), "A" Category, with measuring an area of 901 sq. mtrs. on As Is Where Is Basis	6,84,260/-	3540/-	41,100/-	https://ireps.gov.in/tender_no/Parking92-2020

* Applicable GST and TCS has to be paid by licensee extra, over and above the Advertise value/Reserve Price.
Licensee fee.
2218/2020

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
KOLKATA, 14 OCTOBER

West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar on Wednesday picked out the Beliaghata blast incident to criticise the Trinamul Congress government in the state calling it the "principal violator and tormentor of the citizens", whose rights it is entrusted to protect.

Dhankhar, who has been at odds with the Mamata Banerjee dispensation since assuming charge over a year ago, said he had flagged the issues of human rights violation, political violence and others with the state government on various occasions.

He shared a letter he had written to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on October 11 in which he had expressed concern over worsening law and order situation in the state.

"Moment I raise issue @MamataOfficial of illegal bomb-making; outlaws perpetrating violence; - there is shocker in wait-Manish Shukla killing and now Blast rips roof off club in Kolkata's Beliaghata," he said in a tweet.

"Urged CM in communication to take steps post our Oct 11 tele conversation," he added. His comments come a day after an explosion early on Tuesday blew off a club's asbestos roof and damaged a portion of its wall at Beliaghata in the eastern part of the city.

None was injured in the blast, which occurred on the second floor of the club.

Recent events @MamataOfficial indicate most unfortunate spectacle unfolding in the State for democracy - as government, supposedly upholder of the rights of the citizens, is turning out its principal violator and tormentor @WBPolice," Dhankhar said in a series of tweets.

"Flagged @MamataOfficial incremental rise human rights violations, relentless political violence, quelling of opposition, virtual free run to syndicate and police' santras and corruption, unauthorised infesting of power corridors-all antithesis of democracy and rule of law," he said.

In his letter to the chief minister Dhankhar had brought up the issue of October 8 rally of BJP and the police allegedly knocking off the turban of a Sikh private security officer, terming it as the worst crime in a civilized society governed by the rule of law.

"On October 8, all witnessed extensive breaches of basic and affirmed rights of the people. Enormity of violations generated widespread consternation, reaction and wrath in the public when state apparatus unleashed a virtual reign of terror with barbaric insensitivity. What happened graduate to the worst crimes in a civilised society governed by the Rule of Law," the letter read. The governor said the disrespectful treatment to the turban of a Sikh reflects the highhandedness of law enforcement agencies.

"What happened to a Sikh has sent shock waves beyond the State. As per details in public domain, he (the person) was insultingly beaten, dragged



Sikh community members meet West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar to demand justice for Balwinder Singh at Raj Bhavan, in Kolkata on Wednesday.

BISWAJIT GHOSHAL

Governor says recent disrespectful treatment of a Sikh man reflects high-handedness of police

and his turban respectfully treated in full public view by unstoppable police personnel.

"Such highhandedness of law enforcement agencies, is more than apparent, with the episode gradually unfolding. This is also outrage our Bengali culture - indeelible taint on our well earned 'bhadramanus' (Bengali gentleman) image," he wrote.

There was controversy after visuals of the police beating up a Sikh man during BJP's protest last week went viral on social media. A section of the netizens claimed that the police had pulled at his turban during the scuffle.

The man, identified as 43-year-old Balwinder Singh, is a resident of Bhatinda in Punjab.

The state government had said that a political outfit was deliberately giving "communal colour" to the incident involving the Sikh person, whose turban, it said, came off during a scuffle with the police, to serve its "narrow partisan interest".

The state home department had tweeted that the person was arrested as per law for carrying illegal firearms during BJP's march to Nabana.

Punjab farmers boycott meeting on new farm laws

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 14 OCTOBER

Farmers' organisations from Punjab on Wednesday boycotted a meeting called by the Union agriculture ministry to resolve their concerns over new farm laws and accused the government of playing double standards with no minister present to hear them out.

Representatives from 29 farmers' organisations, including Joginder Singh-led Bharati Kisan Union, were miffed at the absence of Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar and Minister of State for Agriculture.

The meeting was convened at the Krishi Bhawan amid police security to avoid any protest. After the meeting, agitated farmers' representatives were seen shouting slogans and tearing copies of new farm laws outside Krishi Bhawan.

More than 30 representatives, who had come in a bus, were mostly senior citizens but had not even worn face masks despite the COVID-19 pandemic. "No proper discussion took place. Neither Union agriculture minister nor junior ministers were present to hear our concerns. We asked why the minister is not meet-

ing us, why the government is playing double standards by calling us here and ministers holding virtual meetings in Punjab. There was no proper response," Darshan Pal, member of the coordination committee of 29 farmers' organisations, told PTI after the meeting.

Since there was no response from Agriculture Secretary Sanjay Agrawal, who was chairing the meeting, farmers' organisations decided to boycott the meeting, he said.

"BJP leaders are holding virtual meetings in Punjab and talking against us. We are called to Delhi and no minister wants to listen to us," Pal, who also heads the Kranikari Kisan Union Punjab, added.

Harjinder Singh from Ajad Kisan Sangathan said, "The agriculture secretary had invited us to take our feedback on the new farm laws. We thought the agriculture minister would be there, but only the secretary was present."

The secretary tried to explain that the new laws are good and will yield good results in future, he said. "We knew the secretary had no authority and there is no point discussing it with him. We decided to boycott," he added.

Governor's jibe

The way secularism was understood by the pre-Independence Congress party, and the rejection by Mohammed Ali Jinnah and leaders of the Muslim League of this construct, led to the partition of India. Its enshrinement in the Constitution, through provisions that sought to ensure the state's neutrality in religious affairs, and later by the addition of the word 'secular' in the Preamble, legally endorsed the idea, even though it was antithetical to votaries of Hindu majoritarianism, principally groupings that are the ideological predecessors of the present ruling dispensation. But secularism in India has never meant separation of the state from religion; on the contrary, differentiated treatment in the personal sphere confirms the state is empowered to both legislate and administer religious affairs; indeed as some scholars have pointed out the Constitution allows extensive State interference in religion. Secularism in the Indian context thus embodies religious tolerance, quite distinct from Western liberal notions of separating church from state. Be that as it may, the fact that secularism forms a part of the Preamble, and thus seeks to define the Constitutional discourse, means that it must be deemed a virtue, indeed a cornerstone of governance. Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari's somewhat derisive question to chief minister Uddhav Thackeray ~ Have you suddenly turned secular? ~ must be viewed in this context. For it seems to imply several things.

First, it would seem to suggest that not immediately conceding a demand to open temples is a decision born from a misplaced sense of secularism. The temples remain shut because of fears that their re-opening might see a surge of afflictions in a state that has seen most cases of coronavirus. Opening places of worship is a matter within the administrative competence of the state government, and while the Governor may raise his concerns, he is out of line when he links it to notions of secularism. Secondly, the question might reasonably be construed to mean that in Mr Koshyari's assessment, the Chief Minister was not secular in the past and has only become so now. The Governor and the Chief Minister are both bound by their Constitutional oaths, and that by itself means they must pay obeisance to secularism, without allowing subjective interpretation or ideological persuasion to come in the way.

It may well be that Mr Thackeray was un-secular, or even rabidly communal, before he took oath, but once he did so he had no option but to be secular. This applies in even greater measure to Mr Koshyari for unlike the Chief Minister who must bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution, the Governor must swear to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution. As the man who made Ministers of the present government re-take their oath for deviating from the script, Mr. Koshyari cannot be unaware of his Constitutional obligations. And if he imagines that the Constitutional ideal of secularism can be reduced to a jibe, he has no business occupying Mumbai's Raj Bhavan. This is a slippery slope, and the President must rein in his Governor.

Troll attack

By trolling a jewellery manufacturer for an advertisement that featured a Hindu daughter-in-law and a Muslim mother-in-law, on the grounds that it exalted what is rather senslessly termed as "love jihad", fundamentalist bigots may well have expanded the reach of the product far beyond the audience it was targeted at. For news of the merciless trolling that forced the manufacturer to withdraw the advertisement has now reached shores far and wide, trashing India's much-touted reputation for inclusivity and tolerance. While this was the unintended consequence of the poison injected into the outpourings against the advertisement, there were others that were clearly intended. The first was to underscore that toxicity is an essential ingredient of contemporary social discourse and is here to stay. The second was to define the limits of inter-personal relations that some sections of society will accept, which was made clear by trolls asking why the advertisement did not instead feature a Muslim daughter-in-law and a Hindu mother-in-law. Along with khap panchayats and honour killings, such reactions only confirm that antediluvian notions of marriage being viewed as a form of conquest are alive and well. The third is that not even the most eminent of Indian corporates ~ for the jewellery brand is owned by one of the country's oldest and largest conglomerates ~ is immune to the pressures of bigotry. By withdrawing the advertisement at the first sign of trouble, the company clearly thought discretion was the better part of valour and who is to say it was wrong to take this position. For had it persisted, it may well have been accused of promoting enmity ~ and not the amity it sought to project ~ between communities and faced charges under several sections of the Indian Penal Code that have been twisted beyond recognition in contemporary India.

The saddest aspect of this unsavoury saga is that on the face of it, the advertisement copy contained just the sort of syrupy platitudes on amity that one usually associates with state-sponsored advertising. "Beautiful things happen when people come together," a description on the company's website says, along with the slogan: "The beauty of oneness. One as humanity. One as a nation." The company has justified its decision to withdraw the advertisement by saying that while the intention was to "celebrate the coming together of people from different walks of life", the severe reactions to it were "contrary to its very objective." And to think it was not so long ago that the Supreme Court upheld the right of citizens to choose their spouse, and to convert to another religion if they so wished.

Suga's Taiwan Policy

Beijing has not overlooked the fact that Kishi visited Taiwan in September 2020 for a memorial in honour of the late Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui and met with current President Tsai. Kishi's visit coincided with the visit of US Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar. China took these twin visits as a slap on its face



After Yoshihide Suga succeeded Abe Shinzo as Japan's Prime Minister and formed his Cabinet, he chose Nobuo Kishi as his defence minister. Suga's choice of Kishi has sparked diplomatic curiosity and discussion about his likely Taiwan policy. Known for his Taiwan-friendly stance, his policy could have significant implications on Japan's relations with China and a clear departure from Abe's accommodative position, notwithstanding the perceived threat that its giant neighbour poses to Japan.

Kishi is the younger brother of Abe and is perceived to be pro-Taiwan as were his father Shinjiro Abe and grandfather and former Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi. Kishi was adopted by his uncle when he was a child and therefore his last name differs from Abe's. Earlier, under the strong influence of Toshihiro Nikai, Secretary-General of the Liberal Democratic Party and perceived to be pro-China, Suga had given the impression that he was averse to a "China containment" strategy but such an impression was dispelled when he chose Kishi as his defence minister. While China is wary of Suga's choice of Kishi as his defence minister, Taiwan is happy. Seen differently, there would not a major departure from Abe's Taiwan policy during Suga's dispensation.

Suga's choice to head the defence portfolio is interesting. Though Suga kept many top ministers who served in Abe's Cabinet such as Taro Aso as Deputy Prime Minister and Toshimitsu Motegi as foreign minister, he reshuffled some of them but choose Kishi over some others with more experience in defence matters. Kishi, who is secretary general of an all-party group of Diet members, is known to be promoting friendly ties with Taiwan. By doing so, Suga has put

China under watch.

Two days before his appointment as defence minister, Kishi had said that Japan's relations with Taiwan should "basically be in accord with Japan-China Joint Declaration of 1972". After his appointment, Kishi remarked that Japan's ties with Taiwan have been maintained on a non-governmental and working-level basis and that he would "handle things appropriately on this basis".

In this context, it may be recalled that in January 2020, as reported in a monthly magazine Seiron, Kishi had advocated pursuing security and defense cooperation between Japan and Taiwan. In that opinion piece, Kishi had observed that Japan "must by all means advance a Japan-Taiwan security dialogue", and that there should be three-way communication on defence involving Japan, the United States and Taiwan.

The media in Taiwan was overjoyed over Kishi's appointment as Japan's defence minister and was hopeful that he would work towards strengthening Japan-Taiwan ties in the security realm. Another related development that needs a close look is that when former Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori visited Taiwan, he reportedly told President Tsai that given an opportunity, Suga could make a telephone call to her. Because of the sensitivity of the issue and to avoid inflaming ties with China, Chief Cabinet Secretary Katsunobu Kato denied any such speculation.

Kishi's warm and pro-Taiwan stance can also be traced to an incident back in October 2015. When Tsai was in Tokyo in

October 2015 with the head of Japan's "Interchange Association", the organisation that acts as the main window for Japan-Taiwan ties, presumably Abe and Kishi were also present and engaged in unofficial contact, though at that time it was denied owing to sensitivity of such a meeting. If one connects the dots, it would transpire that Japan's old Taiwan policy is on track.

Whether Suga made a telephone call or not to Tsai is irrelevant but the fact that former Prime Minister Mori mentioned this possibility does convey Japan's outlook on Taiwan and that it would convey a strong message to China. Suga just cannot overlook the fundamental values Japan and Taiwan share and this would motivate him to deepen defence cooperation between the countries as Chinese bellicosity in regional affairs becomes unstoppable. The recent Quad meeting of the foreign ministers of four democracies of India, the United States, Japan and Australia that Japan hosted can be seen from this perspective and thus as another strategic milestone in the Indo-Pacific region.

China is always sensitive when it comes to the sovereignty issue. Even in India it reacted strongly when some Indian media published advertisements along with a photograph of Tsai congratulating Taiwan on its National Day on 10 October and asked that the media should stick to the official position of the Indian government's One-China policy. India rebutted the Chinese embassy's advice, reminding it that media is free in India and free to report the way it likes.

No wonder, Beijing greeted Suga's choice of Kishi as his defence minister with disappointment and sent a discreet warning that Japan-China ties could nosedive. In an indirect warning to Japan, the Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin cautioned that "the Japanese side will abide by the one-China principle and refrain from any form of official exchanges with the Taiwan region".

Beijing has not overlooked the fact that Kishi visited Taiwan in September 2020 for a memorial in honour of the late Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui and met with current President Tsai. Kishi's visit coincided with the visit of US Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar. China took these twin visits as a slap on its face.

In 2016, Kishi had iterated his pro-Taiwan stance by remarking that "Taiwan shares common values, maintains close economic and personal ties with Japan, and is an important friend". He went further by saying that by bolstering trilateral relations between Japan, the US and Taiwan, the three democratic nations can work towards stable development of cross-strait relations.

Kishi is not bothered that China does not take such diplomatic signals kindly and gets paranoid easily. To reassert his position, he endorsed the views of his predecessor, outgoing Defence Minister Taro Kono, that China has become a security threat to Japan.

From all indicators, it transpires that Kishi would not only go along with the policy of his brother's administration but shall do so more vigorously. While bolstering ties with the Quad member states, Japan is also concerned with China's incursions into Japan's surrounding areas and rising tensions on the Senkaku Islands issue.

A MEMBER OF THE **ANN**
ASIA NEWS NETWORK

ASIAN VOICES

Everyone must adhere to SOP

Across social media, the level of anger among Malaysians directed towards the political class, seen to be a primary source of recent infections, has been trending. The Prime Minister, in his Facebook Live statement on Oct 6, said that many of the cases in Sabah originated from undocumented migrants, who, being placed in detention centres, spread the virus to other detainees. But earlier stories of politicians not following the standard operating procedure had already triggered public disgust.

In particular, at a time when ordinary members of the public were being fined for breaching rules, one minister was alleged to have violated more serious quarantine rulings after returning from abroad. This was contrasted against the 14-day quarantine completed by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong and Raja Permaisuri Agong back in April after Istana Negara staff tested positive for the virus. Of course, those who are politically partisan will find ways to shift blame away from themselves. In relation to the Sabah infections, fault has been placed on the former chief minister for requesting the election, the governor for agreeing to it and the opposition for provoking one in the first place. Yet, while such expressions of disgust against politicians (and their attempts to shift blame in a partisan manner) are understandable, it's also important to remember the more noble justifications for having elections, and to entertain the possibility that for some of those seeking office, these purer intentions could conceivably have been present.

The Star

In the event, citizens had to weigh their future in terms of the specific threat of Covid-19, or the more multi-faceted policy implications (including those of public health) of the representatives they would elect to their state assembly and the government formed therefrom, aside from the six nominated members unique to Sabah. Others involved in the process included Election Commission personnel working to ensure that voting went smoothly with physical distancing, temperature checks and hand sanitising being practised. Although the numbers of Covid-19 cases seem frighteningly high, the official line is that the majority are isolated, so there is no need to return to a more restrictive version of the movement control order (MCO). Still, I have observed that people have reverted to greater caution on their own.

On my part, I have turned as many meetings as possible into online ones while ensuring that larger events saw even more strict adherence to the standard operating procedure. For the World Squash Day event hosted by the Negeri Sembilan Squash Association (of which I am president) at Seri Menanti, for instance, we obtained rigorous medical advice, allowed only half the capacity of the venue, verified that every attendee had no links to any of the clusters and had masks being worn at all times except while playing on court.



RAJARAM PANDA
The writer was formerly Senior Fellow, IDSA, New Delhi

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR editor@thestatesman.com

Global intervention

SIR, Apropos your incisive editorial, "Tougher approach" (13 October), Beijing-skeptic and pro-independence Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen has refused to acknowledge China's stance that Taiwan is part of "one

unlikely to continue adhering to the One China principle. Taiwan has never been under the jurisdiction of the People's Republic of China though Beijing regards it as a renegade province which must return to its fold.

cy but his backtracking on previous statements suggest he is still trying to grasp the importance of Sino-US ties. In view of China's pressure on Nepal to up the ante with India over its new road-building venture at Lipulekh Pass, and India's stance of never recognizing Taiwan as a separate nation, New Delhi

autocratic China which should have given up expansionist attitude honouring Tsai's approach.

Under these circumstances, international intervention seems imperative.

Yours, etc., S S Paul, Nadia, 13 October.

SHAKE CHINA UP

SIR, Your editorial, "Tougher Approach" (13 October) as well as commentator Harsha Kakar's article make it clear it is time to dump the one-China policy and should set every Indian thinking as to where we stand.

Our diplomats and political leaders seem to shake at their knees to call a spade a spade. Now we say that India is not the same as that it was in 1962.

To prove it we have purchased most expensive military hardware to face China as well as Pakistan. Can we now boldly say Arunachal Pradesh belongs to India from time immemorial?

This should be the first salvo. Then others should follow, like recognition of Taiwan as an independent state.

In this connection I would also draw attention to General Kakar's advice given in the 22 September issue of *The Statesman* that India should decouple business relations with China as fast as possible. That will

ESSENTIAL

SIR, In the wake of reports and rumours that coronavirus may stay on surface of paper, several residential welfare associations in the country decided not to allow newspaper delivery men into their complexes. Reacting to the move, last week Union information and broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said it is incorrect for any entity to stop door-to-door delivery of newspapers to people's homes. He said that he reads 20 newspapers every day and he hasn't seen any problems.

Undoubtedly, a newspaper is an essential item for human civilisation. In the absence of newspapers, one will be forced to depend on television channels that are airing incorrect information to manipulate their TRPs. Social media aren't reliable either. In these times of rumours and fake news, only a newspaper can disseminate authentic information.

Yours, etc., Khokan Das, Kolkata, 11 October.

shake up China.

Yours, etc., S N Guha, Kolkata, 14 October.

A GLOBAL HEADACHE

SIR, This refers to Harsha Kakar's article, "It is time to dump the one-China policy" (13 Oct). The stand-off between India and China across the LAC has proved beyond doubt that India has overcome the humiliation of 1962 and taken resort to a tit-for-tat approach that the Dragon understands better.

Wherever China hurts India's interests, the latter must pay it back in its own coin whenever it gets an opportunity. India should firmly stand by Taiwan, raise its voice of protest against the mainland's torture of Hong Kongers, suppression of Uighurs in Xinjiang and forcible occupation as well as human rights violations in Tibet. The "Wuhan Virus" has almost isolated China globally. In today's context it is highly likely that any Chinese misadventure against India will be collectively resisted by the global community because Beijing is now viewed with suspicion and has become infamous for its expansionist designs. The world deems it as the launch-pad of the devastating pandemic that is claiming lives daily. China now is the global headache.

Yours, etc., Aranya Sanyal, Siliguri, 14 October.



China" since 2016 despite China ratcheting up pressure on the island. Her extraordinary comeback for a second term in 2020 might arguably humble China's 'President-for-life', Xi Jinping, especially after the serious muscle-flexing in Hong Kong.

It is expected that the international community is

China's desire has been ignored by the electorate. China built artificial islands in the SCS, turning them into military and logistical bases.

What was most disappointing is President Donald Trump initially spoke directly to Tsai in 2016 and argued for the need to reconsider America's "One China" poli-

cy so that it does not antagonize China right now.

The Modi government's duplicitous role became apparent when it endorsed India's press freedom while at home the freedom of press has been strangled. Most people in democratic Taiwan have shown no interest in being run by

Acting locally may be killing India's lions



ARMIN ROSENCRANZ AND GOVIND SINGH

There are not one but four lions in the national emblem of India. The surname 'Singh' (lion) is a popular one in many parts of India, ranging from Rajasthan in the West to Manipur in the Northeast. This surname goes back over two thousand years, and its glory was reinstated in 1699 with the setting up of the Khalsa brotherhood in the north Indian state of Punjab.

The lion has been portrayed as the protector of faith and defender of dharma almost throughout Indian culture. Lord Vishnu is said to have taken the form of the half-man half-lion Narasimha, to destroy evil and protect religious freedom. The lion is also the vehicle of goddess Durga,

perhaps to further illustrate her strength and valour.

Yet, sometime around the 1970s, the Government of India snatched the national animal status from the lion and conferred it upon the Royal Bengal tiger. The arguments then were that the tiger had a more cosmopolitan appeal while the lion was simply limited to a small part of India, and some parts of Africa. It was this global appeal of the tiger that gave it the necessary edge over its predecessor to become a national symbol of India.

The newly declared national animal had to be protected, and a Project Tiger was launched shortly after this declaration. In its initial phase, Project Tiger was immensely helpful and doubled the number of tigers in India in just the first two decades of its implementation. But what it also did

was to push lion conservation, and the lion itself, to the back seat. Even as new tiger reserves kept getting declared, the last of the Asiatic lions had to be contained in the Gir forest of Gujarat. And their number, during the first two decades of Project Tiger, increased by only around 100.

What is perhaps more alarming is the comparison of the total number of tigers and lions in India at the start of Project Tiger. At the time when Project Tiger was being conceptualised, the total number of tigers in India was 1,827 and the total number of lions was only around 180. These were the last of the Asiatic lions, one of the two subspecies of the lion species, the other being the African lion.

So, what made the Government of India focus more on tiger conservation and not on the conservation of

the lion? The cosmopolitan appeal of the tiger has already been mentioned. Another factor that may have come into play is the comparison of the global figures of tiger and lion populations. Even today, the total number of tigers in the wild is estimated to be around 3,900 while the figure for lions is estimated to be around 20,000.

What gets overlooked in this data is that India accounts for over 70 per cent of the global tiger population but only around 3 per cent of the global lion population. Autecological investigation of the lion species reveals considerable differences between its two living subspecies. The Asiatic lion is relatively smaller, with a more compressed mane, thicker coat and a characteristic abdominal skin fold not found in its African counterpart. There are differences in the genetic

makeup as well as behaviour of these two subspecies, which emphasises the need to conserve the Asiatic lions despite the presence of a relatively large number of African lions.

The Asiatic lion, however, lies low in conservation priority and there does not seem to be any nation-wide concern to protect an animal that we all grew up to know as the king of the jungle. And perhaps what continues to be the biggest threat to the Asiatic lions is a problem, the solution for which has existed since at least the last 25 years. We have put all our lions in the same basket.

While the Gir forest may currently take pride in being synonymous with the Asiatic lions, it may also become their tombstone. This is because keeping a few hundred Asiatic lions in one habitat increases the probability of inbreeding in the population. The number of adult lions in Gir forest in 1968 was as low as 124. This number today is close to 515 with no new addition of lions from outside this gene pool. Inbreeding results in inbreeding depression which manifests into decreased biological fitness of a population.

It is for this reason that while any news of increase in number of lions in Gujarat is joyous, it must be taken with the proverbial pinch of salt. This is because the lions of Gir are always under a grave threat of a disease or epidemic that could wipe out their entire population in a matter of days. Sustaining the Asiatic lion subspecies therefore requires that an alternate habitat be created, and a number of lions be translocated to this new habitat.

Indeed, such a habitat has been prepared in the neighbouring state of Madhya Pradesh for many years. After the recent Independence Day announcement by the Prime Minister of India, on starting the much needed 'Project Lion', another neighbouring state of Rajasthan has also begun exploring the possibility of reintroducing Asiatic lions in its forests. 'Project Lion' has arrived late, but in the best interests of the Asiatic lions, let us hope it does prove to be better late than never. The first signs of the latter will be the actual witnessing of translocation of lions into new habitats that are as lion-friendly as the Gir forest continues to be.

The writers are, respectively, Professor and Associate Professor at Jindal School of Environment & Sustainability, O.P. Jindal Global University, Haryana, India.

100 YEARS AGO

OCCASIONAL NOTE

The Belgian delegation to the Inter-Allied Seamen's Conference at Brussels proposed a general strike of seamen as a means of enforcing an eight-hour day and forty-eight-hour week. The conference adopted the proposal but coupled it with a French amendment in favour of submitting the question in the first place to a joint commission of seamen and ship-owners, which may render a contest unnecessary. The Belgian seamen, in proposing a strike, threaten to spoil an excellent example which their countrymen are setting to the rest of Europe. Mr. Ernest Benn has given an account of his own observations in Belgium, according to which the Belgian working-man is really working. "The doctrine of work as the solvent of all trouble is accepted not only on the land but in the factories and workshops." This is the exact opposite of the doctrine of the Labour extremists who believe that the solvent of all trouble is extortion. The Belgian workman has more time than formerly for recreation, but this does not alter the fact that he is a hard worker. The Belgians, to a man, are doing their best, Mr. Benn declares, and this fact alone is sufficient to place Belgium at the head of the nations at this moment and to assure that she will be the first to enjoy the comforts and blessings of material prosperity. There is "no striving after an unattainable ideal; there is simply a practical determination to patch things up and get a start."

NEWS ITEMS

BOMBAY COTTON BROKERS' ASSOCIATION

Tension between the members of the Bombay Cotton Brokers' Association and the Cotton Contract Board has if anything been growing. The Association, alleging that the Bombay Government have not attended to their grievances formulated in a petition, held a meeting during the week to represent their case to the Government of India. Speakers at the meeting stated inter alia that since the institution of the Government control over the cotton trade, dealers were at the mercy of a small coterie. The Cotton Contract Board was invested with very wide discretionary powers. The meeting resolved that, pending the satisfactory redress of their grievances the members of the Association should not till further notice have any dealings in respect of the new season's contracts.

SUGGESTED CHURCH REUNION

Commenting on the appeal made in the report of the Lambeth Conference, The Times expresses the opinion that the missionary dioceses of the Anglican Church should make the first move in the direction of reunion with the non-episcopal churches, as the problems there are most acute. They have been considered on the spot, and all parties concerned have already declared their desire for reunion in various conferences. The Times says that the ground has already been largely prepared in southern India, and it is anticipated that Christian churches there will seek to respond to the appeal without delay. Similar, though slower, progress may be looked for in Canada, Australia, China and elsewhere.

THE LATE MR. PERROTT

The Lieutenant-Governor in Council has learnt with deep regret of the sudden death of Mr. Henry Ronald Taylor Simpson Perrott at Gaya. Mr. Perrott joined the Indian Civil Service in the year 1900 and was posted to the district of Shababat. He held charge of various Sub-divisions, and in the end of 1913 was appointed Deputy Commissioner of the Santal Parganas. The influence which he obtained in this district was of the utmost service to Government when in 1917 the recruitment of labourers for service in France was first undertaken. Mr. Perrott threw himself with vigour and enthusiasm into the task of persuading the Santals to undertake service overseas. His early death will be mourned by a wide circle of friends, officials and non-officials alike.

MONEY MARKET

The demand for money continues on a fair scale, and some banks are willing to pay six per cent for six to nine months' deposits, and the discount rate is seven per cent. The effect of raising sterling Exchange to a high level by administrative action has been that vast quantities of Indian produce have not been exported, and imports have been temporarily stimulated. The sudden slump in sterling Exchange does not bring up the price of imported goods to the parity of the ruling rates of sterling. The exporters and the importers both, therefore, require funds for the financing of Indian produce, and for the holding of foreign manufactures. The general feeling is to conserve finance, and to seek credit for an extended period at the present favourable rates.

Who's picking up \$11b US poll tab?

RICHARD BRIFFAULT



funds.

This year, as of August 31, all of the \$531 million funding Joe Biden's campaign so far came from private funds, according to Open Secrets, a publicly available database that tracks campaign finance data. So did the \$476 million funding President Donald Trump's reelection bid so far.

The private dollars that fuel U.S. elections come mostly from a tiny fraction of society. Critics of American inequality often talk about the "1%" – but in campaign finance it is the 0.0001 per cent who matter.

Federal law requires political campaigns, parties, PACs and outside groups to report the identities of donors who give at least \$200.

The September campaign finance filings – which cover contributions through the end of August – indicate that just 2.8 million people,

but do not have to disclose their donors because they claim to be primarily nonelectoral – suggests even more campaign money is provided by a few elite donors.

America's donor class is not representative of the broader community whose interests are at stake in an election.

Donors are older, whiter and wealthier than America as a whole, my analysis shows, and they hail disproportionately from certain places. So far this year, more money has come from Washington, D.C., than from 20 states combined, and Joe Biden raised 10 per cent of his money from just six zip codes – areas in Washington, D.C., New York City, a New York suburb and a suburb of Indianapolis.

Certain industries, like finance, real estate, communications, law, health care, natural resources, oil and gas, are also particularly big election spenders via both personal and PAC donations related to the industries. There is no formal tracking of these donors.

According to media reports and websites like Open Secrets, recent years have seen a striking increase in the number and importance of small donors. This year, small donors account for about 22 per cent of campaign fundraising, up from 14 per cent in 2016. That's a step in a more democratic direction. But big donors are still pivotal to America's campaign finance system.

Whoever wins in 2020 will be tasked with addressing the pandemic's devastating economic and public health harms. A host of other enormously consequential issues – from racial justice and immigration to

trade, the environment and the courts – also hinge on the election outcome.

Having a small number of very wealthy individuals financing political candidates distorts the political process. This is less a classical quid pro quo – the exchange of campaign dollars for votes – than it is politicians' reluctance to take positions that are at odds with the interests of their large donors. What gets on – or stays off – the legislative agenda can be driven by donor concerns.

Donor influence tends to be more significant for issues that get little media attention – who gets a specific tax break, for example, or qualifies for coronavirus relief – than for hot-button concerns like reproductive rights. But campaign money inevitably shapes government action and who benefits from it, who is harmed and who is ignored.

As the Supreme Court explained in sustaining the 2002 McCain-Feingold Act's ban on "soft money" – donations that can affect an election without being expressly focused on the election – The evidence connects soft money to manipulations of the legislative calendar, leading to Congress's failure to enact, among other things, generic drug legislation, tort reform and tobacco legislation."

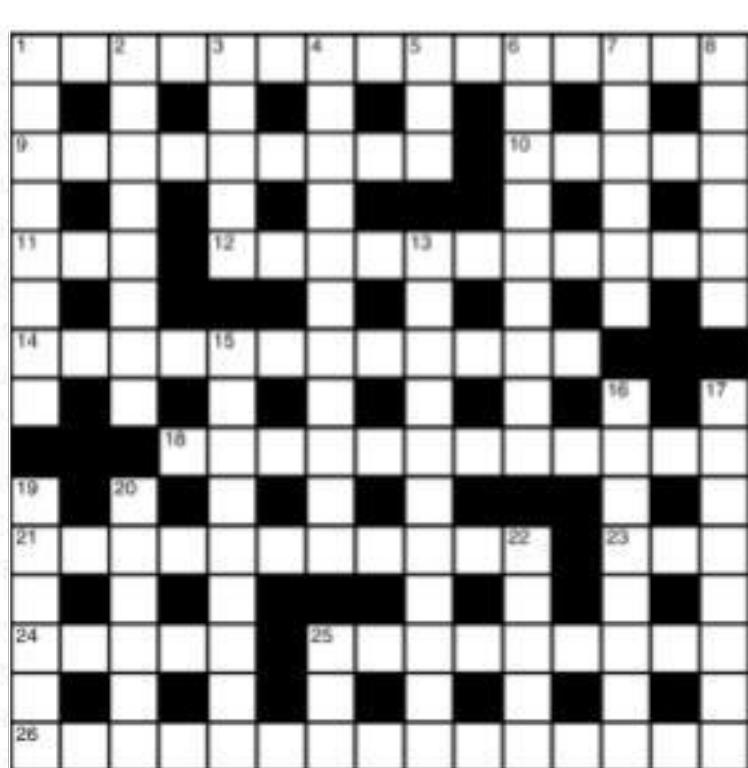
In 2018, then-federal budget director and former congressman Mick Mulvaney admitted as much with disarming candor: "We had a hierarchy in my office in Congress. If you're a lobbyist who never gave us money, I didn't talk to you. If you're a lobbyist who gave us money, I might talk to you."

As the saying goes, he who pays the piper calls the tune.

The writer is Joseph P. Chamberlain Professor of Legislation, Columbia University. This article was published on www.conversation.com

NO 28105

CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

ACROSS

- 1 Looked at one way, 2020 was first of two parts (6-9)
- 9 Sold vice, but not very subtle about it? (9)
- 10 Physical river cut (5)
- 11 See 23
- 12 Factory that is invested in by broadcasting tycoon? (11)
- 14 Dance medium with chairs etc. – missing 11 could make for awkwardness (12)
- 18 Courter is upset with me having beauty not brains (12)
- 21 Showy type of fake

DOWN

- 2 Stop close to road and, if empty, put in children (8)
- 3 Substitute ballplayers
- 4 For pacey but outnumbered centres (5)
- 5 Nature could be somewhere to find refreshment (3,3)
- 24 Contents of 17? (5)
- 25 Bit of delicate bone jewellery coming in droplets (9)
- 26 Manipulative behaviour could make you listen (6,9)
- 27 Virgin Queen brought in wives essentially for exchanging information (11)
- 28 Deliveries with wrong,

wrong, wrong quantity of Flora (9)

- 4 Fight here if held up by British PM or ignored by Lord (11)
- 5/25 Marksman's target finally hit by stranger from the South (3,3)
- 6 Being fixated with what Europe used to be is odd (9)
- 7 Nearly sick after fast food for vegetarians? (6,9)
- 8 Soothing music for two opened by lush chords at the beginning (6)
- 13 Virgin Queen brought in wives essentially for exchanging information (11)
- 16 Apologetic but right to stop idiot wearing item stolen by student? (8)
- 17 Starter in Le Mans makes car go through clutches (8)
- 19 A church abandoning God for something they can count on (6)
- 20 Tavern ale could be thus: without a reception to put it in (6)
- 22 Ring, ring, ring – being incredibly tolerant to start with (5)
- 25 See 5

NOTE: Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required. (By arrangement with The Independent, London)

THUMBNAILS

BSNL, MTNL services: The Central government has mandated all ministries, public departments and public sector units to use telecom services of state-run Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL). "The government of India has, inter alia, approved the mandatory utilisation of capacities of BSNL and MTNL by all ministries/departments of government of India, CPSEs, Central autonomous bodies," a memorandum issued by the department of telecommunications (DoT) said. The memorandum dated 12 October, was issued to all secretaries and departments under the Centre following consultation with the finance ministry.

EIH rights issues: The rights issue of EIH Ltd, which runs hotels and resorts under the Oberoi brand, has been over-subscribed, with Rs 561 crore being offered against the issue size of Rs 350 crore. EIH offered 5.37 crore shares for subscription to existing shareholders at a price of Rs 65. The rights issue opened on 29 September and closed on 13 October. The firm received applications for 8.63 crore shares or 160 per cent of the issue size at the close, according to market sources.

Ather Energy: Electric two-wheeler maker Ather Energy said the deliveries of its flagship scooter Ather 450X (125cc) will begin from November. The company, in a Press statement, also said that by Q1 of next year, the Ather 450X will be seen on roads across 10 cities, including Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Pune, Delhi, Ahmedabad, Kochi, Kolkata and Coimbatore.

Honda cars: After the success of its online car booking platform, Honda Cars India Ltd. (HCIL) has announced the launch of its comprehensive online car buying platform "Honda from Home" to offer an extremely convenient, safe and secure car buying experience to its customers, according to a Press release from the company.

Samsung: Samsung has launched a new variant of its smartphone Galaxy A21s with 6GB RAM, 128 GB storage. The new 6GB/128GB variant is priced at Rs 17,499, the company said in a Press statement, adding that Galaxy A21s is the most affordable Galaxy A smart-phone of this year.

Himalaya Drug: Himalaya Drug Company has expanded the portfolio of Himalaya For Moms, its exclusive mothercare category. The company has launched Himalaya Stretch Mark Oil & Cream to help reduce the appearance of stretch marks during and post-pregnancy for mothers, said a Press statement issued by the company.

WPI inflation at 7-mth high of 1.32 percent

Spiralling prices of food items, especially vegetables, push wholesale inflation up

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 14 OCTOBER

PRICE RISE

► Inflation in food articles during September was at 8.17 per cent, as against 3.84 per cent in August.
► Vegetables as a category had inflation of 36.54 per cent in September and potato price skyrocketed by 107.63 percent from a year-ago period.
► Onions, however, had



deflation at 31.64 per cent and in fruits, the inflation was at (-) 3.89 per cent.

while deciding the monetary policy stance, Icra's principal economist Aditi Nayak said: "Today's data (on WPI inflation) further cements the likelihood of an extended pause from the monetary policy committee (MPC)."

Before recording an increase of 0.16 per cent in August, the WPI inflation was in the negative territory for four straight months - April (-) 1.57 per cent, May (-) 3.37 per cent, June (-) 1.81 per cent and July (-) 0.25 per cent.

Inflation in food articles during September was at 8.17

Increase in revenue and margin outlook for FY21 is due to the continued trust clients have on us

SALIL PAREKH
INFOSYS CEO AND MD

Infosys ups revenue forecast for FY21, Q2 net rises 20.5%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 14 OCTOBER

REPORT CARD



to Rs 24,570 crore in the quarter under review.

► Infosys' consolidated net profit grew by 20.5 per cent to Rs 4,845 crore for the September quarter of financial year 2020-21
► The company's revenues rose by 8.5 per cent

client relevance, are helping it achieve differentiated results in the market, and the same is reflected in the quarterly performance.

The company has declared an interim dividend of Rs 12 per equity share.

Infosys chief financial officer Nilanjana Roy said free cash flows grew significantly in H1, driven by its consistent focus on liquidity and cash management.

"Consequently, we are increasing our interim dividend per share by 50 per cent to Rs 12," he added.

The company also said it is giving 100 per cent variable

pay along with a special incentive for the second quarter.

Additionally, it will also roll out salary increases and promotions across all levels, effective 1 January, Infosys chief operating officer Pravin Rao said. The company has 2,40,208 employees at the end of September 2020 quarter.

"Recognising the continuing stellar commitment from our employees during these times, we are paying out variable pay for the quarter at 100 per cent. We will pay a one-time special incentive in Q3 for our junior employees," Parekh said during a virtual briefing.

to the 6 August circular and also those sector-specific thresholds not specified in the circular dated 7 September.

But lenders shall make their own internal assessments regarding eligibility.

Loans against property will also be eligible for recast if they don't fall under the personal loan category.

The quantum of the loan eligible for recast depends on the outstanding as on the date of invocation, which is 1 March 2020, provided it was a standard account then.

The clarification also said the new definition of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) effective 26 June, will not impact their eligibility for resolution but will be based on the definition that existed as of 1 March 2020.

It also clarified that any company from any sector is eligible for resolution, except those exclusions prescribed in paragraph 2 of the annex

to the 6 August circular and also those sector-specific thresholds not specified in the circular dated 7 September.

But lenders shall make their own internal assessments regarding eligibility.

Loans against property will also be eligible for recast if they don't fall under the personal loan category.

The quantum of the loan eligible for recast depends on the outstanding as on the date of invocation, which is 1 March 2020, provided it was a standard account then.

It has also been clarified that all farm credit exposures, including non-banking financial institution (NBFCs), can be recast under this scheme, but loans to allied activities such as dairy, fisheries, animal husbandry, poultry, bee-keeping and sericulture are excluded from the scope of the resolution framework.

Cabinet nod to demerger of NSP from NMDC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 14 OCTOBER

The government today approved demerger of the under-construction Nagarjar Steel Plant (NSP) from NMDC, and its strategic disinvestment by selling the entire stake of the Centre to a strategic buyer.

State-owned NMDC, under the ministry of steel, is constructing the steel plant at Nagarjar in Chhattisgarh.

"The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has given its in-principle approval to the demerger of Nagarjar Steel Plant (NSP) from NMDC and strategic disinvestment of the demerged company (NSP) by selling entire Government of India stake in it to a strategic buyer," an official

Sebi cautions investors

NEW DELHI, 14 OCTOBER

The Securities and Exchange Board of India today cautioned investors against unsolicited investment tips with respect to listed companies. Besides, it advised investors to exercise appropriate due diligence before dealing in the securities market.

The Sebi has noticed that unsolicited messages containing stock tips or investment advice are increasingly being circulated through bulk SMS, websites and social media platforms.

Such messages are sent to investors and general public usually recommending to deal in specific stocks of listed companies, indicating target prices and giving fraudulent, misleading information relating to listed companies, inducing them to deal in these stocks, the regulator noted.

RBI clarifications on loan recast

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 14 OCTOBER

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has clarified that loans which have remained standard without any defaults as of 1 March 2020, will be eligible for restructuring under the pandemic-related resolution framework issued in August.

In clarifications issued late last night to borrowers as well as lenders about the 6 August circular, the RBI said a loan account that was due for more than 30 days as on 1 March 2020, but subsequently got regularised, will be ineligible for resolution under the Covid-19 resolution framework.

This is because the restructuring framework is applicable only for eligible borrowers who were classified as standard as of 1 March 2020. However, such accounts

may still be resolved under the prudential framework dated 7 June 2019, the central bank said.

Similarly, the regulator said restructuring of under-implementation project loans involving deferment of date of commencement of operations (DCCO) are excluded from the scope of resolution framework and that such accounts will continue to be governed by the 7 February 2020, and the other relevant instructions as applicable to specific category of lending institutions.

Also, in case of multiple lenders to a single borrower whose resolution is undertaken, all lending institutions will have to enter into an inter-creditor agreement.

On whether loans of Rs 100 crore and above will require an independent credit evaluation by any one credit rating agency, the apex bank said,



in case credit opinion is obtained from more than one rating agency, all such credit opinions must be RP4 rating or above.

The clarification also said the new definition of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) effective 26 June, will not impact their eligibility for resolution but will be based on the definition that existed as of 1 March 2020.

Also, in case of multiple lenders to a single borrower whose resolution is undertaken, all lending institutions will have to enter into an inter-creditor agreement.

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Research paper calls for steps to boost exports

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 14 OCTOBER

India should resist the misleading allure of the domestic market and should zealously boost exports, according to a research paper co-authored by former chief economic advisor Arvind Subramanian.

The paper, jointly authored by Subramanian and Pennsylvania State University professor Shoumitro Chatterjee, said India is turning inward, despite demand is assuming primacy over export orientation and trade restrictions are increasing, reversing a three-decade trend.

"Resisting the misleading allure of the domestic market, India should zealously boost export performance and deploy all means to achieve that," said the paper, titled

still enjoys large export opportunities, especially in labour-intensive sectors such as clothing and footwear, but exploiting these opportunities requires more openness and more global integration.

"Indeed, given constraints on public, corporate and household balance sheets, abandoning export orientation is akin to killing the only goose that can lay eggs," it said.

The paper added that India's real market size, defined as consumers with a modicum of purchasing power, is not big. "It is much smaller than the headline GDP number, much smaller than China's, and only a small fraction of the world market. The reason is that India has many poor consumers while the rich tend to be large savers, limiting their consumption," it added.

Equitas SFB files papers for ₹280-cr IPO

NEW DELHI, 14 OCTOBER

Equitas Holdings today said its subsidiary Equitas Small Finance Bank has filed red herring prospectus (RHP) with the Registrar of Companies for initial public offer to raise Rs 280 crore. On 11 October 2020, ESFB had filed the RHP with the RoC Chennai in connection with the proposed initial public offering of equity shares for an amount of Rs 2,800 million, Equitas Holdings (EHL) said. The RHP has been taken on record by the RoC on 13 October 2020, it added.

As per the proposed offer, Equitas Small Finance Bank (ESFB) will raise fresh capital up to Rs 2,800 million, where the promoter EHL will sell up to 7,20,00,000 equity shares, it said. The offer period for anchor investor is one day prior to the bid opening date i.e. 19 October 2020.

In terms of what can be done going forward, clearly on the fiscal side, the IMF believes there is more that can be done to provide support to households and firms that have been affected by the pandemic, Malhar Shyam Nabar, division chief, research department, IMF, told reporters on Tuesday at a news conference here on the eve of the annual meetings of the IMF and the World Bank.

The International Monetary Fund in its annual World Economic Outlook significantly downgraded India's growth for the financial year 2020 to minus 10.3 per cent.

At the same time, IMF said that India is likely to bounce back with an impressive 8.8 per cent growth rate in 2021, but for this New Delhi needs to ramp up its efforts in various fields.

He further said there is a need to tilt the composition of the fiscal support towards more of the direct spending and tax relief measures and to rely slightly less on the liquidity support measures, the credit guarantees, which are clearly important to support the provision of credit in the economy.

But if you look at the

approach that was taken, there was more of an emphasis on that type of measure. We think that there is room to recalibrate and to provide more direct relief and spending support, which could have a first order impact on preventing even worse outcomes, Nabar said.

On the monetary policy side, the Reserve Bank had come in very aggressively early on, he said. "It has paused recently with its interest rate cuts, looking through this inflation that they have had recently, but we believe there is more that the RBI can do," he added.

And together with these efforts, both on the fiscal side and the monetary side, we think that would put India on a path to recovery going forward, Nabar said.

Singapore Airlines' innovative move to stay afloat

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, 14 OCTOBER

Enjoy the celebrated Singapore Airlines' in-flight service ~ but with the aircraft grounded at the airport: "Restaurant A380 @Changi" has become one of creative businesses from one of the world's leading airlines in its fight for survival amid a pandemic-mauled airline industry.

As example of the never-say-die spirit to overcome a crisis, Singapore Airlines (SIA) has launched the "Discover Your Singapore Airlines" innovative initiatives for the next few weeks.

Airlines worldwide including in India are exploring different income avenues to keep afloat, such as becom-

ing cargo carriers and expanding their in-flight shopping as a retail business. Singapore Airlines has gone further.

"With Covid-19 drastically reducing the number of flights operated by the SIA Group, we have created unique activities that would allow us to engage with our fans and customers during this time," said SIA chief executive officer Goh Choon Phong.

On weekends starting 24 October, "Restaurant A380 @Changi" offers a special dining experience with SIA's award-winning service inside a stationary Airbus A380, the world's largest passenger aircraft. Despite the SIA dining ticket costing up to \$496 (Rs 35,917), the October dates were sold out within 30 minutes.

A pre-lunch tour of the A380 will also be available. Diners

have signed on to a waitlist for lunch and dinner during the November weekends, for the world's first restaurant of its kind ~ an Airbus A380 parked in one of the world's leading airports.

Diners can choose from separate menus for the economy, business and first class, from meals served on SIA flights to Paris, Sydney, Tokyo and New Delhi.

Options include SIA's gourmet cuisine from Singapore chef Shermay Lee, and other prominent chefs Georges Blanc (France), Matt Moran (Australia), Yoshihiro Murata (Japan) and Sanjeev Kapoor (India).

A pre-lunch tour of the A380 will also be available. Diners

will get gifts if they arrive in traditional Singapore wear such as sarong kebaya, cheongsam, saree, batik shirt.

"Inside Singapore Airlines" will be another unique initiative

in November during the school holidays. It provides a rare behind-the-scenes tour of the highly-rated Singapore Airlines training facilities.

Visitors will get a tour of more than 70 years of SIA's history, interact with pilots, cabin crew, and know more about the intensive and intricate training SIA staff undergo.

Children can dress up and role-play as cabin crew, and take home their own SIA sarong kebaya uniform. Adults can choose to operate a full flight simulator and even attend a grooming workshop.

Since 5 October, "SIA@Home" has let customers enjoy the award-winning SIA in-flight dining experience at home. Home-delivery customers can choose from 10 menus featuring first-class and business class meals, with option of SIA cutlery such as the Wedgwood and Narumi dining ware and Lalique crystal glasses.

To ensure the health and safety of customers in these Covid-19 times, SIA says it has undertaken to implement enhanced cleaning procedures and precautionary measures. Diners will be seated in groups of up to five, with "safe distancing" (sounds better than social distancing) between groups.

Diners and crew

More realistic battle training must be carried out and more efforts should be made to innovate in terms of combat theories, training methods and task planning



CHINESE PRESIDENT XI JINPING

ASKING THE COUNTRY'S MARINE CORPS TO TURN ITSELF INTO ELITE FORCE

The Statesman

NEW DELHI, THURSDAY 15 OCTOBER 2020

09

Nagorno-Karabakh row raises threat of deadly escalation

Truce failure reflects uncompromising positions that have stymied decades of diplomatic efforts

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOSCOW, 14 OCTOBER

A Russian attempt to broker a cease-fire to end the worst outbreak of hostilities over the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh in more than a quarter-century has failed to get any traction, with rivals Azerbaijan and Armenia trading blame for new attacks.

The failure of the truce that was supposed to begin Saturday reflects the uncompromising positions of the two South Caucasus nations that have stymied decades of diplomatic efforts. The escalation of fighting raises the specter of a wider conflict that could draw in Russia and Turkey and threaten Caspian Sea energy exports.

A look at some military and geopolitical aspects of the conflict and its potential fallout:

ROOTS OF THE CONFLICT: Nagorno-Karabakh, populated mostly by Armenians, was an autonomous region inside Azerbaijan during the Soviet era. Historic tensions between Christian Armenians and mostly Muslim Azerbaijani, fueled by memories of the 1915 massacre of 1.5 million Armenians by Ottoman Turks, exploded in the final years of the Soviet Union.

In 1988, the region sought to join Armenia, triggering hostilities that morphed into an all-out war as the USSR collapsed in 1991. By the time a 1994 cease-fire ended the fighting, an estimated 30,000



Men shelter from shelling in a basement of a building in the city of Terter, Azerbaijan, on Wednesday, during the ongoing military conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. AFP

people had been killed and up to 1 million were displaced.

Armenian forces not only held Nagorno-Karabakh itself but also seized substantial chunks of land outside the territory's borders.

FAILED PEACE INITIATIVES:

Ever since Armenian forces routed Azerbaijani troops in the war, international mediators have sought a political settlement.

Russia, the US and France, which co-sponsored the peace talks under the aegis of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, have put forward numerous peace initiatives, but Armenia's stiff resistance to surrendering any land has been a key stumbling block.

MILITARY DISPARITY: While separatist forces in the Nagorno-Karabakh and the Armenian military continue to rely mostly on aging Soviet-built weapons, Azerbaijan has completely revamped its arsenal with state-of-the-art attack drones and powerful long-range multiple rocket systems supplied by its neighbor and ally, Turkey.

More than two weeks of fighting has shown that Azerbaijan has clearly outgunned the Nagorno-Karabakh forces and put them on the defensive. Azerbaijani troops have made significant advances in several areas around Nagorno-Karabakh and showered its towns with rockets and artillery shells.

Armenian forces have countered with Soviet-built howitzers, antiquated BM-21 rocket launchers and obsolete Tochka-U missiles that lack the punch and precision of Azerbaijan's more modern weapons.

TURKEY'S NEW ROLE:

Unlike previous outbursts of hostilities over Nagorno-Karabakh, NATO-member Turkey, which has close ethnic, cultural and historic bonds with Azerbaijan, took a higher profile and vowed to help Azerbaijan reclaim its territory. Turkey's newly assertive role reflects President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's ambitions to expand his nation's clout.

Armenian officials say Turkey is directly involved in

the conflict and is sending Syrian mercenaries to fight on Azerbaijan's side. Turkey has denied deploying combatants to the region, but a Syrian war monitor and Syria-based opposition activists have confirmed that Turkey has sent hundreds of Syrian opposition fighters to fight in Nagorno-Karabakh.

LOOMING ESCALATION:

Landlocked Armenia, emaciated by three decades of Turkish and Azerbaijani blockades, lacks resources for a drawn-out conflict. But it can't be expected to yield to pressure. Patriotic sentiments run high, and Armenians of all trades and ages have volunteered to go the front lines.

If Armenian forces in Nagorno-Karabakh start losing ground, Armenia could raise the stakes in the conflict by recognizing the separatist region's independence — something it hasn't done yet — and openly challenging Azerbaijan militarily. So far,

Armenian officials have denied making any strikes on Azerbaijan from its territory, a claim contested by Azerbaijan.

Armenia aims to preserve the 1994 status quo in the region and desperately needs a ceasefire to contain the damage and regroup.

CONFICTING GOALS:

While Armenia aims to preserve the 1994 status quo in the region and desperately needs a ceasefire to contain the damage and regroup.

Azerbaijan, with Turkey's blessing, clearly is bracing for a long fight, hoping to bleed Armenia and force it to make concessions.

The escalation of fighting is a major challenge for Russia, which has a military base in Armenia but also has sought to maintain good ties with Azerbaijan and avoid a showdown with Turkey.

Russia and Turkey have learned to accommodate mutual interests in Syria and Libya and have developed strong economic ties, but the Armenian forces in Nagorno-Karabakh are cornered. If the Armenian forces target the strategic pipeline, Azerbaijan could also up the ante.

Armenian authorities also charge that Turkey provides Azerbaijan with intelligence and even air cover, claiming that a Turkish F-16 fighter jet shot down an Armenian warplane. Turkey and Azerbaijan have denied the claim, but Azerbaijan's president admitted that Turkish F-16s have stayed on in Azerbaijan's weeks after a joint military exercise. He insisted that they have remained grounded.

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Armenia aims to preserve the 1994 status quo in the region and desperately needs a ceasefire to contain the damage and regroup.

Azerbaijan, with Turkey's blessing, clearly is bracing for a long fight, hoping to bleed Armenia and force it to make concessions.

The escalation of fighting is a major challenge for Russia, which has a military base in Armenia but also has sought to maintain good ties with Azerbaijan and avoid a showdown with Turkey.

Russia and Turkey have learned to accommodate mutual interests in Syria and Libya and have developed strong economic ties, but the Armenian forces in Nagorno-Karabakh are cornered. If the Armenian forces target the strategic pipeline, Azerbaijan could also up the ante.

DIVINE TOUCH



An artist gives a finishing touch to Goddess Durga ahead of the Dashain Festival in Kathmandu Wednesday.

Thai democracy protesters march despite cop, rival groups

BANGKOK, 14 OCTOBER

Thai activists hoping to keep up the momentum in their campaign for democratic change launched a third major rally in Bangkok on Wednesday, amid concerns about a possible confrontation with police or rival groups supporting the government.

Despite a massive security presence and harassment from counter-demonstrators, thousands of protesters proceeded with a planned march from Bangkok's Democracy Monument toward Government House, the offices of Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha. Prime minister, get out! they chanted.

Before leaving Democracy Monument, several small clashes broke out between protesters and their opponents, who traded punches and threw plastic bottles as police tried to keep them apart.

There was speculation that the counter-protesters were organized by the authorities, with videos on social media showing municipal trucks carrying groups to the site. The protesters negotiated their way past two police checkpoints but were blocked at a third, and it was unclear what they would do next.

The protesters announced plan is to surround Government House for at least a night. The protest got off to a rocky start after organizers issued a post-midnight call for followers to begin assembling at Democracy Monument at 8 a.m. to assure they could secure the venue for the rally's scheduled 2 p.m. start.

The area was blanketed with police, stationed in an organized manner but wearing yellow sports shirts instead of standard uniforms.

Yellow shirts are a symbol of devotion to the monarchy, and are strongly associated with conservative politics. AP

Kyrgyzstan Parl confirms PM nomination in repeat

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOSCOW, 14 OCTOBER

Kyrgyzstan's parliament on Wednesday voted again to nominate a prime minister after the country's president vetoed the previous decision because of questions over its legitimacy.

The back-and-forth reflected the political crisis that has unfolded in the Central Asian country since a disputed parliamentary election triggered mass protests earlier this month. The parliament nominated politician Sadyr Zhamarov as the new prime minister after a similar vote on Saturday, which was challenged by its legitimacy.

Armenian authorities so far have vowed not to target Azerbaijan's infrastructure, including an oil pipeline, but their calculus may change if Armenian forces in Nagorno-Karabakh are cornered. If the Armenian forces target the strategic pipeline, Azerbaijan could also up the ante.

strengthen stability in the country, all our decisions need to be legitimate and not be questioned, Jeenbekov said.

The lawmakers on also supported Zhamarov's suggestions for the Cabinet.

Kyrgyzstan plunged into chaos last week after mass protests erupted the day after a parliamentary election appeared to show parties connected to the ruling elite winning. Protesters seized government buildings, looting some offices, and the Central Election Commission responded by nullifying the October 4 balloting.

As the unrest continued, opposition groups announced plans to form a new government and oust Jeenbekov. Jeenbekov said he may consider stepping down after the political situation in the country stabilizes, and declared a state of emergency in the country's capital, Bishkek, in a bid to end the turmoil.

They said the legislators didn't have a quorum to make the decision.

President Sooronbai Jeenbekov refused to sign the decree confirming Zhamarov's appointment and asked the parliament to hold another vote. In order to maintain and

Pak re-elected to UN rights body

ISLAMABAD, 14 OCTOBER

Pakistan has been re-elected to the United Nations Human Rights Council despite opposition from activist groups over its abysmal human rights records. Among the five candidates from the Asia-Pacific region vying for four seats in the UN's premiere human rights body, Pakistan secured the highest number of votes, the Foreign Office said.

In a secret-ballot voting in the 193-member UN General Assembly on that race, Pakistan secured 169 votes, Uzbekistan received 164, Nepal 150, China 139 and Saudi 130. The race was won by Pakistan.

Armenian officials so far have vowed not to target Azerbaijan's infrastructure, including an oil pipeline, but their calculus may change if Armenian forces in Nagorno-Karabakh are cornered. If the Armenian forces target the strategic pipeline, Azerbaijan could also up the ante.

Russia vows in-kind response to EU sanctions over Navalny poisoning

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOSCOW, 14 OCTOBER

Russia's foreign minister said Wednesday that Moscow will respond in kind to the European Union's sanctions over the poisoning of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny.

Navalny, a corruption investigator and longtime foe of Russian President Vladimir Putin, is in Germany recovering from what German authorities said was a nerve agent poisoning. This week, EU foreign ministers agreed to impose

sanctions on Russian officials and organizations blamed over the incident.

The Germans are not planning to provide any facts, despite all international and legal obligations. We respond in kind, this is diplomatic practice, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said in an interview Wednesday.

Navalny fell ill on Aug 20 during a domestic flight in Russia, and was flown to Germany for treatment two days later.

Last week, tests conducted at labs designated by the

Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons confirmed that the poison used on Navalny was Novichok.

Navalny asserted that his poisoning couldn't have been ordered without Putin's involvement, an accusation the Kremlin vehemently denied.

France and Germany urged their EU partners at a meeting to freeze the assets of those suspected of involvement and ban them from traveling in Europe under sanctions to combat the use and spread of chemical weapons.

Korean boy band BTS faces uproar in China

ASSOCIATED PRESS

SEOUL, 14 OCTOBER



Chinese nationalists erupted in anger at South Korean boy band BTS after its leader thanked Korean War veterans for their sacrifices.

The singer, who goes by RM, made the remark in a recorded acceptance speech for an award from the Korea Society for promoting US-Korean relations. We will always remember the history of pain that our two nations shared together and the sacrifices of countless men and women, RM said in the speech, which included no mention of China.

After 70 years, the world we are living in is much closer than before. Boundaries in many aspects are getting more blurred, RM said.

As members of the global community, we should build

a deeper understanding and solidarity to be happier together. Chinese internet users and state media took RM's comments as a slap at China, whose soldiers fought alongside North Korean forces during their failed attempt to annex South Korea in the 1950-53 war. They accused RM of ignoring the role played by China in the war, which Chinese Communist Party propaganda blames on the United States, instead of North Korean leader Kim Il Sung's

attack on South Korea.

Before, I thought some BTS songs were pretty good. Now, they seem to be covered in excrement, said a commenter on the microblog service Sina Weibo. Insulting China is absolutely not allowed.

A hashtag BTS Insults China

had been viewed more than 4.5 million times, according to Sina Weibo.

Many Chinese netizens pointed out that the speech plays up to US netizens, but the country played the role of aggressor in the war, said an article in the Global Times newspaper, controlled by the Chinese Communist Party.

The attacks reflect Beijing's assertiveness abroad and enduring Chinese sensitivity about the Korean Peninsula.

Asked about the controversy, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson, Zhao

Lijian, said, What I want to say is that it should be our common pursuit to take history as a mirror, face the future, cherish peace and promote friendship. The ruling party uses the entirely state-controlled media to whip up anger against foreign companies, celebrities or governments that take steps Beijing dislikes.

Last year, Chinese state TV suspended broadcasts of National Basketball Association games after the general manager of the Houston Rockets expressed support for anti-government protesters in Hong Kong. Broadcasts resumed this week.

In 2017, Beijing destroyed South Korean retailer Lotte's business in China after the company sold land to South Korea's government to install an anti-missile system opposed by Chinese leaders.

Pakistan has been re-elected to the United Nations Human Rights Council despite opposition from activist groups over its abysmal human rights records. Among the five candidates from the Asia-Pacific region vying for four seats in the UN's premiere human rights body, Pakistan secured the highest number of votes, the Foreign Office said.

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Armenian officials so far have vowed not to target Azerbaijan's infrastructure, including an oil pipeline, but their calculus may change if Armenian forces in Nagorno-Karabakh are cornered. If the Armenian forces target the strategic pipeline, Azerbaijan could also up the ante.

NEED TO KNOW

HOSPITALS

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RAILWAY INQUIRY

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<h5



I'm running against the single worst candidate in the history of American presidential politics..Can you imagine if you lose to a guy like this?

US PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP

SPEAKING TO SUPPORTERS IN THE BATTLEGROUND STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

WEATHER

CITY	MAX	MIN
SINGAPORE	29°C	25°C H
HONG KONG	26°C	20°C H
TOKYO	18°C	12°C CL
LONDON	17°C	9°C S
DUBAI	30°C	25°C S
SAN FRANCISCO	13°C	04°C C H
NEW YORK	10°C	07°C S
MOSCOW	16°C	09°C H

S=sunny, CL=clear, H=hazy, R=rainy...

THUMBNAILS



NASA astronauts of the ISS expedition 64, wave as they board the Soyuz MS-17 spacecraft in Kazakhstan on Wednesday. AFP

Theft attempt in museum: A Congolese activist was fined \$ 3,200 on Wednesday for trying to take a 19th-century African funeral pole from a Paris museum in a protest against colonial-era injustice that he streamed online. The Paris court convicted Emery Mwazulu Idiyanza and two other activists of attempted theft. AP

Holocaust survivors' aid: Germany has agreed to provide more than a half billion euros to aid Holocaust survivors struggling under the burdens of the pandemic, the organization that negotiates compensation with the German government said on Wednesday. The payments will be going to approximately 240,000 survivors around the world. AP

Walmart deal: Walmart says it will spread out its traditional one-day Black Friday deals over three weekends in November in an effort to reduce crowds in its stores. The largest retailer said on Wednesday that more of its doorbuster deals will be reserved for online, as a way to steer more shoppers away from its stores. AP

WB approves \$12 billion to finance virus vaccines, care

WASHINGTON, 14 OCTOBER

The World Bank has approved \$ 12 billion in financing to help developing countries buy and distribute coronavirus vaccines, tests, and treatments, aiming to support the vaccination of up to 1 billion people.

The \$ 12 billion envelope is part of a wider World Bank Group package of up to \$ 160 billion to help developing countries fight the pandemic, the bank said in a statement late Tuesday.

The World Bank said its Covid emergency response programmes are already reaching 111 countries.

Citizens in developing countries also need access to safe and effective vaccines, it said. We are extending and expanding our fast-track approach to address the Covid emergency so that developing countries have fair and equal access to vaccines, said the bank's president, David Malpass, said.

Access to safe and effective vaccines and strengthened delivery systems is key to alter the course of the pandemic and help countries experiencing catastrophic economic and fiscal impacts move toward a resilient recovery, he said.

The International Finance Corporation, the private sector lending arm of the World Bank is investing in vaccine manufacturers through a \$ 4 billion Global Health Platform, the statement said. Development and deployment of vaccines is crucial to helping stem outbreaks of the Covid that has killed almost 1 million people and sickened more than 38 million, while devastating economies. AP

Fighting in swing states, Trump also forced to play defence

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON, 14 OCTOBER

President Donald Trump is being forced to play Electoral College defense with a trip to Iowa, a state he won handily in 2016 but where Democrat Joe Biden is making a late push. Trump's heavy travel this week, including his rally Wednesday in Des Moines, reflects his uphill climb three weeks before the election.

He has already visited Pennsylvania and Florida and will head to another battleground state he likely can't win without - North Carolina - as well as those he once thought were in his grasp but where recent polling shows Biden improving - Iowa and Georgia. Both candidates tailored their campaigning Tuesday to best moti-

vate voters who could cast potentially decisive ballots.

Biden went to Florida to court older voters, looking to deliver a knockout blow in a state Trump needs to win while trying to woo a group whose support for the president has slipped.

And Trump visited Pennsylvania, arguably the most important state on the electoral map, unleashing fierce attacks on Biden's fitness for office in his opponent's backyard. He's shot, folks. I hate to tell you, he's shot, Trump told a big rally crowd in Johnstown, saying there was extra pressure on him to win because Biden was the worst presidential candidate of all time.

Can you imagine if you lose to a guy like this? It's

Racial justice movement a factor for 5 state ballot measures: The Black Lives Matter movement isn't named in any of the 120 statewide ballot measures up for a vote on November 3. But this year's nationwide protests over police brutality and racial injustice are major factors in the campaigns in several states for measures with distinctive racial themes. In California, voters will decide whether to allow affirmative action in public hiring, contracting and college admissions 24 years after Californians approved an initiative outlawing programs that give preference based on race and gender. In California, key supporters of the new affirmative-action measure Proposition 16 said they weren't sure they could get the needed two-thirds support in both legislative chambers to move forward. In Mississippi, where legislators voted in June to retire the last state flag in the U.S. bearing the Confederate battle emblem, voters will decide whether to accept a new flag with a magnolia design. If they vote No, another new design will be proposed and there would be a chance for supporters of the Confederate-themed flag to seek its reinstatement via a ballot measure next year. In Rhode Island, whose official name is Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, voters will have an opportunity to eliminate the last three words. The measure's proponents say the word plantations evokes the grim legacy of slavery, even though that wasn't the connotation when the full name was adopted in 1636. In Nebraska, state Sen. Justin Wayne proposed the amendment to strip the slavery provision from the state constitution back in January 2019 16 months before George Floyd's death and Utah to strip language from the state constitutions providing an exemption to the ban on slavery. AP

unbelievable. In his second rally since contracting the novel coronavirus, Trump spoke for

more than an hour to thousands packed in tightly and mostly maskless.

Like the night before in Florida, Trump seemed healthy, and his rhetoric on the

pandemic including the dubious claim that it was mostly a thing of the past changed little despite his own illness, except for his threat to kiss audience members to prove his immunity. Trump made a local pitch, hammering home the false claim that a Biden administration would limit fracking in areas where the economy is heavily dependent on energy. Biden's proposal would only bar new leases on federal land, a fraction of U.S. fracking operations.

Touting his elimination of a federal rule that would have brought more low-income housing to the suburbs, Trump zeroed in on groups whose support he has struggled to retain, including female voters turned off by his rhetoric.

So I ask you to do me a favor. So I ask you to do me a favor.

Suburban women: Will you please like me? Please. Please. I saved your damn neighborhood, OK? Trump said. The other thing: I don't have that much time to be that nice. You know, I can do it, but I gotta go quickly.

Biden spent the day in Florida, looking to expand his inroads with older voters. To Trump, you're expendable, you're forgettable, you're virtually nobody, Biden said. The only senior Donald Trump seems to care about is himself, Biden added.

After frequently criticizing Trump for not doing enough to promote mask wearing to prevent the spread of the virus, Biden was wearing two masks, an N95 underneath a blue surgical mask, as he deplaned in Florida.

SC confirmation: Barrett bats away Dems' tough questions

Dems warn that she would be a vote to undo the law and strip health coverage from millions of Americans

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON, 14 OCTOBER

Supreme Court nominee Amy Coney Barrett batted away Democrats' skeptical questions Tuesday on abortion, health care and a possible disputed-election fight over transferring presidential power, insisting in a long and lively confirmation hearing she would bring no personal agenda to the court but decide cases as they come.

The 48-year-old appellate court judge declared her conservative views with often colloquial language, but refused many specifics.

She declined to say whether she would recuse herself from any election-related cases involving President Donald Trump, who nominated her to fill the seat of the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and is pressing to have her confirmed before the 3 November election.

Judges can't just wake up one day and say I have an agenda like guns, I hate guns, I like abortion, I hate abortion and walk in like a royal queen and impose their will on the world, Barrett told the Senate Judiciary Committee during its second day of hearings.

It's not the law of Amy, she said. It's the law of the American people. Barrett returned to a Capitol Hill mostly locked down with

Covid protocols, the mood quickly shifting to a more confrontational tone from opening day. She was grilled by Democrats strongly opposed to Trump's nominee yet unable to stop her. Excited by the prospect of a conservative judge aligned with the late Antonin Scalia, Trump's Republican allies are rushing ahead to install a 6-3 conservative court majority for years to come.

The president seemed pleased with her performance. I think Amy's doing incredibly well, he said at the White House departing for a campaign rally. Trump has said he wants a justice seated for any disputes arising from his heated election with Democrat Joe Biden, but Barrett testified she has not spoken to Trump or his team about election cases. Pressed by panel Democ-

rats, she skipped past questions about ensuring the date of the election or preventing voter intimidation, both set in federal law, and the peaceful transfer of presidential power.

She declined to commit to recusing herself from any post-election cases without first consulting the other justices.

I can't offer an opinion on

recusal without short-circuiting that entire process, she said. A frustrated Sen. Diane Feinstein, the top Democrat on the panel, all but implored the nominee to be more specific about how she would handle landmark abortion cases, including Roe v. Wade and the follow-up Pennsylvania case Planned Parenthood v. Casey, which confirmed it in large part. It's distressing not to get a good answer, Feinstein told the judge. Barrett was unmoved.

I don't have an agenda to try to overrule Casey, she said. I have an agenda to stick to the rule of law and decide cases as they come. She later declined to characterize the Roe v. Wade decision that legalized abortion as a super-precedent that would not be overturned.

The committee chairman, Republican Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, opened the day-long session under coronavirus protocols that kept off limits to in-person attendance by members of the public.

Republicans have been focused on defending Barrett and her Catholic faith against possible criticism concerning issues such as abortion and same-sex marriage, and Graham asked if she would be able to shelve her personal beliefs to adhere to law. I have done that, she said. I will do that still. He said, I will do everything I can to make sure that you have a seat at the table. And that table is the Supreme Court.

The Senate is pushing Barrett's nomination to a quick vote before election, and ahead of the latest challenge to the Obamacare Affordable Care Act, which the Supreme Court is to hear a week after the election. Democrats warn that she would be a vote to undo the law and strip health coverage from millions of Americans. I'm not hostile to the ACA, Barrett told the senators.

She distanced herself from her past writings perceived as critical of the Obama-era health care law, saying those pieces were not addressing specific aspects of the law as she would if confirmed to the court.

"I'm not here on a mission to destroy the Affordable Care Act. She appeared stumped when Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., tried to put her on the spot about several details of the health care law's effects. She could not recite specifics, including that 23 million people are covered by the law or that more than 2 million young people are on their parents' health insurance.

The Indiana judge, accompanied by her family, described herself as taking a conservative, originalist approach to the Constitution. A former law professor, she told the senators that while she admires Scalia, her conservative mentor whom she once clerked, she would bring her own approach.

You would not be getting Justice Scalia, you would be getting Justice Barrett, she declared. Senators probed her views on gun ownership, gay marriage and racial equity, at one point drawing an emotional response from the mother of seven, whose children include two adopted from Haiti, as she described watching the video of the death of Floyd at the hands of police.



Supreme Court nominee Judge Amy Coney Barrett testifies before the Senate Judiciary Committee on the third day of her SC confirmation hearing on Wednesday in Washington, DC. AFP

LIGHT IN DARKNESS



A woman wearing a face mask crosses herself at an Orthodox cathedral in Moscow on Wednesday. AFP

Johnson under pressure for 'circuit breaker' full lockdown

ASSOCIATED PRESS

LONDON, 14 OCTOBER

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Wednesday stood his ground in the face of mounting pressure for a temporary complete national lockdown to act as a circuit breaker for the continued rise in coronavirus infections, even as the new three-tier system Covid-19 restrictions came into force across England.

While the new medium, high and very high alert levels system cleared the House of Commons vote on Tuesday to be enforced from Wednesday, more than 40 MPs from Johnson's own Conservative Party rebelled with their vote against the 10pm curfews imposed on pubs, bars, restaurants and other hospitality settings.

On the other end of the

spectrum, Opposition Labour Leader Keir Starmer demanded a two to three week short circuit breaker lockdown instead as he accused the government of having "lost control" of the pandemic.

"The government's plan simply isn't working another course is needed," he said.

The Opposition Leader clashed with Johnson over the issue in the Commons during the weekly Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs) session on Wednesday and accused him of rejecting advice from scientists by not going for a nationwide lockdown. The UK prime minister defended his three-tier system regionalised approach but refused to rule out a full national lockdown in the coming days and weeks.

I rule out nothing of course

in combating the virus, but we are going to do it with the local, the regional approach that can drive down and will drive down the virus, if it is properly implemented [and] avoid the misery of a national lockdown,

he told MPs.

The Opposition demand for a "temporary set of clear and effective restrictions" for the country came as Northern Ireland chose the toughest route of shutdowns to try and control the spread of the virus, which include shutting down schools from Monday.

Under the localised rules for the region, hospitality businesses will be limited to takeaway and delivery services for four weeks from Friday after health officials warned infections would rise further if both schools and hospitality premises remained open.

We consider what happened as a serious deliberate provocation, destructive of bilateral relations, the embassy said.

The 169-member Storting parliament was targeted Aug. 24 by what it described as a concerted cyberattack and a small number of MPs and members of staff had their email accounts hacked," according to Marianne Andreassen, the assembly's administrative head.

She added "various quantities of data had been downloaded."

The cyberattack, which was immediately stopped, was reported to the police. The country's security service PST was investigating it.

The parliament later said private information such as social security numbers, bank information and other personal information plus contact data and preparatory political work may have been lost.

Scientists reveal potential of swine coronavirus jumping from animals to people

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, 14 OCTOBER

herds of pigs throughout China since it was first discovered in 2016.

They said outbreaks of such an illness have the potential to wreak economic havoc in many countries across the globe that rely on the pork industry. In the new study, published in the journal PNAS, the scientists conducted lab tests to assess the potential threat from SADS-CoV to people, and found that the virus efficiently replicates in human liver and gut cells, as well as airway cells.

"Efficient growth in primary human lung and intestinal cells implicate SADS-CoV, which causes the respiratory illness Covid in humans, the

emerging coronavirus pathogen that could negatively impact the global economy and human health," the scientists wrote in the study.

Though it is in the same family of viruses as the betacoronavirus SARS-CoV-2, which causes the respiratory illness Covid in humans, the

mon cold alphacoronaviruses in humans, HCoV-229E and HCoV-NL63, they added.

"While many investigators focus on the emergent potential of the betacoronaviruses like SARS and MERS, actually the alphacoronaviruses may prove equally prominent -- if not greater -- concerns to human health, given their potential to rapidly jump between species," said study co-author Ralph Baric, a professor of epidemiology at UNC-Chapel Hill.

While SADS-CoV has not been known to affect humans to date, the researchers said coronavirus strains found in animals have the potential to

infect humans as well -- an effect known as spillover.

According to the scientists, a wide range of mammalian cells, including primary human lung and intestinal cells, are susceptible to SADS-CoV infection, with the virus showing a higher rate of growth in intestinal cells found in the human gut, unlike the novel coronavirus which primarily infects lung cells.

While studies have suggested that cross-protective immunity often prevents people from contracting many coronaviruses found in animals, the researchers believe humans have not yet developed such a defence to SADS-CoV.

A new beginning with labour laws



Doing away with cumbersome labour laws and replacing them with comprehensive Codes will help both employers and employees while aiding Ease of Doing Business in India, says GAURANG KANTH

In a watershed moment for existing labour jurisprudence in India, the Central Government on 28 September 2020 published the three labour codes namely the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020; the Code on Social Security, 2020; and the Industrial Relations Code, 2020 (collectively "the said Codes") for the welfare of Indian labour. However, the said Codes shall come into force on such date as the Central Government may appoint by notification in the Official Gazette.

As per the Ministry of Labour and Employment, these reforms are a 'game changer' in the field of labour welfare, covering more than 500 million organized as well as unorganized labourers in the country. In 2019, the Ministry, as a part of the labour reform initiatives, had introduced four Bills to amalgamate, rationalize and simplify 29 labour laws into four codes relating to Industrial Relations; Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions; Social Security; and Wages. Earlier, in 2002, the Second National Commission on Labour, by way of submission of a report, had recommended to codify the existing labour laws into four or five groups of law on a functional basis. It was also a perdurable demand of the industry to simplify labour laws. Thus, on 8 August 2019, in a first, amongst

the said Codes, the Code on Wages, 2019 was published by the Ministry. However, the said Code is yet to be notified by the Central Government.

The new labour regime aims to ensure the welfare of workers as well as to develop new industries through a simple compliance system which will in turn generate employment for the workforce in India. It is expected that upon the notification and enforcement of the said Codes, India will have a modern, transparent, accountable, and technologically-driven labour regime with a simplified mechanism in tune with the needs of the developing economy.

Need for Codification of Labour Laws: Labour is a significant subject and falls within the Concurrent List of the Constitution. The Centre as well as the State Governments are competent to enact legislation for the regulation of labour matters in the country. Consequently, there are over 100 state labour legislations and 40 Central labour legislations governing several facets such as minimum wages, accident and social security benefits, occupational safety and health, conditions of employment, disciplinary action, formation of trade unions, industrial relations, etc.

The multiplicity of these labour laws has created numerous definitions

and authorities and uncertainty on the applicability of laws depending on workforce threshold, wage ceiling, nature of establishment, etc. in each statute. It has also led to cumbersome and time-consuming compliance procedures and increase in cost for the employers. It is interesting to note here that the Confederation of Indian Industries, in its white paper titled 'Inspections and Regulatory Enforcements for Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in India (2016)' observed that a manufacturing company in India has to comply with around 70 laws and regulations within the labour legislations. Additionally, factories are also mandated to file around 100 returns every year under these laws. These inspections have been found to be extreme, redundant, duplicate and complex, imposing hefty costs on businesses in India. This regulatory structure and multitude of statutes have not been perceived to be conducive to the business environment in India.

The Ministry has created the structure of welfare and rights of 'Atmanirbhar Shramik' on the basis of four pillars of (i) Salary Protection; (ii) Labour Safety; (iii) Comprehensive Social Security; and (iv) Industrial Relations. These four pillars are manifested through the Code on Wages,

2019; Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020; the Code on Social Security, 2020; and the Industrial Relations Code, 2020, respectively, the important details of which are enumerated in the succeeding paras.

The Code on Wages, 2019: The first pillar of Salary Protection is implemented through Code on Wages, 2019 which subsumes and assimilates four Central Labour Acts namely, the Minimum Wages Act of 1948; the Payment of Wages Act of 1936; the Equal Remuneration Act of 1976; and the Payment of Bonus Act of 1975. It proposes to condense the complexities under the aforesaid Acts by postulating uniform definitions, reducing multiple authorities and bringing transparency and accountability in enforcement of labour laws. In consonance with the concept of sustained economic development, the Code aims to universalize the provisions of minimum wages, payments of bonuses and their timely payment along with equal remuneration to all employees, irrespective of the type of employment (in industry, trade, and business) and their wage ceiling.

Despite the guarantee of a socialist framework and a directive principle of living wage enshrined in the Constitution, the 'Right of Sustenance' is a far cry for every working person.

According to the Ministry, the Code visualizes to ensure the 'Right of Sustenance' for every employee and foster legislative protection of minimum wages from existing about 40 per cent to 100 per cent of workforce. It also aims to universalize the application of statutory as well as mandatory provisions of payment of wages to nearly 480 million workers in India, out of which around 82.7 per cent belong to the unorganized sector (as per the 43rd Report of the Standing Committee of Labour, 2018-2019). The Code proposes to safeguard the interest of workers and employers by striking a balance between the rights of the workers as well as employees.

The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020: The second important pillar is Labour Safety which is made effective through the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020. This Code subsumes, simplifies and assimilates thirteen (13) Central Labour Law Acts related to health, safety and working conditions of workers including Factories Act, 1948; Mines Act, 1952; Dock Workers Act, 1986; Contract Labour Act, 1970; Inter-State Migrant Workers Act, 1979 and many others. This Code seeks to regulate health and safety conditions of workers in establishments with ten or more workers, and in all mines and docks.

This Code, in a first, provides annual health examination for workers/ employees of such age as may be prescribed by the Central Government.

Further, as per the statement of the Ministry, the minimum qualification for leave has been reduced from 240 days to 180 days in a year under this Code. Workers cannot be required to work for more than six days a week. They shall receive one day of leave for every twenty days of work per year. In order to encourage employment of more women in India, this Code provides that women shall be entitled to be employed in all establishments for all types of work under the Code. It also provides that where they are required to work in hazardous or dangerous operations, the government may require the employer to provide adequate safeguards prior to their employment. This Code additionally provides for the payment of at least 50 per cent of the penalty imposed on an employer for injury or death at the workplace, to the aggrieved worker or the heirs of the victim, as compensation, along with other benefits.

The Code on Social Security, 2020: The third pillar is Comprehensive Social Security which is made operational through the Code on Social Security. This Code replaces nine Central Labour Acts including the Employees' Provident Fund Act, 1952, the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, and the Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008 and many others. The Code provides a framework to include organized and unorganized sector workers under the ambit of comprehensive social security. The said Code further contains provisions relating to Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) and Employees' Provident Fund (EPF), building construction workers, maternity benefits, gratuity and social security fund for unorganized sector workers.

It may be noted that the option of ESIC shall now be for plantation workers, unorganized sector workers, gigs

and platform workers, and institutions with less than 10 workers. In case, where the nature of job or work is risky in an institute, the said institute shall inescapably be brought under ESIC even if it is a sole labourer. In accordance of the statement of the Ministry, a Social Security Fund has also been made to provide social security to 400 million workers and gig and platform workers in the unorganized sector and plans shall be formulated to provide all kinds of social security benefits such as death insurance, accident insurance, maternity benefit and pension, etc. to them.

The Industrial Relations Code, 2020: The fourth pillar is Industrial Relations which has been implemented through the Industrial Relations Code, 2020. This Code subsumes and replaces three labour laws which are the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947; the Trade Unions Act, 1926; and the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946. It may be noted that an effective dispute resolution mechanism is being ensured through this Code providing for time-bound dispute resolution system in every institution. The Code ensures that the Fixed Term Employees' service conditions, salary, leave and social security shall be the same as a Regular Employee. In addition, these Fixed Term Employees shall be provided with the statutory right to pro-rata Gratuity.

Further, every establishment with at least 300 workers shall be required to seek prior permission of the government before closure, lay-off, or retrenchment. According to the Ministry, this Code also recognizes trade unions at the institution level, state level and central level. Under this Code, a sole union will be the negotiation agent with the management of the company. If there are more than one registered trade unions of workers functioning in an establishment, the trade union having more than 51 per cent of the workers as members would be recognized as the sole negotiating union.

The codification of Labour Laws into the said Codes is one of the paramount policy decisions of the Central Government in its present tenure. It is a step to promote Ease of Doing Business in India. According to the World Bank's Doing Business Report, 2020, India recorded a jump of 37 positions from 100th rank in 2017 to 63rd rank in 2020 amongst 190 countries. As per the Ministry, after the notification of the said Codes, there will be no need to have multiple registrations or licenses to set up industries. Further, the registration, license etc. shall be provided in a time-bound manner and through online processes. It appears that the effort to reduce regulatory complexity and cost related to the labour laws through such codification may enhance India's ranking. Additionally, it would be much easier for employers to understand and comply with labour law provisions, thereby enabling an impetus to employee welfare. The ease of compliance in the labour regulatory regime is a drive not only to fillip India's ease of business ranking but to enhance participation of more and more enterprises and investors, creation of employment opportunities and conception of an investor-friendly business climate.

The writer is an Advocate, Supreme Court of India and Delhi High Court.

A LAW THAT IS ABSURD AND DRACONIAN

A private member's bill in Pakistan that seeks to penalise anyone who brings the Army into ridicule represents an outlandish proposition peppered with red flags, says ASFAND YAR WARRAICH

Speech is a shape-shifting creature, capable at once of both exquisite beauty and catastrophic destruction. Thus, rather than let it run amuck, we attempt our best to tame it, to temper its potential for harm. When speech fosters unkindness in our midst, we look down upon it, try to shame it into submission. When speech incites violence or crime or hatred, we go so far as to sanction its complete curtailment. And, when speech spreads falsehood, with malice aforethought, we shield ourselves behind the laws of defamation.

Last month, a private member's bill was introduced in Pakistan's National Assembly. Tabled by a PTI parliamentarian, it seeks to amend the Pakistan Penal Code with one tiny addition—Section 500A, which states that "whosoever intentionally ridicules, brings into disrepute or defames the Armed Forces of Pakistan or a member thereof" shall be punished with up to two years of imprisonment or a fine that may extend to half a million rupees, or both.

Legally, this is an outlandish proposition, replete with one red flag after another.

First and foremost, the bill is a poorly drafted piece of legislation. Laws, especially those of a penal character, must be made with the utmost

clarity and precision, for here, where our conceptions of right and wrong are reduced into writing, backed by legal sanction no less, words carry great import, and the door to ambiguity, if left ajar, can have dangerous consequences.

One thing that stands out is the brazen attempt to create a bizarre and novel offence altogether—"intentional ridicule" of the army. This is a notion that defies both logic and common sense, since ridicule, far from being a criminal offence, is a potent component of free speech, used not only in everyday language, but also as a satirical device by all manner of creators, be they poets or novelists, cartoonists or comedians. To call for its criminalisation is to harken back to the age of shahanshahs, of monarchs with such infinite power that they could restrain the very tongues of their human subjects from marring their honour and majesty.

Of course, this is not to say that ridicule is entirely benign. Far from it in fact, since ridicule, be it through parody or caricature or mockery, has but one basic objective: the invocation of laughter. When used against the vulnerable, it is nothing but cruel and condemnable, but when employed against power and those who wield it, ridicule becomes a potent weapon

after all, nothing shatters the veneer of power so wholly and so completely as the simple act of laughter, and in the realm of realpolitik, what starts off as a snicker may one day morph into open revolt.

Second, the amendment is ill conceived. The true purpose behind making defamation an offence or an actionable claim is to protect the reputations of 'persons', and while the law extends this courtesy to various organisations that are vested with 'legal personhood' in its opinion, it cannot, as a matter of public policy, extend the same privilege to public institutions. These fall under a different breed of entities altogether, since their composition, their function, and their conduct are ultimately a reflection of the state itself.

Public institutions, like the armed forces, are extensions of the government, merely one of its many arms—they are not private entities with 'reputations' of their own to manage and protect. As citizens, we blindly entrust them with far-reaching authority and control. However, this power comes at a cost, for unlike people, who are deemed to be born with a right to a reputation of respect, the state and its institutions can make no such claim. Instead, they must consistently and transparently earn their reputation



before our eyes, and for this to take place, they must be made subject to the fullest extent of free speech.

Besides, if we agree to the premise that the armed forces deserve to be protected by a tailor-made law of defamation, there shall remain no cogent or discernible reason as to why the same advantage should not then be extended to every other public institution that takes money from the public kitty—including the entire bureaucracy, the judiciary and of course, countless other authorities, agencies and regulatory bodies, from NAB to PTA and Wapda to Wasa. Any principle, if adopted, must be taken to its logical conclusion, and in this case, it would render the entire state

machinery shrouded from open public criticism.

Having established that it is poor policy to allow the state and its entities to hide behind defamation laws, there can be only one solid justification for such an amendment—to protect the reputations of individual members of the armed forces. If this is indeed the intent, then the bill is redundant in the first place, since they, like any other citizen of the country, can already avail numerous remedies for their protection—like lodging an FIR under Sections 499 and 500 of the PPC, or filing a civil suit for damages, or even making a complaint under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act.

Bills in Pakistan are often subject

to the strangest whims of fate, and so, only time will tell what will become of this one—perhaps it will be hotly debated and picked apart, perhaps it will be shelved and forgotten, only to collect dust till its eventual demise, or perhaps, it will find itself bulldozed through parliament one day, in some convenient atmosphere of political 'one-pageism'.

In the meantime, let us simply hope that if and when it does come under scrutiny, those sitting in our legislature shall have the good sense and wisdom to dismiss this as exactly what it is—a draconian proposal.

The writer is a barrister.
Dawn/ANN



SMALL IS VULNERABLE

Former Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger (in photo, left) has warned that "smaller clubs will die" without urgent action to safeguard the future of the lower leagues as proposals for a major reform of English football have caused division and rancour.

For more updates www.thestatesman.com

THUMBNAILS

On schedule: The final of the inaugural World Test Championship remains on course to be held in June next year despite the disruption caused by the qualifying process by the coronavirus pandemic, cricket's governing body said on Tuesday.

Ronaldo 'fine': Portugal and Juventus' Cristiano Ronaldo was said to be "fine and sunbathing" on Tuesday after testing positive for the coronavirus, which ruled him out of a midweek Nations League fixture with his country. He is said to be an asymptomatic patient:

Proteas' problem: Cricket South Africa acting president Beresford Williams was one of the members of the organisation excused from Tuesday's parliament briefing owing to being implicated in wrongdoing. CSA promised to present the full version of the matter.

Tokyo Games: International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach said on Monday that the Tokyo Olympic Games would be held under any circumstances the world would face next summer. "We are working at full speed with our Japanese partners," he said.

Cavani unavailable: Manchester United have confirmed that new striker Edinson Cavani will miss this weekend's Premier League clash against Newcastle as he is required to quarantine, following his move to England. Cavani joined the Mancunians on deadline day.

'Better' show: Gareth Southgate believes England's second-half display against Belgium was a "better all-round performance" than the 3-2 win away to Spain two years ago, as he explained a more constrained style of football might be the difference in decisive games.

Formula One: Fernando Alonso drove a Formula One car for the first time in nearly 11/2 years on Tuesday in Barcelona. The two-time F1 champion was at the wheel of a Renault, the team he had won his two titles with and whom he would drive for next season.

Wawrinka wins: Stan Wawrinka saved three match points for a 3-6, 7-6 (7-3), 7-5 comeback win over Dan Evans to reach the second round of the St Petersburg Open on Monday, after the tournament had been disrupted by a player's coronavirus case.

100 T20 stumpings: Veteran Pakistani wicket-keeper Kamran Akmal on Tuesday became the world's first wicket-keeper to effect 100 stumpings in T20 cricket, the shortest format of the game. Kamran, 38, achieved the feat while playing for Central Punjab during the National T20 Cup fixture against South Punjab on Tuesday.

Bhawanipore win: Goals from Philip Adiah and Pankaj Moul helped Bhawanipore FC withstand a late fightback from Garhwal FC and seal a 2-1 victory in the I-League Qualifiers in Kolkata on Wednesday. The city-based team was very much the favourites, having picked up all three points in its opening game against FC Bengaluru United, while Garhwal entered the tie on the back of two defeats without having found the back of the net. Garhwal started brightly, playing possession football to put Bhawanipore on the back foot. However, they were undone by a brilliant pass from the half-way line by Arijit Bagui in the eighth minute, as he played a delicate chip over the Garhwal defence.

Gayle set to play against RCB

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

SHARJAH, 14 OCTOBER

Kings XI Punjab will be hoping that Chris Gayle (in photo) fires on his much-awaited return and they, for once, put up a complete performance in their must-win game against a high-flying Royal Challengers Bangalore here on Thursday.

The inability to produce an all-round show and close out games they should have won has led to KXIP losing six out of their seven matches. But KXIP can take confidence from the fact their only win in the tournament has come against RCB, who look a much more potent squad since their last meeting on September 24.

Though the Sharjah wicket has been slowing gradually, the smaller ground dimensions are ideal for someone like Gayle to go on a six-hitting spree. However, it certainly won't be easy for the 41-year-old to get going from ball one, having

tom of the table despite having the top-two leading run-getters of the tournament in skipper KL Rahul (387 at strike rate of 134.84) and his opening partner Mayank Agarwal (337 at 48.14).

Barring Mohammad Shami and Ravi Bishnoi, none of the bowlers have inspired confidence, especially in the death overs. Not being able to find the right balance despite trying out many options has also contributed to KXIP's rapid slide. They run into a RCB squad which has grown in confidence by leaps and bounds since their last meeting. For the first time in many years, they seem to have fixed their bowling woes.

Their spin pairing of Washington Sundar and Yuzvendra Chahal has proved very effective and the pace department has strengthened with the return of Chris Morris from injury. "Playing such a side (with the likes of Gayle, Rahul and Agarwal) in a stadium like Sharjah is definitely not going to be easy. It's going to be a bit challenging but I will definitely do my homework heading to the match," Sundar said on the eve of the match.

RCB's last game against KKR was also on this ground, so they come into the match more aware of the gradually changing conditions than KXIP, who played here last on September 27 when the surface was much better to bat on. With Aaron Finch back among the runs against KKR, RCB's top-four (including Devdutt Padikkal, Virat Kohli and AB de Villiers) can be a nightmare for any team.

KINGS XI vs RCB: Match begins at 7.30 pm IST.

ing not played earlier in the competition. He would have played the last two games but could not due to food poisoning. Having recovered fully, it will be interesting to see who he replaces in the side.

Benching a yet to fire Glenn Maxwell is one option or the team can bring Gayle at the expense of an overseas bowler and replace him with the available Indian talent. KXIP are languishing at the bot-



Curran is a complete cricketer for us: Dhoni

DUBAI, 14 OCTOBER

er admitted that the composition of his team was such that they would always end up being a batsman or a bowler short. Warner said that SRH could have used an extra batsman on the day. "I think with our team and the sort of depth that we have, we're always going to be one short either way. It would have been nice to have an extra batter today, but you've got to weigh up the pros and cons," Warner said after the match. He said SRH had probably conceded seven runs too many, considering the depth of the CSK bowling attack. "I thought 160 was the right total to go after, but anything above that was always going to be difficult. Having six or seven bowlers in the team helps. It's difficult to play against bowlers who can swing the ball. There's always a challenge in the powerplay, but you have to take on the bowlers," he said. The result puts SRH level on points with CSK and two behind fourth-placed Kolkata Knight Riders as the race for the top four positions heats up. "Things are always congested in the middle (of the points table). You have got to beat the best teams to make it to the top. We'll be facing the top teams in the next few days, so I'm up for the challenge and so are the other guys," he said.

"He can give us those quick 15-40 runs. You can push him up if you need that momentum and he is eager to do it. A good-left-armer is always good to have in the side," especially with the new ball, which the batsman is always worried about." Curran has been a regular for CSK in the death overs but on Tuesday, they opted to use Dwayne Bravo, Karn Sharma and Shardul Thakur. "As the tournament progresses we'll get more comfortable with death bowling, which is why we kept Sam away and Thakur and Bravo took over. We'll get better," he said.

SRH captain David Warn-

Dhawan, Iyer's fifties take Delhi Capitals to 161/7 against Rajasthan Royals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

DUBAI, 14 OCTOBER

Shikhar Dhawan and skipper Shreyas Iyer hit stroke-filled half-centuries but Delhi Capitals lost momentum towards the end to be restricted to 161 for seven against Rajasthan Royals in an Indian Premier League match here on Wednesday.

The last five overs of the Delhi Capitals innings yielded only 32 runs and they lost four wickets, an indication how they missed Rishabh Pant and Shimron Hetmyer.

DCHAD a disastrous start to its innings after opting to bat as it lost Prithvi Shaw off the first ball of the match with a gem of a delivery from Jofra Archer (3/19) that jagged back in after pitching and crashed into the middle stump after getting an inside edge. To make matters worse for DC, Ajinkya Rahane was holed out to Robin Uthappa off Archer at mid-on an over later. But then skipper Iyer (53 off 43) joined hands with Dhawan (57 off 33) and the duo initially played cautiously before opening up to take DC forward.

They shared 85 runs for the third wicket off 55 balls to keep DC's momentum going after the early jolts.

Dhawan looked in great nick from the onset, often finding the boundary with his

trademark pulls and shots square off the off side. In the process he scored his 39th fifty in the IPL off just 30 balls but soon after reaching the feathered depart while trying to force the pacer, caught at short third man by Kartik Tyagi of leg-spinner Shreyas Gopal. His runs came off 33 balls which had six boundaries and two hits over the fence. After Dhawan's dismissal, Iyer took the onus on

SCOREBOARD

Delhi Capitals innings:			
Prithvi Shaw b Jofra Archer	0	Ravichandran Ashwin not out	7
Shikhar Dhawan c Tyagi b Gopal	57	Extras: 10 (b 0, lb 2, w 6, nb 2, p 0)	0
A Rahane c Uthappa b Jofra Archer	2	Total: 161 (7 wkt, 20 Overs)	
Shreyas Iyer c Archer b Tyagi	53	Bowling: Archer 4-0-19-3, Unadkat 3-0-32-2, Tyagi 4-0-30-1, Stokes 2-0-24-0,	
M Stoinis c Tewatia b Jofra Archer	18	Gopal 4-0-31-1, Tewatia 3-0-23-0	
A Carey c Jofra Archer b Unadkat	14		

himself and upped the ante with some lusty hits and in the process got his fifth off 40 balls in the 15th over bowled by Jaydev Unadkat, that yielded 17 runs, including two sixes. But soon after, Iyer departed, caught by Archer at long-off off Kartik Tyagi as he went for another big hit. Marcus Stoinis (18) and Alex Carey (14) tried their best to add muscle to the scoreboard but were unsuccessful.

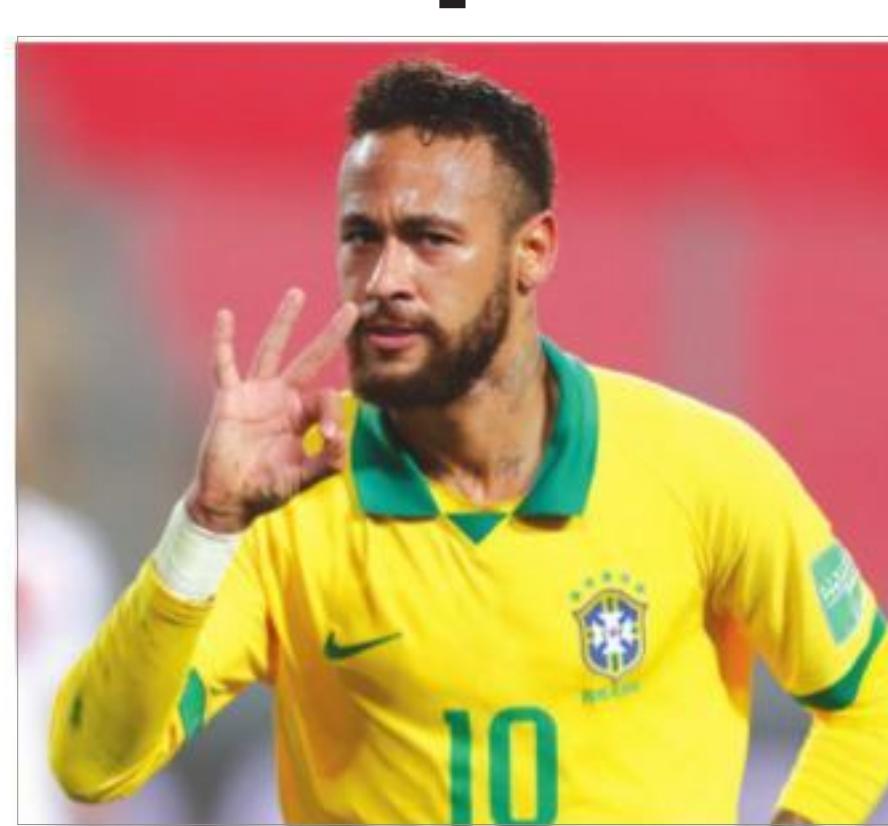
Standing performer for the visitors, although the Barcelona forward played a deeper role than usual and was more of a creator than taker of chances. The result was a disappointment for Bolivia, who were attempting to record back-to-back wins over Argentina for the first time in their history.

Bolivia have started the qualifiers for the 2022 tournament with two consecutive losses. Their next two opponents in November's double header of matches are Ecuador and Paraguay, while Argentina will face Paraguay at home before traveling to Peru.

In Ecuador, the home side recovered from that opening day loss to Argentina to hammer Uruguay 4-2. Moises Caicedo put them ahead after 13 minutes and then Michael Estrada got a goal each side of halftime to put them firmly in the driving seat before Gonzalo Plata made it four with a quarter of an hour remaining.

The visitors stunned Germany twice had to come from behind to earn a roller-coaster 3-3 draw against visitors Switzerland in an exciting Nations League group game packed with incident on Tuesday. The result moves Germany within a point of League A Group Four leaders Spain, who lost 1-0 away to Ukraine, while the Swiss, who are still without a win, remain bottom.

Luis Suárez got two goals back for Uruguay in the dying minutes, both of them from the



Neymar hat-trick helps Brazil to 4-2 win over Peru

AGENCIES

LIMA, 14 OCTOBER

A hat-trick from Neymar (in photo) helped Brazil to a 4-2 victory over Peru in a 2022 World Cup qualifier in Lima on Tuesday and moved the Paris Saint-Germain forward second behind

Pele, with 77 goals, has scored more goals for Brazil than Neymar. Brazil top the South American qualifying group with six points from two games.

A late goal from Joaquin Correa helped Argentina come from behind to beat Bolivia 2-1 on Tuesday and maintain their 100 per cent record in the South American World Cup qualifiers. Bolivia took the lead after 24 minutes when captain Marcelo Martins rose unmarked to head home a cross from the left. However, Argentina, who beat visitors Ecuador 1-0 in their opener last week, equalised seconds before halftime when a clearance from defender Jose Maria Carrasco hit Lautaro Martinez just yards from goal and flew into the net.

Correa then got Argentina's winner with a sweet left-foot strike 11 minutes from the final whistle as Bolivia suffered another defeat following their 5-0 thrashing away to Brazil last week. The result was Argentina's ninth game unbeaten under coach Lionel Scaloni and their first win in Bolivia since

2005. It came in spite of their evident troubles with the thin air, with the game being played at high altitude in La Paz, and some of their players took gulps of oxygen at the side of the pitch during a busy second half in which they dominated their rivals. Martinez could have had a hat-trick but scooped one chance over the bar and had

another well saved by the Bolivian keeper. "We knew what this game meant to us because of its history," the Inter Milan striker said. "We're not going to deny that it's difficult to play here." "I think this team showed lots of heart and lots of brains. We're very happy."

Lionel Messi was another out-

standing performer for the visitors, although the Barcelona forward played a deeper role than usual and was more of a creator than taker of chances. The result was a disappointment for Bolivia, who were attempting to record back-to-back wins over Argentina for the first time in their history.

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A sensational Serge Gnabry back heel flick on the hour pulled the home side level once more and the Swiss then finished the match with 10 men following the stoppage-time dismissal of defender Fabian Schaer for a second booking.

Kroos, in his 100th international, and Remo Freuler beat goalkeeper Manuel Neuer with a cool chip.

Timo Werner hit back for the hosts two minutes later, wrong-footing keeper Yann Sommer with a clever low shot, as the Germans maintained possession and kept pushing forward.

Robin Gosens' effort was tipped over the bar by Sommer in the first half but the keeper was beaten when Kai Havertz charged into the box and fired home the equaliser in the 55th. Germany coach Joachim Loew reverted to a four-man defence for the game but it kept leaking goals as the Swiss went back in front in the 57th after Neuer made consecutive saves from Haris Seferovic before Gnabry pounced to drill in on the rebound.

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AMUL DOODH PEETA HAI INDIA

EVERY POUCH OF AMUL MILK COMES PACKED WITH PURITY AND NUTRITION. SO, WHY CHOOSE LOOSE OR ANY OTHER PACKED MILK?



Misbah steps down as Pak chief selector, to remain head coach

AGENCIES

KARACHI, 14 OCTOBER

Former captain Misbah-ul-Haq on Wednesday said he will be stepping down as Pakistan's chief selector next month to focus on his role as head coach of the national team.

"Whoever is appointed as chief selector, I will fully cooperate with him and work to take the Pakistan team into the top three of every format," Misbah also made it clear that his decision had nothing to do with his meeting with Prime Minister Imran Khan last month when he and senior players, Azhar Ali and Muhammad Hafeez, raised the issue of departmental teams being closed down in domestic cricket.

Misbah insisted that he had not quit as chief selector

NZ's oldest surviving Test cricketer John Reid dies at 92

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

AUCKLAND, 14 OCTOBER

New Zealand's oldest surviving Test cricketer and former captain John Reid has died here at the age of 92, the country's cricket board said on Wednesday.

Reid, regarded as one of the world's best all-rounders during his heyday in the fifties and early sixties, captained New Zealand in 34 Tests including, most notably, the country's first three victories.

"He was, and will remain, a household name in this country, having helped pave the way for everything that has come in his wake," New Zealand Cricket chief executive David White said in a statement offering his tributes. The NZC release, however, did not specify the cause of Reid's death.

"Our thoughts and respect are with his family at this time: wife Norli, children Alison, Richard and Ann, and all his grand-children," White said.

Born in Auckland, and educated in Wellington, Reid played 246 first-class games and scored 16128 runs at 41.35, including 39 centuries, while taking 466 wickets at 22.60.