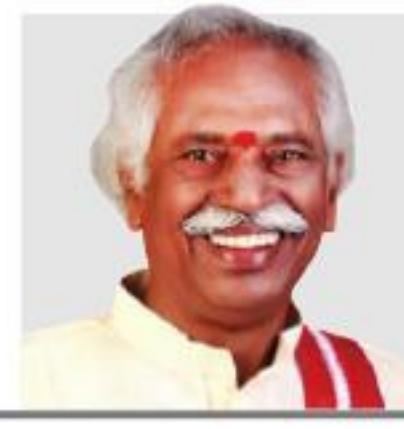




CRUSADER FOR
FREEDOM



P6

'GOVERNORS WON'T
BE SPECTATORS'



P7

KIM JONG-UN MAKES
RARE APOLOGY TO
SOUTH KOREA

THE KUMBLE PLOY
THAT LEFT KOHLI,
PEERS STUPEFIED



P11

P12

WEATHER

Partly cloudy sky. Strong surface winds during the day. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 36 and 26 degrees Celsius respectively.

RAINFALL: Nil

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max: 87% Min: 40%

TEMPERATURE

Max: 37.4°C (+3) Min: 25.4°C (+1)
SUN RISES 06:12 hrs MOON RISES 15:12 hrs SUN SETS 18:13 hrs MOON SETS 01:50 hrs

THUMBNAILS



Participants display placards during a demonstration as a part of the "Fridays for Future" movement in New Delhi on Friday. ■ AFP

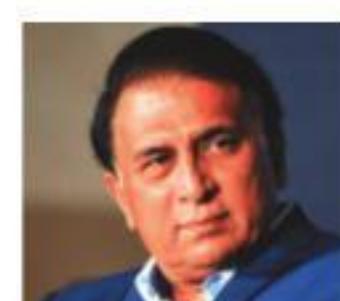
Paris stabbings: French terrorism authorities are investigating a double-stabbing outside the former Paris offices of a satirical newspaper where a dozen people were killed in 2015, and two suspects have been arrested in Friday's violence, authorities said. French authorities said they suspect a terrorist motive because of the place and timing of the stabbings: in front of the building where Charlie Hebdo was based until the Islamic extremist attack on its cartoonists at a time when suspects in the 2015 attack are on trial across town. ■ P10

NMC replaces MCI: The National Medical Commission (NMC) came into existence from Friday as the country's apex regulator of medical education and profession replacing the Medical Council of India (MCI). With this, the nearly 64-year-old Indian Medical Council Act stands repealed and the Board of Governors appointed in supersession of the MCI has also been dissolved with effect from September 25, the health ministry said. ■ P4

Gavaskar lands in trouble after Kohli swipe

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

DUBAI, 25 SEPTEMBER



Gavaskar, your message is distasteful as a fact but I would love for you to explain why you thought of making such a sweeping statement on a wife accusing her for her husband's game?... I am sure over the years you have respected the private lives of every cricketer while commentating on the game. Don't you think you should have equal amount of respect for me and us?

Gavaskar, though, said his comments were misinterpreted. The remark, he said, was in reference to a video clip where Kohli and Anushka were seen playing tennis ball cricket in their compound.

"...Where am I blaming her? I'm not blaming her; I am only saying that the video showed she was bowing to Virat. Virat has only played that much bowling in this lockdown period," Gavaskar told *India Today* channel, explaining that he'd meant that Kohli was rusty due to lack of practice during the lockdown. He also rubbished the allegations on social media that he had made a "sexist comment".

The comment did not go down well with Kohli and Anushka's fans. Some even demanded Gavaskar's sacking from the *Star Sports* commentary panel, lashing out at him on social media. Anushka also issued a statement on her Instagram page, saying that Gavaskar's message was "distasteful". She wrote, "That, Mr

Bharat Bandh: Farmers block roads in many states

Most widespread protests in Punjab, Haryana; protests also in UP, Bengal, Kerala, Karnataka



Prime Minister Narendra Modi accused the Opposition of "misleading" farmers and "using their shoulders to fire" at his government over the farm bills for selfish political interests, and said the reforms brought in the agriculture sector will benefit small and marginal farmers the most



(Above) A 'Chakka Jam' called by farmers at the Delhi/Noida border, in the capital on Friday. ■ DEEPAK
(Left) Farmers and Left Front supporters during a road blockade demonstration protesting against the farm Bills recently passed by Parliament at Habra in North 24-Parganas, Bengal on Friday. ■ SOUVIK DAS

Farmers blocked roads in several parts of the country Friday, protesting against the three agri-marketing bills passed recently by Parliament.

The most widespread protests were in Punjab and Haryana, but demonstrations were also reported from Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Kerala and Karnataka as part of the Bharat bandh call given by several farmer unions.

Over 30 organisations had given a separate Punjab bandh call, leading to farmers blocking roads and traders shutting shops and vegetable markets for the day. The bandh in the state appeared to be near total.

Hundreds of farmers ~ on foot, two-wheelers and tractor-trolleys ~ were stopped at Delhi's border with Uttar Pradesh as they tried to press ahead into the national capital, their agitation disrupting traffic in Noida and Ghaziabad.

Stopped from entering the city, the farmers staged 'panchayats' at the road blocks where they were addressed by Bhartiya Kisan Union office-bearers.

Addressing BJP leaders and workers on the birth anniversary of party's ideologue Deendayal Upadhyay, Prime Minister Narendra Modi again made a pitch for the new laws meant to deregulate the sale of farm produce.

But farmer unions and opposition parties say they will lead to the dismantling of the minimum support price (MSP) system.

In West Bengal, farmer

bodies loyal to the Left parties staged protests.

CPI(M) farmers' wing 'Sara Bharat Krishak Sabha' and those of other left partners such as CPI, Forward Bloc and RSP took out rallies in Hooghly, Murshidabad, North 24-Parganas, Bankura and Nadia.

In Karnataka, there were demonstrations across the state and many farmers arrived in capital Bengaluru to take part in protests against amendments to the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee Act and the Karnataka Land Reforms Act.

Farmers under the

umbrella of the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) staged protests in Kerala, including outside the Raj Bhavan in capital Thiruvananthapuram.

In Punjab's Barnala, a tractor was set on fire by protesters.

Punjab farmers blocked the Sangrur-Patiala, Chandigarh-Bathinda and Ambala-Rajpura-Ludhiana and Moga-Ferozepur roads, triggering traffic diversions and hardship to commuters. Buses run by the state-owned Pepsi Road Transport also went off the roads in Punjab.

Shiromani Akali Dal

chief Sukhbir Singh Badal drove a tractor while his wife and former Union minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal sat beside him in Muktsar district. He led a tractor march from his Badal village to Lambi, where the party had organised a protest against the bills. At several other places, party workers blocked roads.

Prominent Punjabi singers like Harbhajan Mann and Ranjit Bawa took part in a farmers' protest in Nabha.

A three-day rail roko that began Thursday is also underway in Punjab, with farmers squatting on the tracks at many places in Punjab and the railways suspending many trains.

MORE REPORTS ON PAGE 5

India's Covid tally crosses 58 lakh

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, 25 SEPTEMBER

Delhi logs 3,827 virus cases, over 59K tests, 24 deaths

SNS & PTI

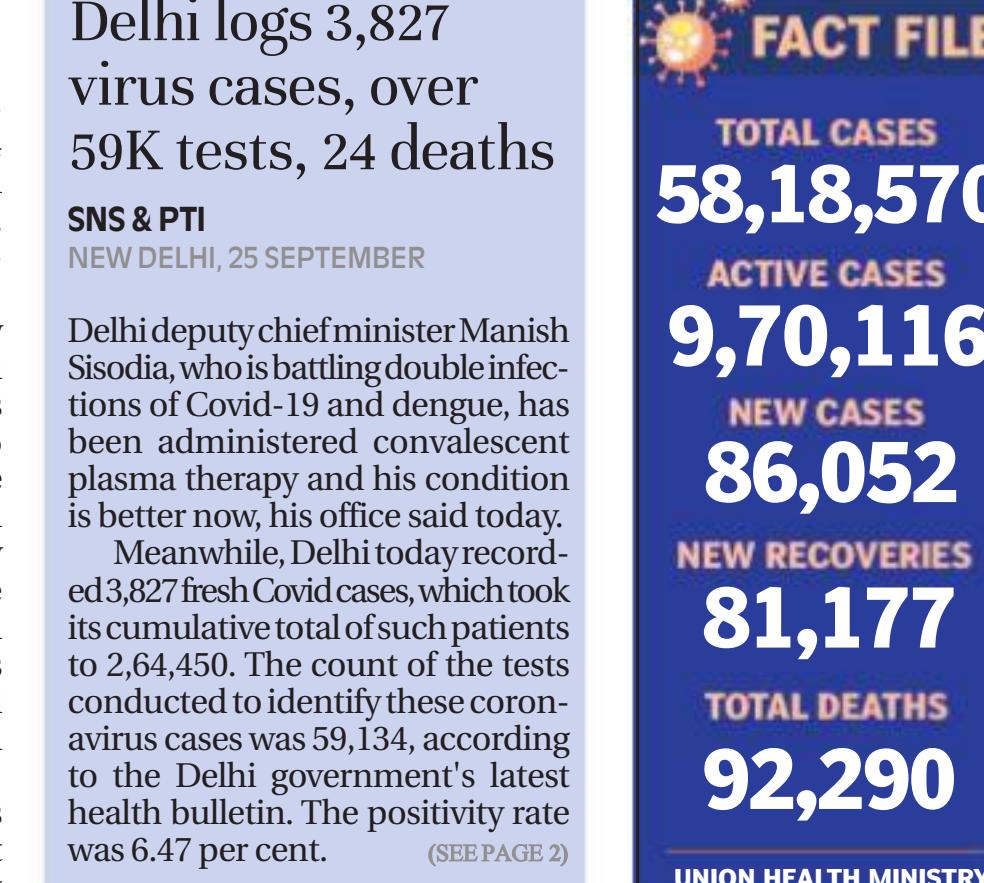
NEW DELHI, 25 SEPTEMBER

With India reporting 86,052 new Covid-19 cases and 1,141 deaths in the last 24 hours, the total tally of Coronavirus infection cases crossed a tally of 58,18,570, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare said on Friday.

The country's coronavirus count now stands at 58,18,571, while the death toll has mounted to 92,290, the ministry's data showed. Of the total cases, 47,56,165 have been successfully treated. There are 9,70,116 active cases of Covid-19 in India. A senior officer in the ministry stated that a total 81,177 people were discharged from various hospitals and quarantine centres in the last 24 hours across the country. So far, a total 47,56,164 people have recovered from the deadly viral infection.

The recovery rate from coronavirus in India at 81.74 per cent is the highest in the world. The fatality rate stands at 1.59 per cent, the data showed.

Maharashtra continues to be the worst



of Chennai. Though four different public homage programmes were planned earlier, the government authorities curtailed them, keeping in view the pandemic situation.

Balasubrahmanyam's body is being kept in his residence at Kamdar Nagar in Mahalingapuram in Chennai, where his close

Vodafone wins arbitration fight over retro tax demand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, 25 SEPTEMBER

British telecom giant Vodafone Group Plc on Friday won an arbitration against the Indian government over a demand for Rs 22,100 crore in taxes using retrospective legislation.

An international arbitration tribunal ruled that India's demand in past taxes was in breach of fair treatment under a bilateral investment protection pact. "Vodafone confirms that the investment treaty tribunal found in Vodafone's favour," the British firm said in a statement. "This was a unanimous decision, including India's appointed arbitrator Rodrigo Oreamuno. The tribunal held that any attempt by India to enforce the tax demand



would be a violation of India's international law obligations.

It was not immediately known if the Indian government will abide by the arbitration award. The government's liability will be restricted to about Rs 75 crore in cost refund, sources with direct knowledge of the matter said. As per the award, the government has to reimburse Vodafone 60 per cent of its legal costs and half of the 6,000 Euros cost borne by Vodafone for appointing an arbitrator on the panel.

Vodafone had before the

arbitration tribunal challenged India's usage of a 2012 law that gave it powers to retrospectively tax deals like Vodafone's \$11 billion acquisition of 67 percent stake in the mobile phone business owned by Hutchison Whampoa in 2007. It challenged the demand of Rs 7,990 crore in capital gains taxes (Rs 22,100 crore after including interest and penalty) under the Netherlands-India Bilateral Investment Treaty.

The tax demand was on the UK-listed company and Vodafone's India venture faced no liability. Vodafone merged its India operations with Kumar Mangalam Birla's conglomerate but the combined entity Vodafone Idea Ltd is facing a \$ 7.8 billion bill in past statutory dues.

songs for a long time, and was considered the 'singing voice' of the superstar.

One of the only singers to have worked with legends across eras - MS Viswanathan, Ilaiyaraaja and AR Rahman - SPB also had his moments in front of the camera. He has acted in over 70 films donning various roles in Tamil, Telugu and Kannada.

The 74-year-old singer was admitted on August 5 to MGM Healthcare Hospital after testing positive for the novel coronavirus. He had been on life support since August 14, when his condition became critical.

He is survived by wife Savithri, son SPB Charan, also a singer, and daughter Pallavi.

OBITUARY ON PAGE 5

Legendary singer S P Balasubrahmanyam succumbs to Covid-19

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

CHENNAI, 25 SEPTEMBER

The ethereal minstrel is no more. But SP Balasubrahmanyam will live forever in millions of hearts through his mesmerising voice. The versatile singer, who also donned the roles of music director, actor and dubbing artist, died at 1.04 p.m. on Friday in MGM hospital in Chennai, where he was under treatment for Covid-19 and related ailments for more than a month.

The legend is believed to be contracted the coronavirus during a reality show in Hyderabad, which he attended as a judge.

His mortal remains will be cremated Saturday morning at 7.30, at Thamaraiappakkam, a suburb

of Chennai. Though four different public homage programmes were planned earlier, the government authorities curtailed them, keeping in view the

pandemic situation.

Balasubrahmanyam's body is being kept in his residence at Kamdar Nagar in Mahalingapuram in Chennai, where his close relatives and friends paid their last respects.

SPB, as he is popularly known, sang over 40,000 songs in 16 different languages in a career of 54 years. The humble and simple man, according to his admirers and colleagues, made extraordinary efforts to perfect his art, which so many times landed him in hospital for treatment for laryngeal corrections.

The singer started his career in the Telugu cinema industry; his memorable performances were in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Hindi. The songs of *Sanakrabbaram*, a multilingual movie, secured him a national award for the first time. While songs of legendary music directors M S Viswanathan and Ilaiyaraaja made

him a cult figure in South Indian cinema, *Ek Duuje Ke Liye* heralded his rise in Bollywood also.

His prowess in singing earned him numerous accolades including a Padma Bhushan from the President of India and a Guinness record for recording the highest number of songs in a day.

Born on June 4, 1946 in Nellore in the erstwhile Madras Presidency, to Harikatha exponent S P Sambamoorthi and Sa-kunthalamma, he had a powerful voice, but no formal training in any kind of music.

SPB was the voice for Telugu superstars Chiranjeevi, Nagarjuna, Balakrishna and Venkatesh for many popular hit numbers. Particularly, he had been the voice of Rajinikanth in his superhit film



Grieved to hear of the passing of a true legend of music, S P Balasubrahmanyam. His golden voice will be remembered for generations. Condolences to his family, many admirers and colleagues in the music industry

MAMATA BANERJEE

WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

HC to hear next week plea challenging commercial property tax on lawyers' offices



PTI
NEW DELHI, 25 SEPTEMBER

The Delhi High Court Friday said it will hear on September 30 a plea by a lawyers association challenging charging of commercial property tax on advocates' offices by municipal corporations.

Justice Najmi Wazir is said the issue raised in the petition is in the nature of public interest litigation (PIL) and it is listed before an appropriate bench, subject to the order of Chief Justice, next Wednesday.

The petition challenged the municipal authorities' decision to treat the use of premises by an advocate as 'commercial activity' and impose taxes accordingly.

The plea filed by Delhi High Court Bar Association (DHCA), through President Mohit Mathur and Secretary Abhijit, challenged an assess-

ment order passed by SDMC in November 2018 and any other notice issued thereafter by the three MCDS -- South, East and North -- for self assessment of property tax returns of lawyers' offices under provisions of the Delhi Municipal Corporation (DMC) Act.

It said that under the DMC Act, use factor system was introduced in the new method of assessment of property tax and for advocates, there is no specific category but they are being charged on the basis of methods applicable on commercial properties which attract the highest tax.

All the professionals form one class but the legal profession has been treated as part of commercial activity, which is illegal, arbitrary and contrary to the law laid down by this court, the plea said, adding that the office of legal professionals should be use factor 1

which is for residential and public purpose.

It said the Bar Council of Delhi sent a representation to the municipal corporations on July 21 for reduction of the use factor 4 to 1 for levy of property tax in respect of offices of advocates in Delhi. Use factor 4 is for business buildings which attract the highest tax.

Lawyers appear before the court to represent their clients but in effect assist the court to dispense justice and this cannot be a business or any commercial activity, the plea, filed through advocate Nikhil Mehta, said.

As an interim relief, the plea sought to stay the operation of November 2018 notice issued by the authorities for self assessment property tax return of the lawyers' office.

The plea has arrayed the three municipal corporations as parties.

Sisodia administered plasma, condition stated to be 'better'

Delhi reports 3,827 new coronavirus cases from 59,134 tests, records 24 deaths with toll rising to 5,147

SNS & PTI
NEW DELHI, 25 SEPTEMBER

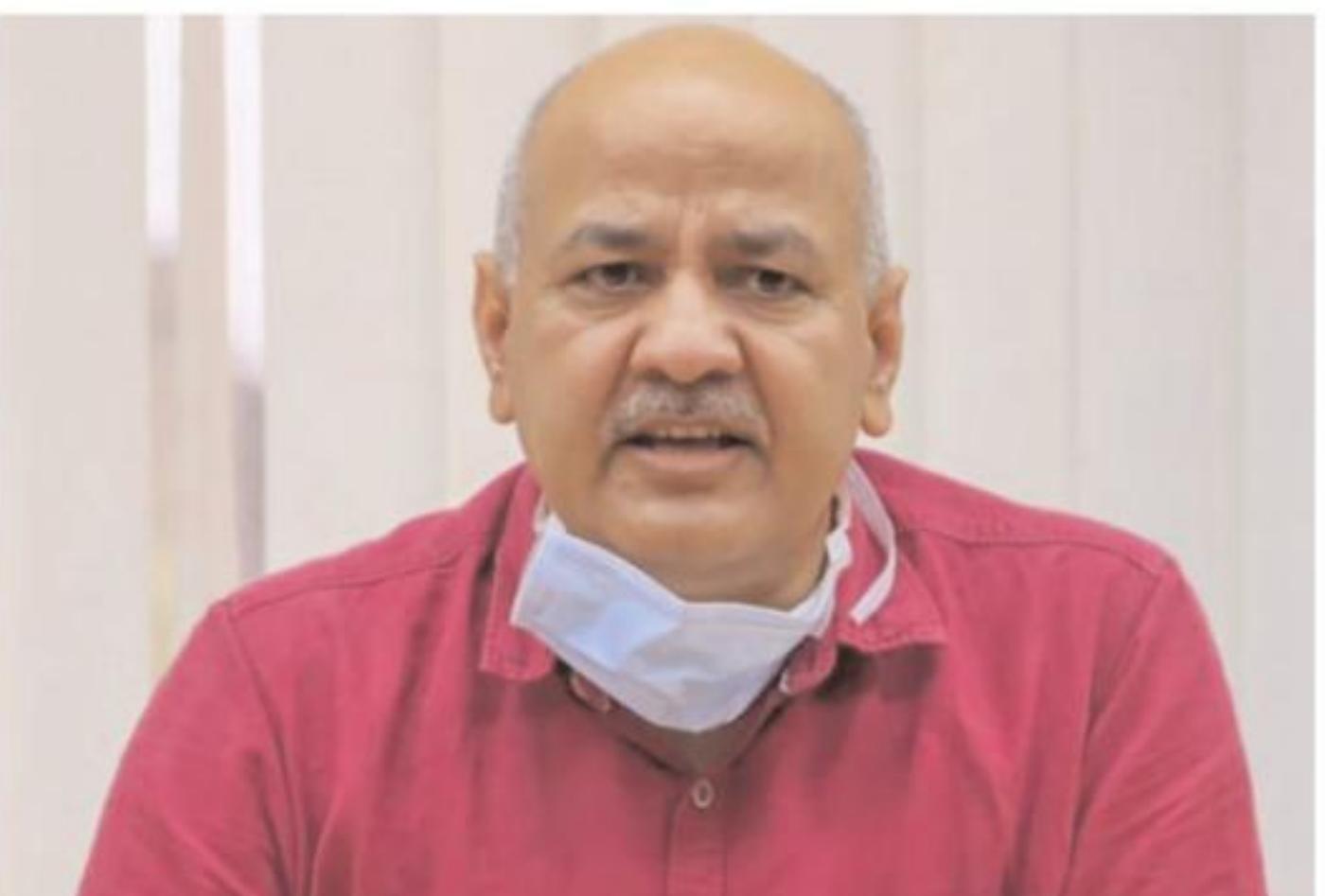
Deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia, who is battling double infections of Covid-19 and dengue, has been administered convalescent plasma therapy and his condition is better now, his office said today.

Sisodia is undergoing treatment at Max Hospital, Saket, where he was shifted yesterday evening from the Delhi government-run LNJP Hospital due to his "falling" blood platelet count and low oxygen level. He was admitted to the ICU of the private hospital in south Delhi.

"He was administered plasma therapy and his condition is better now," an official said.

Sisodia had tested positive for Covid on 14 September and had been under home isolation. He was admitted to LNJP Hospital last Wednesday for treatment, and tested positive for dengue a day later.

Medical Superintendent of LNJP Hospital, Suresh Kumar said though there is no scientific evidence to prove that plasma therapy



benefits a patient, it has been administered for various ailments for several years. "In Covid-19 patients, it helps in bringing the oxygen level to the normal value besides other benefits, which aid in recovery. But in some cases, plasma therapy does not work," he said.

Meanwhile, Delhi today recorded 3,827 fresh Covid cases, which took its cumu-

lative total of such patients to 2,64,450. The count of the tests conducted to identify these coronavirus cases was 59,134, according to the Delhi government's latest health bulletin.

The positivity rate was 6.47 per cent.

The cumulative figure of recovered Covid patients in the city was now 2,28,436, including 4,061 patients discharged by different health-

care facilities during the past 24 hours.

The national capital today recorded 24 Covid fatalities, which pushed its death toll due to the contagious disease to 5,147, the health bulletin said.

There was a decline in the number of Covid fatalities since yesterday when the figure was 36.

The number of patients remaining hospitalised in

Delhi was 8,944 and the figure of active Covid cases was 30,867.

The health bulletin stated that the city now had 18,096 home isolation cases, which was higher than yesterday's count of 17,995.

There was a sharp rise in the number of containment zones in the national capital, which increased to 2,124 today from yesterday's 2,059, the bulletin added.

Delhi health minister Satyendar Jain held a meeting with medical directors and superintendents of all Delhi government hospitals to review the status of testing. The chief secretary also held a review meeting with all district magistrates on Covid management in the city.

Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal had yesterday told reporters that "All the experts believe that the second wave (of coronavirus), which had come in Delhi, appears to have hit its peak. Now, the cases will come down in coming days."

The national capital had yesterday reported 3,834 new cases of Covid-19. The tests conducted to find out these coronavirus cases were 59,183.

Classified

LOST & FOUND

Lijvier Singh Choudary S/o Raghubir Singh Choudary R/o C-64A, Shivaji Park, Punjabi Bagh, New Delhi-110026, Have Misplaced: PTM Letter Dated 16/01/2012 And Following Payment Receipt Issue by Dif For The Property Number Cgw-241, Dif Capital Greens, Shivaji Marg, Moti Nagar, New Delhi-110015. If Found Please Contact: 9810039468.

1/29/12/11, CG3/CRB/00036/1211 -32,55,384-2/06/02/12, CG3/CRB/0005/0212 -31,73,662-3/07/03/12, CG3/CRB/0010/0312 -1,92,555-4/10/08/13, CG3/CRB/0008/0813 -1,17,700-5/29/11, CG3/CRB/0020/1113 -4,500-6/07/02/14, CG3/CRB/0009/0214 -5,481-7/15/07/14, CG3/CRB/0004/0714 -1,20,385-8/11/04/16, CG3/CRB/0017/0416 -33,11,171-9/20/03/18, CG3/CRB/17/000180 -40,00,000-10/20/03/18, CG3/CRB/17/000181 45,32,362-11/31/03/18, CG3/CRB/17/000234 -1,64,020/-PTM LETTER ISSUED BY DLF IN FAVOUR OF BAJAJ FINANCE LTD

widow of Islam, r/o Village Bhadas, Tehsil Ferozepur Jhirka, District Gurugram (Haryana) (since deceased) being Legal Representatives. Hence the General Public is being informed through this publication, if anybody has any objection then he/she may file the same in the court on or before 22-10-2020 at 10-00 a.m. personally or through some authorized agent. Failing which the amount shall be disbursed to the applicants being her LRs and further any objection not considered.

Given under my hand and the Seal of this Court/Tribunal on 14-09-2020.

Commissioner Under Employees' Compensation Act, 1923 Circle-IV, Gurugram-122001 (Haryana)

Seal of the Court

PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform the General Public that our client Sanjay Aggarwal S/o Sh Subhash Chand Bagadia, R/o B-3/34, Rajashali Apartments, Ptampura, Delhi-110034 has filed before Hon'ble High Court of Delhi RFA(OS) No. 16/2018 titled as Sanjay Aggarwal vs Prem Prakash Gupta, in which Hon'ble High Court of Delhi has passed interim status quo Orders / Directions quo right, title, interest, possession with respect to subject property bearing No. 4735, Punjab Bagh West, Delhi v/s its Orders dated 30* October 2019, dated 04* June 2020 and dated 05* August 2020. Therefore Our Client hereby cautions that any party or person dealing with said subject property shall be doing so at their own risk, cost and consequences and our client shall not be responsible for the same.

For R.A. LAW CO. Atit Tewari Advocate
908, P.P. Towers, 9th Floor, Netaji Subhash Place, Ptampura, Delhi-110034

IT IS hereby cautioned to the general public that some unknown persons are collecting subscriptions and donations from the public, claiming to be a member of our client A.K. Bajwali, Devotional Singer's Welfare Trust (Silsil) Sansad) which is a reputed NGO, having its Registered Office address at Haritala, Kolerdanga, Road, Post and Police Station: Nabawip, District: Nadia, Pin-741302, West Bengal, though our client has not given any such permission to unknown persons to do so.

So the general public is hereby cautioned not to give any subscription and donation to them as they are not associated with our client with any mode or manner and our client will not be responsible for any such claim. Any such incident comes into the knowledge of our client, our client shall be constrained to initiate appropriate legal proceedings against the persons, collecting subscription and donation from the public in the name of our client.

A.K. Mishra & Associates Advocates & Law Firm Date: 25.09.2020

CHANGE OF NAME

TENDERS

JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY

Sealed tenders are invited for Tender No.:

1) JU/NIT/EQUIP/01/20-21 for Department of Mechanical Engineering.

2) JU/NIT/AC/01/20-21 for Technology Bhavan (TEM LAB).

3) JU/NIT/STN/01/20-21 for Central Stores.

Details are available on the website at www.jadavpur.edu.in under tender link.

Registrar

GREEN WARRIORS



Climate activists display placards during their demonstration as part of the Fridays For Future (FFF) movement, in the Capital on Friday.

DU new academic session to commence on 18 November

PTI

NEW DELHI, 25 SEPTEMBER

Delhi University's new academic session will commence on November 18, while admissions for undergraduate courses under the first cut-off list will begin from October 12.

The varsity announced the admission schedule for undergraduate and postgraduate courses on Friday.

According to the schedule released by the varsity, admissions under the first cut-off list will begin on October 12 and end on October 14. The last day of payment will be October 16.

Admissions under the second cut-off list will take place between October 19 and October 21, while the last date of payment will be October 23.

Admissions under the third cut-off list will take place between October 26 to October 28, while admissions under subsequent cut-off list will be between November 2 to November 4.

Admissions under the fifth cut-off list will be held between November 9 to November 11.

The new session will commence on November 18, while admissions under the special cut-off list will be between November 18 to November 20.

In case vacant seats are left, further cut-offs may be announced by the varsity.

For entrance-based undergraduate courses, admissions against the first merit list will happen between October 19 to October 21 while the last date of payment is October 23.

Admissions under the second merit list will happen between October 26 and October 28, while admissions under the third merit list will be between November 2 to November 4.

The registration portal for first spot admission will open on November 10 and admissions will be held the next day.

Admissions against first merit list for postgraduate courses will be held between October 26 and October 28 while the admission under the second merit list will be announced on January 11, 2021.

The video was uploaded on February 12, 2020, and the result of Delhi Vidhan Sabha Election on February 12, 2020, a video was uploaded on YouTube in which Kejriwal has been shown singing an obscene song.

The court said in its order passed on September 24, "In the video in question, the tone and manner of the song was not only lowering the reputation of a constitutionally

entitled Chief Minister but it is not the Chief Minister but the video is morphed ulterior motives," he claimed in his complaint.

The complainant filed by advocate Amit Sahn, claimed that after the result of Delhi Vidhan Sabha Election on February 12, 2020, a video was uploaded on YouTube in which Kejriwal has been shown singing an obscene song.

The court said in its order passed on September 24, "In the video in question, the tone and manner of the song was not only lowering the reputation of a constitutionally entitled Chief Minister but it is not the Chief Minister but the video is morphed ulterior motives," he claimed in his complaint.

The varsity said that in case vacant seats are left, further merit lists will be announced.

The Statesman

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RANCHI
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I have confidence in the scientific developments taking place in the field of treatment and vaccines for Covid-19 and soon India will achieve more success in our fight against coronavirus infection

HARSH VARDHAN

MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

NEW DELHI, SATURDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2020

Farm Bills: Capt hopes Centre will back off post farmers' stir

Punjab CM hopes the agony of farmers, who have been forced to come out on the streets and risk their lives amid the Covid pandemic to protest the Centre's 'anti-farmers' legislations, will move the Modi govt

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, 25 SEPTEMBER

With protesting farmers' groups taking to the streets to block roads and take out rallies and marches today as part of their nationwide agitation against the Narendra Modi government's three controversial farm sector Bills passed by Parliament earlier this week,

Punjab chief minister Capt Amarinder Singh expressed the hope that the agony of the agitating farmers will reach the central government.

He also hoped that the Centre will "gracefully back off from destroying the farm sector with such ruthless disregard for the farming community". He has maintained that the Centre's three contentious legislations were "anti-farmers" that will "destroy the farming community".

The BJP-led Union government had, with its ill-conceived and unconstitutional farm laws, pushed the farmers to the brink, forcing them to come out on the roads and endanger their lives amid



the Covid pandemic," said the Punjab CM, expressing grave concern over the plight of the farmers and others associated with the agriculture sector, who form the lifeline of Punjab's economy.

"Maybe the distressing visuals of tens of hundreds of farmers out on the roads at hundreds of locations in Punjab, and in several other states, will touch the hearts of the

Centre's leadership," the CM hoped, adding that "Perhaps the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will now realise its folly".

Iterating his commitment to fight these "draconian" farm laws till his last breath, Capt Amarinder also urged the President not to give his assent to the Bills, which were crafted, he alleged, "to destroy not just the economy of Punjab and the food secu-

rity of the nation but also the lives of lakhs of farmers and their families, as well as those dependent on the agricultural food chain for their livelihood".

The Bills, if implemented, will have "devastating effects" for the border state of Punjab, as well as for the entire nation, Capt Amarinder warned, charging the Modis with "negligence and irresponsibility" in their implementation.

ers' concerns to promote the interests of its capitalist cronies.

He also lashed out at the Akalis for their public posturing on the Bills, which, he claimed, "even the farmers had dismissed as crocodile tears".

Reacting to the attacks by SAD president Sukhbir Badal and SAD leader Harsimrat Badal on him, Capt Amarinder dubbed it as a "blatant tactic to divert attention from their own failures to protect the farmers' interests and their shameful decision to stay on in the central government, after actively supporting and defending the farm Ordinances (earlier)."

The CM charged that the Akalis' "double standards" had been "totally exposed" by the point that they continued to be a part of the "anti-farmer ruling coalition at the Centre" and had, till date, refused to even come out with any public criticism of the Union government.

"This drama of Harsimrat resigning from the Union Cabinet is not enough to convince the farmers of the sincerity of the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD)," he added.

Farmers hold road blockades in UP to demand rollback of agrilegislations

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
MEERUT, 25 SEPTEMBER

A large number of farmers under the aegis of various organisations today blocked major national and state highways and held protests in Uttar Pradesh as part of farmers' nationwide agitation against the Narendra Modi government's controversial agriculture sector legislations.

In a humanitarian gesture, the agitating farmers allowed ambulances carrying patients to pass from the blocked roads.

The members of the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU), Kisan Mazdoor Sangathan (KMS), Rashtriya Kisan Sabha (RKS) and BKU (Bhanu) led the protests and blocked the highways



ment for introducing the agriculture bills which are anti-farmers. He said that the farmers in one voice demand from the government that these bills should be withdrawn.

Farmer leader associated with KMS, Harveer Singh Nihola who was also in the protest asserted that the farmers will not step back and continue their struggle unless their demand is accepted by the government. We do not want to trouble public hence allowed Ambulances carrying patients to pass in spite of the road blockade, he added.

Opposition parties viz Congress and Samajwadi Party also extended their solidarity with the farmers on this issue. While the congress joined the protest at different locations in the district, SP leaders handed over a memorandum to the District Magistrate in Meerut.

BKU leader Rakesh Tikait led the protesting farmers in Muzaffarnagar. In his address to the farmers, Tikait said that they will not give up at any cost unless the government repeals the controversial agriculture bills. BKU activists jammed national highway 58 (Delhi-Hardwar and Dehradun) at Falauda, Rampur Tiraha.

Farmers associated with BKU, KMS and RKS blocked Delhi-Pauri highway at Mawana bypass in Meerut and Bijnore. Though people had to face trouble due to this blockade that continued till 4pm as the movement of vehicles on the highways was disrupted. On the contrary arrangements of food and water were made for the protesting farmers by their supporters.

On the contrary groups of farmers, under the aegis of BKU blocked Delhi-Saharanpur highway at Chutmalpur in district Saharanpur and some other locations in Saharanpur division.

BKU (Bhanu) also joined the protest led by its National General Secretary Choudhary Diwakar at Rajabpur, in District Amroha. Here hundreds of farmers in the leadership of Chaudhary blocked Delhi-Lucknow highway. While addressing the farmers, Chaudhary blamed Modi government for working in the interests of corporates. He said that the government is least concerned about the interest of farmers. He called upon different farmers organisation to fight against this anti-farmers government.

Meanwhile Congress workers led by Avneesh Kajla, its district President in Meerut joined the protest at different locations and express their solidarity with the farmers. He said that the congress party stands with the farmers and will support them in this fight against these agriculture bills.

Samajwadi party leaders and workers led by former minister Shahid Manzoor, district president Rajpal Singh, former MLA Prabhudayal Balmiki and MLA Rafeeq Ansari handed over a memorandum addressed to the governor through district magistrate K Balaji demanding withdrawal of agriculture bills.

Farm Bills protest: Farmers stopped at Delhi border, police deployed

PTI
NOIDA (UP), 25 SEPTEMBER

Hundreds of farmers gathered on a key road in Noida in Uttar Pradesh in a protest demonstration on Friday, prompting deployment of police in riot gear that kept them from proceeding towards Delhi.

The farmers were at the Noida Gate in Sector 14A near Chilla, at the UP-Delhi border, where they were stopped by the Gautam Buddha Nagar police around 12 noon, officials said.

The farmers under the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) banner are protesting the farm sector bills, alleging they were "anti-farmer" legislations, that were passed by the Parliament during the just-concluded Monsoon Session.

"Today's protest is part of a bigger statewide and nationwide agitation by farmers against the farm-sector-related bills passed in Parliament recently. The farmers are opposed to these 'blacklaws'. Our demand is that a law should be made that fixes the MSP (minimum support price) as the lowest amount for purchasing crops from farmers," BKU's Meerut Zone president Pawan Khatana told PTI.

Barricades came up amid heavy deployment of police personnel at the Noida-Delhi



During the agitating farmers' road blockade protest against the Modi government's contentious agriculture legislations, at Delhi-Noida border on Friday.

4 Delhi policemen suspended for allegedly letting go off drug peddler

PTI
NEW DELHI, 25 SEPTEMBER

Four Delhi policemen, including two sub-inspectors, have been suspended for allegedly taking a bribe from a drug peddler to let him off the hook and selling the nearly 160 kg marijuana seized from him in the black market, officials said Friday.

The four policemen from Jahangirpuri police station reported the seized quantity of marijuana as nearly 1 kg and sold the remaining psychoactive drug, they said.

An inquiry is underway to ascertain the actual quantity of marijuana seized from the peddler, identified as Anil, during a raid at a house in northwest Delhi on September 11.

The four policemen from Jahangirpuri police station reported the seized quantity of marijuana as nearly 1 kg and sold the remaining psychoactive drug, they said.

PROTEST IN TIME OF PANDEMIC



The Himachal Kisan Sabha members hold a protest against the Centre's controversial farm sector legislations outside the deputy commissioner's office in Shimla on Friday.

HP Police signs MoU with IIT to update cops' tech knowledge

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, 25 SEPTEMBER

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Himachal Pradesh Police and Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Mandi in the presence of Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur here on Friday to set up an institutional mechanism to facilitate the Police Personnel in updating their knowledge.

The Chief Minister also inaugurated Himachal Pradesh CCTV Surveillance Matrix and Command Centre at state Police Headquarters which had been established in a record time of 65 days despite Covid-19 pandemic.

In his address, Thakur said that the objective of the MoU was to facilitate the police personnel to update their knowledge about new technologies, geographical and temporal analysis of crime and public order, prediction of period crime trends, traffic management, e-challan, beat patrolling system, threat and security analysis, cyber-crime, cyber forensics and cyber security.



He said that the collaboration would be based on research and development activities and capacity building which would involve police officers, IIT faculty, researchers and students.

Thakur said that it would also offer exposure to IIT students about police functioning and internships at various units of Himachal Pradesh Police. He said that this would also facilitate interaction of students with police officers to enhance exposure to ideas of crime trends, detection, prediction, analytics and learning about technological matters. He said that this would also update the knowledge of police officers particularly of Investigation Officers on technological advancement and its application in practical policing. The collaboration will provide improvement in police working especially with respect to systems, protocols, technologies and training imparted at Police Training Centre, Dharohar and other units in Himachal Pradesh Police, he added.

The Chief Minister said that this CCTV Surveillance Matrix system would work on the principle of 'Stopping crime before its starts' by integrating all its components. He said that the aim of this system was to focus on predicting crimes, offenders, perpetrators, victims, places and time.

Thakur at present there were over 19,300 CCTV cameras installed all over the State and these were very helpful in prevention and detection of crime, investigation, traffic management, manpower optimization and improving efficiency in police service delivery. He said that keeping in view the about 70 lakh population of the State ideally 68,000 cameras were required to be installed all over the State. He said that the State Government would consider to install these cameras in a phased manner. He said that this would not only check the crime but also help in effectively managing traffic in the State.

He said that four command centres had been functioning in Kullu, Sirmour and Kinnaur districts effectively and efforts were being made to establish district level command centres in other districts of the state as well.

He said that it was the need of the hour to equip police forces with the latest technologies to cope up with the situation as anti-social elements were also using technologies. He said that police personnel need to be a step ahead in technology to curb the crime in the state.

Director General of Police Sanjay Kundu said that state Police would hold regular academic conferences, workshops and discussions involving the state Police, technological experts, IIT faculty, researchers and students. He said MoU would help in simplifying the investigation of IT related cases and to formulate a compact protocol for investigation.

He said that the initiative of the police department would not only check crime against women and children but would also ensure a congenial environment in the State. He said that more CCTV cameras would be installed in major religious places which would help in effective management of crowds.

Additional Director General of Police (ADGP), Crime Investigation Department (CID), N. Venugopal made detailed presentation on salient features of MoU and CCTV Surveillance Matrix.

The difference between state minister of women and child development Rekha Arya and senior IAS officer V Shanmugam has provided the Opposition Congress ammunition to attack the Uttarakhand government for having no control over its bureaucrats.

The controversy took a sharp turn when state minister for women and child development Rekha Arya wrote a letter to Dehradun Police claiming that Secretary V Shanmugam is missing from office and remains untraceable since 20 September.

The minister even expressed fear that someone has possibly kidnapped the secretary. On this a senior IAS officer clarified that V Shanmugam is in isolation at his home as he had come in contact with a Covid-19 positive person.

Former Uttarakhand Chief Minister and current All India Congress Committee general secretary Harish Rawat came under heavy fire from Rekha Arya for his comment on the rift.

State minister of women and child development Rekha Arya challenged Harish Rawat to prove any corruption charges against her and even declared resigning from politics if the veteran political leader can prove any of the allegations.

The issue is hot and the inquiry will provide clarity on the real reasons for the rift. Was the minister unhappy over a non-deserving company getting the contract? Or she was annoyed by the behavior of the bureaucrats?

Political temp soars in U'khand over rift between minister & bureaucrat



Uttarakhand minister of women and child development Rekha Arya

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
DEHRADUN, 25 SEPTEMBER

The tussle between a senior bureaucrat and a minister of the Trivendra Singh Rawat government has continued to keep the political temperature high in Uttarakhand.

Amid this growing minister-bureaucrat rift in the BJP-ruled state, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat has ordered an inquiry into the allegation of the minister on alleged corruption in the tender process of hiring a private recruiting agency.

The difference between state minister of women and child development Rekha Arya and senior IAS officer V Shanmugam has provided the Opposition Congress ammunition to attack the Uttarakhand government for having no control over its bureaucrats.

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Is coronavirus pandemic over now? Is the situation right for elections?

SHRI SENA LEADER SANJAY RAUT

ASKING IF IT WAS APPROPRIATE TO CONDUCT ELECTIONS IN BIHAR AMID COVID



A bus driver issue a ticket to a passenger as city bus services resumed partially after the government eased restrictions in Hyderabad on Friday.

APF

Heroin, brown sugar worth Rs 5 crore seized: The police on Friday seized brown sugar and heroin worth Rs 5 crore in Assam's Karbi Anglong district and arrested two persons, a senior officer said. 75 packets, each containing 200 Yaba tablets and 68 packets with 13 to 15 grams of brown sugar and heroin in each packet, were recovered from the vehicle, an official said.

SNS

TENDER

NTPC Limited
(A Govt. of India Enterprise)

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB) DOMESTIC COMPETITIVE BIDDING
IFB/NIT Number 40088262 Date: 23.09.2020
Bidding Document no.: CS-0011-112A(1)-9
Name of Package/Work: Procurement of Biomass Pellet for various Thermal Plants of NTPC (17 Projects)
Type of Bidding: E-tendering / Single Stage Two Envelope
Bidding Document Sale: From 28.09.2020 to 05.10.2020 upto 17.00 hrs
Receipt of Techno-Commercial Bids: 19.10.2020 upto 1500 hrs.
Date and Time of Opening of Price Bids: Shall be intimated separately
Contact Details: DGM (CS) / Sr. Manager (CS), NTPC Limited, Noida
Tel: 0120-4946619 / 4946684, Email: itsur@ntpc.co.in/
tapasikumar.mazumdar@ntpco.co.in, Website: www.nptctender.com
Registered Office: NTPC Bhawan, SCOPE Complex, 7, Institutional Area, Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110003, CIN:L40101DL1975G0007966
Leading the Power Sector

EAST DELHI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
OFFICE OF THE Ex. ENGINEER (ELECT)-I
SHAHDARA (N) ZONE, Keshav Chowk, Delhi-110053
NIT NO. E.E.(Elect)-I/V-Shah.N/EDMC/ 2020-21/TC-16 Dated, 24.09.2020
PRESS NOTICE INVITING TENDERS
The Executive Engineer (E) on behalf of Commissioner, EDMC invites online tenders in two Bid System for the following work:
Last Date to Download tender Documents : 06.10.2020 upto 12:00 Noon
Last Date of Bid Preparation & Hash Submission : 07.10.2020 upto 12:00 Noon
Last Date of Technical And Financial Lock : 07.10.2020 upto 15:00 PM
Last Date of Re-encryption of Online Bid : 09.10.2020 upto 12:00 Noon
Last Date of Technical Bid (envelope 1) : 09.10.2020 upto 17:00 PM
Last Date of Evaluation of Technical Bid : 16.10.2020 upto 12:00 Noon
Opening of Financial Bid (Tentative) : 20.10.2020 upto 17:00 PM
S. No. 1. Name of work : P/o Fire Fighting arrangement in EDMC Primary Schools Dilshad Garden O-Block, Tahirpur Village, Sunder Nagar M-Block, Sunder Nagar O-Block, Yamuna Vihar B-2, Yamuna Vihar C-1, Ghonda North Urdu, Jaffrabad, D-Block Seelampur, New Basti Seelampur, Shastri Park and Maupuri at Ward No. 33, 34, 40, 42, 43 & 45 Under Shahdara EE(E)-I, Shahdara (North) Zone. Tender Amount : 7242248, Head of A/c : XL-VII-Edu., Earnest Money : 145000, Time of Completion : 6 months / phase with civil work, Tender Cost : 1500, Rates hold good for 6M, Online Tender No. : 319243.
Tender form and specifications can be downloaded from the website of EDMC <http://mcctenders.com>
RO NO - 51/DPE/EAST/2020-21
Ex. Engineer (Elect)-I
EDMC's Citizens Helpline No. 155303

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

1. The Executive Engineer, National Highway Division HPPWD Hamirpur H.P on behalf of Governor of H.P invites the item rate bids, in electronic tendering system, for construction of the following work from the eligible and approved contractors registered with HPPWD.

Sr. No	Name of work	Estimated Cost (Rs)	Earnest Money (Rs)	Cost of tender form (Rs)	Period of completion	Eligible class of contractor
1	Construction of Entry Gate of Art work of Mehtapur Gate Facilit at RD 44/700 on NH-503 Extr. in the State of Himachal Pradesh	1908240.00	39000.00	500.00	Two Months	Class C&D
2	Cost of Bid document against each ashown above (non-refundable) should be in form of demand draft in favour of Executive Engineer NH Division HP. HPPWD Hamirpur payable at Hamirpur.					
3	Availability of Bid Document and mode of submission: The bid document is available online and bid should be submitted online mode on website https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app bidder would be required to register in the web-site for submission of bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) Class-II from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities (CA).					
4	Key Details: The Tender Documents shall be uploaded online in 2 Cover:- i) Cover 1 : Shall contain scanned copies of all "Technical Documents/ Eligibility Information". ii) Cover 2: Shall contain "BOQ/ Financial Bid" where contractor will quote his offer for each item.					
5	Submission of Original Documents: The bidders are required to submit (a) original demand draft towards the cost of bid document and (b) original bid security duly pledged in favour of Executive Engineer, NH Division HPPWD Hamirpur (H.P.) in approved form and other Technical Documents which are uploaded online in the O/O Executive Engineer, NH Division HPPWD Hamirpur (H.P.) as specified in Key Detail at Sr. No. 4, failing which the bids will be declared non-responsive.					
6	Bid opening details: The bids shall be opened on 22-10-2020, at 12.30 PM in the office of Executive Engineer, NH Division HPPWD Hamirpur (H.P.) by the authorized officer. In their interest the tenderer are advised to be present along with original documents at the time of opening of bids. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.					
7	The bids for the work shall remain valid for acceptance for a period not less than 120 days after the deadline for bid submission.					
8	Other details can be seen in the bidding documents. The officer inviting tender shall not be held liable for any delays due to system failure beyond its control. Even though the system will attempt to notify the bidders of any bid updates, the Employer shall not be liable for any information not received by the bidder. It is the bidders' responsibility to verify the website for the latest information related to the tender.					
9	The bidders are required to submit experience in successfully completing or substantially completing at least one contract of similar nature of work of at least 40% (Forty percent) of the value of proposed contract within the last five years.					
10	The contractor should inspect the site before putting the tender and made himself conversant with the site conditions.					
11	The contractor must produce original GST registration at the time of submission of original documents.					

(II) Objections/ representation if any against the bidders will be entertained only with in five days after up loading of technical evaluation online. And thereafter the financial bids of technically qualified bidders will be opened and uploaded online.

5. Tender Details:-
The Tender Documents shall be uploaded online in 2 Cover:-
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ii) Cover 2: Shall contain "BOQ/ Financial Bid" where contractor will quote his offer for each item.

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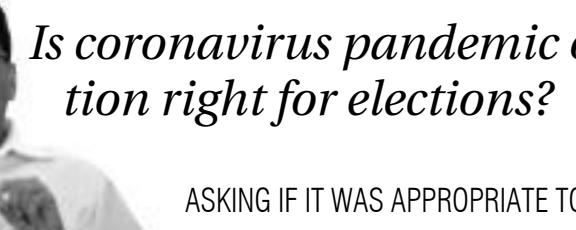
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3328/2020-2021 HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMPAK



Is coronavirus pandemic over now? Is the situation right for elections?

SHRI SENA LEADER SANJAY RAUT

ASKING IF IT WAS APPROPRIATE TO CONDUCT ELECTIONS IN BIHAR AMID COVID

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ndia

NMC to regulate medical education

National Medical Commission replaces MCI as apex controller of medical education

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 25 SEPTEMBER

The National Medical Commission (NMC) came into existence from Friday as the country's apex regulator of medical education and profession replacing the Medical Council of India (MCI).

With this, the nearly 64-year-old Indian Medical Council Act stands repealed and the board of governors appointed in supersession of the MCI has also been dissolved with effect from 25 September, the health ministry said.

"Historic reform in the field of medical education has been effected by the Union government with the constitution of the National Medical Commission (NMC), along with four autonomous boards," the ministry said in a statement.

"With this, the decades-old institution of the Medical Council of India (MCI) stands abolished," it said.

Former head of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences ENT department here, Dr Suresh Chandra Sharma, has been appointed as chairman for a period of three years with effect from Friday, while Rakesh Kumar Vats, who was secretary general in the Board of

Governors of the MCI, is the secretary of the commission, according to gazette notifications issued on Thursday.

The NMC Act, which seeks to usher in mega reforms in the medical education sector, received the assent of the president on 8 August, 2019 and was published the same day. The Act provided for setting up of an NMC in place of the scam-tainted MCI.

The four autonomous boards under the NMC Act—the Under-Graduate Medical Education Board (UGMEB), Post-Graduate Medical Education Board (PGMEB), Medical Assessment and Rating Board and the Ethics and Medical Registration Board—have also

been constituted and comes into existence from Friday, according to the notifications.

"This historic reform will steer medical education towards a transparent, qualitative and accountable system," the statement said.

The basic change that has happened is that the regulator is now 'selected' on merits, as opposed to an 'elected' regulator.

Men and women with impeccable integrity, professionalism, experience and stature have been now placed at the helm to steer the medical education reforms further, the ministry said.

"In pursuance of the provisions of sub-section (1) of

the section 60 of the National Medical Commission Act, 2019, the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 is hereby repealed with effect from the 25th day of September, 2020.

"The Board of Governors appointed under section 3A of the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 in supersession of the Medical Council of India constituted under subsection (1) of section 3 of the said Act shall stand dissolved," one of the notifications read.

The NMC comprises a chairman, 10 ex-officio members and 22 part-time members. The ex-officio members include presidents of the four autonomous boards.

"In pursuance of the provisions... of the National Medical Commission Act, 2019, the central government hereby constitutes the National Medical Commission," another notification read.

"Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers...the central government hereby notifies that all the remaining provisions of the National Medical Commission Act, 2019, shall come into force with effect from the 25th day of September, 2020," another one read.

The NMC will carry forward the reforms initiated by the Board of Governors under Dr V K Paul.

Ex-Punjab DGP Saini appears before court, seeks withdrawal of warrant

The court issued a notice to the Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Punjab Police, seeking its reply, and fixed September 30 as the next date of hearing. The former DGP, along with his counsel, appeared in the court of Judicial Magistrate (First Class) Ravinder Kaur, said Special Public Prosecutor Sarjeet Singh Narula.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHANDIGARH, 25 SEPTEMBER

filed the application two days after he failed to appear before the SIT for investigation at the Mataura police station in Mohali.

The arrest warrant against him was issued by the court of Judicial Magistrate (First Class) Ravinder Kaur on September 12.

The court had then directed police to produce Saini by 25 September. Former DGP was booked in May in connection with the disappearance case.

The court issued a notice to the Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Punjab Police, seeking its reply, and fixed September 30 as the next date of hearing.

The former DGP, along with his counsel, appeared in the court of Judicial Magistrate (First Class) Ravinder Kaur, said Special Public Prosecutor Sarjeet Singh Narula.

Saini said in his application that the Supreme Court has granted him an interim protection from arrest in the case and the non-bailable warrant issued against him be withdrawn.

Saini also said he was ready and willing to appear before the investigating agency and cooperate as and when required.

The former state chief

L Adimoolam elected president of Indian Newspaper Society

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, 25 SEPTEMBER

Mr L Adimoolam, of the publication *Health & The Antiseptic* has been elected president of The Indian Newspaper Society for the year 2020-21. He succeeds Mr Shailesh Gupta of Mid-Day.

Mr D Purkayastha of the *Ananda Bazar Patrika* was elected the deputy president of the INS at its 81st annual general body meeting held at Bengaluru on Friday while Mr Mohit Jain of the *Economic Times* has been elected as the vice president and Mr Rakesh Sharma of the *Aaj Samaj* as Treasurer of the society for the year 2020-21. Ms. Mary Paul is the Secretary General of the Society.

Mr Ravindra Kumar, Editor and Managing Director of *The Statesman*, and Mr Sunil Mohan, of *The Sunday Statesman*, are among the other members of the Executive Committee of the INS.

Other members of the Executive Committee include Mr. S. Balasubramanian (Aditya Thanthi), Mr. Girish Agarwal (Dainik Bhaskar, Bhopal), Mr. Samahit Bal (Pragativadi), Mr. Gaurav Chopra (Filmi Duniya), Mr. Vijay Kumar Chopra (Punjabi Kesari, Jalandhar), Mr. Karan Rajendra Darda (Lokmat, Aurangabad), Mr. Vijay Jawaharlal Darda (Lokmat, Nagpur), Mr. Jagit Singh Dardi (Charhdikala Daily), Mr. Viveck Goenka (The Indian Express, Mumbai), Mr. Mahendra Mohan Gupta (Dainik Jagran), Mr. Pradeep Gupta (Dataquest), Mr. Sanjay Gupta (Dainik Jagran, Varanasi), Mr. Shivendra Gupta (Business Standard), Ms. Sarvinder Kaur (Ajit), Mr. M.V. Shreyas Kumar (Mathrubhumi Arogya Mask), Mr. Tanmay Maheshwari (Amar Ujala, Delhi), Mr. Vilas A. Marathe (Dainik Hindusthan, Amravati), Mr. Dinesh Mittal (Hindustan Times, Patna) and others.

SIT formed to probe killing of Qadri

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, 25 SEPTEMBER

The J&K Police on Friday constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the killing of prominent Kashmiri lawyer Babar Qadri by terrorists on Thursday evening at his house in Srinagar.

"We have constituted a SIT headed by SP Hazratbal that will probe the killing of Qadri," IGP Vijay Kumar said.

Kumar said that the attack happened at 6:20 pm yesterday, when two masked

men entered Qadri's residence in the congested Hawal area as clients with files in their hands.

"They told Qadri that they had to discuss some accident related case but fired at his head with pistols. Qadri sustained four bullet wounds in his head and died on the way to hospital," the IGP said.

While fleeing, the attackers fired a few bullets in the air in the lane. The IGP told media persons that the case was a top priority for the police. The SIT will include a legal expert apart from senior officers of the police.

Giving details about the incident, Kumar said two persons posing as clients with files in their hands and faces

covered with masks came to Qadri's house on Thursday evening.

"They called Qadri claiming that they want some advice for an accident case. When Qadri came down, they fired upon him indiscriminately with a pistol.

The assailants would be arrested or neutralised soon. "We will arrest them as soon as possible and if we cannot arrest them, we will try to neutralise them in an encounter," said Kumar.

"We are assessing CCTV footage from camera installed in the lane," he said. IGP said Qadri's car was fired upon in 2018 and he had a threat perception but declined to shift to a safe zone.

Entry banned

Saudi Arabia's decision to ban all flights to and from India until further notice should force Indian civil aviation authorities to take stock of the manner in which Covid protocols are followed at the country's many airports when clearing passengers for overseas travel. Riyadh's decision came after aviation authorities in Hong Kong and Dubai suspended air travel from India in the midst of concerns about the country exporting Covid-positive patients on international flights. In both cases, it was the national carrier that was at fault; one case involved an Air India flight while the other was an Air India Express service. In the case of Hong Kong, it was Air India's second suspension because last month, it was accused of ferrying 14 Covid positive passengers to the city. The Dubai suspension was lifted a few days ago after Air India Express reportedly apologised and assured authorities it would subject passengers to stringent tests. But these developments were enough to alarm Saudi Arabia which has now suspended air operations to and from India.

Many countries require international passengers to carry a negative RT-PCR test certificate issued within 72 hours of travel, and for the airline to check that the certificate is in order. The occurrence of such cases in passengers departing Indian shores suggests one of three possible things - first, that the certificate was false; second, the test threw up a false negative report or third, that the airline did not check the passenger's test report. While Saudi Arabia's decision will affect the many Indians who work in the kingdom, there is a larger worry that Indian authorities, especially the Ministry of Civil Aviation, must address urgently. For Indians face the real risk of being labelled international pariahs because of the galloping numbers of coronavirus patients and, worse, the widely held suspicion that those who have tested positive make up only a fraction of those actually affected in the country. Notwithstanding the catalogue of achievements that the Ministry of Health seeks to reassure us with every day, the fact is that India's numbers are growing twice as fast as the next worst daily performer - the United States - and its daily death tally is now the highest in the world. Already, many countries have begun tightening requirements for those arriving from India, be they nationals or visitors, Singapore having become the latest to do so by mandating that all those who were in this country up to 14 days before their arrival in the island republic face stringent health tests. While it is not within the province of civil aviation authorities to manage the epidemic, the least that is expected of them is to take all necessary steps before allowing passengers to board international flights. Unless the position changes drastically - and quickly - Indians may soon face the prospect of being left with just a handful of countries that allow them entry.

Presumed guilty

The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2020, passed by Parliament on Wednesday, makes drastic changes to the FCRA Act, 2010, enacted by the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance government. It was brought in to regulate acceptance and utilisation of foreign contributions by individuals, NGOs and companies. There has been a long pending demand from members of the ruling party to change the Act, but surprisingly the Bill to replace the ordinance on the subject was introduced without any fanfare. The draft Bill was not in the public domain till it was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 20 September. Neither the public nor any of the stakeholders were consulted. The amended Act mandates that all foreign contributions must be received only in a FCRA account in a State Bank of India branch in New Delhi to be notified later. Asking about 20,000 charitable organisations around the country to move their FCRA accounts to SBI in Delhi is hugely disruptive. Many will not be able to operate these accounts properly as the home branch will be far away from Delhi, many in rural and semi-urban areas with poor connectivity. Not only that, organisations will have to provide details of Aadhaar cards of all their office-bearers, directors and key functionaries to the government, supposedly to add accountability of all actors involved in FCRA activity. This goes against the Supreme Court ruling on the use of Aadhaar. While some NGOs have played dubious roles, it is unfair to tar all of them with the same brush; it may even be unbecoming of the government to clip the wings of organisations that performed yeoman service in fighting the dreaded Covid-19 pandemic and bringing much needed succour to millions of displaced people. By assuming that all NGOs receiving foreign funds are guilty until proven otherwise, and by limiting administrative expenses to 20 per cent, the Act restricts expenditure on, for instance, filing Public Interest Litigations. According to the rules framed under the FCRA Act, administrative expenses include all salaries, except for school teachers, doctors, field researchers and trainers. This means salaries of outreach workers, field staff who support villagers and rural communities may also be counted as administrative expenses. This amendment will impact payment of salaries, professional fees, utility bills, travel and other such expenditures. While NGOs engaged in dubious charitable activities - by no means a small number - must be weeded out, the Government must take care to ensure it does not throw the baby out with the bath water. In addressing lacunae in existing systems of governance and regulations, the amended law has not thought through consequences of the drastic changes made in the Act. The government must recognise the diversity of NGOs which include world class science and research organisations. Their competitiveness and creativity should not be crushed.

Crusader for Freedom

The Bible provided Douglass the ultimate weapon to humiliate and shame White Christians. He would frequently cite passages from the Bible, pointing out their hypocrisy in thanking God for America's freedom while keeping slaves in bondage in the name of Jesus

It is difficult to imagine a more remarkable life of determination, courage, crusading spirit and success than that of Frederick Douglass, who reached the pinnacle of glory from the lowest depths of a life of slavery. Douglass, who was self-taught, rose to become not only the foremost opponent of slavery and one of the most insightful intellectuals of the 19th century, but he was also regarded as an orator of unparalleled stature and a world-class writer.

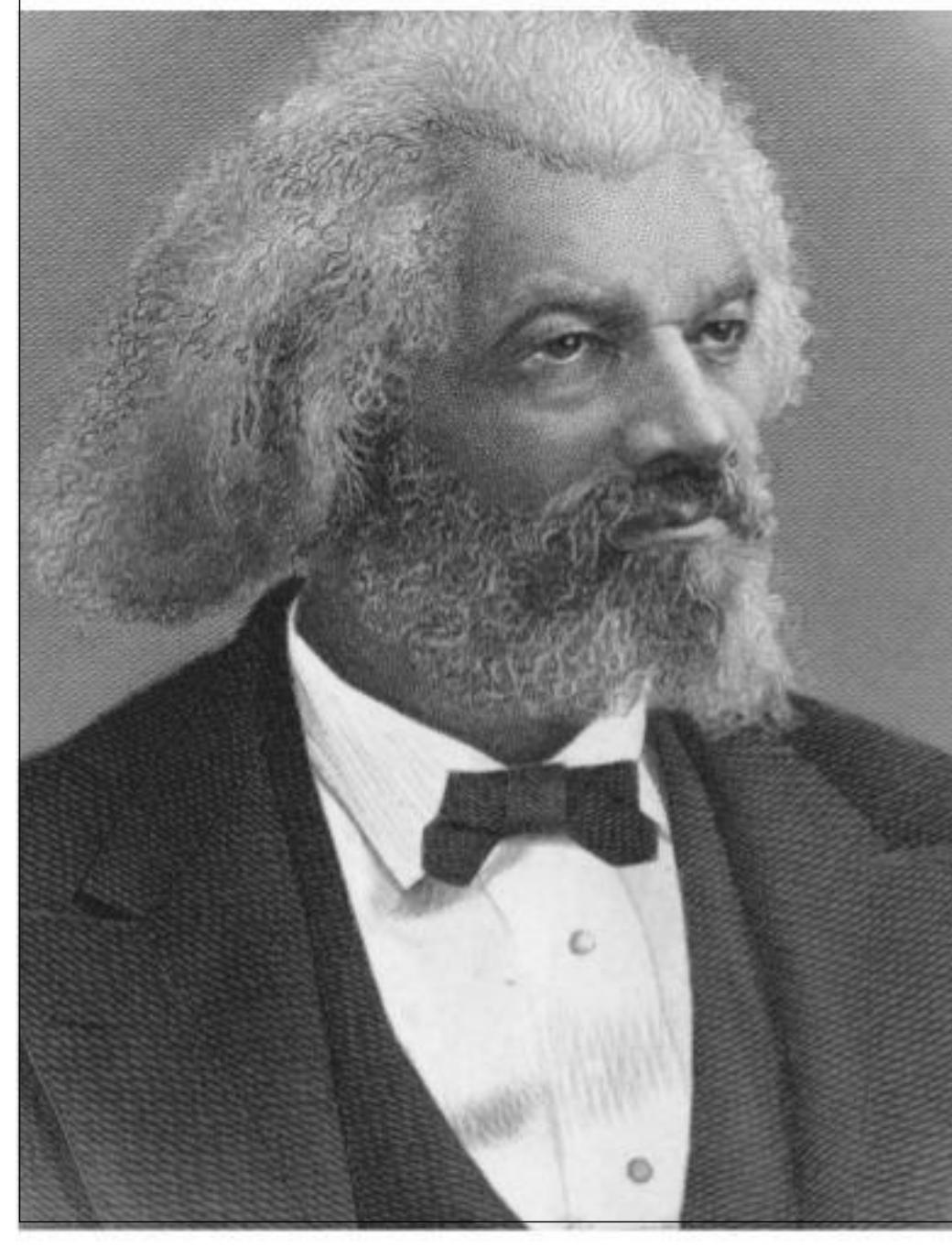
Frederick Douglass was born into slavery in Talbot County, Maryland in 1818. He was separated at a very young age from his mother, who was a slave, and was raised by his grandparents. He didn't know the real identity of his white father who, according to Douglass's biographers, was his owner. He searched his whole life for the name of his true father without any success.

When he was a young boy, Douglass witnessed the most gruesome murders and violent whippings of slaves by their masters with the help of the overseers. Children were also subjected to merciless whippings. Douglass has written about these brutalities in his autobiography and how it left an indelible impression on the young man's mind. So, at a very young age, Douglass was initiated into a world that was marked by barbarities, the absence of morals and grave injustices. These tragic and horrific incidents certainly had a profound influence in shaping Douglass's political views about slavery.

As a young boy, Douglass was extraordinarily bright and very observant. He impressed people around him not only with his razor-sharp intelligence but also with his strong curiosity. It was this curiosity and intellectual persistence that drove Douglass to ask profound questions about issues concerning the origins and ethical and moral dimensions of slavery. Douglass was also known for his prodigious memory, which helped him in important ways when he wrote books about his life.

When Douglass was eight years old, his owner sent him to Baltimore to live as a house servant with the family of Hugh Auld. Hugh's wife, Sofia, who defied a ban on teaching slaves to read and write, taught Douglass the alphabet. Hugh flew into a rage when he found out what Sofia was doing and forbade her to offer more lessons to Douglass.

When Sofia refused to teach Douglass, he was able to get his education from the white immigrant boys in the Baltimore neighborhood. Douglass wrote in his autobiography that he used to bribe the neighborhood boys with the bread that Sophia had provided for him in order to receive help with his spelling lessons. Very often Douglass and these immigrant white boys would be engaged in animated discussions as to why Douglass was a slave for life while the white boys were free. The boys confided in Douglass that they found slavery to be morally wrong and they gave him hope that he would be free



one day.

At the age of 13, Douglass spent the hard-earned money that he had saved from polishing shoes for a copy of The Columbian Orator, an anthology meant for students of elocution. The Columbian Orator included passages from famous speeches about freedom.

Douglass acknowledged how impactful The Columbian Orator was in shaping his views about antislavery and the democratization of education, while instilling in him the spirit of the American Revolution and the values of republicanism. It was The Columbian Orator that taught Douglass how to give great speeches, focusing on cadence, pace, tone, language, gesture and posture.

It was during this time that Douglass met Charles Lawson, who became his deepest influence. Lawson filled Douglass's life with hope and instilled in him a deep and insatiable craving for knowledge from books. Thanks to Lawson, Douglass became very familiar with the scriptures. The Bible played a critically important role in Douglass's adult life in two ways: First, it gave him spiritual centeredness. And second, it provided him the ultimate weapon to humiliate and shame White Christians. He would frequently cite passages from the Bible, pointing out their hypocrisy in thanking God for the nation's freedom while keeping slaves in bondage in the name of Jesus.

When Douglass was a teenager, he devoted an enormous amount of time to reading on the art of oratory. He was also busy learning what he called the "art of writing." In order to be a first-rate writer, he voraciously read

the works of literary giants from England and Europe. He also assiduously studied the works of the ancient Greek philosophers as well as Continental philosophers. All this reading ignited a fire within Douglass, broadened his horizons, strengthened his determination to find freedom, and inspired him to share his life story with the world.

In 1838, when Douglass was 20, he made his dramatic escape from slavery by traveling north by train and boat from Baltimore to Philadelphia and then to New York. Two weeks after arriving in New York, Douglass married Anna Murray, a free black woman whom he had met in Baltimore.

After marriage Douglass settled in Bedford, Massachusetts, where he was working on the dock. During this time, he was giving anti-slavery speeches in his community, which gave him some prominence.

In 1841, Douglass was invited to speak about his experience as a slave at the antislavery convention in Nantucket, Massachusetts. His extemporaneous speech was so riveting, impactful and memorable that he was immediately catapulted to the distinguished role of the speaker for the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society. His lectures, which were filled with passion, erudition and richness of voice enthralled his audiences everywhere, establishing Douglass as the key spokesperson of the antislavery movement. In May 1845, Douglass wrote his autobiography, *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*, which became a classic in American literature and was a phenomenal success worldwide. Douglass's autobiography served as the most important source of information for slavery from a slave's viewpoint. Douglass later wrote two more autobiographies, which were works of political and social criticism with the purpose of abolishing slavery in the United States and for granting full rights and privileges to Blacks. For Douglass, who had already gained worldwide fame as a writer and orator, these two autobiographies permanently secured his position in the pantheon of great literary giants.

On 5 July 1852, Douglass gave a speech titled "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?" at an event commemorating the signing of the Declaration of Independence at the Corinthian Hall in Rochester, New York. Although Douglass gave this speech more than 160 years ago, it is regarded as one of the greatest speeches in the annals of history. According to David Blight, author of the 2019 Pulitzer Prize winning biography *Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom*, "in both secular and sacred terms, prescient in its vision and powerful in its unforgettable language, Douglass had delivered one of the greatest speeches of American history. He had transcended his audience as well as Corinthian Hall, into a realm inhabited by great art that would last long after he and this history were gone."

During his long and celebrated life, Douglass held many highly distinguished positions in the US Government. During the US Civil War, Douglass was appointed as a consultant to President Abraham Lincoln, advising him on matters of utmost importance. Their relationship became so close that at his second inauguration, President Lincoln greeted Douglass at the White House reception not as "Mr Douglass" but as "my friend." Throughout his life, Douglass not only fought for full civil rights for freed slaves, but he also vigorously supported the women's rights movement.

Douglass died at the age of 77 after living an astonishing life. He led a movement in New York to desegregate schools before there was a civil rights movement. His tireless voice helped lay the groundwork for the emancipation of slaves and for the 15th Amendment, giving the Blacks in the United States the right to vote. In his essay in *The New Yorker*, "The Prophetic Pragmatism of Frederick Douglass," Adam Gopnik sums up Douglass's accomplishments thus: "In his legacy as prophetic radical and political pragmatist, in the almost unimaginable bravery of his early journey and the resilience of his later career, in his achievements as a writer, activist, crusader, intellectual, father, and man, the claim that he was the greatest figure that America has ever produced seems hard to challenge."

I have provided a quick glimpse of the life of Frederick Douglass due to limitations of space. I am fully aware that my piece falls short of capturing the many facets of this great man's life who often has been called the greatest American of the 19th century. I therefore ask for the reader's indulgence.

VIDYASAGAR

SIR, 2020 is the bicentennial year of birth of Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar. A dhoti-clad man of short stature, Vidyasagar was born on 26 September 1820 to Thakurdas Bandyopadhyay and Bhagabati Debi at Birsingha Village in the then Hooghly district, which now falls within Paschim Midnapore, in a Hindu Brahmin family. At a very early age, he was sent to Calcutta and was admitted to a local school. Study reveals that his intense quest for knowledge forced him to study under the street light as could not afford a gas light at home. He was a brilliant student from his early childhood and earned many scholarships. During his attachment with the Sanskrit College for well over a decade, Vidyasagar mastered so many fields of learning.

At 21, he joined Fort William College as Head, Department of Sanskrit. In 1846, he joined Sanskrit College. Here, as Assistant Secretary, he recommended a major change in the education system, resulting in a serious altercation with the Secretary. In 1849, he resigned and re-joined Fort William College. Later, he established a school in Calcutta.

Vidyasagar was a man quite ahead of his times in that he challenged Brahmanical practices undauntedly. He was a great social reformer, philanthropist and opposed child marriage and polygamy. He felt for the status of women in society and sought their upliftment and empowerment. He felt for the deplorable life led by Hindu widows in the then Bengal and introduced widow remarriage, and also asked his own son to marry a widow in 1870. Vidyasagar penned down the Bengali Primer, *Barnaparichay*, reshaping the existing alphabet system; authored several books on social issues and on the need to overcome orthodox beliefs. His contribution to literacy in India and the Bengali language, is immeasurable.

During his long association with Karmatar, he set up a girls' school, a night school for adults and a free homoeopathy clinic for the underprivileged. The great sage Ramakrishna praised him as the ocean of wisdom. The Sanskrit College, Calcutta awarded him the title 'Vidyasagar', i.e., Ocean of Knowledge. He breathed his last on 29 July 1891. Let us pay our homage to this great man of India's renaissance of the 19th century.

Yours, etc., Biswanath Bhattacharjee, Bhadreshwar, 24 September.

A MEMBER OF THE **ANN**
ASIAN VOICES

Realistic viewpoint

During a visit to a 1950-53 Korean War battlefield Saturday, Defense Minister Suh Wook said military tensions on the peninsula have eased due to the implementation of an inter-Korean agreement signed two years ago.

In his inaugural speech the day before, South Korea's new defense chief vowed to fully implement the 2018 military accord with North Korea in line with Seoul's efforts to build lasting peace on the peninsula.

Signed on the occasion of President Moon Jae-in's second summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un in Pyongyang, the agreement calls for a series of trust-building and arms control measures as part of a broader understanding to halt all hostile acts against each other.

Among the measures is the joint excavation of remains in the Demilitarized Zone. During his visit to Arrowhead Hill in the DMZ in time for the second anniversary of the signing of the accord, Suh said he hoped the two Koreas would jointly excavate the area as soon as possible. Suh's appraisal of and commitment to the inter-Korean military pact seems out of tune with critical views held by many experts here about its actual consequences for the security of the South.

Critics note that the South has stuck to the agreement word for word, reducing surveillance and reconnaissance activities along the front line as well as naval and air operations, while the North remains deceitful and insincere.

Over the past two years, the recalcitrant regime has continued to refine its nuclear and missile capabilities. In June, the North strained ties with the South by blowing up a joint liaison office on its border town of Kaesong in anger over the sending of

H The Korea Herald
anti-Pyongyang leaflets by North Korean defectors and other activists here.

With the two sides showing asymmetric attitudes toward the military agreement, the readiness posture and discipline of South Korea's armed forces appears to be slackening.

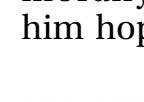
The new defense minister, who served as the Army chief of staff until being appointed to his current post, has repeatedly vowed to maintain a staunch readiness posture while fully implementing the inter-Korean military accord. In the eyes of some critics, he is seen to be making incompatible pledges in keeping with the Moon administration's preoccupation with inter-Korean reconciliation.

It is necessary now to make a cool-headed reevaluation of what has happened since the signing of the military agreement from a realistic viewpoint of national security.

Reconsideration also needs to be given to the hasty manner in which South Korea is pushing to retake the wartime operational control (OPCON) of its forces from the US.

The allies have agreed that the envisioned transfer is not time-based but conditions-based. But the Moon government appears bent on completing the transfer process before Moon's five-year presidency ends in May 2022.

During their parliamentary confirmation hearings last week, Suh and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman nominee Won In-choul said they would strive to accelerate the wartime OPCON transfer to Seoul, which Suh said "is in the need of the times" and Won called a "long-held yearning" of the South Korean people.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@thestatesman.com

Gorkhas and the NEP

SIR, We, the Gorkhas, humble citizens of India, dare not oppose even for its sake any so-called national policy of the Government that seeks to shape us to a finer form. We do ardently acquiesce in the implementation of the National Education Policy-2020 because we are loyal nationalists. It pains us to say that our aspiration of a genuine national identity is yet to be fulfilled to enable us to contribute our utmost

to the national cause.

However, we the hill-people of Darjeeling and Kalimpong, and the age-old inhabitants of the Terai-Dooars region have been destined to remain on tenterhooks because no educational policy serves our purpose well so long as we are not entitled to have our own educational boards, councils and universities to regulate the courses of our studies. We can hardly pro-

per to our full potential until we are free from Bengal's imposition and suppression. We have not been allowed to be the architects of our own fate. We are yet to fully understand how this much-hyped NEP-2020 may come into operation in serving us as desired.

The NEP may prove itself as a judicious plan in the national interest but I, destined to live so far away from other enlightened masses, feel miserable for ignorantly lacking in several respects. I myself for coming from a deprived community. Nevertheless, I venture to comment that the undergraduate course of four years as envisaged is rather long and the PG course of just one year doesn't sound justifiable. May I, if it makes any sense, quote Rajiv Gandhi, the former PM, as having asserted in his Convocation address - "Higher education is not meant for mediocre. Mediocrity is not tolerated in higher studies."

Yours, etc., Dick Dewan, Pedong, 15 September.



VIDYASAGAR

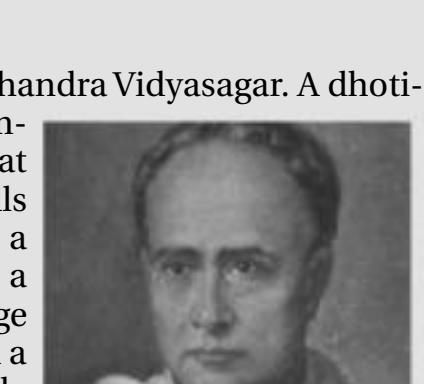
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'Governors won't be spectators'

Himachal Pradesh Governor **BANDRU DATTATRAYA**'s journey from the rough-and-tumble of politics to the rarefied realm of gubernatorial office changed many things. He has sought to compensate for replacement of his past political innings' hectic schedule with the placid routine of the Raj Bhawan by occupying himself more in travel, interactions, reading, writing, morning or evening walks and yoga. However, the elaborate protocols of his high constitutional post have not changed the essential approach of this two-time ex-Union minister from Telangana with regard to work in public interest. With roots in the RSS, Dattatraya, 73, was credited with bringing in "labour-friendly" legislations as Union labour minister. He is still fond of interacting with people for gaining first-hand knowledge about various matters in order to continue making his contribution to the development process. He has stayed in touch with people during the Covid-19 pandemic and has been proactively giving inputs to the state government on dealing with issues related to health, education and supply chains. In an interview with **ARCHANA PHULL** soon after completing his first year as HP Governor, Dattatraya spoke candidly on a variety of issues. Excerpts:

Q. How do you look at your first year in office as Himachal Governor?

A. I was more in public life earlier. In my home state, my role was mostly limited to being in the Opposition. I have all along been a social activist. When I came here, most of my friends told me that I won't be able to speak out or do much and Raj Bhawan would be like a jail. But I didn't feel like that. It is only that I am now in a more disciplined and restricted life. But there is so much work here and it's my habit to do hard work. I have visited the entire state to meet and talk to people, except for tribal areas where I could not go due to the pandemic. I found people of Himachal contented and less political. I try to identify issues and contribute maximum for the state's development by acting as a link between the state and the Centre. My first year as Governor of HP has been fruitful.

Q. Don't you think it is unusual for a Governor to have media interaction on completion of one year in office?



But you did so, why?

A. I wanted to share my report card. I just reviewed what all I did. Let everyone know what the Governor has been doing and what his priorities are. The Governor has an active role to play in development.

Q. Do you think the Governor's institution has got really activated during the Narendra Modi regime?

A. Yes. The approach of the present central government is totally different. We don't have any written instructions, but it is understood that the Governor's institution would not be a mere spectator now. It has to be performing and transparent. In the Governors' conference, there were clear instructions to focus on empowerment of different sections, central government schemes and tribal issues.

Q. Most of your tenure here so far has overlapped with the Covid pandemic which continues to rage. How do you assess the HP government's handling of the pandemic?

A. The Himachal Pradesh government adopted a proactive approach to handle the pandemic. It went for lockdown one day before the country

in March. The instructions given by the central government geared up the state machinery more. The work done by the health department, police, Panchayati Raj institutions and NGOs is laudable.

Q. What should the state government do next to handle the pandemic situation?

A. There is a need to check migration to handle the pandemic. Six months after the lockdown, the government will have to take several new initiatives with new technology and government machinery will have to give them wider coverage. The system should be reversed and the supply chains should be taken to people rather than people coming out. A good example is the postal department which distributed pensions at the doorstep. There should be more mobile vans for health care. The government should identify new Covid-prone areas in the state and restrict the movement of people from outside at border areas. HP certainly has an advantage as it has more rural areas than urban localities.

Q. What should be the action plan to

get things back on track in Himachal amid the pandemic?

A. The government needs to remove fear psychosis from the minds of common people and help them rework future strategies. Everything slowed down due to Covid-19. We need to work on special projects and plans. The major challenge for HP now is economic revival and employment generation. The government now needs to help people become self-reliant at village level, so that they stand on their feet and stay back. Why should the youth of Himachal go out for salaried jobs? Let them work out sustainable options for income in their homes. Covid has actually done one good thing by making the younger generation know the value of their homes and healthy food. We can have an action plan at block level for this. The ground is ripe to switch to natural farming also by getting the youths engaged with agriculture back home. The tourism sector should be revived with incentives to different players like taxi operators, hoteliers, etc. The problems faced by industry should also be identified for smooth functioning in the midst of the pandemic.

Q. What is that one piece of advice you would like to give to both the government and the Opposition in Himachal?

A. I think there should be better mutual understanding between the government and the Opposition in the interest of the state for better handling of a crisis like Covid. They should have more intellectual maturity and the standards of debate and suggestions should be higher. There should not be any communication gap between the government and the Opposition.

Q. You held a meeting with officials on the situation in the HP border areas along Tibet after the Galwan incident. What is your concern?

A. Yes, I discussed the issue with officials at length. The tribal belt of Himachal Pradesh along the international border with China needs attention. The youth from the area go out for jobs and settle outside. Mostly the elder generation is living in their native land. We need to do infrastructure development, strengthen basic facilities and create employment opportunities in the border area by ensuring local youths' skill development in order to stop them from going out for greener pastures. It will take care of security issues. I had taken it up with the chief minister and even written a letter to defence minister Rajnath Singh.

Q. What in your view is the USP of Himachal Pradesh, which, if harnessed imaginatively, could propel the state on to the global stage?

A. Tourism, especially eco-tourism, can take Himachal Pradesh to the international stage. Himachal has bounty of natural beauty and has clean and green environment, which could be of great attraction to tourists from across the world. Domestic and foreign tourists do come to HP in good numbers, but so far they visit places like Shimla and Manali. There is a lot of scope for tourism and eco-tourism development in Himachal Pradesh and the government should involve the private sector in it. Why can't the guest houses in the state be privately managed from a tourism point of view? The Shaktipeets in HP can be brought on the world map with proper planning, development and projection. I am already working on a plan for linking North and South in this regard.

100 YEARS AGO

OCCASIONAL NOTE

British ministers will soon need to be reminded, by way of caution, of the fate which befell Lord Sackville. By a letter which he believed to be private and which was quite innocently meant, but which referred to the Presidential election then pending in 1888, Lord Sackville found that he had given offence, and his position as British Ambassador at Washington became untenable. American politics are not to be lightly meddled with during the crucial days of a Presidential contest. There may be no harm in Mr. Lloyd George expressing the wish for American co-operation and looking forward to the time when political troubles in the United States will be ended. No one can well be offended by amiable platitudes of this kind. There may be no greater harm in Lord Curzon's reference to the painful crippling of the League by the defection of the United States, and his argument that no effort should be spared to induce a reversal of that decision - for the reversal may come from either of the two American parties. Bearing in mind, however, the sensitiveness of American political opinion while the great quadrennial party campaign is pending, the policy of the United States in relation to the League of Nations is a topic which must needs be handled with due reserve by the statesmen of other Powers. Apart from this, Lord Curzon's statement regarding the League was mildly encouraging.

NEWS ITEMS

OIL AGREEMENT

The Franco-British oil agreement now published provides that in Rumania the two Governments will support their respective nationals with a view to the acquisition of former German oil interests and other concessions; all shares in the former being half French and half British. In Russia, the two Governments will support their respective nationals in acquiring concessions. In Mesopotamia, France will receive 25 per cent of the Government output at market rates or 25 per cent of shares in private companies. The agreement also provides for the construction of pipe lines for transportation of oil through the French sphere to the Mediterranean in North Africa and other French colonies. France will give facilities to Franco-British groups, Britain giving corresponding advantages in British Crown Colonies.

DEATH OF MR. H.F. BROWN

The late Mr. Henry Francis Brown, the announcement of whose death in England has been received by Messrs. Kilburn and Co., was born in 1840, and received his business education in the offices of Messrs. R. & J. Carlisle and Co., Liverpool. In the year 1864 he was offered a partnership in the firm, but owing to a dispute with the home partners as to the propriety of his crusade against the then prevalent mildew damage in cotton goods he declined, and on the termination of his engagement in 1865 he joined the firm of Messrs. Schoene Kilburn and Co., and was admitted a partner on the 1st May, 1866. Mr. Brown was a gentleman of the old school, and in spite of the fact that for many years he led a retired life, will be missed by many.

THE FUTURE OF THE NAVY

Admiral Beatty today received the freedom of Huddersfield. In his speech he said that the Navy today, both in commission and in reserve, was the minimum compatible with the safety of the Empire. The Navy's policy regarding construction had been to investigate the problems of war and coordinate all lessons so that when the time came, as it must come, for them to put those lessons to useful purpose, they should be applied with wisdom and understanding. The best brains of the Service were being devoted to maintaining the Navy in such a condition that it would continue to form the principal bulwark of the Empire against aggression.

INTERESTING ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES

Mr. J.T. Rankin, the Divisional Commissioner, in a recent tour in Kotalipara, District Faridpur, procured some very interesting archaeological relics for the Dacca Museum. One is a very peculiar copper image of Bajra Tara, the only like of which, so far as is known, is now in the Indian Museum at Calcutta. The other articles are two very beautiful gold coins of Skanda Gupta 455-467 A.D. Both these coins were found near the western embankment of the mud-fort at Kotalipara. The authorities of the Dacca Museum are compiling a detailed descriptive catalogue of the Archaeological exhibits in the Museum which will also contain notices of all objects of antiquarian interest lying in villages of the Dacca and Chittagong Divisions.

Horror tales from Saudi Arabia

SHUPROVA TASNEEM

The story of migrant labour has two polar opposite faces in Bangladesh - one is the "success story" of hard-earned foreign exchange being sent back to the country by dedicated migrant workers, keeping their families afloat and propelling up the economy as well. The other side of that story is one of vulnerability, exploitation and the dehumanising of migrant workers, turning them into products for sale in a market where the cheaper the cost of labour, the higher the margin of profit.

Most recently, the face of this dehumanisation has been 14-year-old Kulsum, who was sent to Saudi Arabia as a domestic worker with false documents in April 2018 by a recruiting agency, M/H Trade International. On September 12, she was returned to her family in Bangladesh in a body bag. Her lifeless form was covered with signs of torture - her employers allegedly beat her mercilessly, breaking her legs and arms and damaging her eyes.

Kulsum is not the first female Bangladeshi migrant worker to be tortured and killed in the host country. According to the Expatriate Welfare Desk at the airport, from 2016 to 2019, the bodies of 410 female migrant workers were returned to Bangladesh, with the highest number coming from Saudi Arabia (153), followed by Jordan (64) and Lebanon (52). What is the

price of their lives? Data from the Bangladesh Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) suggests that out of the \$16 billion of remittances sent home by migrant workers in the fiscal year 2019-2020, the highest portion came from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (\$3.5 billion).

Given this amount, it is perhaps no surprise that the bulk of Bangladeshi migrant workers end up in the kingdom - 57 per cent of documented Bangladeshi migrant workers were based there in 2019; out of over 18,000 documented female Bangladeshi migrants, over 10,000 were in Saudi Arabia alone, mostly working as domestic workers. This is despite the fact that Human Rights Watch (HRW) has described the conditions of foreign domestic workers in the country as "near-slavery", attributing them to "deeply rooted gender, religious, and racial discrimination".

Last year, at least 800 female migrant workers returned from Saudi Arabia after being tortured and sexually abused, according to the Brac Migration Programme. After Kulsum's death, The Daily Star interviewed other migrant workers, recently returned from the same country, who also recounted terrible stories of sexual violence, imprisonment and starvation. These women had no legal protections and no access to justice, were unable to contact their embassies, and were abandoned by their recruiting agencies.

It is not just Bangladeshi who

have fallen victim to the terrible violence inflicted on domestic workers by certain employers - Saudi Arabia has been criticised for years by rights organisations for not only failing to protect foreign domestic workers from employers, but also for creating conditions that trap workers with their abusers with no recourse to justice. In a Guardian report from 2013, an HRW spokesperson said: "The Saudi justice system is characterised by arbitrary arrests, unfair trials and harsh punishments. Migrants are at high risk of being victims of spurious charges. A domestic worker facing abuse or exploitation from her employer might run away and then be accused of theft. Victims of rape and sexual assault are at risk of being accused of adultery and fornication." Although a 2015 amendment to migrant labour laws criminalised certain abusive labour practices (confiscating passports, working without contracts, etc.) and strengthened certain labour rights (paid leave, injury compensation, etc.), it excluded domestic workers, who are still at the complete mercy of their employers due to the horribly restrictive kafala (visa sponsorship) system. If anything, the institutional bias against female migrant workers has become even more entrenched in Saudi law.

In 2014, the Indonesian government paid \$ 2.1 million in "blood money" to save Indonesian maid Satinah binti Jumadi Ahmad in Saudi Ara-

bia, who was on death row for murdering her employer. According to Indonesian rights group Migrant Care, Satinah had been regularly abused by her employer, and had finally snapped and retaliated in self-defence. In 2018, the authorities of this Gulf state were strongly condemned by Indonesian officials for executing domestic worker Tuti Tursilawati without even informing her family or the consular staff.

Migrant Care alleged that Tuti had murdered her employer while defending herself from being raped. While these stories of abuse are eerily similar to the ones recounted by Bangladeshi workers who have returned from Saudi Arabia, there is a marked difference - their country of origin vocally and publicly condemned the kingdom for violating the rights of these women, even going as far as paying two million dollars to save one of them. Can female migrant workers from Bangladesh expect the same treatment from authorities?

If we look at the case of M/H Trade International alone, there is little room for doubt regarding our authorities' stance. The allegations against this agency surfaced as early as 2017. In 2018, one returnee domestic worker, sent to Saudi Arabia by this agency, spoke out on how she was raped, starved and finally pushed off the roof by her employers, leaving her permanently disabled. Not only did M/H Trade International not help her, she was even raped by their local recruit-

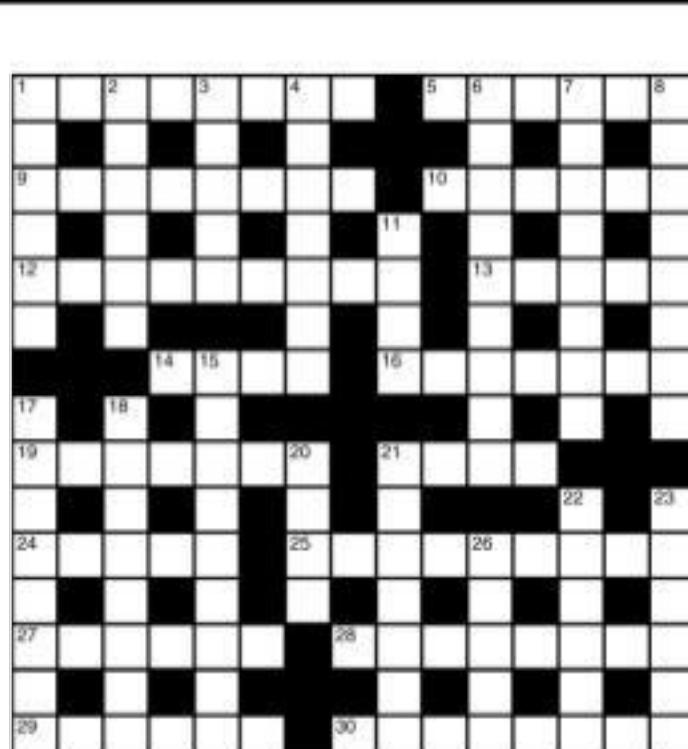
ing agent. Yet the raid on this agency's office and arrest of its agents only occurred in 2020. Why did this take so long? How did this agency manage to get a fake passport for Kulsum and send her abroad through completely legal migration channels? Why did the Bangladeshi embassy in Riyadh fail to protect Kulsum?

Perhaps unsurprisingly, there is no clear data on how much money the recruiting agencies and other interested parties (such as dalals or brokers) make from the trade in human labour. However, it is common knowledge that transnational syndicates resembling trafficking rings exist to profit from this lucrative trade at the expense of migrant workers. It is also quite clear that it is not possible for these agencies and brokers to operate, in both host and origin countries, without the support of corrupt officials who are getting a slice of the migrant trade pie. And what do female migrant workers - those who managed to survive their traumatic experiences but will carry scars for the rest of their life - get? No justice in either host or origin country, and the knowledge that their exploitation and torture is considered, by all accounts, to be the unfortunate side-effect of a multibillion-dollar and completely legal industry. The abuse of a few hundred women palea in comparison to the golden ticket of \$3.5 billion, not to mention the unaccounted-for bulk profits being pocketed by those pulling the strings in the "manpower" trade.

The Daily Star/ANN

NO 28085

CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

SOLUTION FOR 19 SEPTEMBER



ACROSS

- 1 Hostess with young man stretching limits of legality (8)
- 5 Get over junk you shouldn't have internalised (6)
- 9 Texan can brush over preposterous hat (8)
- 10 Returning songbird impishly carries bit of leaf (6)
- 12 Turn head of terminally lovesick sheep? (9)
- 13 Dutch wants depravity, the horny fellow (5)
- 14 Scraps very loud sex when retired (4)
- 16 Is Raab desperately trying to start being a foreign expert? (7)
- 19 About to master four-letter word usages (7)
- 21 Produced wind to sound rude (4)
- 25 Appear to enjoy drinking a double (9)
- 27 Sympathetic lady in Papuan attire stripped regularly (6)
- 28 Spooner's to use motivational tactic getting a drink in America (4,4)
- 29 Go green in a weird way and articulate why (6)
- 30 Beauty to behold by the outskirts of Caerphilly (3,5)
- 31 Liable to change (6)
- 32 Tory leader visits unsuspecting resident (6)
- 33 Drawers learn using repetition, endlessly sketching faces (5)
- 34 Operation cancelled with doctor beginning to fall asleep (4,3)

6 But will she see you after this? (5,4)

- 7 A flower cutting to have in France - cheer! (2,6)
- 8 Greek character missing a knack for sexiness (8)
- 11 Essential ingredients to cook rabbit gumbo (4)
- 15 See 20
- 17 Assassinate duchess with steel-bladed boot (3,5)
- 18 Rowdy gents are cut off (8)
- 20/15 Amazingly fit and also single but so out of touch (4-9)
- 21 I go by mainly old Byzantine life lessons (7)
- 22 I have to open some booze to concede defeat (4,2)
- 23 Sound like an ass welcoming foreign visitor to shop (6)
- 26 Barely rate jerk in Upper Chamber (5)

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



India should aim to be among the top 25 countries in global innovation index

SANJAY DHOTRE
UNION MINISTER

THUMBNAILS

Important insurers: The Irdai has identified LIC, GIC and New India Assurance as domestic systemically important insurers (D-SIs) and subsequently decided to subject them to enhanced regulatory supervision. The three insurers have also been asked to raise the level of corporate governance, identify all relevant risks and promote a sound risk management culture, the Insurance Regulator and Development Authority of India said.

PTI

Digital payment: The finance ministry on Friday said that public sector banks have on-boarded about one crore customers on digital payment modes in just one month of the launch of "Digital Apnayen" campaign. The campaign, aimed at encouraging customers to use digital banking channels, was launched on 15 August under the aegis of the government's Digital India initiative.

PTI

Federal Bank offer: Federal Bank has introduced an EMI facility for holders of Federal Bank debit cards to purchase two-wheelers. Unlike conventional two-wheeler loans, hypothecation in favour of the bank is not required for vehicles purchased on debit card EMI from Federal Bank. Customers can choose a repayment period of 3/6/9/12 months. There is no processing fee charged on loans under this scheme, the bank said.

SNS

Ducati launch: Luxury motorcycle brand Ducati has launched all-new Scrambler 1100 Pro and the 1100 Sport Pro, priced at Rs 11.95 lakh and Rs 13.74 lakh respectively, (ex-showroom pan India), the company said in a statement. Bookings are now open across all Ducati dealerships, it added.

SNS

Smartphone: Poco, an independent brand born out of Xiaomi in India, on Friday launched its latest smartphone ~ Poco X3. Powered by Snapdragon 732G processor, Poco X3 boasts of incredible performance that lasts up to two days on one charge, according to the company. The phone will be available in 6GB + 64GB, 6GB + 128GB and 8GB + 128GB storage variants for Rs 16,999, Rs 18,499 and Rs 19,999, respectively, it said.

SNS

Realme series: Realme has launched its performance-driven smartphone series ~ narzo 20 series, for young players and thrill-seeking consumers in the country. The narzo 20 series features three smartphones ~ narzo 20 Pro, narzo 20 and narzo 20A, said a Press release from the company.

SNS

SP debt recast: The Shapoorji Pallonji Group, which has decided to exit the Tata Group, will restructure Rs 10,900 crore of its debt under the resolution framework for pandemic-related stress, a group official said.

PTI

Equity indices snap 6-day falling streak

Investors return to buying mode amidst a modest recovery in global markets

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
MUMBAI, 25 SEPTEMBER

Equity benchmark the Sensex rallied 835 points today after six days of declines as investors returned to buying mode amid a modest recovery in global markets.

A strengthening rupee which spurted 28 paise against the US dollar ~ added to the momentum, traders said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex opened higher following Thursday's sell-off and stayed in the positive territory throughout the session. It finally closed at 37,388.66 points, up 835.06 points or 2.28 per cent.

Similarly, the NSE Nifty vaulted 244.70 points or 2.26 per cent to finish at 11,050.25 points.

All Sensex components ended in the green, with Bajaj Finserve, HCLTech, Bharti Airtel, IndusInd Bank, L&T, TCS, ICICI Bank, ONGC, Infosys and Bajaj Finance gaining up to 6.64 per cent.

On a weekly basis, the Sensex lost 1,457.16 points or 3.83 per cent, while the Nifty tumbled 454.70 points or 4.04 per cent.

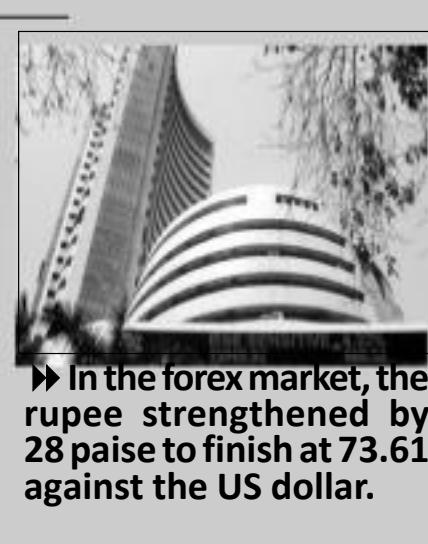
Global markets stabilised following an overnight pullback on Wall Street after reports said US lawmakers were working on a stimulus deal that could be voted on as early as next week.

"Stimulus measures, if any, in the US could provide support to the markets. If the market corrects from these levels, then investors should actively look for accumulating good quality stocks for long-term wealth creation," said Sanjeev

SENSEX JUMPS 835 PTS

► The 30-share BSE Sensex opened higher following Thursday's sell-off and stayed in the positive territory throughout the session. It finally closed at 37,388.66 points, up 835.06 points or 2.28 per cent.

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In the forex market, the rupee strengthened by 28 paise to finish at 73.61 against the US dollar.

Zarbade, VP PCG Research, Kotak Securities.

All sectoral indices finished higher. The BSE telecom index spurted 5.73 per cent, led by Vodafone Idea, following reports that Vodafone has won the arbitration case against India over the latter's Rs 20,000-crore retrospective tax demand.

Teck, IT, auto, capital goods, banks, basic materials and metal indices rose as much as 4.02 per cent.

The broader BSE mid-cap and small-cap indices jumped up to 2.90 per cent.

During the session, the local unit witnessed an intra-day high of 73.56 and a low of 73.77 against the US dollar.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.01 per cent up at 94.36.

In rest of Asia, bourses in Tokyo and Seoul settled with gains, while Shanghai and Hong Kong ended in the red. Stock exchanges in Europe were also trading on a mixed note in early deals.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude was trading 0.05 percent higher at \$41.96 per barrel.

In the forex market, the rupee strengthened by 28 paise to finish at 73.61 against the US dollar.

At the interbank forex market, the domestic unit opened at 73.76 against the US dollar, then gained further ground to finally close at 73.61, registering a rise of 28 paise over its previous close. On Thursday, the rupee dived 32 paise to touch a near one-month low of 73.89 against the US dollar.

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Govt panel's nod to restructuring of SAIL board

NEW DELHI, 25 SEPTEMBER

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the restructuring of SAIL's board, the steel ministry said today. The restructuring of the board will bring in greater efficiency, and decentralisation in the company, it said.

"The Appointments Committee... has approved the restructuring of the board of SAIL. The 4 posts of CEOs of SAIL's integrated steel plants are to be elevated as functional directors by designating them as directors-in-charge of Bokaro, Rourkela, Bhilai and one director-in-charge jointly for Burnpur and Durgapur steel plants," the statement said.

The restructuring also involves merging the functions and duties of the post of director (raw materials and logistics) and that of director (projects, and business planning) with the post of director (technical) and its consequent re-designation as director (technical, projects and raw materials).

The restructuring board will consist of chairman, director (finance), director (commercial), director (technical, project and raw materials), director (personnel), directors in-charge of integrated steel plants.

Enquiries from open

ED attaches ₹127-cr London flat of Yes Bank's Rana Kapoor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 25 SEPTEMBER

sources confirmed that this property has been listed for sale on several websites," it said.

The agency, as per procedure, will now approach their counterparts in the United Kingdom to execute the attachment order and will issue a proclamation that the asset cannot be sold or purchased as it has been seized under the criminal sections of the PMLA.

The ED had earlier attached assets in the US, Dubai and Australia in a similar fashion as part of other investigations under the PMLA.

"The market value of the flat is ₹13.5 million (about Rs 127 crore). The property was purchased by Rana Kapoor in 2017 for ₹9.9 million (Rs 93 crore) in the name of DOIT Creations Jersey Limited and he is the beneficial owner," the ED said in a statement.

It claimed that the agency obtained "information from a reliable source that Kapoor was trying to alienate this property in London and that he has hired a reputed property consultant."

Enquiries from open

'Faceless income tax appeal' system launched by Centre

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 25 SEPTEMBER

The government today launched "faceless income tax appeal", under which all the future tax dispute cases will be resolved online~ e-mail, e-enquiries or e-hearing. The launch of the new system, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said, will not only provide greater convenience to the taxpayers but will also ensure just and fair appeal orders and minimise any further litigation.

"As on date, there is a pending of almost 4.6 lakh appeals at the level of the commissioner (appeals) under the department. Out of this, about 4.05 lakh appeals, i.e., about 88 per cent of the total appeals will be handled under the faceless appeal mechanism and

almost 85 per cent of the present strength of commissioners (appeals) shall be utilised for disposing off the cases under the faceless appeal mechanism," said the Press release issued by the finance ministry.

Under this system, there will be no physical interface between the taxpayers or their counsel/s and the income tax department. Now, the taxpayers can make submissions from the comfort of their home and save their time and resources.

From now on, under this faceless appeal everything from e-allocation of appeal, e-communication of notice/questionnaire, e-verification/e-enquiry to e-hearing and finally e-communication of the appellate order, the entire process of appeals will

be online, dispensing with the need for any physical interface between the appellant and the department," reads the release.

It will also include allocation of cases through data analytics and AI under the dynamic jurisdiction with central issuance of notices which would be having Document Identification Number (DIN).

As part of dynamic jurisdiction, the draft appellate order will be prepared in one city and will be reviewed in some other city resulting in an objective, fair and just order.

The new system will also be instrumental in imparting greater efficiency, transparency and accountability in the functioning of the income tax department, it said.

SBI relocates FI&MM division to Delhi for better synergy with govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 25 SEPTEMBER

In a bid to promote financial inclusion and better coordination with the government, State Bank of India (SBI) today relocated the financial inclusion and micro market (FIM&MM) division from its Mumbai corporate office to the national capital.

The financial inclusion and micro market division takes care of 8,000 rural and semi-urban branches catering to bottom of the pyramid segment and 64,000 customer service points (CSPs) managed by business correspondents and 58,000 ATMs.

Besides, the division is responsible for running all the government-sponsored schemes, including direct

benefits transfer like PM-Kisan, in coordination with various departments and ministries.

According to SBI chairman Rajnish Kumar, the focus of the Delhi-based division will be community service, financial inclusion and running government-sponsored schemes.

The new office of the vertical inaugurated by the SBI chairman will be headed by deputy managing director Sanjeev Naik.

Earlier, the vertical was part of retail overall network of the bank, he said, adding that the rest of the bank will be able to perform better because of the sharper focus on respective business lines.

Asserting that the decentralisation is expected to bring

Equitas SFB revises IPO offer size

NEW DELHI, 25 SEPTEMBER

Equitas Holdings Ltd today said its small finance bank subsidiary has revised downward the fresh issue of equity shares for its proposed IPO to Rs 280 crore from Rs 550 crore planned earlier.

Also, Equitas Holdings (as the parent company) will offer lesser number of shares for sale at 7.2 crore in the initial public offer (IPO) of Equitas Small Finance Bank (ESFB).

In the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) filed on 16 December 2019, ESFB had informed the Securities and Exchange Board of India about its Rs 1,000-crore IPO which comprised a fresh issue aggregating up to Rs 550 crore and an offer for sale of up to 7.2 crore.

Earlier this month, the corporate affairs ministry had also notified that the maximum limit of deposits to be accepted from members by a private company shall not apply to a start-up company for 10 years from the date of its incorporation, instead of five years.

Pursuant to relaxation permitted by the Sebi vide its circular dated 21 April 2020, ESFB had filed with the Sebi an addendum to its DRHP revising its offer size for the proposed IPO of its equity shares," ESFB said in a regulatory filing.

As per the revised offer, the size of the fresh issue has been reduced from up to Rs 5,500 million (Rs 550 crore) to up to Rs 2,800 million (Rs 280 crore) and the number of equity shares offered through the offer for sale by the company (EHL) has been reduced from up to 10,000 million (Rs 1,000 crore) to up to 7,200,000 equity shares," it said.

Among others, the employee reservation portion for eligible employees has been reduced from up to Rs 50 million (Rs 5 crore) to up to Rs 10 million (Rs 1 crore); and the EHL shareholder reservation portion for eligible EHL shareholders has been reduced from up to Rs 1,000 million (Rs 100 crore) to up to Rs 510 million (Rs 51 crore).

Harley's exit to impact around 2,000 jobs: Fada

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, 25 SEPTEMBER

Automobile dealer body Fada today said the closure of Harley Davidson's operations in India would lead to job loss for up to 2,000 workers across the brand's 35 dealerships.

Harley Davidson on Thursday said it is discontinuing sales and manufacturing operations in the country.

The India action will include an associated workforce reduction of around 70 employees, it had said in a SEC filing.

The Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (Fada) said that besides job loss, the exit of the American cult bike maker would also lead to a loss of up to Rs 130 crore

for the brand's dealer partners in the country.

"Harley Davidson has not informed any of its dealer partners about its closure plans and dealers are yet to receive any official communication," Fada president Vinakesh Gulati said.

It goes without saying that dealers who have invested their hard-earned capital in this iconic brand are left with an abandoned baby without any compensation package, he added.

With a luxury brand like Harley, setting up its dealership costs anywhere between Rs 3 to 4 crore, and with a total of 35 dealerships, Rs 110-130 crore will go down the drain, Gulati said.

Moreover, there will be customers who will not receive glitch-free service as spares will

now be in shortage, thus leading to harassment of dealers from customers, he noted.

India's capital goes down the drain with the closure of every single brand in the country, Gulati said.

After General Motors, MAN

Trucks and UMLohia, Harley Davidson is the fourth automobile brand shutting shop in the last three years in India, he added.

"Had there been a franchise protection Act in India, brands like these would not have abruptly closed their operations, leaving their channel partners and customers in a fix," Gulati said.

In a statement issued on Thursday, Harley said its dealer network will continue to serve customers through the contract term, adding it is communicating with its customers in India and will keep them updated on future support.

It, however, said that it plans to close its manufacturing facility in Bawali

(Haryana) and significantly reduce the size of its sales office in Gurugram.

The company's exit from India is part of its global "2020 Restructuring Activities".

In the second quarter of 2020, the Milwaukee, Wisconsin-based company had initiated restructuring activities, including workforce reduction and termination of certain contracts that would result in elimination of around 700 positions globally, including termination of close to 500 employees.



Public development work should not be stopped, and we have our full support to it

RAJIB BANERJEE, STATE FOREST MINISTER
AFTER HIS MEETING WITH OFFICIALS OF THE GORKHALAND TERRITORIAL ADMINISTRATION

The Statesman
NEW DELHI, SATURDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2020

09

Odisha's Covid caseload doubled in 27 days

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 25 SEPTEMBER

Odisha's COVID-19 count on Friday leaptfrogged to breach past the two lakh mark with virus infections getting doubled in less than a month recording a growth rate of over 50 per cent.

Odisha, took 169 days to cross the one lakh mark on August 30.

However in an exponential spike in the current month, there is addition of one lakh more cases in the next 27 days as on date.

A total of 4,208 more people from 30 districts tested positive for the infection taking the total caseload to 2,01,096, while 15 fresh fatalities pushed

the state's coronavirus death toll to 767.

As many as 2,462 new cases were reported in quarantine centres, while 1,746 infections were detected during contact tracing. The local contact cases recorded today amounted to 41 per cent of the fresh cases detected during the past 24 hours.

Khurda district, under which Bhubaneswar falls, has reported the highest number of new cases at 725, followed by Cuttack (465) and Jajpur (237).

Odisha now has 39,232 active coronavirus cases, while 1,61,044 people have recovered from the disease so far.

The state has so far tested over 30.09 lakh samples (bulk of which is rapid antigen tests)

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 25 SEPTEMBER

The coronavirus caseload in Odisha's capital city of Bhubaneswar climbed to 20,219 on Friday with the detection of 326 fresh cases.

While the COVID count in the city stood at 10,021 on 30 August, it climbed to 20,219 today with 9,847 infections

for COVID-19.

In terms of detection of positive cases on a daily basis, Odisha currently stands at 7th spot in the country reporting more than 4,000 daily infections for the 10th successive days.

detected in September at a daily average of 393 positive cases.

There has been an exponential spike of 49 per cent infections in the current month. Besides, the detection of local contact cases has jumped to almost 60 per cent of the total positive cases detected in September.

Of the fresh 326 cases as

Six other states Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh have witnessed more coronavirus infection everyday than Odisha.

While high recovery rate and low death rate are reas-

many as 256 were local contact cases while 70 were reported from quarantine centres.

The city reported a total of 3,612 active cases while 16,511 have recovered from the contagion till date. 80 patients from the city have succumbed to the virus.

The recovery is higher than the number of fresh cases since the past one week.

suring features of otherwise gloomy COVID scenarios, a large percentage of local or community contact cases has become a major cause of worry for State's COVID managers. In the current month, 40 per cent cases were detect-

ed during contact tracing. The State has registered a low death rate of 0.38 per cent.

However skeptics tend to believe the gross under-reporting of COVID death cases while questioning fatality statistics reeled out by the health and family welfare department.

"We are of the belief that the government is hiding the daily death figure. More numbers of people are dying of Covid than what the government claims", alleged Manas Choudhury, President of District Congress Committee, Bhubaneswar while citing that the number of bodies being disposed of daily is much higher than the figure put up by the State.

Odisha CM seeks classical status for Odishi music

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 25 SEPTEMBER

Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik reiterated his demand for conferring classical status to Odishi Music (Vocal and Instrumental).

In a letter to Union Minister of state for Culture and Tourism, Prahlad Singh Patel,

the CM said Odishan music has, at least a tradition of 2000 years and is based on written 'sastras' and its own core 'raga'. It has a distinctive rendition style based on codified grammar and is different from Hindustani and Carnatic music, noted Patnaik.

The state government have undertaken pioneering efforts to get classical status for

Odishi music at an institutional level, i.e., establishment of Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra Odishi Research Centre and Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi with the purpose of promotion of music, dance and drama in the state.

It has also established the Utkal University of Culture.

Odishi dance has been recognized as one of the classical forms, but, ironically, Odishi music is yet to be recognized as a classical form of music at national level, said the CM.

The Heritage Cabinet of the state has passed a resolution for classical status to Odishi Music, he said while requesting the Union Minister to consider the demand.

Three killed in mishap



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
JAJPUR, 25 SEPTEMBER

In a tragic mishap, three persons including a woman and a child were killed after the bike in which they were riding collided head-on with an ambulance near Neulpur on NH-16 under Dharmasala police station limits today.

The deceased have been identified as Sankar Sahoo, 49, his wife Mamina, 43 and their 5-year-old daughter of Cuttack, police said.

Police said, Sankar was heading towards Panikoil from Cuttack on his motorcycle along with his wife and daughter when a private ambulance which was on its way to Chandikhole collided with the bike. All three died on the spot.

There were no patients in the ambulance and the driver absconded leaving behind the ambulance after the mishap.

Angry locals ransacked the ambulance.

The NH on which the incident took place is undergoing expansion and repair work for the past two and half years. The NHAI contractor has closed one side of the road for the work for the last several months. As a result, both incoming and outgoing vehicles are being forced to ply on the same lane.

Locals allege there is no signage and no diversion road.

Roadmap for revival of metal sector discussed

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 25 SEPTEMBER

Odisha government is keen on fast tracking implementation of projects and support to the MSME sector by prioritizing their remittances as well as opening new mines to help revive the economy and particularly the metal sector.

The points were made by principal secretary industries, Hemant Sharma at a webinar on the mineral sector organized by the CII today.

State steel and mines Minister Prafulla Mallick said the mining sector is one which provides jobs to tribal people of the state and 70 per cent of workers are engaged in the iron and coal sector alone.

His ministerial colleague Dibya Shankar Mishra asked industries to help improve the livelihood of tribals and see that each tribal child is educated.

CMD NALCO, Sridhar Patra, noted that the mineral sector contributes 14.4% in the Index of IPP and has been growing at a rate of 2.1% since 2013-2020. Digital and automation are playing a major role and the mineral sector in India has already started these technical sessions.

Odisha farmers hit the street against farm bills

BHUBANESWAR, 25 SEPTEMBER

Farmers in different parts of the state as well as non-BJD, BJP Opposition parties took to the streets today against the farm bills passed in parliament.

In western parts of the state, farmer organizations staged protests and alleged that it will lead to destruction of the agriculture sector. MNCs will take over and the farmer will be left high and dry charged peasant leader Lingarajat Barghata today.

The farmers demanded withdrawal of the bills.

In coastal Odisha districts, including state capital Bhubaneswar, political parties took the lead to oppose the bill while peasant outfit Naba Nirman Krushak Sangathan also demonstrated.

Police deployment was made to avert untoward incidents.

Activists of the Rashtriya Kisan Mazdoor Sangathan protested against the bills at AG Square in Bhubaneswar. Many protestors were whisked away by the police as they tried to march towards the state secretariat.



Trade unions and oppn political parties minus the BJD, BJP demonstrate against the farm bills at Bhubaneswar. Police guard the road to block the protest march.

SNS

Energy sector in recovery mode: Odisha minister

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 25 SEPTEMBER

Industrial electricity consumption during the first few months of 2020-21 fiscal dropped by 26 per cent in Odisha and is now picking up and optimistic projections are that the reduction of consumption and revenue collection will be around six per cent over the previous year.

The crisis in the energy sector has been huge due to compressed demand. While industrial demand dipped, distcos are struggling, Gridco which is the bulk supplier is in the red.

Seen in this backdrop, the increased industrial activity gives hope of hike in demand and revenue.

Energy Minister Dibyasankar Mishra who reviewed the situation today emphasized on special attention towards revenue collection and a separate meeting with the industries department to resolve any dispute relating to electric-

Industry body denounces power tariff hike

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BALASORE, 25 SEPTEMBER

The North Orissa chamber of commerce and industry (Nocci) reacted sharply to the power tariff hike and described it as 'ill timed'.

The economy as a whole and the manufacturing sector in particular is struggling for survival. There is a negative growth of 23.5 per cent of the GDP in the previous quarter and optimistic estimates are it may be negative 10 per cent in the next quarter, noted the Nocci.

ity duty that is pending.

Mishra also reviewed the progress of Real Time Data Acquisition System (RT-DAS) to capture the meter data of the Captive Power Plants by remote means. He directed EIC (Elec.) to complete the installation of RT-DAS system at the earliest.

Taking up the issue of electrical accidents, the Minister noted that 90 per cent of the accidents were human mistakes that could be prevented.

Most of the accidents are happening in the 11 KV system and then in the LT system.

He suggested to the Electrical Inspectorate to devise a mechanism for improvement of Electrical Safety systems in which safety training, safety examinations, educating electrical workers working at ground level and creating public awareness shall be a continuous program round the year.

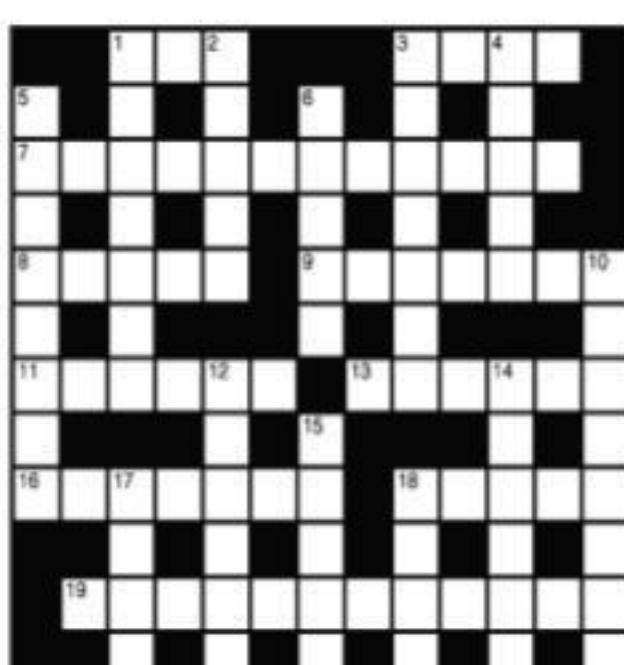
He also directed the safety officers of all the Electrical utilities to report about the safety measures adopted by their management on a routine basis.

Principal Secretary Nikunj Dhal called for monthly or quarterly reports on electrical accidents and measures taken.

Meanwhile across the state consumers, opposition political parties have hit the streets demanding a roll back on the power tariff hike which is to be effected from 1 October. Traders as well as domestic consumers are up in arms at the 20 paise per unit increase at a time when earners have dipped.

LEISURE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD



CROSS
1 Snooker stick (3)
3 Part of a large building (4)
7 Partiality (3-9)
8 Fruit (5)
9 Source of difficulty (7)
11 Emphasis (6)
13 Small mammal (6)
16 Dignified (7)
18 Urbane (5)
19 State administration branch (5,7)
20 Charges (4)
21 Long still scarf (3)

DOWN
1 Plant such as ivy (7)
3 Privileged minority (5)
5 Sweetly charming (7)
6 Lure (5)
7 Sugar syrup (8)
9 Seasickness (French) (3,2,3)
10 Taxonomic group (7)
14 Staying power (7)
15 Romany (5)
17 Nibble (5)
18 Woody plant (5)

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD
ACROSS
1 Neigh, 16 Diva,
4 Kid (Naked),
8 Nit,
9 Barbarian,
10 Gogges,
12 Prey,
13 Draw the line,
16 Pattern,
18 Pattern,
19 Hub, 24 Oil.
DOWN
1 Nonage,
2 Integer,
3 Needful,
4 Relating to the nose
5 Lure,
6 Lure,
7 Partiality,
8 Fruit,
9 Source of difficulty,
10 Emphasis,
11 Small mammal,
12 Dignified,
13 Urbane,
14 Staying power,
15 Romany,
17 Nibble,
18 Woody plant.

BEETLE BAILEY/Mort Walker



RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson



DADDY DAZE/John Kovaleski



NEED TO KNOW

HOSPITALS

22586262, 22585007

RAILWAY INQUIRY

General Inquiry 139

• Toll Free Nos. 180012511

23864470

• U.P. Roads 23868709

ROADWAYS INQUIRY

• ISBT (General Inquiry):

23868836, 23865181

• Deen Dayal Upadhyay

25496320, 25494403

• Guru Tegh Bahadur

23717473, 23325320

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*I don't want to hide that very tough, complicated weeks are ahead of us, but we are going to succeed if we do what we need to do*

SPAIN NATIONAL HEALTH MINISTER SALVADOR ILLA

AS MADRID RESISTS GOVERNMENT PRESSURE TO EXTEND SOFT LOCKDOWN

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



A vendor sells balloons in Colombo on September 25. AP

Assange case : A lawyer for Julian Assange said on Friday that the WikiLeaks founder's situation will be worse if President Donald Trump is re-elected. Edward Fitzgerald said at Assange's extradition hearing in London that Assange will suffer if he is sent to the US to face spying charges regardless of who wins the election. AP

Fund for H1-B prog: The US will invest \$ 150 million in training for middle-to-high-skilled H-1B occupations in key sectors, including in information technology which employs tens of thousands of Indian professionals. The training models will include customised training, incumbent worker training, on-the-job training etc. AP

Princess Eugenie pregnant: Britain's Queen Elizabeth II is said to be delighted as Buckingham Palace announced on Friday that her granddaughter Princess Eugenie is expecting her first baby early next year. Eugenie married a wine merchant in 2018 and their baby will be the 11th in line to the British throne. AP

Covid-19 hits income, Queen Elizabeth II to trim costs

LONDON, 25 SEPTEMBER

Britain's Queen Elizabeth II and her family are facing a 35 million pound (USD 45 million) hit from the coronavirus pandemic, partly due to a shortage of tourists, the monarch's money-manager said Friday.

Releasing the royal household's annual accounts, Keeper of the Privy Purse Michael Stevens said a lack of income from visitors to royal buildings was likely to bring a general funding shortfall of \$ 19 million over three years.

He said the impact of the pandemic is also likely to cause a 20 million-pound (USD 25.4 million) shortfall in a 10-year, 369-million-pound program to replace antiquated heating, plumbing and wiring at Buckingham Palace, the queen's London home.

Officials have said the palace's aging infrastructure, which had its last major upgrade after World War II, is at risk of a catastrophic failure if it's not replaced.

Stevens said the royal household would not ask for more government money but would look to manage the impact through our own efforts and efficiencies. Buckingham Palace has already introduced a staff pay freeze and a halt to hiring.

The accounts show that the monarchy cost British taxpayers \$ 88.2 million in the year to the end of March, an increase of \$ 3.1 million on the previous financial year. The accounts also show that Prince Harry and his wife, Meghan, paid an undisclosed sum to reimburse the public purse for rent and refurbishment of their Frogmore Cottage home near Windsor Castle. The exact sum will appear in next year's accounts. AP

'No easy answer': Many ask what next in Breonna Taylor case as protest goes on

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Taylor, an emergency medical worker, was shot multiple times by white officers after Taylor's boyfriend fired at them

In the wake of the decision not to prosecute Kentucky police officers for killing Breonna Taylor, authorities and activists alike wrestled Thursday with the question of what comes next amid continued demands for justice in the Black woman's death.

The question obviously is: What do we do with this pain? Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer said during a news conference. There is no one answer, no easy answer to that ques-

President will accept results of free-and-fair presidential polls: WH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

WASHINGTON, 25 SEPTEMBER

The US will stay away from "ridiculous" foreign wars that never end and bring back its troops, President Donald Trump has said, as he pledged to strike down terrorists who threaten Americans and maintain the country's "unrivaled" military might to ensure peace through strength.

Addressing an election rally in the key battleground State of Florida on Thursday, Trump alleged that for decades, American politicians had spent trillions of dollars rebuilding foreign nations, fighting foreign wars, and defending foreign borders.

"But now we are finally protecting our nation, rebuilding our cities, and we are bringing our jobs, our factories, and our troops back home to the USA," he said.

"We will strike down terrorists who threaten our citizens and we will keep out of America - of our great country - we will stay away from those ridiculous endless foreign wars. They never end," Trump told thousands of his supporters.

Referring to the "endless foreign wars", Trump said that the American troops were coming back.

"They're all coming home. They're all coming home. We will maintain America's unrivaled military might. And we will ensure peace through strength. And nobody has strength like we have strength. Peace through strength," he asserted.

One of the largest campaign rallies of the 2020 presidential elections, over 30,000 people turned out for the presi-

n't bring homicide charges against the officers who burst into her apartment during a drug investigation in March.

Taylor, an emergency medical worker, was shot multiple times by white officers after Taylor's boyfriend fired at them, authorities said. He said he didn't know who was coming in and opened fire in self-defense. Police entered on a warrant connected to a suspect who did not live there, and no drugs were found inside.

State Attorney General Daniel Cameron said the investigation showed officers

acted in self-defense; one was wounded. A single officer was charged with wanton endangerment for firing into neighboring apartments.

The only possibility for criminal charges against the officers for the killing itself seems to rest with the US Justice Department. The FBI is still investigating whether Taylor's civil rights were violated. But the burden of proof for such cases is very high, with prosecutors having to prove officers knew they were acting illegally and made a willful decision to cause someone's death.

Taylor's family planned to weigh in at a news conference scheduled for Friday in the park. Meanwhile, at least 24 people have been arrested in Louisville during the second night of protests over a grand jury's decision not to indict police officers on criminal charges directly related to the death. Louisville Metro Police said early Friday that the demonstrators were arrested before 1 a.m. on charges including unlawful assembly, failure to disperse and riot in the first degree.

LA protest: One person was

hurt when a vehicle ran into a small crowd of people protesting police brutality in Los Angeles Thursday night, authorities said. The driver of a blue pickup truck got into an argument with demonstrators and struck the protester who was standing in the street as the driver tried to get away, police said in a statement. The protester was taken to a hospital with minor injuries.

Portland protest: A fire was set to the outside of a police union building late Thursday, leading authorities to declare an unlawful assembly

as Portland, Oregon, grappled with another night of protests over racial injustice.

Several photos and videos posted online showed flames erupting outside the doors of the Portland Police Association office.

The fire was quickly extinguished and demonstrators were ordered to disperse, news outlets reported. Portland police declared an unlawful assembly and tweeted that those who failed to leave could be subject to arrest, citation, or the use of crowd control agents.

Novavax in UK begins late-stage vaccine trial

LONDON, 25 SEPTEMBER

US-based Novavax has begun a late stage trial of its potential Covid vaccine in the United Kingdom because the high-level of the coronavirus circulating in the country is likely to produce quick results, the pharmaceutical company said.

Novavax plans to test the effectiveness of its vaccine in a trial involving 10,000 people between the ages of 18 and 84, according to a statement issued late Thursday. At least 25% of the subjects will be over the age of 65, and 400 participants will also receive a licensed flu vaccine.

The trial is being conducted in partnership with the UK government's Vaccine Taskforce, which was created in April to help speed the development of a vaccine.

With a high level of SARS-CoV-2 transmission observed and expected to continue in the UK, we are optimistic that this pivotal phase 3 clinical trial will enroll quickly and provide a near-term view of the vaccine's efficacy. Dr Gregory M Glenn, head of research and development for Novavax, said in the statement.

The announcement comes as cases continue to rise across the UK. The government reported 6,634 new positive test results on Thursday, the UK's highest daily number since the pandemic began. Britain has the deadliest outbreak in Europe, with nearly 42,000 confirmed deaths. Drugmakers are rushing to develop vaccines with the backing of governments desperate to find a way of easing restrictions that have hammered the world economy.

Ginsburg is first woman to lie in state at US Capitol

WASHINGTON, 25 SEPTEMBER

Commemorations are set to begin honouring the late Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg at the US Capitol, the first woman in American history to lie in state at the domed building, capping days of commemoration of her extraordinary life.

Mourners are paying tribute to Ginsburg, as her casket was on public view at the court's iconic steps. It's the short-made procession across the street Friday morning for the private Capitol ceremony with elected officials, family and other invited guests amid coronavirus social distancing restrictions.

AP

Terror probe opened after two stabbed in Paris; suspects held

ASSOCIATED PRESS

PARIS, 25 SEPTEMBER

French terrorism authorities are investigating a double-stabbing outside the former Paris offices of a satirical newspaper where a dozen people were killed in 2015, and two suspects have been arrested in Friday's violence, authorities said.

France's counterterrorism prosecutor said authorities suspect a terrorist motive because of the place and timing of the stabbings: in front of the building where Charlie Hebdo was based until the Islamic extremist attack on its cartoonists and at time when suspects in the 2015 attack are on trial across town.

Prosecutor Jean-François Ricard said that the chief suspect in Friday's stabbings was arrested, along with another person. Ricard said the assailant did not know the people who were stabbed, two workers in a documentary production company who had stepped outside for a smoke break. The suspects' identities have not been released, and it is unclear exactly what prompted the attack. An investigation was opened into attempted murder in relation with a terrorist enterprise, according to an official at the terrorism prosecutor's office.

The two people confirmed injured worked for documentary film company Premières Lignes, according to founder Paul Moreira. He told BFM television that the attacker fled into the subway, and the company's staff members were evacuated.



French police inspect the scene of an attack after several people were injured near the former offices of the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo by a man wielding a knife in Paris on Friday. AP



The Alan Kurdi rescue ship from German aid organization Sea-Eye arriving at the port of Olbia in Sardinia, with 125 rescued migrants aboard. The ship was named Alan Kurdi after the Syrian boy who made global headlines when his drowned body washed up on a beach in Turkey in 2015. AP

Powerful Vatican Cardinal Becciu resigns amid scandal

ASSOCIATED PRESS

ROME, 25 SEPTEMBER

The powerful head of the Vatican's saint-making office, Cardinal Angelo Becciu, resigned suddenly Thursday from the post and renounced his rights as a cardinal amid a financial scandal that has reportedly implicated him indirectly.

The Vatican provided no details on why Pope Francis accepted Becciu's resignation in a statement late Thursday. In the one-sentence announcement, the Holy See said only that Francis had accepted Becciu's resignation as prefect of the Causes of Saints and his rights connected to the cardinalate.

Becciu, the former No. 2 in the Vatican's secretariat of state, has been reportedly implicated in a financial scandal involving the Vatican's investment in a London real estate deal that has lost the Holy See millions of euros in fees paid to middlemen.

The Vatican prosecutor has placed several Vatican officials under investigation, as well as the middlemen, but not Becciu.

Becciu has defended the soundness of the original investment and denied any wrongdoing, and it's not clear whether the scandal itself was behind his resignation or possibly sparked a separate line of inquiry.

For the late-breaking news of his resignation, the severity of his apparent sanction, the Vatican's tight-lipped release and the unexpected downfall of one of the most powerful Vatican officials all suggested a shocking new



dinal after unidentified priests alleged sexual misconduct.

O'Brien was, however, allowed to retain the cardinal's title and he died a member of the College of Cardinals, the elite group of churchmen whose main job is to elect a pope.

In the Vatican statement, the Holy See identified Becciu as His Eminence Cardinal Angelo Becciu, making clear he remained a cardinal but without any rights.

At 72, Becciu would have been able to participate in a possible future conclave to elect Francis' successor. Cardinals over age 80 can't vote.

But by renouncing his rights as a cardinal, Becciu has relinquished his rights to take part. Becciu was the substitute, or top deputy in the secretariat of state from 2011-2018, when Francis made him a cardinal and moved him into the Vat-

ican's saint-making office.

He straddled two pontificates, having been named by Pope Benedict XVI and entrusted with essentially running the Curia, or Vatican bureaucracy, a position that gave him enormous influence and power.

The financial problems date from 2014, when the Vatican entered into a real estate venture by investing over \$200 million in a fund run by an Italian businessman. The deal gave the Holy See 45 percent of the luxury building at 60 Sloane Ave. in London's Chelsea neighborhood.

The money came from the secretariat of state's asset portfolio, which is funded in large part by the Peter's Pence donations of Catholics around the world for the pope to use for charity and Vatican expenses.

Associated Press reporters at the scene saw



Pakistan needs to continue to put extreme pressure on the various terrorist groups that live and reside inside (the country)

SENIOR US DIPLOMAT WILLIAM TODD

DURING HIS CONFIRMATION HEARING AFTER HIS NOMINATION AS US ENVOY TO PAKISTAN

The Statesman

11

NEW DELHI, SATURDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2020

THUMBNAILS



A physical imitation of a Bitcoin at a crypto currency "Bitcoin Change" shop, in Istanbul on Friday. ■ AFP

Virus surge in Russia : Moscow authorities have issued a recommendation for the elderly to stay at home and for employers to allow as many people as possible to work remotely, following a rapid growth of cases in Moscow. The number of new daily infections started to grow last week and was up to over 1,500 on Friday. AP

UK officer shot: A Scotland Yard officer was shot dead at a police station in south London by a man arrested in the early hours of Friday. The Metropolitan Police said it has launched a murder investigation. The 23-year-old suspect has been taken to hospital with a gunshot wound and remains in a critical condition. PTI

Pak scribe held: An international media rights group on Friday voiced concern over the brief arrest of a Pakistani journalist this week for allegedly carrying weapons while reporting on a court case in the capital, saying Pakistani authorities should investigate the misuse of law in order to stop the harassment of media workers. PTI

Turkey 2014 riot probe: Turkish prosecutors have issued warrants for the detention of 82 people, including a number pro-Kurdish former lawmakers, as part of an investigation into deadly riots six years ago by Kurds angered at what they perceived to be the government's inaction against IS. PTI

China aims to make 1 billion Covid vaccine doses a year

BEIJING, 25 SEPTEMBER

A Chinese health official said Friday that the country's annual production capacity for coronavirus vaccines will top 1 billion doses next year, following an aggressive government support programme for construction of new factories.

Capacity is expected to reach 610 million doses by the end of this year, Zheng Zhongwei from the National Health Commission said. Next year, our annual capacity will reach more than 1 billion doses, he said at a news conference.

American pharmaceutical giants Pfizer and Moderna aim to produce a billion doses each in 2021 as well.

Zheng said distribution of the vaccines would prioritize groups such as medical workers, border personnel and the elderly before they are made available to the general public. AP

Kim apologises over death of SKorean official

It's extremely unusual for a North Korean leader to apologize to South Korea on any issue; Kim's move will likely de-escalate tensions between the Koreas

ASSOCIATED PRESS

SEOUL, 25 SEPTEMBER

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un apologized Friday over the killing of a South Korea official near the rivals' disputed sea boundary, saying he's very sorry about the incident he called unexpected and unfortunate, South Korean officials said.

It's extremely unusual for a North Korean leader to apologize to South Korea on any issue. Kim's move will likely de-escalate tensions between the Koreas as it's expected to ease anti-North sentiments in South Korea over the man's death as well as mounting criticism of its liberal President Moon Jae-in.

Comrade Kim Jong Un, the State Affairs Commission chairman, feels very sorry to

give big disappointment to President Moon Jae-in and South Korean citizens because an unexpected, unfortunate incident happened at a time when South Korea grapples with the coronavirus pandemic, Moon's adviser Suh Hoon cited the North Korean message as saying.

On Thursday, South Korea accused North Korea of fatally shooting one of its public servants who was likely trying to defect and burn his body after finding him on a floating object in North Korean waters on Tuesday. South Korean officials condemned North Korea for what they called an atrocious act and pressed it to punish those responsible. According to the North Korean message, North Korean troops first fired blanks after the man found in the North's waters refused to answer other



People watch a television news broadcast showing file footage of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, at a railway station in Seoul on Friday. ■ AFP

than saying he's from South Korea a couple of times. Then, as he made moves to flee, the North Korean troops fired 10 rounds. When they came near the floating object, they only found lots of blood but no sign of him.

The troops determined he

was dead and burned the floating object inline with anti-coronavirus rules, according to the North Korean message read by Suh.

Senior South Korean military officer Ahn Young Ho told a parliamentary committee meeting Wednesday that North

Korea killed the man likely because of elevated anti-coronavirus measures that involve indiscriminate shooting at anyone approaching its borders illegally.

Defense Minister Suh Wook said at the same meeting that the official was believed to have tried to defect because he left his shoes on the ship, put on a life jacket and boarded a floating object. Suh also cited circumstantial evidence indicating the defection attempt. Some experts say there wasn't enough proof to conclude he tried to cross over to North Korea.

The North Korean message was sent from the United Front Department of the ruling Workers' Party, a top North Korean body in charge of relations with South Korea.

The message said North Korea cannot help express-

ing big regrets over the fact South Korea had used blasphemous and confrontational words like atrocious act to condemn the North without asking it to explain details of the incident.

But it said North Korea is still sorry about such an incident happening on its territory and will take steps to prevent trust between the countries from collapsing.

The presidential Blue House said Friday that Moon and Kim had recently exchanged letters before the latest incident. In his letter, Kim expressed worries about coronavirus outbreaks and typhoon damage in South Korea and wished Moon a good health.

Kim Jong Un's supposed apology reduces the risk of escalation between the two Koreas and keeps the Moon government's hopes for engagement alive, Leif-Eric

Easley, a professor at Ewha University in Seoul, said. The shooting incident was also turning South Korean public opinion against offering peace and humanitarian assistance to Pyongyang."

Before Kim's apology, Moon's government faced withering criticism by conservatives following its admission that officials already had

acquired intelligence indicating the official's death right after it happened. Conservatives lambasted the government for allegedly deliberately withholding the information so as not to spoil the atmosphere ahead of Moon's speech at the virtual U.N. General Assembly on Wednesday, during which he repeated his calls for declaring an end of the Korean War in a bid to build a lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula.

Sri Lanka apex court set to hear petitions against 20A

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

COLOMBO, 25 SEPTEMBER

Chief Justice of Sri Lanka's Supreme Court Jayantha Jayasuriya has appointed a five-member bench of the Supreme Court to hear the petitions filed against the government's proposed 20th Amendment to the country's Constitution.

The bench will be led by Chief Justice Jayasuriya and comprise Justice B.P. Aluvihare, Justice K. Sisira J. De Abrew, Justice Priyantha Jayawardene and Justice Vijieth Malalgoda, the Supreme Court said in a statement on Friday.

As of now, 12 groups,

including Main Opposition Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB), have filed petitions in the apex court against the proposed amendment. The initial hearing is on September 29. The court will make its submission to the Parliament and President Gotabaya Rajapaksa by the second week of October. Amendment 20A proposes to restore full executive power and legal immunity to the president, removing the provisions of Amendment 19 which lay down the procedure to take legal action against the president.

Further, Amendment 19, adopted in 2019, empowered

the Parliament over the Prime Minister, watered down the powers of the presidency, depoliticised the government administration, demarcated the independence of key democratic pillars.

Since Amendment 20A was gazetted, various groups have opposed it. Even ruling Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna allies have raised their voice against it. The Amendment 20A was submitted in Parliament earlier this week. As part of the Constitutional process, groups against the amendment can approach the court in the next one week to stall the move.

The bench will be led by Chief Justice Jayasuriya and comprise Justice B.P. Aluvihare, Justice K. Sisira J. De Abrew, Justice Priyantha Jayawardene and Justice Vijieth Malalgoda, the Supreme Court said in a statement on Friday.

As of now, 12 groups,

Japan's new PM Suga steps into UN limelight

ASSOCIATED PRESS

TOKYO, 25 SEPTEMBER

Considered something of a lightweight on foreign policy issues, Japan's new prime minister has spent much of his career in the shadows, supporting previous leader Shinzo Abe with backroom bureaucratic maneuvers and in largely scripted, sometimes prickly dealings with the media.

That will change Saturday when Yoshihide Suga makes his very public debut, albeit virtually, at the UN General Assembly, the world's premier international gathering of leaders. Don't expect the earth to shake, though, with resounding rhetoric or wildly innovative ideas to improve Japan's rocky ties with the nations it terrorised in WWII or its decades-long economic malaise. Much as he's done domestically in the week and a half that he's been prime minister, Suga is eager to emphasise that Abe favoured and will muddle along rather than breaking any new ground, Kingston said.

Suga maintains that he was involved behind the scenes on big foreign policy issues and in building relationships with foreign leaders. Much as Abe did, Suga will emphasise ties with the United States, Japan's top ally. He's also eyeing several postwar diplomatic goals that have bedeviled a string of prime ministers, including resolving the issue of Japanese citizens abducted by North Korea, with which Japan still has no diplomatic ties.

Suga has praised Abe's skills in forging personal ties with US President Donald Trump, something he said that he might not be able to do as well. Abe's close relationship with Trump, much marvelled at in the Japanese press, was said to be key to keeping US-Japan ties firm. And Suga may have played a bigger part in building that relationship than is widely known.

In recent comments published in Bungei Shunju magazine, Suga said he was the one who insisted on establishing ties with the Trump side when nobody was seriously expecting a Trump victory.

Japan Catholic Church sued for damages in alleged sex abuse

TOKYO, 25 SEPTEMBER

perament.

He is not a visionary, according to Jeff Kingston, director of Asian studies at Temple University Japan. He is a capable lieutenant who will follow Abe's foreign policy.

Because of the constraints on travel and face-to-face contact caused by the coronavirus pandemic, Suga also won't be able to pursue the personal diplomacy that Abe favoured and will muddle along rather than breaking any new ground, Kingston said.

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A woman has filed a suit against the Roman Catholic Church in Japan alleging that a priest raped her four decades ago, as the church's unfolding worldwide sexual abuse crisis gradually reaches Japan.

The civil lawsuit, filed this week in Sendai District Court, seeks \$534,000 in damages.

It accuses a priest, who has not been charged or penalized, as well as a bishop who counseled the woman in recent years about the alleged abuse.

The suit, which also accuses the Diocese of Sendai in northeastern Japan, says the church refused to take the complaints seriously, causing psychological pain.

I have filed this lawsuit to claim back the dignity I have lost, and to try to end this serious crime, said Harumi Suzuki, who has gone public with her name. She said she lived through more than 40 years of hell, but wants to raise her voice for other abuse survivors.

The Rev. Shiro Komatsu at the Sendai diocese said it has no comment because it has not seen the lawsuit. Documents seen by The AP show the diocese carried out an investigation by third-party lawyers into her case in 2016. The investigation determined that the sexual act likely occurred but decided no criminal or civil responsibility could be pursued, given the passage of time and that the priest may have thought the act was consensual. Suzuki denies she consented.

Ex-Pak PM bans PML-N members from meeting army leadership

ISLAMABAD, 25 SEPTEMBER

Former Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said that from now on no one from his PML-N party will hold individual, private or delegation-level meetings with the country's military leadership.

Taking to Twitter on Thursday, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz supreme said that if necessitated by national security or constitutional requirements, such meetings in the future will be approved by the party's leadership and will be made public, reports Dawn news.

Sharif's tweet comes a day after the Pakistan Army disclosed that former senior PML-N leader and Sindh Governor Mohammad Zubair had twice reached out to Chief of the Army Staff Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa and discussed political and legal issues of the former premier and his daughter Maryam Nawaz in the past few weeks.

Recent events once again prove how some meetings remain hidden behind seven veils while others are given the colour of choice through publicising them. This game should now stop, his tweet further said.

IANS

You are good people: Navalny thanks Russian pilots, medics

ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOSCOW, 25 SEPTEMBER

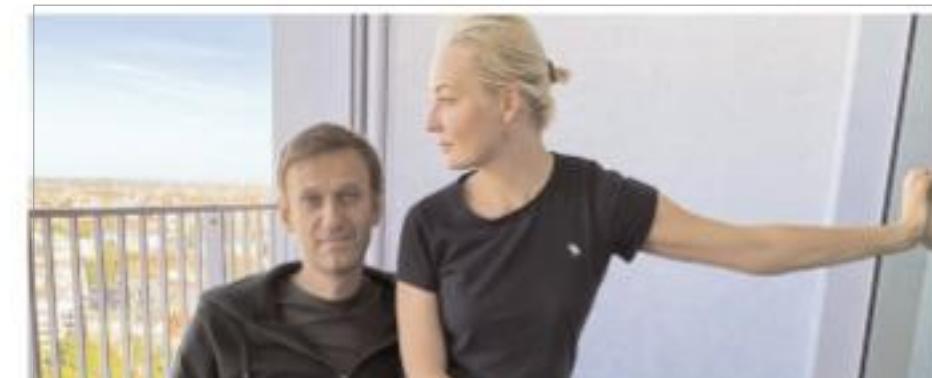
Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny, who is in Germany recovering from what authorities there determined to be nerve agent poisoning, thanked Russian pilots and paramedics for acting quickly after he fell into a coma on a flight from Siberia.

Navalny, who collapsed on a plane to Moscow on August 20 and spent nearly three weeks in a coma, said in an Instagram post on Friday that pilots quickly landed the plane in Omsk and medical workers at the airport jammed a dose of atropine into him, immediately recognising a toxic poisoning.

Thank you, unknown good-hearted friends. You are good people, the 44-year-old politician wrote under a photo of him hugging his wife Yulia.

After 48 hours in a hospital in Omsk, where Russian doctors said they found no trace of any poisoning, Navalny was transferred to the Charite hospital in Berlin. German chemists believe a complete recovery is possible.

Russian authorities have been resisting the international pressure to launch a criminal investigation, saying no within 10 days.



This handout picture posted on 21 September, 2020 on the Instagram account of @navalny shows Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny and his wife Yulia Navalnaya in Berlin's Charite hospital. ■ AFP

mined that he was poisoned with the Soviet-era nerve agent Novichok finds corroborated by labs in France and Sweden.

Navalny, a longtime foe of Russian President Vladimir Putin, was discharged from the hospital earlier this week. Charite hospital said that based on Navalny's progress, physicians believe a complete recovery is possible.

Russian authorities have been resisting the international pressure to launch a criminal investigation, saying no within 10 days.

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Auction Notice

Auction of Lot No 1, N.R. Rosa station yard/Rosa campus, 34 numbers Dangerous trees under Assistant Divisional Engineer/Northern Railway Shahjahanpur will be auctioned in the office of Assistant Divisional Engineer/Northern Railway Shahjahanpur. All the interested bidders are invited to participate in this auction

Auction place : Office of the Assistant Divisional Engineer/Northern Railway/ Shahjahanpur on date

22.10.2020, at 11:00 AM

1. All the bidders will deposit cash Rs 100/- in the office of Assistant Divisional Engineer/Northern Railway Shahjahanpur which will not be refunded and shall also deposit Rs 8000/- in favor of Sr. Divisional Finance Manager Northern Railway Moradabad as a Demand Draft of SBI or Other Nationalized Bank.
2. All the bidders who will take part in the auction will also have proper knowledge of Auction rules and others allowances.
3. Successful bidders will deposit the Demand Draft of SBI or Other Nationalized Bank in favour of Sr. DFM/MB or station earning in cash on same day with following rate.-
 - a 10% amount of selling price or minimum amount Rs 25,000/- whichever is maximum on purchase of more than Rs 1,00,000/-
 - b Balance amount will be deposited within 10 days including the date of auction
 - c GST @ 18 % will be deposited on total cost within 10 days including the date of auction
4. The work should be completed within 60 days including the date of auction.
5. Railway has right to close the work any time. In this situation the balance amount will be returned without interest.
6. Complete Details of tree with locations will be available in the Divisional Office Moradabad.
7. Bidders are requested to quote their rates according to the tree locations.
8. Trees will be delivered and handed over in the presence of SSE/works, ISA and RPF.
9. If the balance amount is not deposited within 10 days including the date of auction, then initial deposited amount



LIFE IS HARD

Endorsing most players everywhere, Bangladesh cricketer Najmul Hossain Shanto (*in photo, left*) has said he finds life in a bio-secure bubble hard. The left-handed batsman does not "feel good" staying in the midst of strict restrictions. What bothers him most are the frequent coronavirus tests. "No one likes to be quarantined," Shanto says.

For more updates

www.thestatesman.com

THUMBNAILS

League Cup: Manchester City needed a Phil Foden goal 15 minutes from time to see off Bournemouth 2-1 and reach the fourth round of the League Cup, while Liverpool ran riot in a 7-2 win at Lincoln on Thursday. City have won the competition for the past three years.

Positive test: Zlatan Ibrahimovic has tested positive for Covid-19, AC Milan have announced. The 38-year-old was to miss the club's Europa League match against Bodo on Thursday. "The player was promptly placed in quarantine at home," Milan said.

Virus havoc: Flamengo have asked the Brazilian football confederation to postpone their match against Palmeiras set for Sunday after 16 players tested positive for the coronavirus. The club said they had only nine outfield players available for the fixture.

F1 record: Lewis Hamilton will seek to equal Michael Schumacher's record 91 Formula One wins at the Russian Grand Prix in Sochi on Sunday despite fears over a potential coronavirus fallout from allowing 30,000 fans to attend. He is one win away from the mark.

Hard tackle: Fifa has suspended Trinidad and Tobago from international soccer after its football association pursued a dispute through the country's High Court in contravention of the world governing body's statutes. The TTFA and Fifa have been at loggerheads.

French Open: Andy Murray will begin his French Open against former champion and No 16 seed Stan Wawrinka in a major first-round tie. Rafael Nadal, seeking a record-extending 13th French Open title, was handed a relatively tough path to this year's final.

Bach optimistic: The president of the International Olympic Committee has spoken positively about the prospect of the Tokyo Games going ahead next summer despite the pandemic. Thomas Bach was addressing IOC representatives and Japanese organisers.

Siele banned: Kenyan long-distance runner Patrick Siele has been handed a ban for three years and six months by the Athletics Integrity Unit for doping. The AIU said in a statement that Siele ran away from anti-doping personnel, allegedly "hurting a fence to escape."

Condolence message: The International Cricket Council has expressed grief at the death of former Australia international Dean Jones. On Thursday, Jones, one of the Indian Premier League commentators in a bio bubble, died in Mumbai after a cardiac arrest.

Fine recovery: In Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, Anirban Lahiri staged a superb fight-back after an early setback to shoot 3-under 69 in the first round of the Corales Puntacana Resort & Club Championship. He had a triple bogey on the second hole.

Oz ordeal: Cricket Australia on Friday postponed to the next summer (2021-2) a one-off Test against Afghanistan and a One-Day International series against New Zealand, citing the complexity of scheduling international matches during the coronavirus pandemic.

Bottas fastest: Valtteri Bottas was fastest in the first practice session for the Russian Grand Prix on Friday as his Mercedes teammate Lewis Hamilton was slowed down by damaged tires. Bottas set the pace with a time of 1 minute, 34.923 seconds, beating Renault driver Daniel Ricciardo by half a second. Max Verstappen was third quickest in his Red Bull.

Karthik captaincy in focus as KKR face Sunrisers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ABU DHABI, 25 SEPTEMBER

Skipper Dinesh Karthik's (*in photo*) tactical nous will once again be put to test when Kolkata Knight Riders take on a depleted Sunrisers Hyderabad in their second IPL fixture here on Saturday.

Much was expected from a revamped Kolkata Knight Riders set-up but it seemed Karthik did not learn from his past mistakes and made some inexplicable decisions that led to their complete capitulation against Mumbai Indians.

The Jamaican, who was their highest run-getter last season with 510 runs from 249 deliveries and the tournament's highest strike rate of 204.81, was seen at No 6 but by then the task had become extremely difficult.

World Cup winning captain Eoin Morgan, who was roped in to bolster the wobbly middle order, also could not do much as the asking rate had shot past 13 by the time he came to bat at No 5.

In bowling too, there was a tactical blunder by holding back their ace spinner Sunil Narine till the last over of power play. On a day, their biggest buy Pat Cummins failed miserably, Narine was given a go only when his IPL



KKR vs Sunrisers: Match begins at 7.30 pm IST.

'bunny' Rohit Sharma was well set.

It really defied logic to see such a defensive strategy by a team now coached by Kiwi great Brendon McCullum who is known for his aggressive mindset.

Known to put up a balanced side on the park, Hyderabad lacked strength and experience

in their middle-order, failing miserably against Royal Challengers Bangalore. Needing just 43 runs from last five overs, SRH lost their last seven wickets for 32 runs to lose the game by 10 runs.

If that was not enough, injury to their all-rounder Mitchell Marsh has compounded their misery.

Skipper David Warner, after being run out in an unfortunate manner at the non-strik-

er's end, will be keen to get into the act, while it remains to be seen whether Kane Williamson has recovered from his injury to bolster the batting department.

SRH bowling has always been impressive and it seems the think tank may bring in Mohammed Nabi to bowl alongside his fellow mate Rashid Khan while Bhuvneshwar Kumar will spearhead the pace attack.

Squad:
Kolkata Knight Riders:
Dinesh Karthik (captain & wicketkeeper), Andre Russell, Kamlesh Nagarkoti, Kuldeep Yadav, Lockie Ferguson, Nitish Rana, Prasidh Krishna, Rinku Singh, Sandeep Warrier, Shivam Mavi, Shubman Gill, Siddhesh Lad, Sunil Narine, Pat Cummins, Eoin Morgan, Varun Chakravarthy, Tom Banton (wicketkeeper), Rahul Tripathi, Chris Green, M. Sridharth, Nikhil Naik (wicketkeeper), Ali Khan.

Goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh Sandhu and midfielder Sanju were on Friday declared the AIFF men's and women's national team head coach Maymol Rocky along with AIFF Technical Director Isaac Doru. "Huge thanks go to AIFF and everyone who has supported and helped me relentlessly to achieve this today. There was always a desire to reach this point and this is an award which I have always looked up to. Chhetri-bhai (Sunil Chhetri) has won it so many times and I have always thought when I can be worthy enough to win it," said Sandhu.

in the Indian Super League (Hero ISL) and I-League, the women's swimmers were chosen by women's national team head coach Maymol Rocky along with AIFF Technical Director Isaac Doru. "Huge thanks go to AIFF and everyone who has supported and helped me relentlessly to achieve this today. There was always a desire to reach this point and this is an award which I have always looked up to. Chhetri-bhai (Sunil Chhetri) has won it so many times and I have always thought when I can be worthy enough to win it," said Sandhu.

TANS

Sandhu, Sanju win AIFF player of the year awards

NEW DELHI, 25 SEPTEMBER

Goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh Sandhu and midfielder Sanju were on Friday declared the AIFF men's and women's Footballer of the Year respectively, the All India Football Federation (AIFF) said. Sandhu is the second goalkeeper to win the award after Subrata Paul in 2009. Meanwhile, Anirudha Thapa and Ratanbala Devi were declared men's and women's Emerging Footballer of the Year respectively. The AIFF said that while the men were chosen based on votes from the head coaches of the clubs

How coach Kumble plotted Punjab's ascent

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 25 SEPTEMBER



match presentation.

He had already spoken about his fears leading up to the IPL, considering he was coming back in after a five-month break owing to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Quite honestly, I was nervous but I knew if I spent time in the middle, hit a few balls with the middle of the bat, it will all be okay. I try to follow the routine I had when I was a player but as a captain you are running around and doing a lot of things," Rahul said. He is captaining in the IPL for the first time.

"I still try to maintain the same routine. Once I am out there in the middle, the toss is the only time I feel like a captain and otherwise I try to balance being a player and the captain," he said.

After Rahul had starred with the bat, KXIP bowlers put up a disciplined performance to bundle out RCB for 109 in 17 overs. "It's as complete a team performance as it can get. We had a few different plans going into this game. We knew RCB have a power-packed batting line-up and we had to get two or three wickets up front and that also meant putting runs on the board, we know what these guys can do if they get set. The analyst, coaches and the management will be happy," he was all praise for young leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi.

are from the same city, Bangalore, speak the same mother-tongue, Kannada, and this familiarity, with the resultant bonding, would have helped the team. Actually, members of the Punjab team speak four languages - English, Hindi, Kannada, and Punjabi - and that could have also been important. Rahul said he had been lacking in confidence heading into the team's second IPL fixture.

"I have actually been not so confident (hitting it well). I had a chat with Maxi (Glenn Maxwell), he said how are you feeling. I said that I am not feeling completely in control of my batting, he said you must be joking, you are hitting really well," Rahul said at the post-

Shaw shines as Delhi Capitals make 175/3 against CSK

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DUBAI, 25 SEPTEMBER



Young Prithvi Shaw (*in photo*) struck a fluent half-century and shared a 94-run opening stand with Shikhar Dhawan to guide Delhi Capitals to 175 for three against Chennai Super Kings in an Indian Premier League match here on Friday.

Shaw made 64 off 43 balls in the company of Dhawan (35 off 27 balls, 3 fours, 1 six) to provide a superb start to DC's innings after being put into bat.

The duo started slowly, scoring just 36 runs of the first six overs of powerplay before opening up to stitch 94 runs for the opening wicket in 10.4 overs.

Shaw got into his stride, hitting two consecutive boundaries off Deepak Chahar.

The Mumbai youngster didn't appear to rush things and played some attractive shots.

Once CSK skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni introduced the spin duo of Piyush Chawla and Ravindra Jadeja in the seventh over, both Shaw and Dhawan went on the offensive. Chawla, who was taken apart by Sanju Samson in their previous game against Rajasthan Royals, came in for some rough treatment as did Jadeja who went wicket-less in his four overs (0/44).

Dhawan after playing second fiddle for a while, joined the party and hit a couple of attractive boundaries and slogged Jadeja's first ball for a six over mid-wicket.

The DC openers hammered 58 in the next 4.4 overs after the slow start.

Chawla broke the dangerous-looking partnership by removing both Dhawan and

Shaw in consecutive overs. Rishabh Pant (37 not out, 25 balls) and captain Shreyas Iyer (26, 22 balls) pushed the

scoreboard along before the latter was caught by a diving Dhoni off Sam Curran as CSK managed to pull things back.

SCOREBOARD

Delhi Capitals Innings:		Extras:	(8 b 0 lb 5 w 3 nb 0 p 0)
Prithvi Shaw stn b Chawla	64	Total:	175 (3 wkt, 20.0 ov)
Shikhar Dhawan b Chawla	35	Opening:	Chahar 4-0-38-0, Curran 4-0-27-1, Hazlewood 4-0-28-0, Curran 4-0-33-2, Jadeja 4-0-44-0
Rishabh Pant not out	37		
Shreyas Iyer c Dhoni b Curran	26		
Marcus Stoinis not out	5		

Martinez heads Bayern past Sevilla to win Super Cup

AGENCIES
BUDAPEST, 25 SEPTEMBER

last games for Bayern after eight years and eight German league titles. Chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge told the German media last month that the versatile defensive player was seeking to leave.

"When I play in a Bayern shirt I want to give everything, 100 per cent, and I showed that today," Martinez told broadcaster Sky, leaving a question about his future open. "I just want to celebrate today with my colleagues, the whole team. Not so much because we have another game on Sunday (in the German league). Obviously if I am there on Sunday I will give everything."

Playing extra time was far from ideal for either team in a season which had started later than normal and would have a more congested calendar amid the coronavirus pan-



Messi lashes out at Barca for selling Luis Surez

BARCELONA, 25 SEPTEMBER

this point nothing surprises me." "I was accepting the idea (of your departure), but not until I entered the changing room did I realize what it means," Messi wrote. How difficult it is going to be not sharing each day with you, both on and off the field.

We will miss you very much. These have been many years of many mates, lunches, dinners... many things I won't forget from all those days together. Barcelona decided to overhaul its squad after the 8-2 loss to Bayern Munich in the Champions League last month. The 33-year-old Suarez was told by incoming coach Ronald Koeman that he was no longer wanted. The club, hard hit financially by the coronavirus pandemic, also needed to reduce its expenditures on salaries for its players. AFP