

OPINION 6
THE CONVERSION FACTOR:
HOW REAL IS THE THREAT?

WORLD 8
N KOREA TEST-FIRES BALLISTIC
MISSILES IN MESSAGE TO US

SPORT 12
MORGAN OUT OF
FINAL TWO ODIS

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10 VIVACITY



Alarming rise in deaths in Covid 2nd wave

At 53,476 coronavirus cases, total soars to 5-month high Cases to peak in mid-April, may taper off by May end



A couple pays a penalty for not wearing a face mask, as is mandatory as a precaution against the coronavirus, at a market place in New Delhi on Thursday

PNS ■ NEW DELHI
After breaching the 50,000-mark for the first time almost eight months ago and the last time on November 6, last year, India on Thursday yet again saw the tally of coronavirus cases climb up to 53,476 in a continuing sign of renewed concern. India's Covid-19 cases now stand at 1,17,87,534.

The rapid rise has begun to show its impact on the death numbers as well. The daily death count, which had dropped to double digits in February, has risen to more than 200 during the last two days. On Thursday, 251 fatalities were reported. However, compared to the sharp increase in cases, the fatalities have been quite low in the ongoing second wave in contrast to what was seen in

the peak months of July, August and September last year. It was on July 29, 2020 that India first witnessed Covid-19 cases cross the 50,000 mark. And after November 6, coronavirus cases have been registering a downward slide, only to take the upward swing since the last few days. According to the Union Health Ministry, Maharashtra and Punjab are turning out to be a major cause of worry.

1,515 cases in Delhi, 5 deaths

New Delhi: Delhi reported 1,515 coronavirus cases on Thursday, highest in over three months, while five more people succumbed to the disease, the Health Department said. This is the highest number of cases since December 16 when 1,547 people tested positive for the virus, according to official data. The city had recorded

1,254 cases on Wednesday and 1,101 cases on Tuesday — the first time since December 24 that the number of cases crossed the 1,000-mark. The active cases rose to 5,497 on Thursday from 4,890 a day ago. The positivity rate rose to 1.69 per cent from 1.52 per cent on Wednesday, the health bulletin said.

Cases have been increasing over the last two weeks. Maharashtra reported 31,855 new cases followed by Punjab with 2,613 and Kerala with 2,456 new cases.

count to show a sudden rise in the coming two weeks. With the death of 251 people in the last 24 hours, the toll has reached 1,60,692 in India while the active caseload in the country has mounted to 3,95,192.

When the first time the daily case count crossed the 50,000-figure on July 29 last year, India reported 775 deaths. That was because the daily case count at that time had already remained in the range 30,000-40,000 for two weeks before hitting the 50,000 mark. This time, the rise in cases has been much more rapid.

India has reported cases in the 40,000 range four days and 30,000s in two days, before touching the 50,000 range on Wednesday. It is possible, therefore, for the daily death

RT-PCR -ve report must for passengers arriving in Bengaluru from any State: Min

Bengaluru: Passengers arriving from any State to Bengaluru must be in possession of RT-PCR negative report, Karnataka Health and Medical Education Minister K Sudhakar said on Thursday.

Mass vaccination the only solution, says SBI report

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic in India started on February 15 and could last until the end of May witnessing a peak in mid-April this year, a research report released by the State Bank of India (SBI) said on Thursday. Cautioning that the country could see an addition of 25 lakh cases during this period, it said mass vaccination and not local lockdown, as is being imposed by some States, is the only solution to curb the surge. The 28-page report said localised lockdowns or restrictions have been "ineffective" and that mass vaccination is the "only hope" to win the battle against the pandemic. "Considering the number of days from the current level of daily new cases to the peak level during the first wave,

India might reach the peak in the second half of April," it said. Focusing on the economic indicators, the SBI report said the business activity index, based on high frequency indicators, has declined in the last week, adding that the impact of the lockdown or restrictions imposed by certain States might become visible next month.

Currently, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Punjab, Uttarakhand are some of the States in the country which have imposed night curfew and shut business entities in some of their cities reporting an

increase in cases. The report also calls for an increase in the pace of vaccination across States. Increasing daily vaccination from the current 34 lakh to 40-45 lakh per day would mean that inoculation of citizens over 45 years can be completed in four months from now.

So far, nearly 5 crore people have been vaccinated. With an attempt to bring more beneficiaries under the inoculation drive launched from January 16, the Government has widened the ambit from April 1 to include those above 45 even if they have no co-morbidities.

NCW: 80% jump in domestic violence since lockdown

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With families remaining confined to homes during the Covid-19-induced lockdown, domestic violence reared its ugly head more menacingly. There has been a major rise in the number of complaints of domestic violence from 2,960 in 2019 to 5,297 in 2020, which is a jump of nearly 80 per cent. Worryingly, the ominous trend is continuing in the ongoing year too.

which is a jump of little over 20 per cent year on year data.

A year after the lockdown, the NCW continues to receive over 2,000 complaints every month of crimes against women with nearly one-fourth of them related to domestic violence, according to the official data.

According to the NCW data, as many as 1,463 complaints of domestic violence against women were received from January 2021 to March 25, 2021.

The National Commission for Women (NCW) received a total of 19,730 complaints of crimes against women in 2019 as compared to 23,722 in 2020

The nationwide lockdown was imposed on March 25 last year to curb the spread of Covid-19, but it trapped many domestic violence victims with their abusers.

LoC silent in March after 5/6 years, says Naravane

Terror launch pads in PoK intact, says Army Chief

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With both the countries agreeing last month to observe ceasefire on the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu & Kashmir, Army Chief General MM Naravane said here on Thursday the border is silent for the first time in around five to six years with not a single shot fired in March.

The Army Chief, however, said the terrorist infrastructure, including terrorist launch-pads, on the Pakistani side remained intact and



asserted that it cannot be business as usual unless the neighbouring country stops supporting terrorism.

Speaking at a conclave, Naravane said he was optimistic that the ceasefire will hold as the Pakistan Army was on board. "I am glad to inform that in the whole month of March, we have not had a single shot fired at the Line of Control (LoC) barring an odd incident. It is for the first time in about five or six

years that the LoC has been silent. That really bodes well for the future," he said.

Last month, the Indian and Pakistani armies recommitted themselves to the 2003 ceasefire agreement on the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir. The return to the ceasefire was agreed upon by the director generals of military operations (DGMO) of the two countries. "Our core issue is that they have to stop support to terrorism. Unless they stop that it cannot be business as usual," Naravane said.

Asked what could have prompted Pakistan to suddenly agree to the ceasefire, Naravane said the duels between the two sides had not resulted any forward movement and that Islamabad has its own internal problems.

Realtor poisons wife with thallium for aborting baby against his will

Wife on ventilator, her mother, sister die in hospital

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 27-year-old man in Delhi who allegedly poisoned his wife and her family using thallium in fish curry was arrested by the Delhi Police on Thursday. His mother-in-law Anita Devi Sharma and sister-in-law Priyanka died of poisoning, while his wife Divya is on ventilator.

The accused identified as Varun Arora, a resident of Greater Kailash, was inspired by former Iraqi despot Saddam Hussein, who was known to use thallium, a slow poison, to eliminate political opponents.



Police said Varun Arora is a builder by profession. The main trigger for Arora's anger against his wife was that she had aborted their baby defying his wish with help from her family.

Police found during the investigation that the accused was reading articles on internet related to former Iraqi president Saddam. According to Urvija Goel, the Deputy

Commissioner of Police (DCP), West district, on Monday, police got information that Anita, a resident of Inder Puri, was declared dead at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital.

"The doctors had opined that death was caused by thallium poisoning, detected in blood and urine of the patient. During enquiry, it was found that daughter of deceased Divya was also admitted in the ICU ward and she was subjected to the same thallium poisoning for which she is undergoing treatment. She is on ventilator support," said the DCP.

Priyanka, the younger daughter of Anita, died during the treatment on February 15. "Devender Mohan Sharma, Divya's father, and their maid too had symptoms of thallium poisoning," said the DCP.

In Assembly Opp Parties corner Naveen Govt over unemployment issue



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Opposition BJP and Congress on Thursday tried to corner the State Government in the Assembly over the growing unemployment in the State.

Both the parties targeted the Government saying that thousands of people are migrating to other States as the Government has failed to create job opportunities for the youths. Participating in an adjournment motion debate over the unemployment issue, Opposition Chief Whip Mohan Charan Majhi (BJP) said youths are running from pillar to post

in search of jobs. The unemployment problem is a bigger pandemic than coronavirus, he opined. As many as 18 lakh young people are unemployed in the State, but the Government is hiring retired officers. Over one million migrants returned to the State. But it is unknown whether the Government did the skill mapping of the returnees or created any job opportunities for them, said Majhi.

BJP MLA Mukesh Mahaling said skill development initiatives have collapsed in State while unemployment has doubled during the Covid time. *Continued on Page 2*

TTPS expansion Pradhan seeks Power Min's intervention

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Union Minister of Petroleum and Steel Dharmendra Pradhan on Thursday wrote a letter to Minister of State (IC) Power and New and Renewable Energy RK Singh seeking his personal intervention in expediting the Stage-3 expansion of Talcher Thermal Power Station (TTPS) in Odisha.

Later, Pradhan in a tweet said Singh assured his personal help in setting up a new power plant in Talcher subject to the necessary support by the Odisha Government.

In the letter to the Power Minister, Pradhan stated that, "The project is very crucial for the livelihood of local populace and strengthening the local economy."

I also learnt that the Odisha Chief Minister had written a letter to you on March 22, 2021 seeking your intervention for addressing concerns related to the closure of TTPS. "Keeping in view the need for ensuring sustained availability of low-cost and reliable power for rapid socio-economic development of Odisha and eastern India, I urge for your personal intervention in the matter," Pradhan stated.

Notorious criminals held; goon flees as aides blind cops with chilli powder

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi witnessed two encounters between police and criminals on Thursday. A gangster carrying a reward of ₹3.5 lakh and his accomplice on whose head ₹2 lakh was there were arrested on Bhairon Marg, while in another incident a wanted criminal escaped from police custody following a shootout outside GTB hospital on Thursday afternoon.

The shootout in which the criminal escaped after his aides threw chilli powder at the police team took place around 12.30 pm when the third battalion of the Delhi Police was taking gangster Kuldeep, alias Fajja, who is a member of the Gogi gang, to the hospital for treatment, a senior police officer said. In the Pragati Maidan incident, the accused, Rohit Choudhary, 35, and his accomplice, Parveen alias Titu, were arrested after a shootout.

The two suffered injuries in their legs during the encounter and were taken to hospital, police said. This was the first time that a Delhi Police woman officer was part of the encounter team, police claimed. Both the accused are wanted in cases of the MCOCA, murder, attempt to

murder and other cases of robbery as well, police said. In another incident in which the criminal escaped, a fierce gunfight broke out at a Government hospital in Delhi in broad daylight on Thursday when a police team escorting a notorious criminal came face to face with those who came to aid his escape, leaving one assailant dead and triggering a chaos with patients and their relatives running for cover, officials said.

While the prisoner managed to flee, the police nabbed one of his six associates who was injured in the gunfight at the GTB hospital here, they said.

In a high-voltage drama, the assailants first threw chilli powder at the police team and then started firing at them to which the security personnel retaliated with 12 rounds of fire, killing one of them on the spot and injuring another, officials said. On the intervening night of Wednesday and Thursday, the Delhi Police's Crime Branch team got a tip-off that Choudhary and his accomplice would reach Bhairon Marg in a blue car, following which a trap was laid down at a parking there, a police officer said.

Stop Jagannath properties' sale: Plea in SC

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

New Delhi: A petition was filed in the Supreme Court on Thursday seeking a directive to stop selling of any properties of Lord Jagannath of Puri.

Jan Swabhimann Welfare Society counsel Shashank Shankar Jha moved the apex court for a directive to the Secretary of Ministry of Home Affairs, the Odisha Chief Secretary and the Chief Administrator of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration to immediately stop settling and selling of any properties of the Lord.

The plea sought the court's intervention to direct the parties to ensure any temporary or permanent settlement that has happened in properties of Lord Jagannath comprise only of people who adhere to the religion that worships the Lord.

Besides, the petition prayed for the SC's intervention to dissolve the current temple management and form a judicial committee in interim to oversee creating of an administrative mechanism for the temple in sync with Dharmik traditions of the Jagannath Dham and the role of Government is restricted to only facilitation of such a mechanism. The plea further requested for a judicial commission headed by a retired judge of the Supreme Court to investigate the matter. *PNS*

PM Modi leaves for Bangladesh to attend 50th independence day

It's first foreign visit by PM after 496 days

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to visit Bangladesh on Friday to mark the 50th anniversary of the neighbouring nation's freedom in 1971, it will be his first foreign visit after a full 496 days — the longest gap between two of his foreign visits.

His last foreign trip was to Brazil from November 13 to 15, 2019. Besides Bangladesh, Modi is expected to visit Brussels for the European Union-India summit (May 8), and to Cornwall, United Kingdom, from June 11 to 13, to attend the G-7 grouping where India is a special invitee (June 11-13).

Bangladesh has invited four other heads of State from Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan and the Maldives to join the celebrations marking 50 years of its independence, but Modi will be the only leader to join. India and Bangladesh will sign several agreements and unveil new measures to boost people-to-people contacts.

In his departure statement, Modi said, "I am happy that my first foreign visit after the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic will be to our friendly neighbouring country, with which India shares deep cultural, linguistic and people-to-people ties. I look forward to visiting Bangabandhu's Samadhi in Tungipara to pay my respects to his memory." The PM said he also looks forward to offering prayers to Goddess Kali at the ancient Jashoreswari Kali Temple, one of the 51



Shaktipeeths in the Puranic tradition. "I will be having substantive discussions with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, following our very productive virtual meeting in December last year. I also look forward to my meeting with President Abdul Hamid, and to interactions with other Bangladeshi dignitaries," Modi said.

As per the details of the PM's foreign and domestic visits on pmindia.gov.in, the largest gap so far between his two foreign trips was 158 days when he visited Sri Lanka in May 2017 after he went to Japan in November 2016.

Before this, the longest gap was of 102 days between Modi's visit to Nepal to attend the SAARC summit between November 25-27 in 2014 and then to Seychelles on March 10, 2015. And, prior to that, there was a gap of 94 days after his unscheduled visit to Pakistan on December 25 last year and then his travel to Saudi Arabia after three months on March 29 in 2017.

MLA Das not leaving land for DRDO road

Activists threaten to gherao him in Baleswar

UBACHAK MOHANTY ■ BALESWAR

A group of young activists, alleging that Bhograi BJD MLA Ananta Das was creating a hurdle in the construction of a DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organisation) road, warned of launching a dharana before Das's house, if he didn't address the issue.

The group led by Bikram Panda said that the construction of road of around 10-km stretch from the Tamulia bridge to Chandipur while is under progress and almost on the verge of completion, yet a

patch of land owned by the former Minister which falls on the route has emerged as a major hurdle. As Das is neither leaving the land nor taking any compensation, the road construction work could not be carried out, they alleged. "Several acres of private land have been acquired by the DRDO for the construction of the road. Yet, unfortunately, the patch belonging to Das couldn't be acquired.

About 10 decimal of land may be required from his portion," they told. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik while is battling for development of the State, his own party MLA is creating obstruction. As a result, the work is halted, they alleged further.

"If he doesn't cooperate in sorting out the issue after two weeks, we would embark on a

dharana in front of his residence in Baleswar town," threatened Panda. According reports, the Defence road construction is required as the DRDO is facing difficulties to mobilise heavy machinery and other equipment.

Currently, these vehicles and equipment ply through Baleswar town which is not at all hassle free. The road after completion would give a seamless movement of vehicles of mainly PXE (Proof and experimental establishment) and ITR (Integrated test range), a missile testing unit of DRDO.

Further, the State Government has a proposal of constructing a ring road around town. The proposal is the road of around 12 km would join the DRDO road and the total road would be around 30 km.

2-day Delhi Odisha Parba from Mar 27 On virtual mode

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The two-day mega 'International Odisha Parba' will be organised on virtual platform from March 27 by the Odia Samaj, New Delhi showcasing the unique art, culture, heritage and tradition of Odisha.

Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas and Steel Dharmendra Pradhan, Rajya Sabha MP Padma Vibhushan Dr Raghunath Mahapatra and Vice Chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant General Chandni Prasad Mohanty will give the welcome messages.

The inaugural day will start with the dance 'Bande Utkal Janani', a welcome performance by Guru Madhumita Rout's troop. The event will witness various regional and ancient dance and art forms that originated centuries ago, such as Jodi Sankha, animal mask dance, Ranaga dance, Malakhamba, Bonda tribal dance, martial art, Adi Dhun, etc.

The audience will get to hear from Padma Vibhushan Sonal Mansingh, Padma Vibhushan Sudarshan Sahoo and many more. Well-known singers from the Ollywood industry



including Tansen Singh, Tapu Mishra, Diptirekha, Sohini Mishra, Swayam Padhi, Tariq Aziz, Ashutosh will entertain the audience with their melodious performances.

INBRIEF

BBSR-BHADRAK MEMU TRAIN TO RESUME FROM APR 7

Bhubaneswar: In view of the growing demand for resumption of passenger trains in the State, the East Coast Railway (ECOR) has decided to restart service of another MEMU train between Bhubaneswar and Bhadrak with effect from April 7. As per the schedule, 68408 Bhubaneswar-Bhadrak MEMU train will leave Bhubaneswar at 5.55 pm from April 7 and reach Bhadrak at 9.15 pm. In the return direction, 68407 Bhadrak-Bhubaneswar MEMU will depart Bhadrak at 6.15 am with effect from April 8 and arrive at Bhubaneswar Railway Station at 9.50 am.



JEE MAIN (MARCH SESSION): DEBASISH ODISHA TOPPER

Bhubaneswar: Results of JEE Main-2021 (March Session) have been announced by the National Testing Agency (NTA) and Debasish Panda has emerged as topper in Odisha. Debasish, a student of ODM Public school, scored 99.959166% to top the list in the State. As many as 13 candidates have scored 100 per cent marks in the entrance test. The JEE (Main) Examination for B.E./B.Tech was conducted from March 16 to 18. The examination was conducted for the second time in 13 languages (English, Hindi, Gujarati along with Assamese, Bengali, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu).

SASHWAT ODISHA TOPPER IN SX STREAM IN KVPY

Bhubaneswar: Sashwat Sahu, a student of Integrated two-year Classroom Programme at the FIITJEE Bhubaneswar Centre has become the Odisha topper. He has secured an All India Rank 134 in SX Stream in KVPY results 2020-21.

KALAHANDI RI CAUGHT TAKING BRIBE

Bhubaneswar: Thabira Bhoi, RI, Tulapada Circle under Narla tehsil in Kalahandi was caught red-handed by Vigilance officers while allegedly demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 5,000 through a private person from complainant Niranjan Nayak of Terlo, Narla PS, Kalahandi district in the RI office premises to prepare a sketch map for partition of a land recorded in the name of Nayak's grandfather.

STRAY DOGS CHASE AWAY BEAR IN NILGIRI TOWN

Baleswar: A wild bear was chased away by stray dogs in Nilgiri town on Wednesday night and the scene was captured on a mobile camera by a biker who caught sight of the event while returning home. Meanwhile, the video footage has gone viral in social media. Reports said the wild bear had strayed from Swarnachuda hill into the town and was found mooching near Katchery market Durga Mandap. After seeing the bear, a pack of dogs chased the bear away from the town. The bear too was unable to face the attacking dogs and again ran into the reserve forest. It is assumed that since frequent fires in the Nilgiri and Kudhia forests are destroying the wildlife habitats and disturbing them, they are sneaking into human habitations for safety and search of foods. This has given rise to man-animal conflicts in recent time.

Two brothers drown in Kharasrota

PNS ■ JAJPUR

Two brothers, including a minor, drowned in the river Kharasrota near Chintapalli village under the Jajpur Sadar police station on Thursday while taking bath.

The siblings drowned after accidentally slipping into the deep river. The deceased were identified as Dibakar Chanda (18) and his younger

brother Dinabandhu Chand (15). Dibakar was reading Plus Two Arts in a college and Dinabandhu was reading in Class-X in the village school.

Their father Kanhu Charan Chand and some villagers fished out their bodies. Police seized the bodies and sent them to the District Headquarters Hospital for autopsy, said Jajpur Additional Superintendent of Police Narayan Barik.

Play on Gandhi's Odisha visit staged at Belpahar

RAJ KUMAR SHARMA ■ JHARSUGUDA

To mark 100 years of Gandhi's visit to Odisha, a play was staged by the Sate Language, Literature and Music Department on Tuesday at the Ratna Mandap, Belpahar, in assistance with the Belpahar Mirror Theatre.

Before that, a procession started in the evening from the Mahatma Gandhi Smruti Sadan to the Ratna Mandap in which different women's organisations of Belpahar, senior citizens' associations and members of the Mahatma Gandhi



Smruti Sadan participated. Jharsuguda district SP Bikash Chandra Das joined as chief guest and ADM Pradeep Sahoo as distinguished guest and convener of Belpahar Citizen Forum Shyam Sundar Satpathy, DIPRO Ajay Jena and Director of Mirror Theatre Subash Pradhan as other guests. The speakers requested everybody to work for the development of the country taking the philosophy of Gandhiji, love for the motherland and social service. Gandhi had visited Jharsuguda on May 5, 1934 and

walked from the Jharsuguda railway station in a grand procession to the house of freedom fighter Late Bihari Ram Tanty at Mangalbar Mungapada. Besides, Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das also spread the message of Gandhi from this house.

On the occasion, Durga Prasad Tanty, son of Bihari Ram Tanty, was felicitated. A play 'Gandhinka Odisha' written by Sankar Tripathy and directed by Subash Chandra Pradhan was staged. The play covered all aspects of the Dandi March and Salt Agitation, etc., launched by Mahatma Gandhi.

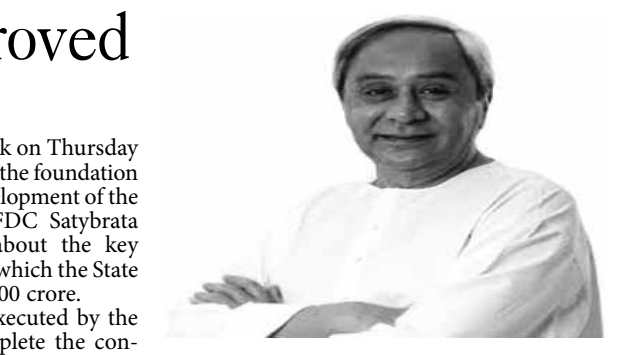
CM Naveen lays stone for Kalinga Studio project ₹200 cr approved

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Thursday unveiled the plaque to mark the foundation stone-laying ceremony of redevelopment of the Kalinga Studio. Chairman, OFDC Satyabrata Tripathy explained the CM about the key infrastructure of the project for which the State Government has approved Rs 200 crore.

The project work will be executed by the IDCO and is expected to complete the construction and landscaping of the core support area by December 2022.

The project concept and master plan will be given an international consulting firm M/s Grant Thornton Bharat LLP while the studio will be developed spreading into three different zones comprising infrastructure such as multi sized indoor shooting halls with all modern facilities, make believe shooting locales, theme based parks, post-production facilities such as dubbing and mixing studio, animation work station, editing suite, DI (Digital Intermediate) Studio, pre-



view theatre, Directors' room, space for brainstorming, script narration, casting etc, recording lab, radio and media houses etc. Along with film production, the studio proposes to contain comprehensive fun, entertainment, and a leisure hub.

The infrastructure includes live performance stage, adventure parks, kids play area, water games, castle view, snow world, iconic points etc along with boarding and lodging facilities for the film crew, and space for social and cultural gatherings.

Odisha State awarded as 2nd for TB control

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

On the occasion of the World TB Day on March 24, Odisha was awarded by the Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare for being the second in the country for its achievements towards elimination of TB in 2020.

State Director Public Health Dr Niranjan Mishra Odisha and State TB Officer Dr PK Hota received the award from Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare Dr Harsh Vardhan and Minister of State for H&FW, Ashwini Kumar Choubey in New Delhi.

While Odisha has been ranked second in the country for its efforts towards elimination of tuberculosis (TB), four of its districts have found place among the top 10 districts in the country in terms



of TB control. Subarnapur district has been placed second followed by Deogarh at third, Jagatsinghpur at fifth and Boudh at sixth rank for successful efforts towards TB elimination. Meanwhile, the State Government has provided incentive to private hospitals treating TB patients in order to scale up notification rate. With its continued efforts, the State hopes to meet the target of elimination of TB by 2025, said a senior official.

In Mayurbhanj Rotary holds students' dental screening camp

PNS ■ BARIPADA

A dental screening camp for students of Classes-IX and X was recently held at the Bireswarpur Government High School of Badsahi block in Mayurbhanj district. More than 100 students underwent medical screening for their dental problems, if any, in the camp organised by the Rotary Club of Baripada Heritage.

The students found affected by some kinds of dental diseases were advised through their parents to consult dentists of the Baripada PRM Medical College. Soon after the screening, an awareness programme on "Dental hygiene: A step towards caring Adolescent" was also organised in the school premises. The pro-



gramme held under the supervision of dentist Chandra Mohan Singh was inaugurated by local Sarpanch Rajanikant Nayak and attended by a large number of villagers and Rotarians. Rotary Club President Debashish Das and school Headmaster Rotarian Santosh Kumar Kastha also

Covid death

PPT compensates hosp staffer's widow

PNS ■ PARADIP

Paradip Port Trust (PPT) Deputy Chairman AK Bose on Thursday disbursed compensation of Rs 50 lakh by a cheque to Sabita Lenka, wife and legal heir of Late Trinath Charana Lenka, a contractual dresser of the PPT Hospital, who succumbed to Covid-19 in October last year.

The compensation was disbursed in the presence of Dr P Panda, CMO, PPT Hospital, and other medical staffs. The compensation scheme has been



declared by the Union Ministry of Port, Shipping and Waterways. It may be noted that due to proactive steps taken by the PPT management and the PPT Hospital in particular, this has been the only loss of life at the Paradip Port in the ongoing Covid pandemic.

Embezzling deposits Bhadrak postmaster gets 7-year RI

PNS ■ BHADRAK

A post master of Aharapada branch post office in Bhadrak district was awarded seven years rigorous imprisonment (RI) for misappropriation of deposits.

Chief Judicial Magistrate Debaddatta Patnaik, Bhadrak, convicted Kamalakanta Nayak under Section 409 of IPC and sentenced him to seven years rigorous imprisonment in a 2016 postal deposit embezzlement case. The convict was also slapped with Rs10,000 fine

failing which he will undergo one year rigorous imprisonment. Nayak was accused of embezzling Rs 35 lakh deposited by 185 customers at the Aharapada branch post office.

The then Bhadrak Circle Postal Superintendent Paramananda Sahoo came to know about the massive misappropriation of postal deposits during an audit conducted in the year 2016 following which a written complaint was lodged at the Bhadrak rural police station. The accused was arrested on August 23, 2017.

Paradip: Literary meet, poem recitation held

PNS ■ PARADIP

A Sahitya Sabha and Kavita Pathotsava courtesy the Paradip Sahitya Sansad along with the Paradip Ladies' Club was held at the Shramik Bhavan here on Wednesday.

Paradip Sahitya Sansad secretary Prashanta Rout presided over the event. In the morning session, former member of Odisha Sahitya Akademi and prominent columnist Akshay Kumar Rout was chief guest.

He said the world of literature is vast and the writers and poets are the strongest part of it. He elaborated how ordinary

people become extraordinary and immortal through their literature.

Odisha Sahitya Akademi awardee Pitambar Tarai attended as chief speaker. "The poet is fearless; he is not afraid of anyone; he preaches the message of poetry.

The society does not remember the king but the poet. Not many remember Kapilendra Dev but Sarala Das. Pratap Rudra is not remembered, but everyone remembers Jagannath Das and his Bhagavat," he said. Preeti Aarti Parija was guest of honour. Lopamudra Mohanty, Seemashree Nayak, Pushpanjali



Sahu, Gitanjali Sethi, Sushree Narendra, Rashmi Acharya and Preeti Aarti Parija recited their poems on behalf of the Paradeep Ladies' Club. Poets Pramalta Barik, Nagendra Swain, Arup Kumar Bishwal, Rabindra Kumar Dash, Prabhati Majhi, Babaji Kumar

Nayak, Narsingh Charan Barik, Prabhakar Kumar Barik, Bhagyashree Pradhan, Gita Das, Urmila Mohanty, Sairaj Pinaki Rout recited self-written poems. Nrusingh Charan Barik, Sanjay Kumar Mishra, Satyajit Raut and Ramakant Jena coordinated the function.

TRL Krosaki flags off TB chariot

For creating awareness in Belpahar

PNS ■ JHARSUGUDA

A tuberculosis (TB) chariot for creating awareness on TB was flagged off in the TRL Krosaki Refractories Limited at Belpahar on the World Tuberculosis Day for creating awareness among the general public about this deadly but

curable disease. Director, TRL Krosaki Hospital Dr Tushar Kanti flagged off the chariot on Wednesday at the TRL Krosaki Hospital.

The programme was organised by Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Department of the company. Dr Gopinath Soren, Dr Manjuri Besra, Dr Rajiv Singdeo, Matron Sujata Das, Aniruddha Mishra and other hospital staff attended the programme.

Deputy General Manager (PR & CSR) Dr Santosh Kumar Mishra, Deputy Manager (PR & CSR) Sasanka Dixit and



other CSR staff participated. The chariot developed by the company was decorated with banners and posters.

Information about tuberculosis and its treatment was announced continuously through a public address sys-

tem and at the same time leaflets were distributed. Staff nurses of the hospital walked in a procession along with the chariot by holding placards. The chariot moved through every ward of Belpahar Municipality.

Olympic qualifier Bhavani warmly received at KIIT

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The KIIT & KISS fraternity on Thursday felicitated CA Bhavani Devi, a KIIT student, who qualified for Tokyo Olympics 2021 in Fencing. She has earned the distinction of becoming the first-ever Indian to qualify for the Olympics in Fencing.

Bhavani, who hails from Tamil Nadu, reached Bhubaneswar along with her mother and coach from Italy. A felicitation ceremony for the ace fencer was organized at the KIIT in the presence of distinguished personalities like Dr

Achyuta Samanta, founder, KIIT & KISS; Bashir A Khan, general secretary, Fencing Association of India; Debendra Sahoo, secretary, Odisha Fencing Association; 'Green Man' Dr Abdul Ghani; and sprint queen Dutee Chand.

Bhavani said, "KIIT is lucky for me. I qualified for Tokyo Olympics after enrolling in KIIT." Dr Samanta said, "Apart from education, KIIT & KISS have given emphasis on the promotion of sports and sportspersons. In fact, KIIT & KISS premises has the largest state-of-the-art sports and games infrastructure located in



an educational institution across the globe. So far, the two institutions have produced about 5,000 talented players".

Dr Samanta hoped Dutee and Bhavani would definitely win medals in the forthcoming Olympics.

National Bank for Financing Infrastructure RS passes Bill to fund infrastructure projects

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Budget Session of Parliament concluded on Thursday with the Rajya Sabha passing the National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development Bill to fund infrastructure projects. The Lok Sabha had passed it on Tuesday. The Budget Session was earlier scheduled to end on April 8. In his valedictory remarks, Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu said the Upper House saw a productivity rate of more than 90 percent in the Budget Session. The House also bid farewell to three retiring members from Kerala — Vyalar Ravi, K K Ragesh and Abdul Wahab. While giving a brief account of the performance of the House, Naidu said the upper house functioned for a total of 104 hours as against the total scheduled time of 116 hours. In the second part of the



Budget session, both the houses started working simultaneously with relaxed social distancing norms. In the first part of the Budget session, the Rajya Sabha met in the first half of the day while Lok Sabha functioned in the afternoon session. He also said a total of 21 hours and 26 minutes of the House was lost due to disruptions during this Session. However, the House compensated this loss and sat beyond the scheduled time for a total of 14 hours and 28 minutes to complete the legislative and other business. Naidu also noted that the high productivity witnessed during the last four sessions since June 2019, that is, 249th, 250th, 251st and 252nd Sessions has continued in this Session (253rd) as well. As regards legislative output, Naidu said the Rajya Sabha passed 19 bills during the session, which includes the Appropriation Bill and Finance Bill. Around 34 hours and 4 minutes were spent on the discussion of the Government bills, which comes around 42 per cent of the total function-

The House also gave its nod to the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2021

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Gandhi were present in the House. The first part of the Budget Session started on January 29 with the President's address to joint sitting of both houses of Parliament. The address was boycotted by over 20 Opposition parties, including the Congress, in support of the demand of the protesting farmers for the repeal of the three farm laws. The Union Budget was tabled on February 1. Thereafter, House proceedings were washed out for four consecutive days over the opposition's demand for separate discussion on farm issues. To compensate the session's lost time, the House sat till midnight for several days. The House also gave its nod to the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2021. The Insurance (Amendment) Bill which increases foreign direct investment (FDI) limit in the insurance sector from 49 per cent to 74 per cent was passed in the House. In his remarks before adjourning the house, Mahtab said despite disruptions, the Lok Sabha's productivity during the Budget session stood at 114 per cent and the members also dealt with important issues by sitting till midnight on several occasions. 146 members participated in the discussion on the Union Budget for 14 hours and 42 minutes, he said.

Two lakh plus grievances received against 2 Ministries between 2018 and 2020

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Over two lakh grievances have been received against two Ministries between 2018 and 2020. Besides, one to two lakh grievances have been received against four ministries/departments and 50,000 to one lakh grievances received against eight Ministries during the same period. Expressing concern over the large number of grievances, a Parliamentary Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice in its 106th report on Demands for Grants (2021-22) of the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions has asked the Centre to constitute social audit panels to identify core grievance-prone areas and streamline their systems. As regards the redressal of grievances by states/UTs, the Committee noted that the percentage of grievance disposal is not satisfactory. In its recent report, the panel recommended to the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) to progressively bring down the maximum time limit for grievance redressal from 60 to 45 days. "The Committee recommends the Department to instruct the ministries/departments of central government to constitute social audit panels to identify core grievance prone areas and streamline their systems accordingly," the committee said. The Government of India has established the Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS), an online system for grievance redressal. This system facilitates citizens to lodge their grievances to ministries/ departments/ organisations/ state governments/ UTs, which scrutinise and take action for speedy and favourable redress of these grievances. A separate work flow and functionality for grievances to appeal authorities in CPGRAMS has been operationalised in CPGRAMS. The time line for resolution of an appeal by the nodal appellate authority is 30 days of receipt of the same, according to the report. The Committee appreciated the department for institutionalizing an appellate mechanism in CPGRAMS. The Committee also emphasizes that the department should publicise the portal through all possible means including the print and electronic media so that the benefits of the grievance redressal mechanism percolate down to those at the bottom of the pyramid, it said. The Committee also recommends the department to develop an Interactive Voice Response System for registration of grievances for the benefit of people who inhabit remote areas and have no proper access to the internet, the report said.

SC quashes FIR against journalist

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Thursday quashed an FIR lodged against journalist Patricia Mukhim for allegedly creating communal disharmony through her Facebook post. A Bench headed by Justice L Nageswara Rao allowed the plea filed by Mukhim against the Meghalaya High Court order which had refused to quash the FIR against her.



"We have allowed the appeal," the bench said while pronouncing the judgement. The top court had reserved its verdict in the matter on February 16. Mukhim's counsel had earlier argued before the apex court that there was no intention to create disharmony or conflict through the post which referred to an incident of a murderous assault on July 3, 2020. The counsel for Meghalaya government had earlier claimed in the top court that "communal colour" was given to the scuffle between minor boys and her post shows it was a communal incident between tribal and non-tribal people.

IN SHORT

- NIA RAIDS 3 LOCATIONS IN RAILWAY BLAST CASE**
New Delhi: The NIA has conducted searches at three locations in West Bengal and Jharkhand in the Nimtita Railway Station Bomb Blast Case in which West Bengal Minister Jakir Hossain and 26 others were injured. On Wednesday, the NIA conducted searches at the premises of Biyon SK and Mohammadun SK alias Mohan Kasai in Murshidabad, West Bengal and at the premises of accused Shahidul Islam at Majhgao, West Singhbhum, Jharkhand in connection with investigation of case.
- DOUBLE-DECKER FLYOVER TO EASE TRAFFIC JAM**
New Delhi: The Centre is working on a proposal to build a double-decker flyover in steel city Jamshedpur to reduce traffic congestion in the city, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said on Thursday. Replying to a query from Jamshedpur MP Bidyut Baran Mahato during the Question Hour in Lok Sabha, Gadkari also said the total toll collection on national highways is expected to reach ₹34,000 crore in the financial year ending March 31, 2021 despite farmers' protest on some highways from ₹24,000 crore in 2019-20.
- EXTENSION FOR PERSONAL DATA SAFETY BILL PANEL**
New Delhi: The Joint Committee of Parliament examining the Personal Data Protection Bill was on Thursday given extension till the Monsoon Session to submit its report. The JCP, headed by the BJP's Meenakshi Lekhi, was constituted in Lok Sabha in December 2019, and was expected to submit its report in the Budget Session.

SC to hear plea seeking permanent commission for women in Army



A Bench headed by Justice D Y Chandrachud said the process by which women officers were evaluated did not address the gender discrimination concern raised in the verdict delivered by the apex court last year.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Thursday allowed the pleas of several women SSC officers seeking grant of permanent commission in the Army, while holding that the ACR evaluation process was flawed and discriminatory in nature. The Bench also noted that the structure of our society is created by males for males where talk of equality is a farce and since Independence, efforts have been made to bridge the gap and grant equal opportunity to men and women. Delivering its verdict on a batch of pleas filed by several women officers who had sought compliance of its February last year directions to the Centre for grant of permanent commission, promotions and consequential benefits, the court said the Annual Confidential Report (ACR) evaluation criteria for grant of permanent commission to women officers ignored achievements and laurels brought by them to the Indian Army. A Bench headed by Justice D Y Chandrachud said the process by which women officers were evaluated did not address the gender discrimination concern raised in the verdict delivered by the apex court last year. In its landmark judgement delivered on February 17 last year, the top court had directed that women officers in the Army be granted permanent commission, rejecting the Centre's stand of their physiological limitations as being based on "sex stereotypes" and "gender discrimination against women". It had directed that within three months, all serving short service commission (SSC) women officers have to be considered for permanent commission irrespective of their having crossed 12 years or, as the case may be, 20 years of service. In its judgement passed on Thursday, the apex court said that ACR evaluation criteria for SSC women officers in Army created systematic discrimination.

CAG orders enquiry into renovation of India House in London

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has recommended an inquiry in the renovation of the India House in London as the works award was given without approval of the Ministry of External Affairs. According to a CAG report tabled in the Parliament, the High Commission of India, London undertook work relating to renovation of the basement at the India House, at a cost of GBP 744,971 (approx. ₹ 6.63 crore), without prior approval from the Ministry of External Affairs and resorted to irregular splitting of works to evade approvals from higher authority and open bidding. "It adopted a grossly manipulated process for award of works to the same person, and made post facto additions and alterations in the scope of work which led to undue benefits being extended to Contractors. Such blatant subversion of rules and processes indicates supervisory failure and possible collusion between Mission officials and the agencies". The renovation work of the basement area was taken up at a bid cost of GBP 129,800



(₹ 1.07 crore). After five months in January 2018, the Mission issued another NIT for "Design and furnishing of the consular service area", which was again a part of the original project scope, and awarded this work at a cost GBP 34548023 (₹ 3.14 crore). Subsequently, (August/September 2018) the Mission took up "additional works25" not originally within the scope of the renovation project valuing GBP 107,694 (₹ 99.06 lakh), by splitting the total work into 19 piecemeal orders. The CAG said that the Mission resorted to indiscriminate sub division of work with the intention of evading approval of higher authorities/Ministry and avoiding open bidding. "Further, additional work was awarded based on fraudulent quotations, to an associated ineligible company, incorporated immediately prior to the award of work and dissolved after receipt of payments," the CAG said. The report further states as per the contract, the work was to be executed within 8-10 weeks from September 1, 2017 i.e., by November 15, 2017. "However, the work was completed on 31 January 2018. Despite a delay of 10 weeks (minimum) in completion of the work33, the Mission did not recover liquidated damages amounting to GBP 7,78834 (₹ 6.85 lakh) from the company," it said. The renovation work of the basement area was taken up at a bid cost of GBP 129,800

Not proper to call RSS, affiliates 'Sangh Parivar': Rahul



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday said it is not right to call the RSS and its associated groups 'Sangh Parivar' as a family has women, respect for elders, compassion and affection, and the organisation has none of these. Gandhi's remarks come a day after he said the harassment and de-boarding of nuns from a train in Uttar Pradesh was a result of the Sangh Parivar's "vicious propaganda" to pitch one community against another and trample on minorities. In a tweet in Hindi on Thursday, he said he will no longer refer to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh as 'Sangh Parivar', united family. "I believe it is not right to call the RSS and associated organisations Sangh Parivar — there are women in the family, there is respect for the elderly, a sense of compassion and affection - which is not there in the RSS".

BJP leader Mukul Roy to get Z category security during Bengal polls



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has upgraded the VIP security cover of BJP leader Mukul Roy to 'z' category during the polls process in West Bengal. The Union Home Ministry has asked the CRPF to undertake the upgrade. Earlier, Roy was enjoying 'y' category cover. Roy, 66, was under the 'y'-category cover of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). Roy is the national vice president of BJP and a party candidate from the Krishnanagar Assembly seat in Nadia district of West Bengal. During the polls, he will now enjoy a 'z' category cover during his movement in the state. Roy will now have a contingent of 24-30 armed personnel who will work in shifts and accompany the politician during the poll campaign and also provide security at his residence. He had joined the BJP in November, 2017 from the Trinamool Congress (TMC) party and has also served as the Railways minister in the past.

Climate change may hurt Indian manufacturing due to heat stress on workers: Chicago study

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

One-degree Celsius rise in annual temperatures may lead to two per cent drop in productivity levels of industrial units and climate change may hurt the Indian manufacturing sector owing to heat stress on workers, a new study has said. The study by the Energy

Policy Institute at the University of Chicago used several high-frequency micro-data sets of worker output and a nationally representative dataset of more than 58,000 factories across India. The researchers found that there is around two per cent drop of productivity for every one-degree rise in annual temperature. "The greatest declines occurred in labour-intensive plants," the study said. This multi-year study indicates that climate control in the workplace removes productivity declines but not absenteeism, presumably because workers remain exposed to high temperatures at home and outside.

₹3,700-crore bank fraud case: CBI raids over 100 spots in 11 States/UTs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI on Thursday conducted searches at over 100 locations in 11 States/Union Territories in a countrywide special drive and registered over 30 cases related to bank fraud of over ₹3,700 crore. These searches are part of Special Drive to book the fraudsters on the complaints received from different Nationalised Banks in the country. The complainant banks include Indian Overseas Bank, Union Bank of India, Bank of Baroda, Punjab National Bank, State Bank of India, IDBI, Canara Bank, Indian Bank and Central Bank of India. The various cities/towns where the searches were conducted include Kanpur, Delhi, Ghaziabad, Mathura, Noida, Gurugram, Chennai, Thiruvananthapuram, Bangalore, Gantur, Hyderabad, Bellary, Vadodara, Kolkata, West Godavari, Surat, Mumbai, Bhopal, Nimadi, Tirupati, Visakhapatnam, Ahmedabad, Rajkot, Karnal, Jaipur and Sri Ganganagar. "During searches, various incriminating documents and other material/digital evidences have been recovered," the CBI said in a statement. The CBI has been receiving a number of complaints from various banks alleging cheating, diversion of funds, submission of fake/forged documents by different defaulting firms while obtaining loans/credit facilities and the like. There have been allegations that such firms have been turning defaulters resulting into the loans becoming Non Performing Assets (NPAs), thus causing heavy loss to the public sector banks, it said. "After scrutiny of the complaints, the cases are registered by CBI. Thorough investigation is carried out in order to book the culprits, take them to face the law and endeavour to salvage public money," it added.

RS polls from Kerala

CPM accuses EC of succumbing to Centre's pressure

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

CPM leaders on Thursday accused the Election Commission of succumbing to the Central Government's pressure and changing the schedule of elections to three seats in Rajya Sabha from Kerala. Last week, the Election Commission announced the schedule and the election was supposed to be conducted on April 14. But all of a sudden the EC kept the election on abeyance citing an opinion from the Law Ministry. "Election to Rajya Sabha from Kerala has been kept in abeyance. ECI says Law Ministry recommended so. Art. 324 vests the power to conduct the election only in the ECI. Why the political intervention? Why has ECI succumbed to it? Indian Constitution has been violated, yet again!" tweeted Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan expressing displeasure. CPM(M) polit bureau member Nilotpal Basu said that the party is shocked to see the attitude of the Election Commission. "We wanted to pointedly question the bonafides of the Government of India to directly intervene in the process of elections whereas no political party or individuals had expressed any disagreement with the authority of the ECI, much less the details of the notification for elections. "We are afraid that this appears to be completely in contravention of the immense powers of the Election Commission under Article 324 and actually amounts to the relinquishing of its independence. It is clear that the ECI is acting at the behest of the overnment", said he.

SC orders status quo on supply of Yamuna water to Delhi till today

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Thursday directed Governments of Punjab, Haryana and others to maintain status quo on supply of Yamuna water to Delhi till Friday. The apex court was hearing an application filed by Delhi Jal Board (DJB) which has sought directions to the Haryana Government to cease the discharge of untreated pollutants into the Yamuna and release sufficient water to the national capital. A Bench headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde issued notices to Haryana, Punjab and Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) and asked them to file their responses on the application by Friday. Senior advocate A M Singhvi, appearing for DJB, said that water level has fallen in the national capital. Senior lawyer Shyam Divan, appearing for Haryana, said that full level of water supply has been made. Senior advocate Vikas Singh, who also appeared in the

matter, said that a court commissioner should be appointed to verify the water level. Divan said no application has been filed for the appointment of court commissioner in the matter. "This is about the fundamental right to water. We will not go into technical issue whether court commissioner can be appointed only after the application. If the need arises, we can appoint it," said the bench, also comprising Justices A S Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian.

Bengal phase 1 campaign ends

Didi, Shah take on each other's outfit

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Even as curtains came down on the high decibel campaign for the 30 Assembly seats going to polls in the first phase of Bengal elections both the BJP and Trinamool Congress on Thursday went all out against each other claiming the State would collapse if their rivals came to power. While Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee attacked the BJP for splurging money and using muscle power to win the State polls and asked the people to remain on guard against the saffron outfits alleged nefarious designs, Home Minister led his party's campaign rolling out a long list of promises for the Jangalmahal area. Thirty seats spread across

tribal-dominated of Purulia, Bankura, Jhargram, Purba Medinipur (Part 1) and Paschim Medinipur (Part 1) districts once considered the citadel of the Left will go to polls on March 27. "I have definite information that the BJP is spending money and pushing in criminals from other States ... so you will have to remain vigilant against their dirty designs," Banerjee told two rallies in Jangalmahal. "Be prepared with your kitchen tools to repulse any outsider raid on your voting rights ... do check and recheck the EVMs (electronic voting machines) and do turn up early in the morning to cast your votes," the Chief Minister said alleging the BJP was "using all the dirty tricks in its kitty to throw me out of power." She said "first I was given an injury to stop me from campaigning ... but I am made of

different metal ... I can play with one leg and kick many goals ... then they are using the central forces to dominate the voters... they are also splurging money to purchase votes besides bringing in criminals from other States to rig elections ... but be prepared with your rolling pins and other kitchen tools to repulse the outsider criminals... We have specific information about people being brought from Odisha to loot votes." Earlier she said that the criminals and police forces from the BJP ruled States like UP were being imported to loot votes. Alleging that the BJP had tacit understanding with the Indian Secular Front --- the newly floated party by a Muslim cleric Abbas Siddique that was jointly contesting with the Left and the Congress --- Banerjee said "the minorities will have to remain alert about a new party that has emerged

in the scene with tacit backing of the BJP so that it can eat into the minority votes." Attacking the BJP for forcing making plans to victimize the citizens of India she said "if the BJP comes they will introduce CAA and NPR but we will never allow these to happen in Bengal ... Remember if BJP comes there will be apocalypse. So stop them here and now." Earlier from a rally at Jhargram Shah said that if BJP came to power infiltration would be stopped. "Let the BJP come to power there will be no infiltration in Bengal so that your food, your jobs and your business is eaten away by the foreigners ... let alone foreigners not a bird will be allowed to enter Bengal," he said "there is an opportunity" and the people would have to choose between Vikas (development) and Vinash (destruction).

'Shattered hopes and sham revolution' in Nandigram

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ NANDIGRAM

My family was in the forefront of (the land) movement. We lost one of our members in the (police) firing. But what did we get in return? Only false promises... Not even a school teacher's job. I took the TET (Teachers' Eligibility Test) but failed to land a job because some other people purchased these jobs for Rs 5 lakh a piece. That is how Prason Maity (name changed) pours his anger out not only on Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee but also her principal opponent Suwendu Adhikari who is contesting on a BJP ticket. Prason is a member of a "highly respected Sahid" (those who died during the land movement that triggered Nandigram police firing in March 2007) family. "If you condemn Mamata Banerjee can you spare Suwendu Babu for that ... he was am MP, and later a powerful minister chairman of Haldia Development Board and cooperative bank and god knows how many things

... we know how many of their men got jobs some for cash others for service but what happened to the kind of those ... on whose corpse they rode to power. Nothing," says Dipak Sihi (name changed) a local from Garchakraberia who too lost a relative in the movement. "We know there will once again be a gagging lull after the elections. All these hullabaloo will be gone ... and after May 2 those who are coming with folded hands will look at us with contempt and scorching eyes ... we will continue to lead a speechless life for another five years... at times we feel why we walked into the trap of TMC and Maoists ... Why did we not allow a chemical hub to take place in Nandigram so that thousands of locals would not have to go out for jobs," says Feroz from Rowapara adding however "we the Muslims are in a catch 22 situation ... we know that Mamata Banerjee has cheated us but still we have to vote for us ... this is a battle of identity."

Cong-led UDF fighting back to retain power

KOCHI: Despite the opinion polls and surveys conducted by the media in the State portraying the Congress trailing behind the CPI(M) in the run up to the April 6 Assembly election, the Grand Old Party is slowly and steadily fighting back and catching up in the race. The Congress-led UDF, though handicapped by the prolonged discussions to settle the conflicts between the constituent parties in the Front as well as between various groups in the lead party, have put the differences behind them and launched the full-fledged campaign by early this week. The road show by former party chief Rahul Gandhi in the districts of Ernakulam, Kottayam has given a new life to the Congress workers and the party has come back to its fighting mood. Former Chief Minister Oommen Chandi, Leader of the Opposition Ramesh Chennithala, KPCC Chief Mullappalli Ramachandran and working president K Sudhakaran MP are the frontline warriors of the party travelling across the length and breadth of the State to campaign for not only the Congress but for the candidates fielded by the constituent parties of the UDF. The Congress was in for a shock when former minister P C Chacko, a loyalist of Sharad Pawar who did not follow his mentor when the latter walked out to float the NCP in 1998, quit the party early this month because he was denied a seat in the April 6 election. PNS

ED grills Mehbooba Mufti

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Chief Mehbooba Mufti was grilled by the officials of the Enforcement Directorate in connection with a case of money laundering in the Srinagar based zonal office for over five long hours on Thursday. Initially, Mehbooba had refused to appear in person before the ED officials in New Delhi on March 22 but after the Delhi High Court refused to grant stay on ED summons, she was left with no option but to present herself before the investigating officers of the Enforcement Directorate. Mehbooba arrived in the ED zonal office around 11.00 a.m and remained closeted for over five hours. Interacting with the media persons after her questioning Mehbooba Mufti tried to put up a brave front claiming, "my hands are clean, I have nothing to hide". Without naming anyone in particular Mehbooba in a veiled reference to the central government said they have been searching for two long years and now they have started questioning about my father's

property in Bijbehara, money spent on his grave etc." No rocket science is required to understand what they are trying to do, Mehbooba said adding that dissent has been criminalized in the country. "This country is being ruled by either ED, CBI or NIA. This country is not running according to the Constitution of India, it is running according to a political party's agenda," she told reporters. Exhausted Mehbooba Mufti also maintained that there will be no change in the party's strategy over fighting for the rights of people including the restoration of Article 370. "One who speaks against you (Government of India) is being either booked under sedition charges or being summoned by the investigative agencies. I was questioned about my father's property in Bijbehara, which we have sold out and was asked how you sold it and other related things. Secondly, they questioned me how secret funds were utilised during my tenure in office. They asked me who prepared the list of widows to whom funds were granted, how money was utilised for youth engagement programs," the PDP chief said.

Coast Guard recovers heroin, weapons worth ₹3K cr from Sri Lankan fishing vessel

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a swift air-sea coordinated operation, the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) has seized high-grade heroin worth Rs 3,000 crore and weapons from a Sri Lankan fishing vessel off the Minicoy Isle in the Lakshadweep Islands region in the Arabian Sea. Acting on an intelligence input received on March 15 about the engagement of a suspicious boat of foreign origin in drug trafficking in Arabian Sea, the ICG ships and aircraft conducted extensive search in the area off the Lakshadweep Islands. On March 18, patrolling ICG units detected three suspicious boats off Minicoy Islands and intercepted them. Post boarding, interrogation of the crew revealed inconsistent statements. "On rummaging of boats, high grade 300 kiofgrams of Heroin and five AK-47 rifles with 1000 live rounds were recovered from Sri Lankan fishing boat Ravihansi," an ICG spokesperson said. The ICG officials pegged the estimated value of narcotics in the international market at Rs 3000 crore. After the recovery of narcotics and weapons, the ICG escorted all the three boats along with 19 crew members to Vizhinjam, Kerala for further joint investigation. This is the second major anti-drug trafficking operation undertaken by ICG on the west coast of India within a fortnight.

Ex-Mumbai CP moves HC, seeks CBI probe into graft case against Maha Home Minister

Mumbai: After the Supreme Court refused to entertain his similar plea, Mumbai's former Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh on Thursday moved the Bombay High Court, seeking a CBI investigation into the alleged corruption charges against Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh.

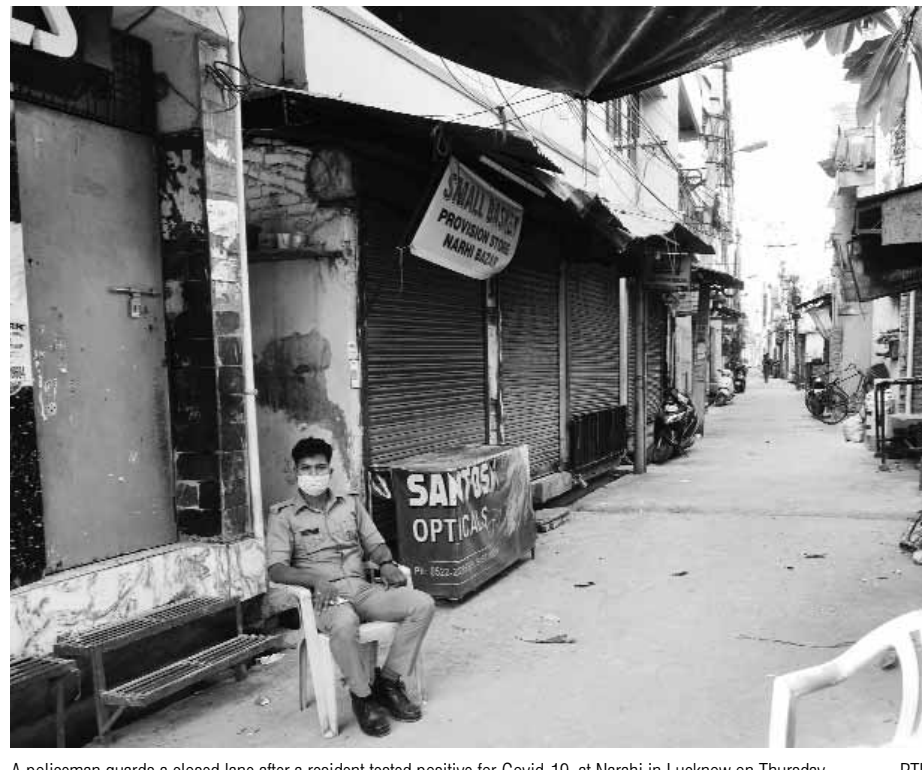
A day after the apex court the matter flagged by him as "very serious affecting administration of a state" but asked him move the high court, Singh filed a criminal Public Interest Litigation (PIL) reiterating his earlier allegations and seeking an "immediate, unbiased, impartial" CBI probe against Deshmukh. A HC bench headed by Chief Justice Dipankar Datta is likely to hear Singh's PIL next week. Singh had created a sensation on Saturday last by shooting off a letter to chief minister Uddhav Thackeray alleging that State Home Minister Anil

Deshmukh of the NCP had asked suspended police officer Sachin Vaze last month to "collect" a staggering Rs 100 crore per month from bars, restaurants and other sources. State Home minister Deshmukh had swiftly debunked Singh's charge, saying that the former Police Commissioner had made false allegations "to save himself, as the involvement of Sachin Vaze in Mukesh Ambani & Mansukh Hiran's case is becoming carried out so far & threads are leading to Mr. Singh as well". Among other things, Singh sought an HC direction to the CBI to secure CCTV footage from Deshmukh's residence from earlier this year before it was "destroyed" and to the state government to produce all records of communication received from IPS officer Rashmi Shukla in March 2020. PNS

1 CRPF jawan killed, 3 injured in terrorist attack on Srinagar outskirts

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Hours after Asia's largest Tulip garden located in the lap of Zabarwan Hills was thrown open to all visitors and tourists visiting Kashmir valley 'unidentified' terrorists targeted a mobile patrol vehicle of CRPF on the outskirts of Srinagar in Lawaypora area in which two CRPF personnel including a Sub Inspector rank officer attained martyrdom while two others received injuries. A senior CRPF officer who visited the spot immediately after the terror strike told reporters, "in a hit and run attack a group of 'unidentified' terrorists targeted a mobile patrol vehicle of CRPF of 73 BN around 3.45 p.m in which two CRPF personnel attained martyrdom while two others were undergoing treatment in a command hospital in Srinagar". The CRPF officer said, "the terrorists fled away through the bylanes taking advantage of the prevailing chaos and confusion in the area". The entire area was cordoned off and massive searches were conducted in the area to track down the foot prints of the terrorists behind the attack. The martyred CRPF personnel were identified by Jammu and Kashmir police as SI/GD Manga Ram Dev Barman & Ct Ashok Kumar of 73BN CRPF.



A policeman guards a closed lane after a resident tested positive for Covid-19, at Narahi in Lucknow on Thursday PTI

Kin of 2 sisters held over killing

Pilibhit (UP): The two teenage sisters who were found dead at a village here under mysterious circumstances were allegedly murdered by their mother and a brother, police said, in what appear to be a case of honour killing. They have been arrested. A brick kiln owner has also been arrested, while a search is on for two other family members, police said. On Monday, family members saw the elder sister talking to someone over the phone, following which she was beaten up by them. At night, both the sisters were asked with whom the elder one was talking to and why, according to Pilibhit Superintendent of Police Jaiprakash Yadav. "They were asked from where they got the phone. When both of them did not reply, the family members killed them in a fit of rage," the SP said. "They were angry because the marriage of the elder one was fixed and their act could bring a bad name to the family." One of the teenagers, aged 17 and 19, was found dead in a field, while the other was found hanging from a tree on Tuesday morning, police had said. PTI

10 years of jail to accused in 6-yr-old rape case

PRADEEP SAXENA ■ ALIGARH

A DJ-15 Judge Vijay Kumar Verma convicted the accused in the case of rape in Palimukimpur area six years ago and sentenced him to ten years of imprisonment. The accused has also been punished with a fine of Rs 21 thousand. This decision has been given in the order of disposal of the cases under the Mission Shakti Abhiyan. According to ADGC Krishna Murari Johri, the prosecution advocate, on August 27, 2015, a woman was alone in the village Hardoi in Palimukimpur area. It is alleged that Monu of the village came and raped her and also fled after carrying out the incident of rape and assault. The next day, the victim filed a case at the police station. The court convicted the accused on the basis of evidence and testimony and punished him with ten years imprisonment and fine of Rs 21 thousand. PTI

With faulty policies of BJP Govt, inflation has broken people's back: Akhilesh

Lucknow: Allying that people are in trouble due to the policies of the BJP Government, Samajwadi Party President Akhilesh Yadav on Thursday said that inflation has broken their back and the public is now thinking of getting rid of the saffron party's misrule. "The common man in the country is a harried lot and is in trouble due to the faulty policies of the BJP government (at the Centre). While inflation has broken their back, there are no employment opportunities. Markets have not yet recovered from the recession. Every section of the society is troubled. Surrounded by apprehensions of the future, people are now thinking of getting rid of the BJP misrule and are awaiting polls," Akhilesh said in statement issued here. "The festival of Holi is approaching but price rise has faded the enthusiasm of the people. Edible oil, ghee, nuts, everything is out of reach of the general public. It is said that since December, almost everything is being sold 25 per cent costlier. Due to heavy adulteration in the food items that

Month after going missing, woman's body recovered from borewell in UP

Hamirpur (UP): The body of a 22-year-old woman, missing for over a month, was on Thursday recovered from a borewell here in an alleged case of honour killing, police said. Neha Yadav (22) who had gone missing on February 16 from Kariyapur village in Kurara area was found dead in the borewell, Superintendent of Police Narendra Kumar Singh said. He said family members had lodged a kidnapping case against a youth on February 19 but upon probing has suspected their role in the death itself. The victim's cousin and uncle were later detained by the police and during interrogation they accepted to have killed Yadav and disposed the body in the borewell. The body was taken out with the help of fire brigade personnel on Thursday, he said. The woman lived with her mother and was alone at the time of the incident. "It is suspected to be a case of honour killing. A detailed probe is on in the matter," the SP said. PTI

AP logs 758 fresh Covid-19 cases, four deaths

PTI ■ AMARAVATI

In a continued surge, Andhra Pradesh reported 758 fresh cases of COVID-19 in the 24 hours ending 9 am on Thursday, the highest in four months after the 1,031 on November 26. The state's caseload now moved up to 8,95,879 from 1.48 crore tests with an overall positivity rate of 6.02 per cent. While the 1,031 cases in November came from 67,269 tests, the 758 turned out from 35,196 tests, indicating a higher positivity rate. According to the latest bulletin, 231 patients recovered from the infection in 24 hours, pushing the total recoveries to 8,85,209. The toll rose to 7,201 after four more fatalities were reported in the state, the bulletin said. The number of active cases increased to 3,469, the highest since December 27 last. "Yes...It appears so," a top health official remarked, when asked if the state was seeing yet another surge in the COVID-19 contagion, going by their rise in numbers in the last few days. "We are focusing on areas where the spread of the infection is high and taking containment measures accordingly," he said. The official noted that the number of coronavirus cases being reported in schools was very less, contrary to perception. "Wherever cases are detected, we are shutting down the schools for three days and conducting tests on all students and teachers. Only then we are allowing the schools to re-open," he said. Asked if there were any super-spreader events or bulk cases in a particular zone, a district Collector replied in the negative, adding the infection was essentially spreading through contacts. Authorities identified residential junior colleges as one of the main sources of the infection spread in some districts and had, in fact, shut-down some of them after fresh cases sprang up. PTI

Covid: 172 new cases in J&K

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir recorded 172 new Covid-19 cases on Thursday, taking the infection count to 1,29,203, officials said. No fresh coronavirus-related death was reported in the past 24 hours, they said. Of the new cases which included 46 travellers, 41 were from the Jammu division and 131 were from the Kashmir division, officials said. Srinagar district recorded the highest 65 cases, including 25 travellers, followed by 34 in

Jammu district, they said. Eight districts did not report any new cases, while eight others had cases in single digits. Two other districts -- Baramulla and Budgam -- had cases in double digits apart from Srinagar and Jammu, officials said. The number of active cases, which has been rising steadily over the past week, currently stands at 1,593, while 1,25,627 patients have recovered so far, the officials said. PTI

Kerala records 1,989 corona cases, 12 deaths

Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala recorded 1,989 fresh COVID-19 cases and 12 more deaths on Thursday, taking the caseload to 11,12,246 and the toll to 4,539. As many as 1,865 people got cured today, pushing the total recoveries to 10,82,668 while the active cases stood at 24,380, Health minister K K Shailaja said in a press release. In the last 24 hours ending 2 pm today, 51,027 samples were tested and the test positivity rate was 3.9 per cent. According to the release, 1,28,61,734 samples have been sent for testing so far. Those infected today include 15 health workers while 75 had come from outside the state and 1,746 were infected through contact. PTI



Devotees celebrate 'Chita Bhasam' Holi, on the banks of the Ganga river in Varanasi on Thursday PTI

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Stop playacting

Uddhav shouldn't allow the Maharashtra Home Minister to sell a dummy to the people

Politicians nowadays seem to have scant regard for probity, accountability and integrity in public life; what matters to them is power and position. The recent turn of events in Mumbai reflects that those wielding power think that they can get away with anything. NCP chief Sharad Pawar's blue-eyed boy and Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh, against whom serious charges of corruption have been levelled by Mumbai Police's former Commissioner Param Bir Singh, said he would welcome a probe against himself if Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray orders any. The CM has so far not acted against his tainted Cabinet colleague while Pawar has predictably defended his pick. The Home Minister's statement came a day after the Supreme Court (SC) termed the matter "quite serious" and asked Singh to approach the Bombay High Court (HC) with his plea seeking a CBI probe against Deshmukh. Deshmukh seems to be aware that in case Uddhav orders a probe against him, the HC will take note of this fact before deciding on Singh's plea. It may or may not have a bearing on the High Court's decision but Deshmukh is apparently trying to ensure that the case is not handed over to a central agency. A CBI inquiry means trouble not only for the Home Minister but for the entire Government.



On the other hand, even if Uddhav orders a probe, any inquiry against Deshmukh by the State agency, while he continues to occupy his office, hardly makes any sense. It would be merely an eyewash as the subordinate officials will leave no stone unturned to ensure that their boss comes clean of all charges. Ideally, any officer or Minister who faces an inquiry is suspended or asked to proceed on leave until the probe concludes. It is done to ensure that the probe remains unbiased and the suspect in question does not influence the investigation in any manner. Had he been serious about the corruption charges against him, Deshmukh should have tendered his resignation on moral grounds before asking the Chief Minister to launch a probe. Now, it is up to Uddhav to take a call on the prickly issue. However, he is expected to ask Deshmukh to tender his resignation before ordering any probe against the Home Minister. However, in case he decides to go soft on Pawar's favourite man, Uddhav can reshuffle his portfolio or make him a Minister without charge. But seeing the state of affairs in Maharashtra, where Pawar is calling the shots while the Chief Minister sits with his hands tied behind his back, it is most likely that Deshmukh will continue as the Home Minister irrespective of whether a probe is initiated against him. On the other hand, Deputy CM Ajit Pawar has claimed that the Opposition wanted the Maha Vikas Aghadi Government to fall from day one but the Government enjoys full majority. While the spate of allegations and counter-allegations between the Government and the Opposition flies thick and fast, it would be interesting to see what happens next in Maharashtra.

PICTALK



People celebrate Lathmar Holi at Sri Krishna Janmasthan temple in Mathura

PTI

Indians first

The heckling of two nuns on false accusations doesn't befit us as a peace-loving, tolerant nation

India is a country with major aspirations. It wants to be a regional superpower so that it can keep an increasingly belligerent and expansionist China in check for amity in its immediate neighbourhood. The country, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, dreams of becoming a \$5 trillion economy by 2025. How is it then that a nation that positions itself as a "vishwa guru" and believes in the concept of "Vasudhaiva kutumbakam" (the world is one family) and ahimsa, is increasingly becoming intolerant in its own backyard? Whether it be cow vigilantes beating a young man to pulp with a hammer even as the police stand by mutely in Gurugram or the lynching of dairy farmer Pehlu Khan in Alwar, or the recent harassment of two nuns and their trainees travelling on a train from Delhi to Rourkela in Odisha. The four women were forced to disembark in Uttar Pradesh's Jhansi after an Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad worker accused them of forced conversions. The women were bullied, abused and harassed by a crowd before being taken away by the railway police. However, the police found the conversion claim wrong as the two postulates were carrying their baptism cards issued in 2003.

With elections in Kerala round the corner, the issue has led to a political slugfest in the State and the BJP, which has been trying to woo the Christians there, suddenly found itself on the back foot. Campaigning in Kerala, Home Minister Amit Shah was at pains to assure the people of action. But what if it had not been the election season? Would our *netas* have jumped to the defence of the minority community then? The Constitution allows everyone in the country to believe or not to believe in any religion and the Jhansi incident is an encroachment on the freedom and fundamental rights of these citizens. It is a sad reflection on our country that more and more States are coming out with repressive laws that target the freedom of preaching and practising select religions. Should we as a country not be more focused on bringing about an end to hunger, poverty, casteism and discrimination than fighting each other over something as personal as religion? We would be better *desh bhakts* if we focused on peace, equality, prosperity and brotherhood among all Indians. We must remember that we are all Indians first.

The conversion factor: How real is the threat?



GYANESHWAR DAYAL

The mistreatment of nuns on a train in Jhansi for alleged attempts at conversion is proof of the high-handedness of the Right-wingers

The heckling of two nuns in Jhansi is making news and brings to the fore the conversion debate at a time when five Assembly elections are round the corner. In the incident, two nuns travelling on a train were mobbed allegedly by a group of Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad activists. They felt that the nuns were in some way involved in conversions, though there was nothing at the spot to suggest this. Still, their journey came to an abrupt end. Mercifully, they were not hacked which was not a distant possibility.

It happened in Uttar Pradesh (UP), which has been at the forefront of 'love jihad' and other minority-related issues. To date, there is no law in UP against conversion though a controversial Bill is on the anvil. The Act will debar religious conversions by inducement, though conversion by free will would be allowed. That is when it comes into effect. Eight States have already passed a similar Act.

Article 25 of the Constitution guarantees the freedom to profess, practice and propagate religion to all citizens. For argument's sake even if the law was enforced and the nuns were involved in conversion, it does not become the Right-wingers' prerogative to enforce it. The self-assigned custodians of Hinduism who try to enforce the law are by its very definition outlaws. It is the job of the police, not citizens, to bring the culprits to book.

Conversion is an old debate and Christian missionaries have been under the scanner for it. Muslims, for that matter, are spared from this debate (love jihad is a different issue). Other mass conversions that take place are from Hindus to the Buddhist fold. Since Babasaheb Ambedkar converted to Buddhism along with several of his Dalit followers, the trend has continued. Most conversions that take place from the majority community to minority are frowned upon while the ones from minority to majority are welcomed as homecoming. Double standards there!

Right now, over 1,000 appli-



cations are pending in Gujarat for conversions. Most of them are from Hindus who would like to embrace Buddhism. The Right wing should view such conversions as a reason to introspect rather than blaming the other religionists for wooing their flock. Almost all Hindus who have applied for conversion to Buddhism are Dalits.

These champions of Hinduism must raise their voice when atrocities are committed on Dalits. From the suicide of Rohit Vemula to the flogging of Dalit workers, hardly ever has a Hindu outfit stepped forth to protest such incidents. If you don't treat your co-religionists well, such applications are bound to increase.

As far as Christian missionaries are concerned, there is no denying that they are entrusted with the task of converting people and that is how Christianity spread across the globe. For that matter, that is how Buddhism spread when Emperor Ashoka sent his emissaries to spread the teachings of Buddha to various places. No harm in that.

The charge often levelled against Christian missionaries is that they do so by bribing and inducement. Allegedly, huge sums of money are spent

by Christian organisations for converting the tribal and Scheduled Caste Hindus. That Odisha is the State where such practice takes place is a myth that needs to be busted.

Since Independence, the Christian population in the country has declined in absolute as well as relative terms. The census data shows that it declined to 2.30 per cent in 2011 from 2.33 per cent in 2001. The Christian population growth is lower than the Hindu growth rate. So either the money the Christian missionaries are getting is going down the drain or the missionaries are not able to deliver. Christian organisations must ponder over the return on investments as the Christian population in the tribal region of Odisha has remained static.

This writer had filmed a documentary in Manoharpur in Odisha where missionary Graham Staines was burnt alive with his two sons, Philip (10) and Timothy (7), on the night of January 22, 1999, for allegedly converting tribal Hindus. The spur to do the documentary was a small story in a newspaper. Gladys Staines, the widow of Graham, had said that she had forgiven Dara Singh, the murderer of her sons

and husband. It takes real conviction and guts to even pretend, let alone forgive by heart. The lady surely deserved to be portrayed in the right manner but she chose otherwise.

The place was so backward that it had no electricity, market or a pucca house. Primary health services, banks, police stations were a far cry. She still worked there and ran a hospital and provided many basic necessities to the people.

You don't need a million dollars to convert people there; just a loaf of bread and a dressing on a wound would do. Can the Right-wing groups please do something about their plight so that no one would ever think of converting? Service to mankind is a basic Christian tenet.

In any case, the Christianisation of India is a lost cause. It could not happen during the British rule, so now the chances are even less. There are practical reasons: By converting, the SCs lose the tag and thereby many Government benefits. Also, they cannot move up the social ladder in the religious hierarchy. Raising the bogey against conversions is easy but far removed from reality.

(The writer is a columnist and documentary film-maker. The views expressed are personal.)



THESE CHAMPIONS OF HINDUISM MUST RAISE THEIR VOICE WHEN ATROCITIES ARE COMMITTED ON DALITS. FROM THE SUICIDE OF ROHIT VEMULA TO THE FLOGGING OF DALIT WORKERS, HARDLY EVER HAS A HINDU ORGANISATION STEPPED FORTH TO PROTEST SUCH INCIDENTS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

VACCINATION IS NO PANACEA

Sir —The detection of a new 'double mutant variant' — a combination of two variants E484Q and L452R — and several other variants in India is a serious problem to grapple with. Genome sequencing of samples by Indian SARS-CoV-2 Consortium on Genomics (INSACOG) set up by the Health Ministry has made the detection possible. The COVID-19 situation is exacerbated by the presence of the UK, Brazilian and South African strains classified as "variants of concern" along with the newly-detected 'double mutant variant' in India.

The scientists are investigating if there is a correlation between the new variants and the current surge in infection cases. The exact nature of the variants is still to be understood. Data on them, whenever available, will be analysed in terms of their clinical consequences such as transmissibility, severity and responsiveness to vaccines and treatment. The 'double mutant variant' — two mutations in a single virus — is being studied to find out if it causes "immune escape" or, in other words, allows the virus to slip past the body's immune defences, and increases infectivity. Studies will show if it is a "variant of concern" or a "variant of interest".

The uncertainties and imponderables surrounding the Novel Coronavirus undergoing mutations, coupled with the people hesitancy in getting inoculated, indicates that the end to the pandemic is nowhere in sight. It is difficult to forecast how long the pandemic will linger on. It is necessary that we all wear masks, sanitise our hands and maintain physical distancing. In the time of this pandemic, we must all submit to science and abide by what it requires us to do.

G David Milton | Tamil Nadu

CENTRE, DELHI GOVT SETTING WRONG EXAMPLE

Sir — The conflict between the Centre and Delhi Government is setting a bad precedent for democracy. Recently, the Central Government has introduced the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill that seeks to

Lower the loudspeaker volume



This refers to the editorial 'Deafening' (March 25). The Right to Freedom of Religion is guaranteed to all Indians by the Constitution under Articles 25 to 28. This right is not only for individuals but also for religious groups in India. But we have no right to trouble others. *Azaan* is for Muslims but it also falls on non-Muslim ears. Further, a random peek in any mosque during the prayer times would show that not many Muslims

respond to the call. The footfall in mosques is negligible except for the midday Friday prayer and those who regularly go there five times a day do not actually depend on the *azaan* to be reminded of the prayer time. The high-decibel noise emanating from the loudspeakers must be regulated as it not only adversely affects human health but also troubles animals and birds.

People are at high risk of losing their hearing permanently due to noise pollution in India. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), noise exposure below 70 decibel does not pose any health risks to human beings or wildlife. However, if someone is exposed to noise levels of 85 decibel or more for more than eight hours on a regular basis, it can be considered hazardous.

Not only loudspeakers but road traffic, aeroplanes or jets and trains produce a large amount of noise. Exposure to such noises on a regular basis for long periods of time have proved detrimental to human health. It is advisable that Muslim clerics should tune the loudspeakers installed on mosques to lower volumes.

Nischai Vats | Sultanpur

enhance the powers of Delhi's Lieutenant Governor (L-G). The new law requires the Government to take the L-G's opinion before it takes any action. This is not in line with a decision of a five-judge Bench of the Supreme Court in 2018 which had maintained that the L-G must be informed about Delhi Cabinet decisions but his concurrence was not needed, except in the case of police, public order and land. Senior Congress leader and MP Mallikarjun Kharge stated that it is a Bill to "steal the powers of an elected Government and destroy democracy". This will affect Kejriwal who has been the Chief Minister since 2015 and has constantly been at odds with the L-Gs who have been accused of gubernatorial overreach.

Amit Singh Kushwaha | Satna

GOVT MUST LISTEN TO THE FARMERS

Sir — As the farmers' protest on Delhi bor-

ders continues, farmer unions have called for a Bharat Bandh on March 26 demanding a complete rollback of the farm laws. The Sanyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM), a union of farmers protesting against the new agriculture laws, has appealed to the citizens of the country to make the Bharat Bandh on March 26 successful.

Several rounds of talks have been held with the Government, but no agreement has been reached yet. Farmers are camping at the Singhu, Tikri and Ghazipur borders of Delhi. They are adamant on repealing the laws altogether, while the Government is ready for amendments after discussing the loopholes in the laws. The Centre must listen to the farmers before it's too late.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUNDBITE

In a family there are women, there is respect for elders, there is love and affection which is not there in the RSS. So now I will not call the RSS as *Parivar* (family).

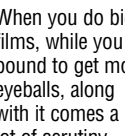


Congress leader — Rahul Gandhi



The fluctuations in the markets over the past few days do not reflect the fundamentals, dynamics, potential or the future of economy.

Turkish President — Recep Tayyip Erdogan



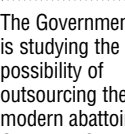
When you do big films, while you are bound to get more eyeballs, along with it comes a lot of scrutiny.

Actor — Vaani Kapoor



Cricket between Pakistan and India is very important. Sports should be kept away from politics. Relations between the two countries can improve because of cricket.

Former Pakistan captain — Shahid Afridi



The Government is studying the possibility of outsourcing the modern abattoir of Goa Meat Complex to private companies for the period of 10 years.

Goa CM — Pramod Sawant

FIRST COLUMN

HARASSMENT OF NUNS MUST STOP

The nuns sacrifice their whole lives in the service of society and want nothing in return



MARKANDEY KATJU

The recent incident of harassment of nuns from Kerala in Jhansi by the Right-wing goons needs to be unequivocally condemned as it brings disgrace to our country. Nuns are not ordinary women and they render great service to society, particularly in the fields of education and healthcare. Some of the best convent schools in India are run and managed by these sisters and almost everyone wants his or her daughter or other female relative to get admission in these missionary schools. Further, the hospitals they run are also par excellence.

The nuns sacrifice their whole lives in the service of society and want nothing in return for their selfless devotion. They live a disciplined life and serve people without any discrimination. They are deprived of the pleasures and happiness which most women have — a family, a husband and children. And yet many people levy all kinds of false and baseless allegations on these nuns, some of which are better left unsaid. One of the allegations that they do forcible conversions is palpably false.



When I was a lawyer, and later a judge at the Allahabad High Court, the nuns of St Mary's Convent who run the best girls school in the town, would often come to me for help. I have always helped them *pro bono*. Their biggest harassment would begin a month or two before school admissions kick-starts in March as the school session started in April. Often they were harassed by the authorities and officials, who wanted to secure a seat for their daughters or other female relatives in the school.

The harassment was a way to create pressure as the seats in the prestigious school were limited and for every seat there would be at least 10 or 20 aspirants. In such a situation, a competitive test was imperative and was organised to select the candidates. However, in case any official's daughter failed to get through the entrance test, s/he would harass the nuns and create pressure. I remember how the municipal authorities once sent a notice to the Principal, Sister Evelyn, alleging that the land on which the school stood had been illegally occupied, which of course was totally false. On another occasion, an Income Tax notice was sent by an Income Tax official whose daughter had not been able to beat the competition. Also, police officials would often harass them and since the nuns were defenceless, they had often to succumb to such pressures.

Apart from the harassment by the authorities and officials, the nuns were also faced with the goonda-type student leaders of the Allahabad University, who pressure them for giving admission to their candidates. After I became a judge of the Allahabad High Court in 1991 whenever the nuns had a problem they came to me for help and I would call the District Magistrate or other authority and tell him that the harassment must stop. The result was that the nuns started regarding me as their elder brother, and they would sometimes invite me over for tea. I still remember the excellent cakes they would themselves prepare for me.

In my opinion, the nuns are our role models and if our nation has to progress, our people must develop the spirit of service and sacrifice which the nuns have. Far from harassing them, we must give them the highest respect and learn from them.

(The writer is a former judge of the Supreme Court of India. The views expressed are personal.)

A sprinkling of stardust on my shoulders

Tasked with covering a film awards function for DD, I was clear that I didn't want to tread the beaten path of filing a TV report nor take the services of a scribe for interviewing stars



SUDHIR TANDON

One Friday evening in March 1973, I was summoned by an Assistant Station Director of Delhi's *Doordarshan* (DD) and introduced to a charming man. "Yunus Dehlvi runs the influential magazines *Shama* and *Sushma* and is organising a film awards function. This is Sudhir Tandon and he will cover your event." My boss sensed my surprise (for cameramen were not asked to take on the role of a producer-director, unless they themselves came up with a proposal) "As you are to become a producer soon, the Director Television Centre has given this order. Discuss the details of the event with Dehlvi sahib."

We met the following day at the Convention Hall of New Delhi's iconic Ashoka Hotel for a recce of the venue and familiarisation with the drill where Yunus' younger brother Idrees became my point man. I was clear that I didn't want to tread the beaten path of filing a TV report (summary of the stage show) nor take the customary services of a journalist for interviewing celebrities. Instead, there had to be verve and a certain irreverence in the programme. I inquired of Idrees the names of starlet attendees. We narrowed down on Reena Roy who had been selected for the award of the Best Rising Star. The toil to contact her began as soon as she had checked in at the Ashoka. Even though Idrees had briefed Reena, but every time I called up her room, a lady would tell me to ring up later as she was either taking a nap or was out or was busy. Finally, on Sunday evening the lady told me that: "Baby has gone to the hairdresser. She'll contact you on her return" — a refrain that I'd heard earlier. Exasperated, I lost my cool and told her "Ammaji, tell your baby not to bother. She is out of my programme and I'll find someone better."

Would my boast work? Harried, I went to Idrees and, on the way, I saw Nargis in her room. "If nothing works out, I'll approach Nargis (with whom I'd some acquaintance) and request her to salvage the situation," I thought and asked Idrees, "which other starlets are on your list?" He mentioned Dimple Kapadia. The name sounded faintly familiar. "She's the 16-year-old heroine of Raj Kapoor's under-production film," he explained. Immediately, we rushed to her hotel room.

The wait between the knock on the door and its opening was inexorable. The door opened and a concussion of comeliness hit me. But...she appeared older than 16 years! What transpired between her and Idrees, I couldn't fathom in those catatonic moments. We were led to a sofa and she disappeared. A man dressed in a black suit appeared and was introduced to me as Chunnibhai — Dimple's father. My escort briefed him about the purpose of our visit and the father consented. A few minutes later, a girl in white appeared and, immediately she owned the room. Dimple's presence demanded unwavering attention of those present there. She was sprightly, her big brown eyes hinted at impish intelligence and her face had intimations of self-assurance, playfulness and joy.

Upon hearing my proposal, she giggled, "I have no such experience." Rolling her eyes, she quipped with disarming candour about how she had fluffed in a school show and even in the Board exams. My heart curled while her hands sculptured the silence with a disciplined eloquence. Soon she intoned, "But why not? I can try." There was a glint in her eyes and she spoke with a certain *elan*.



A MAN DRESSED IN A BLACK SUIT APPEARED AND WAS INTRODUCED TO ME AS CHUNNIBHAI — DIMPLE'S FATHER. MY ESCORT BRIEFED HIM ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF OUR VISIT AND THE FATHER CONSENTED. A FEW MINUTES LATER, A GIRL IN WHITE APPEARED AND, IMMEDIATELY, SHE OWNED THE ROOM. DIMPLE'S PRESENCE DEMANDED UNWAVERING ATTENTION OF THOSE PRESENT THERE

The writer is former president, *Ostian's Connoisseurs of Art, Founding Executive Director, LS TV and Additional Director General, Doordarshan.* The views expressed are personal.



My next worry was to look for the sound recordist who had not turned up even though little time was left for the show to start. Those were the times when film cameras were used for filming outside the TV studios. A sound recordist used a tape recorder to capture sounds. And soon enough, the stars and celebrities began to arrive. That was one occasion in which I'd planned for Dimple to chat with them. But the plan had to be aborted. Nonetheless, I took silent shots not only of the arrivals of the stars but subsequently of the stage show as well. Over 45 minutes into the event the sound recordist turned up, from which point onwards our film had picture and sound in synchronisation.

With the show ending and the opportunity to chat with the stars lost, it was decided that we would go to the Oberoi Hotel where the post-event dinner was to be held. Dimple agreed to the plan. At an appropriate moment in the edited film we see a man and a woman with their backs to the camera. She chides the man, "Hari bhai, *aapko sharam nahi aati ki ek ladki thand me thithoor rahi hai aur aap beparwah hain?* (Isn't it shameful that a woman is shivering in this cold and you have no concern?)" Taken aback, Sanjeev Kumar sheepishly muttered something to Dimple and the banter went on. In her chats later with a couple of stars who could be commandeered, she bounced spontaneously from gossip, to the personal, to jocular. She was no slouch either when it came to conversing with the fresh crop from my alma mater, FTII — Shabana Azmi,

Kanwaljeet and so on. By the time we packed up, it was nearly 1 am.

The next morning's newspapers had a big surprise in store not only for me but for all film fans. A box item on the front page exclaimed that superstar Rajesh Khanna had proposed to Dimple the previous night. Since I had missed out on taking close shots of Dimple, I called her up the next day. She readily agreed to come to the DD studio and bring some clothes for the shots. A sari, however, was a big "no" as she had been forbidden to wear it by Raj Kapoor prior to the release of 'Bobby'. When I enquired about her engagement, she disclosed that she had met Rajesh Khanna soon after our shooting got over and that the turn of events culminated in a commitment.

Editing the stage show was a big problem due to the non-availability of the sync sound. As *All India Radio* also had recorded the event for its report, I borrowed their tape from my friend and legendry drama producer Dina Nath. Because the film camera and the sound recorder run at different speeds, there is always a mismatch between the action, especially the lip movement, and the sound. This mismatch becomes stark in close-ups. Therefore, where it was just impossible to achieve synchronisation, I took recourse to using music, songs and words as a counterpoint to the visuals. This resulted in an added nuance in the programme.

Finding a suitable title for the programme was another headache. The title had to reflect the brand of the magazines and the spirit of the event but I didn't want it to be vapid

or trite, for instance *Shama-Sushma* Film Awards. I reached out to our senior scenic designer and an Urdu poetry buff in DD. Johri came up with a design in which the melting candles revealed the title *Shama-dar-shama*. This title also resonated with the lyrics and the ambience of the film *Pakeezah* which was a rage then and a few dances from which were performed at the function.

Even though I did not accept the position of a producer later, I was still assigned to make a programme on the second edition of the *Shama-Sushma* Film Awards the following year. This was on the request of the Dehlvis as my programme had received appreciation. While filming, I spotted Dimple Khanna seated in the front row of the Ashoka Convention Hall. We exchanged greetings and in jest, I asked her if she would again want to host my show. She flashed a smile and shook her head. "Sorry. Can't!"

Moments like modulations come in human relationships. One begins to recall the cadences of the past. Now, a total recall gluts the mind's screen. But why after nearly five decades? I could not find any record of the debut of the *Shama-Sushma* Film Awards nor of the date on which Rajesh Khanna proposed to Dimple anywhere on the web. The Dehlvis and their magazines are all gone. My programmes are lost. Maybe, my memory of the event and perhaps Dimple's first screen appearance for public might reclaim some lost territory. Or, is it the arrogance of a grotesque leap of a private fantasy for public attention? Who knows!

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

IF MAMATA HAS TO KEEP HER LEG OUT, THEN WHY WEAR A SARI? SHE COULD WEAR A PAIR OF BERMUDAS INSTEAD. —BENGAL BJP PRESIDENT DILIP GHOSH



GHOSH SAYS MAMATA SHOULD BE WEARING SHORTS TO DISPLAY HER LEGS. THESE PERVERTED, DEPRAVED MONKEYS THINK THEY ARE GOING TO WIN. —TMC MP MAHUA MOITRA

FOREIGN EYE



COOPERATION, NOT CONFRONTATION!

Vaccinating the world is the only way out of the COVID-19 pandemic, but a mixture of nationalism and protectionism is blocking the exit. The US, UK and EU have for months blocked a proposal at the World Trade Organisation, put forward by India and South Africa, to waive intellectual property rights for COVID-19 vaccines. It is galling for poor countries to hear Boris Johnson preach the virtues of a liberal trading regime for the UK when he imposes a protectionist one on them. (The Guardian editorial)

The power of the 'janata curfew' decoded

Since people play a pivotal role in administration, the credibility of 'janata curfew' will be tested on the anvil of public interest time and again

With the fresh and rapid spike of COVID-19 cases in India, the fear of a second wave of the pandemic is looming large in various States. A couple of days ago, Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the Chief Ministers of all States to chalk out an amicable mechanism, including the management of micro-containment zones and strict enforcement of restrictions to control the "emerging second peak" of the contagion.

Last year, too, the Prime Minister called for social distancing and a "janata curfew" — a curfew of the people, by the people and for the people — was imposed on March 22 to contain the pandemic. The speech was inclusive and persuasive and the "janata curfew" proved beneficial to prepare the country mentally



SANTOSH BISWAL | UTTAM CHAKRABORTY

Biswal teaches at the Symbiosis Institute of Media and Communication, Symbiosis International, Pune, and Chakraborty is an academic researcher. The views expressed are personal.

for the hard lockdown that was to come soon after, to contain the spread of the Coronavirus.

Currently, with a view to checking the infection, the vaccination drive is in full swing across the nation. In the Vidarbha regions of Maharashtra, various district administrations have decided to implement "janata curfew" from time to time, instead of complete lockdowns. Though it is true that a complete lockdown cannot be replaced by a "janata curfew" if the infection is to be effectively contained, the intention of the administration is not to paralyse socio-economic activities completely but to continue them in a restricted manner. In this context, such a curfew has an edge over a complete shutdown.

The record of "janata curfew" deserves unraveling and

accounting for. The central idea behind such an effort rests on the people's participation from the beginning to the end.

Last year, while advocating social distancing to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, the Prime Minister's clarion call for a "janata curfew" received immense support. There was clapping, ringing of bells, beating of drums and utensils in gratitude to the Corona heroes nationwide. Endorsements from celebrities also poured in.

In her balcony in Mumbai, Sunita Bhuyan played the tune of a song by the iconic Bhupen Hazarika on her violin. There was solidarity expressed at the historic Jama Masjid of Old Delhi, too. The overall support was colossal.

A couple of days before the "janata curfew", Modi



addressed the nation on the pandemic. While hailing the doctors, nurses, housekeeping staff, police and media persons for the commendable job they were doing in a time of crisis, he counselled people not to go for panic buying. The "janata curfew" worked as a good means of communication and Modi took the narrative of social distancing to the next level. The tone of the address was apolitical and he laid stress on the power of

the people, as a weapon to keep the crisis at bay.

People's participation has effectively met the necessary requirements in various fields including public health. The idea of 'Pani Panchayats' driven by the people is intended to manage groundwater across the country. Community kitchens, meant for achieving food security for people on the margins, are not mere populism. Khabar Lahariya, a community media driven by rural women journalists, belongs to Dalits, tribals and other minority classes. Community radio stations like *Vidyavani* run by the Savitribai Phule Pune University and *Radio Udaan* for the visually impaired, have been instrumental in giving a voice to the voiceless. These instances encapsulate the power of the community in nation-building. Sadly, some

of the ambitious programmes and action plans are marred by irregularities.

However, there are other sides to the "janata curfew", too. The Mahagujarat movement, known as the Mahagujarat Andolan in the year 1956, is a case in point. A "janata curfew" was called to protest the film *Padmavat*, too. Earlier in 2013, to get a separate Gorkhaland, Gorkha Janmukti Morcha chief Bimal Gurung had resorted to a "janata curfew" to take on Mamata Banerjee's 72-hour ultimatum to lift the strike in the Darjeeling Hills.

Tellingly, since India is a place of the people and their decision plays a pivotal role in every aspect of the administration, the importance and credibility of "janata curfew" will be tested on the anvil of public interest from time to time.

AFTER 'SILENCE STRIKE' Myanmar protests again met with force

AP ■ YANGON

Protesters against last month's military takeover in Myanmar returned to the streets in large numbers on Thursday, a day after staging a "silence strike" in which people were urged to stay home and businesses to close for the day. Security forces sought to break up some of the protests by force. Social media accounts and local news outlets reported violent attacks on demonstrators in Hpa-an, the capital of the southeastern Karen state, as well as the eastern Shan state's capital of Taunggyi and Mon state's capital of Mawlamyine, also in the south-east. It was not clear if soldiers used live ammunition in addition to firing rubber bullets at the demonstrators.



A protester flashes the three-finger sign of defiance as he walks past burning tires in Yangon, Myanmar on Thursday AP

According to Democratic Voice of Burma, a broadcast and online news service, two young men were shot and seriously wounded in Hpa-an. Other protests on Thursday morning proceeded peacefully, including in Mandalay, the country's second-biggest city, and on a smaller scale in neighborhoods of Yangon, the largest metrop-

olis. DVB also reported that another young man was killed and at least four other people wounded Wednesday night in what it described as a crackdown by the army in Kyaukpadaung, a town in central Myanmar. The military's February 1 seizure of power ousted the

Association for Political Prisoners says at least 286 people have been killed in connection with the crackdown. It says 2,906 people have been arrested, charged or sentenced at one point in connection with resisting the coup, with most remaining detained. Kanbawza Tai News, an online news service based in

Taunggyi, reported that four of its staff, including its publisher and its editor, were detained Wednesday night. It said the home of the editor was raided and materials seized. The detentions constitute the junta's latest attack on press freedom. About 40 journalists have been detained since the Feb. 1 coup, and roughly half are still in custody. The military government has also ordered at least five news outlets to shut down, although they continue to operate.

Thein Zaw, a journalist for The Associated Press who was arrested last month while covering an anti-coup protest, was released Wednesday. The judge in his case announced during a hearing that all charges against him were dropped because he was doing his job at the time of his arrest. He had been facing a potential three-year prison sentence under the public order law he was charged with violating. On Wednesday, more than 600 protesters were released from Yangon's Insein Prison, where Thein Zaw had also been held — a rare conciliatory gesture by the ruling military.

N Korea test-fires ballistic missiles in message to US

AP ■ SEOUL

North Korea test-fired its first ballistic missiles since President Joe Biden took office on Thursday, as it expands its military capabilities and increases pressure on Washington while nuclear negotiations remain stalled. Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said the launches threaten "peace and safety in Japan and the region," and that Tokyo will closely coordinate with Washington and Seoul on the North's testing activities.



TV screens show a news programme reporting about North Korea's missiles with file footage at an electronic shop in Seoul, South Korea on Thursday AP

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the missiles were fired at around 7:06 a.m. And 7:25 a.m. From an area on the North's eastern coast and flew 450 kilometers (279 miles) on an apogee of 60 kilometers (37 miles) before landing in the sea. US Indo-Pacific Command spokesperson Capt. Mike Kafka said the US military was aware of the missiles and was monitoring the situation while closely consulting with allies.

Another senior US official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss military observations, matched the information from South Korea's military, saying that initial assessments suggest the North fired two short-range ballistic missiles. "This activity highlights the threat that North Korea's illicit weapons program poses to its neighbors and the international community," Kafka said. The launches came a day after US and South Korean officials said the North fired short-range weapons presumed to be cruise missiles into its western sea over the weekend. North Korea has a history of testing new US administrations with missile launches

and other provocations aimed at forcing the Americans back to the negotiating table. Still, Thursday's launches were a measured provocation compared to the nuclear and intercontinental missile tests in 2017 that inspired war fears before the North shifted toward diplomacy with the Trump administration in 2018.

Analysts say that the North would gradually dial up its weapons displays to increase its bargaining power as it angles to get back into stalled talks aimed at leveraging nuclear weapons for badly needed economic benefits.

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified male named Sanjay, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown has injured in accident at Gulabi Bagh red light by a car. He was admitted at HR Hospital and referred to LNJP Hospital, Delhi. In this regard FIR No. 28/19 dated 04.04.2019 has been lodged at Police Station, Gulabi Bagh, Delhi. During the treatment doctors declared him dead and till not identified by anyone. Identification of unidentified dead body is as under:

Name: Sanjay, Age: About 50 Years, Height: 5'5", Face: Long, Complexion: Wheatish, Build: Thin, Wearing: Without Shirt and Black pant.

If anyone has any information or clue about this male deceased may kindly be inform undersigned

SHO
Police Station, Gulabi Bagh, Delhi
DP/1053/N/2021 (UIDB) Ph.: 011-23651692, 8750871634

Stuck ship in Egypt's Suez Canal imperils shipping worldwide

AP ■ ISMAILIA (EGYPT)

A skyscraper-sized cargo ship wedged across Egypt's Suez Canal further imperiled global shipping Thursday as at least 150 other vessels needing to pass through the crucial waterway idled waiting for the obstruction to clear, authorities said.



This photo released by the Suez Canal Authority on Thursday, shows Lt. Gen. Ossama Rabei, head of the Suez Canal Authority, investigating the situation with the Ever Given, a Panama-flagged cargo ship

The Ever Given, a Panama-flagged ship that carries cargo between Asia and Europe, ran aground Tuesday in the narrow, man-made canal dividing continental Africa from the Sinai Peninsula. In the time since, efforts to free the ship using dredgers, digging and the aid of high tides have yet to push the container vessel aside.

Egyptian officials and others were due to begin work again to free the vessel Thursday morning after halting for the night. So far, dredgers have tried to clear silt around the massive ship. Tug boats nudged the vessel alongside it, trying to gain momentum. From the shore, at

least one backhoe dug into the canal's sandy banks, suggesting the bow of the ship had plowed into it. Bernhard Schulte Shipmanagement, the company that manages the Ever Given, said the ship's 25-member crew are safe and accounted for. The ship had two pilots from Egypt's canal authority aboard the vessel to guide it when the grounding happened around 7:45 am on Tuesday, the company said.

Biden taps Vice-President Harris to lead response to border challenges

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US President Joe Biden has put Vice-President Kamala Harris in charge of leading the diplomatic effort to address the root causes of migration from Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras and to stem the recent surge of immigrants to America's southern border. It is the first major foreign



policy issue to be assigned to Harris, and it comes as the White House grapples with a

growing number of migrants from the Central American countries at the southern border, including thousands of minors arriving without adult family members. Announcing his decision on Wednesday, Biden said nobody is better qualified than Harris, who ran the second-largest attorney general's office in America, to deal with the migration issue.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This is notified for the information of rail passengers that the timings of the following Special Trains will be revised as under :-

Revised Timings of 09027/09028 Bandra Terminus - Jammu Tawi - Bandra Terminus Festival Special Express (Weekly)			
Train No. 09027	ARR. DEP.	STATIONS	Train No. 09028
--	12:00	Bandra Terminus	15:00 --
23:05	--	Jammu Tawi	-- 05:45

Revised Timing effective from :- 09027 Ex. Bandra Terminus on every Saturday from 27.03.2021 & 09028 Ex. Jammu Tawi on Every Monday from 29.03.2021.

Stoppages : Borivali, Vapi, Surat, Vadodara Jn., Anand Jn. Nadiad Jn., Ahmedabad Jn., Mahesana Jn., Palanpur Jn., Abu Road, Falna, Marwar Jn., Pali Marwar, Jodhpur Jn., Merta Road Jn., Degana Jn., Chhoti Khatu, Didwana, Ladnun, Sujangarh, Ratangarh Jn., Churu, Sadulpur Jn., Hisar, Barwala, Dhuri Jn., Ludhiana Jn., Jalandhar Cantt., Pathankot Cantt. & Kathua stations.

Revised Timings of 02917/02918 Ahmedabad Jn. - H. Nizamuddin - Ahmedabad Jn. Sampark Kranti Superfast Special (Weekly)			
Train No. 02917	ARR. DEP.	STATIONS	Train No. 02918
--	15:30	Ahmedabad Jn.	03:35 --
05:45	--	H. Nizamuddin	-- 13:25

Revised Timing effective from :- 02917 Ex. Ahmedabad Jn. on every Monday from 29.03.2021 till further advise & 02918 Ex. H. Nizamuddin on Every Saturday from 03.04.2021 till further advise.

Stoppages : Nadiad Jn., Anand Jn., Chhayapuri, Godhra Jn., Dahod, Ratlam Jn., Kota & Mathura Jn. stations.

For any kind of information such as arrival/departure timings and stoppages enroute, the passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website <https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in> or NTES App.

Note: All norms of the State and Central Government regarding COVID-19 including Social distancing, sanitization etc., may be followed in the trains and at the Railway stations. All the other precautions associated with COVID-19 should also be ensured.

RailMadad Helpline No. 139 Visit RailMadad website: www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in & Download RailMadad app.

Please join us on **NORTHERN RAILWAY** Visit us at: www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

Office of the Executive Engineer Quality Control & Procurement Division, HMT, Srinagar

Dates-Corrigendum-V

Subject : - Extension of dates for Supply & Delivery of Water Tankers, 6 KL capacity mounted on suitable carrier vehicle with pump and hose pipe etc. complete.

Ref: 1. This office NIT No: PHE/QC&PD/40/2020-21/e-Tender Dated: 23-02-2021.

2. This office corrigendum-I for extension of dates vide No: PHE/QCPD/6981-84 dated: 04-03-2021.

3. This office corrigendum-III for extension of dates vide No: PHE/QCPD/7018-21 dated: 09-03-2021.

4. This office corrigendum-III for extension of dates vide No: PHE/QCPD/7052-55 dated: 16-03-2021.

Due to poor response and representation thereof, the above referred e-tender is hereby re-scheduled as follows:

1. Tender Notice No. :- PHE/M&P/40 of 2020-21/e-Tender Dated: 23-02-2021.

2. Date of Inviting Tender :- 23-02-2021.....10.00 AM

3. Clarification End Date :- 30-03-2021.....02.00 PM

4. Document Downloading End Date :- 30-03-2021.....06.00 PM

5. On Line Document Submission End Date :- 31-03-2021.....3.00 PM

6. Date of opening of Cover 1st :- 01-04-2021.....2.00 PM

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti PHE (QC&PD), HMT Srinagar

No. DIPP-15585/20 Dated: 25-03-2021

Uyghurs in Turkey protest Chinese Foreign Min's visit

PTI ■ ISTANBUL

Istanbul: Hundreds of Uyghurs staged protests in Ankara and Istanbul on Thursday, denouncing Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi's visit to Turkey and demanding that the Turkish government take a stronger stance against human rights abuses in China's far-western Xinjiang region. The crowd gathered at Istanbul's Beyazit Square, holding posters of missing relatives they believe are being kept in



A protester from the Uyghur community steps on a China flag during a protest against the visit of China's Foreign Minister to Turkey, in Istanbul on Thursday AP

detention camps in China and chanting slogans against Beijing. Dozens of Uyghurs, Turkish opposition lawmakers and academics also assembled near the

Chinese Embassy in Ankara, as Wang met with Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu and later with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. AP

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSONS

(See Section 82 Cr.PC)

Whereas complaint has been made before me that 1. Ved Parkash S/o Raja Ram R/o H.No.39, FF, Pocket-9, Sector-22, Rohini, Delhi 2. Amrinder S/o Raj Baksh Singh R/o H.No.219, Pocket-5, Sector-22, Rohini, Delhi 3. Sohan Singh S/o Kehar Singh R/o KH. No.793, Village Kadipur, Kushak No.2, Delhi have committed (or are suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 342/17 Date 08.08.17 u/s 420/467/468/120B IPC, P.S. North Rohini, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Ved Parkash, Amrinder and Sohan Singh cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Ved Parkash, Amrinder and Sohan Singh have absconded (or are concealing themselves to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Ved Parkash, Amrinder and Sohan Singh of FIR No. 342/17 Date 08.08.17 u/s 420/467/468/120B IPC, P.S. North Rohini, Delhi are required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 15.05.2021.

By Order,
Ms. Masni Malik
Ld. Metropolitan Magistrate
Rohini Court, Delhi

DP/740/RD/2021

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED

SEE SECTION U/S 82 Cr. P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Mohd. Ismile Malik, S/o Mohd. Nasruddin Malik, R/o F-142, Kavita Colony, Near Krishna Dharmsala, Nangloi, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to has committed) the offence in case FIR No. 292/18, u/s 323/341 IPC, at P.S. Aman Vihar, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Mohd. Ismile Malik cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Mohd. Ismile Malik has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Mohd. Ismile Malik in case FIR No. 292/18, u/s 323/341 IPC, at P.S. Aman Vihar, Delhi is required to appear on this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 05.05.2021.

By Order
Sh. Gopal Krishan
Metropolitan Magistrate (North-West),
Room No. 109, First Floor,
Rohini Court, Delhi

DP/743/RD/2021-(Court Matter)

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Naveen Goel S/O Ram Bilas Goel R/O-House No 316, 2nd floor, Rajdhani Enclave, Pitampura, Delhi, 110034, declare that I am the owner of property Kharsa No. 27/24/2/1 in the revenue estate of village Liwaspur, Distt. Sonapat (Haryana) through Sale Deed dated 25/04/2019, and mortgage the same property with PCL (Profuctus Capital Pvt Ltd) against property loan. If anyone has any objections please contact me at above mentioned address or Contact me on +919891422779 within 14 days.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the General Public that Mr. Ashok Verma is owner of Property bearing No. W-339-9, area measuring 101 sq. Yds, Kharsa No. 94/8/1, Gali No. 15-F, Sadh Nagar, Pitampura, New Delhi. "Said property" by virtue of Sale Deed dated 29/11/2018, Registration No. 11359. All persons are hereby informed that above mentioned owner want sell Second floor, Rights Hand Side, to someone who is taking home loan from Fullerton India Home Finance Company Ltd. for purchase of the said floor, if anybody has any objections upon said property its ownership & Title / its Sale and Mortgage, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants) 200, 1st Floor, 23, Shivaji Marg, Moti Nagar, N. Delhi-15 Ph. 011-41112527-28 kumarassociatesadvocates@gmail.com

GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (NE) III

G.T ROAD SHAHDARA, DELHI-110032

E-mail:- eeenil.ee@gmail.com Ph No.22596645

Stop Corona; Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene

Press NIT No.62 (2020-21)						
S. No	Name of Work	Amount put to tender Rs.	Tender Fees (in Rs.)	EMD (in Rs.)	Date of release of tender in e-procurement solution	Last date/time of receipt of tender through e-procurement solution
1.	Improvement of water supply system at Matke Wali gali and its connected lanes in Chauhan Banger Seelampur AC-65 NE-III Tender I.D No.2021_DJB_202190_2	31,90,321/-	500/-	EMD Exempted	24.03.2021	07.04.2021

Further details in this regard can be seen at <https://delhi.govtprocurement.gov.in> ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER) Sd/- EX. ENGINEER (NE)-III Advt. No. J.S.V. 559/2020-21

BEFORE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL -II, DELHI

4th Floor, Jeevan Tara Building, Parliament Street, New Delhi - 110001

PUBLICATION NOTICE

in OA No. 850/19 Date: 08.12.2020

Deutsche Bank AG (Applicant) VS Compass India Holidays Pvt. Ltd. & Ors. (Respondent)

To, DEFENDENTS

1. M/s Compass India Holidays Pvt. Ltd., through its directors 35 Link Road, Lajpat Nagar-3, New Delhi-24

2. Mr. Durgaj Sengupta Director of M/s Compass India Holidays Pvt. Ltd. 35 Link Road, Lajpat Nagar-3, New Delhi-24

Also at: N-12, 2nd Floor Greater Kailish, Part-1, New Delhi-48

3. Ms. Nilanjana Sengupta Director of M/s Compass India Holidays Pvt. Ltd. 35 Link Road, Lajpat Nagar-3, New Delhi-24

Also at: N-12, 2nd Floor Greater Kailish, Part-1, New Delhi-48.

Whereas the above named applicant(s) has / have instituted a case for recovery of Rs. 10,57,734.00 (Rupees Ten Lakh Fifty Seven Thousand Seven Hundred Thirty Four Only) against you and where as it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in the ordinary way therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance in the Tribunal on 08.04.2021 At 10:30 A.M. Take Notice that in default of your appearance on the day before the mentioned, the case will be heard and determined in your absence.

By Order of the Tribunal For Registrar, DRT-II, DELHI.

PUBLIC NOTICE

"Form No. INC-25A Before the Regional Director, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Northern Region In the matter of the Companies Act, 2013, section 14 of Companies Act, 2013 and rule 41 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014 AND In the matter of M/s Seal Logistics Limited having its registered office at T-2, Third Floor, Manish Complex, LSC Plot No.7, H Block Market, Sarita Vihar, New Delhi-110076, Applicant. Notice is hereby given to the general public that the company intending to make an application to the Central Government under section 14 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with aforesaid rules and is desirous of converting into a private limited company in terms of the special resolution passed at the Extra Ordinary General Meeting held on 24.03.2021 to enable the company to give effect for such conversion. Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed change/status of the company may deliver or cause to be delivered or send by registered post the nature of his interest and grounds of opposition to the concerned Regional Director, Northern Region B-2 Wing, 2nd Floor, Paryavaran Bhawan, CGO Complex, New Delhi-110003, within fourteen days from the date of publication of this notice with a copy to the applicant company at its registered office at the address mentioned below. For and on behalf of the Applicant AJAY KASANA MANAGING DIRECTOR DIN: 02029902 Regd. Office: T-2, 3rd Floor, Manish Complex, LSC Plot No.7, H Block Market, Sarita Vihar, New Delhi-110076. Date: 25.03.2021 New Delhi-110076

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Clients Shri Devender Singh and his wife Sangeeta R/o B-65/B, 1, Near Bansal Dairy, Gokal Pur, North-East Delhi-110094 have severed their relations from their Son Namely Nitin Panwar and have debarred him from their moveable and immovable properties due to his misconduct and misbehaviour towards my clients. My clients shall not be responsible for his any acts and transactions in future. Ekta Dhama (Advocate) Ch.No.854, Patiala House Court, New Delhi Mob. 9650487913

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is notified for the information of general public that my client Ms. Sarabjeet Kaur is the owner of Flat No. A-105, First Floor, "Aditya Garden City", Plot No. 6/GH-4, Vasundhara, Ghaziabad and she has lost original documents i.e. Allotment Agreement dated 05.11.2005 in respect of above said property. Our client has also lodged a FIR on 18.03.2021 for the same. Any person dealing with the said documents may do so at his/her own risk and our client shall not be responsible in any manner whatsoever, however any claim on the basis of title documents will be entertained within 7 days of publication, failing which any such right, title, interest, or claim, if any, will be deemed to have been waived and not binding on our Client. C.K. JHA Advocate E-524, Karkardooma Courts, Delhi-110032 (M) - 9811296674

Govt plans single window nod for investors by Apr 15

As part of furthering the ease of doing business in the country, the Government is set to introduce a single-window clearance mechanism for investors by mid-April in order to attract greater foreign investment, a senior official said on Thursday.

Investor wealth erodes by over ₹ 7L cr in 2 days of market crash

New Delhi: Investor wealth has eroded by over Rs 7 lakh crore in two days of market crash as sentiment remained muted amid rising COVID-19 cases in the country.

Investment climate going well in India; private sector: CEA

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The investment climate is going well in India and the private sector should skill their workforce in the interest of its business, Chief Economic Advisor K V Subramanian said on Thursday asserting that he does not foresee any difficulty in demand and supply of the workforce.

Sebi relaxes norms for listing of start-ups; allows discretionary allotment to eligible investors

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Seeking to boost listing of Start-ups, markets watchdog Sebi on Thursday decided a slew of relaxations to norms, including reducing holding period for pre-issue capital and allowing discretionary allotment to eligible investors.

Sebi makes dividend distribution policy compulsory for top 1,000 listed cos

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

To strengthen corporate governance practices and disclosure requirements, Sebi on Thursday decided that top 1,000 listed firms should formulate a dividend distribution policy.

CAG recommends enquiry in renovation of India House in London

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has recommended an enquiry in the renovation of the India House in London as the works award was given without approval of the Ministry of External Affairs.

Govt permits NPNT compliant drone operations at 34 green zones

NEW DELHI: The Ministry of Civil Aviation has granted permit to 'No-Permission-No-Takeoff' (NPNT) compliant drone operations at 34 additional green zones to facilitate, smoothen, and promote drone operations in the country. The approved sites allow drone usage up to 400 ft Above Ground Level (AGL).

Heterogeneous banking sector in India in a decade with four types of banks: Das

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank foresees a "competitive, efficient and heterogeneous" banking sector with four distinct sets of banks dominating the landscape over the next decade, its governor Shaktikanta Das said on Thursday.

Regulation should not constrain innovation in fintech space: RBI Gov

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Underlining the need for innovation in the financial sector for effective service delivery, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das on Thursday called for effective regulation that should help innovation in the fintech space and not stifle it.

IN BRIEF

CASTING OF 2ND CONCOURSE SLAB COMPLETED The construction work of Noapara-Barasat via Bimanbandar Metro project has been going on in full swing. In recent times, a significant progress of this project has been achieved. Casting work of the 2nd concourse slab of Bimanbandar station was completed on Thursday.

SRM HOSTS DEFENCE SERVICE HACKATHON FOR STUDENTS SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST), Kattankulathur hosted a Defence Services Hackathon, the first-of-its-kind in the country. It was hosted by SRM Innovation and Incubation Center, SRMIST. The aim of this hackathon was to involve students and researchers in developing solutions for real time problems faced by our armed forces.

ONCE-A-DAY' HAND SANITIZER LAUNCHED Adding an altogether new dimension in the hand sanitizer industry, Swanrose India, a wholly owned subsidiary of US-based Swanrose Inc., on Thursday announced the launch of 'once-a-day' hand sanitizer - 'Just Human'.

JAMMU TOURISM HEAD MEETS TOUR OPERATORS The Director tourism Jammu, Dr Naseem Javid Chowdhary held an interactive meeting with travel and tour operators of Maharashtra, Gujarat and Delhi on the sidelines of SATTE at Noida. SATTE is one of the prominent travel exhibitions of South Asia in which J&K participates every year.

COOPERATIVES YET TO LURE YOUTH: MINISTER Minister of State for Agriculture Parsotham Rupala has said that Cooperatives which can be the instrument of rural development particularly agriculture are yet to catch the fancy of the youth and the Government must take efforts to attract them into this model. The government is eyeing towards cooperatives to help it achieve its goal of becoming a US\$ 5 trillion economy by 2024-25 as envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

RBI HAS MAJOR CONCERNS ON CRYPTOCURRENCIES: DAS The Reserve Bank has "major concerns" on the cryptocurrencies traded in the market and has conveyed the same to the government, its governor Shaktikanta Das on Thursday said. Underlining that both the government and the RBI are "committed to financial stability", Das said there are no differences between the central bank and the Finance Ministry on the matter, and "we should now await the final decision on the matter" from the Centre.

ECONOMIC REVIVAL TO CONTINUE 'UNABATED'; RBI GOV The rising COVID-19 infections across the country are a matter of concern, but it may not impact the ongoing economic revival as one does not foresee lockdowns, Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das said on Thursday. The economic revival will continue 'unabated', Das said, asserting that there is no need for a downward revision of RBI's 10.5 per cent GDP growth forecast for FY22. Speaking at Times Network's India Economic Conclave, Das said, "We have 'insurance' to protect economic revival like a fast-paced vaccination drive, greater ability among people to follow COVID protocols", and one does not see lockdowns as well.

FOOD CORPORATION OF INDIA Regional Office - 4, Nehru Place, Tank Road, Jaipur-302015 (Rajasthan) Phone : 0141-2743137, Fax : 0141-2742034, Email : srmrj.fci@gov.in E-Tender Notice

WESTERN RAILWAY MATERIAL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT CORRIGENDUM TO e-AUCTION SALE PROGRAMME Please refer to this office e-Auction Sale Programme during April-2021 dt.: 18/03/2021.

PUBLIC NOTICE Notice is hereby given that the share certificate No(s) 99590, 40873, 101703, 125684, 93443, 95124, 101858, 192197-192198, 266935, 79074 for 1100 shares bearing distinctive No(s) 29255311 to 29255410(100), 23224311 to 23224410(100), 29472111 to 29472210(100), 31618551 to 31618650(100), 28631511 to 28631610(100), 28037011 to 2803810(100), 29488511 to 29488610(100), 41091410 to 41091609(200), 61986297 to 61986396(100), 27149011 to 27149110(100), standing in the name(s) of Bunu Dasin the books of M/S Tamilnadu Petroproducts Limited has/have been lost/misplaced/destroyed and the advertiser has/have applied to the company for issue of duplicate share certificate(s) in lieu thereof. Any person(s) who has/have claim(s) on the said shares should lodge such claim(s) with the Company's Registrars and Transfer Agents viz. Came Corporate Services Ltd, No 1, Club House Road, Chennai, TamilNadu - 600022. Phone No. 044-28460084 / 28460395 / 28460390 Fax No. 044-28460129 within 15 days from the date of this notice failing which the Company will proceed to issue duplicate share certificate(s) in respect of the said shares. Date:- 26/03/2021. Name(s) of the shareholder(s) Bunu Das Place:- New Delhi

UJVN LIMITED H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006, Telephone-0135-2763508, 2763808 Fax 0135-2763507 CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866, Website: www.ujvn.com. दिनांक 25.03.2021

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE The Dy. Chief Engineer /Const.-I, Northern Railway State Entry Road, New Delhi for and on behalf of President of India invites open e-tender under Single Packet System for the under noted work:-

DELHI JAL BOARD, GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (SDW) XII STP SEC-25 ROHINI DELHI-110085 "STOP CORONA : Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene" Press NIT No.22 (2020-21)

BEFORE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL -II, DELHI 4th Floor, Jeevan Tara Building, Parliament Street, New Delhi - 110001 PUBLICATION NOTICE in OA No. 852/19 Date: 08.12.2020 Deutsche Bank AG (Applicant) VS Mis AV Services Pvt. Ltd. & Ors. (Respondent)

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR SHER-I-KASHMIR INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES SOURA SRINAGAR KASHMIR DEPARTMENT OF MATERIALS MANAGEMENT (Imports Section) Email: ammoimports@skims.ac.in, Fax: 0194-2403404 EXTENSION Sub :- First Extension to the eNIT No SIMS-324-eNIT 04 (Imports) of 2021 dated 18-02-2021 (Tender ID-2021_SKIMS_117187_1) regarding supply/installation & commissioning of fully Automated Random Access Chemistry Analyzer for the department of Cl. Hematology SKIMS.

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED General public is hereby informed that a girl namely Komal, D/o: Kamal, R/o: H.No. B-712, G.D. Colony MV III, Delhi has been missing/kidnapped since 22.02.2021 at 4:00 PM from her home. In this regard FIR No. 94/2021 dated 11.03.20 u/s 363 IPC at Police Station Ghazipur, Delhi. The description of missing/kidnapped girl is as under: Name: Komal, Age: 14 Years, Height: 4'9", Face: Round, Complexion: Wheatish, Built: Medium, Wearing: White Shirt & Red Trouser and Blue Shoes in Feet.

UJVN LTD. H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, G.M.S. Road Dehradun-248006 Telephoness: 0135-2763508, 2763808, Fax: 0135-2763808 CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866 Dated- 25.03.2021 Time Extension Notice-I Name of Work:- Supply of miscellaneous items for Erector Hostel and Ramganga Power Station, Kalagarh, Pauri Garhwal. In reference to e-Tender No. 22/EE(M)/KJG/2020-21 invited by this office, it is to inform that due to unavoidable reasons dates of the tender are extended as below and time extension notice has been uploaded on e-procurement portal. Please quote your bids accordingly. For further details kindly log on to http://www.uktenders.gov.in.

PUBLIC NOTICE To be known to all that my client, SHRI PREM SHANKAR GUPTA S/O SHRI L.C. GUPTA R/O FLAT NO.4-B, 40-B, FIRST FLOOR, GANGOTRI APARTMENTS, ALAUNANDA, NEW DELHI-110013, is the owner of FDR SEC'S FLAT NO.8-A, 8, ON FIRST FLOOR ALONGWITH SCOOTER GARAGE, CATEGORY-III, SITUATED AT GANGOTRI APARTMENTS, ALAUNANDA, NEW DELHI-110013, and my client have applied for Conversion of leased to freehold in respect of said flat. The original document is ALLOCATION LETTER, DEMAND/ALLOTMENT LETTER, SITE & FINAL OCCUPANCY LETTER, POSSESSION LETTER, NOC FOR WATER & ELECTRIC AND SITE POSSESSION SLIP WITH BANK CHALLANS, of above said property have been lost or misplaced by my client and an E.L.R./NOC to this effect has been lodged in the Police Station, Crime Branch, Delhi (R.No.1475/19/2021 dated 17.02.2021) and a Public Notice was published in Hindi & English News Paper namely Pioneer on dated 24.02.2021. The said Original Documents are found in Store Room of my client. Any person claiming any rights, interest, having any objection or write to Deputy Director LAB (Housing) or Director (Housing), Vikas Sadan, New Delhi.

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE

SEARCH FOR MISSING General public is hereby informed that a girl (depicted in the photo), Namely: Versha Lal D/o Rajesh Lal R/o H. No. 187, Khanpur Village, New Delhi has been missing since 28.02.2021 from her house. In this regard a case vide DD No. 35 A dated 01.03.2021 has been logged at Police Station Neb Sarai, New Delhi. Her physical description is as under:- Age : 19 Years, Height: 5'1", Complexion : Fair, Face: Long, Built: Thin, Wearing : Kathi colour top and grey colour pant. Any person having any information/Clue about this missing girl, may inform SHO, Neb Sarai, New Delhi at E-mail Id - cic@cbi.gov.in or Website: http://cbi.nic.in

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED General Public is hereby informed that a lady namely Chandani, W/o Laxman, R/o H. No. A-81, Kumhar Wali Gali, Pitam Pura Village, Delhi, Age: 20 years, Height: 4'5", Face: Oval, Complexion: Wheatish, Wearing: Red Saree and Black Sandal in her feet has been missing/kidnapped from the area of P.S. Rani Bagh since 17.02.2021. In this regard a vide DD No. 85A, dated 19.02.2021 has been registered at P.S. Rani Bagh, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing lady but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about this lady please inform undersigned. E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.nic.in SHO Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641 PS Rani Bagh, Delhi Fax : 011-24368639 Ph. : 011-27015329, 27020740, 27020742 DP/751/OD/2021

SEARCH FOR MISSING General Public is hereby informed that a boy namely Vineet, S/o Dilip, R/o H. No. 15/113, Kalyanpuri Delhi, Age: 18 years, Height: 5'4", Complexion: Sallow, Built: Medium, Face: Round, Eyes: Black, Hair: Black, Wearing: Green Colour T-shirt, Blue Colour Jeans and Blue Sleeper in his feet has been missing from his home since 6.03.2021 at 5 pm. In this regard a vide DD No. 93A dated 10.03.2021 has been registered at P.S. Kalyanpuri, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing boy but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about this boy please inform undersigned. E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.nic.in SHO Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641 PS. Kalyanpuri, Delhi Fax : 011-24368639 Ph.: 011-2272251, 8750871830 DP/434/ED/2021



Bollywood
 'There is something about Jackie (Shroff) sir and his energy. As soon as he arrives, everyone is very comfortable.'
 —Vijay Varma

A PERFECT CANVAS

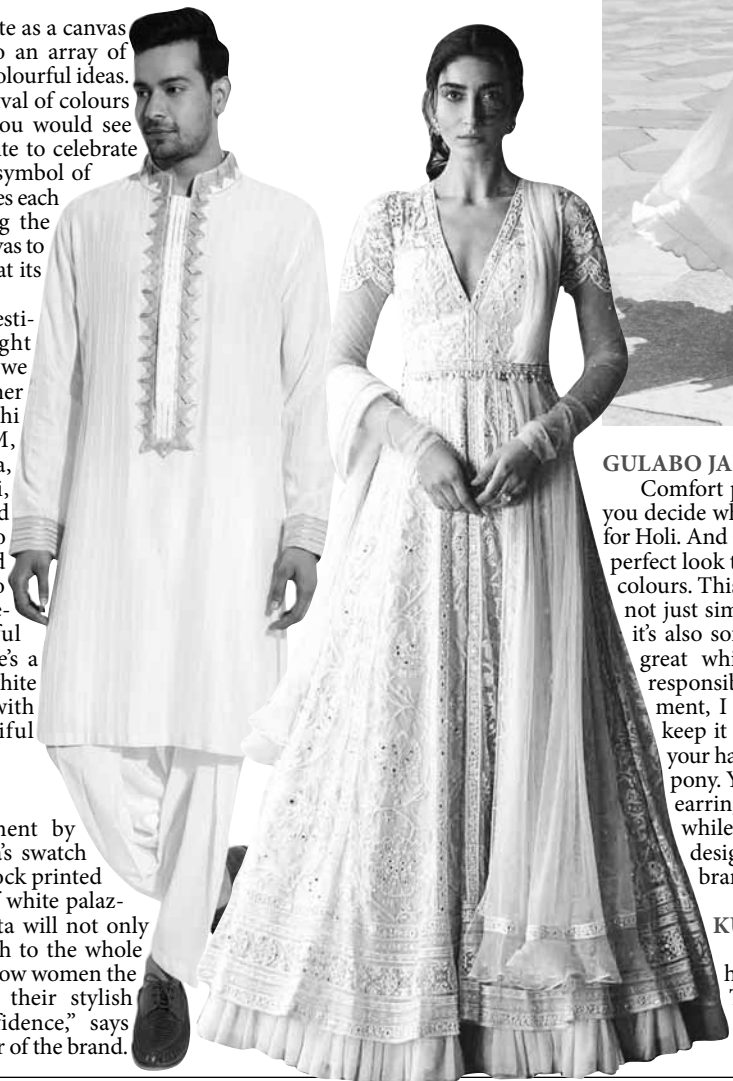
Fashion designers creatively use white as a canvas to give your Holi celebration a colourful expression. Here are some outfit ideas to freshen up your look. By TEAM VIVA

The colour white as a canvas gives room to an array of creative and colourful ideas. While Holi is a festival of colours and traditionally, you would see people wearing white to celebrate the occasion. As a symbol of peace, white embraces each colour. Thus, giving the festival a perfect canvas to celebrate creativity at its best.

And with the festival of colours right around the corner, we have a set of designer labels including Ridhi Mehra, Vedika M, Kunal Anil Tanna, Sukriti & Aakriti, BARI India and Gulabo Jaipur, who have creatively used white as a canvas to give your Holi celebration a colourful expression. So, here's a little something white for a day filled with bright and beautiful colours!

BARI INDIA

Make a statement by pairing BARI India's swatch and splash hand-block printed kurta with a pair of white palazzo pants. "The kurta will not only give an ethnic touch to the whole look but will also allow women the freedom to flaunt their stylish persona with confidence," says Nitisha Jain, founder of the brand.



GULABO JAIPUR

Comfort plays a crucial part when you decide what you are going to wear for Holi. And Gulabo Jaipur has just the perfect look to celebrate the festival of colours. This glorious white *kalidar* is not just simple and comfortable but it's also soft on the skin. And with great white outfits, comes great responsibilities. "With this garment, I would advise women to keep it simple and minimal. Oil your hair, tie it in a bun or a loose pony. You could opt to wear tiny earrings, so you don't lose them while playing Holi," suggests designer Saloni Panwar of the brand.

KUNAL ANIL TANNA

So, why should girls have all the fun, right? This minimalistic white pintuck kurta with a hint of bling by Kunal Anil

Tanna will add festive cheer and a dash of colour to your intimate Holi celebrations. "It's important to preferably have a fabric that dries off easily. Keeping it simple is crucial as you don't want to keep adjusting instead of enjoying the festivities," shares designer Kunal Tanna of label Kunal Anil Tanna.

RIDHI MEHRA

If you are invited for a Holi party where you would play with flowers instead of colours, then this elegant Anarkali in sublime ivory should be your OOTD. "Aliza, a bejewelled silhouette paired with a net *dupatta* makes for a perfect festive outfit," shares designer Ridhi Mehra.

VEDIKA M

It's all about experimenting with your look this Holi and label Vedika M has just the outfit for you. To add a dash of vibrancy to your festivities, you can style plain white long sleeves elastics

top with a pair of hand brush painted jogger pants in shades of sea green and pink. "You can accessorise the white outfit with chunky earrings, colourful bangles and complete the look with a pair of sunglasses to have a trendy indo-western outfit," Vedika says.

SUKRITI AND AAKRITI

Holi parties are known for their music and if you love to dance then fashion designer duo Sukriti & Aakriti have just the perfect look for you. In menswear, this embroidered *bandi* paired with a kurta set is chic and comfortable, whereas women can opt for this white organic sharara set with multi-coloured *gota* work and tassels. "You can style the sharara with a pair of *chand bali* earrings and a sleek pulled back hair style. As for the guys, a pair of retro sunglasses will add pizzazz to that *desi* look," duo Sukriti & Aakriti share.

'Having a career abroad comes with a price'



Actor Nimrat Kaur, who has been part of international projects such as *Homeland* and *Wayward Pines*, says that due to her involvement outside Bollywood, she doesn't get a lot of films to choose from in India.

However, the actor adds that she has never had to remind anyone of who she is.

"I am not in circulation as I might have liked to be regularly. I may not get to choose from a big spectrum of parts which otherwise I would have got. But it has never come to a point where I have to remind people about who I am," Nimrat says.

She adds that she might not be offered the kind of roles that she wants, but that's the "price" she has to pay for a career abroad.

"They might not offer me exactly what I am looking for, but that's part and parcel of life. I have a career abroad and here. That comes with a price," she says.

Talking about the kind of work she wants to take up, Nimrat says, "I cannot think of a genre I will not attempt, even if I fail at it. I am looking for all kinds of work. The more you do, the more you want to. It's a bottomless pit where you can keep playing different people."

Nimrat will be seen in the film *Dasvi*, which also features Yami Gautam and Abhishek Bachchan.

'There were no distractions'

Singer-songwriter ARJUN KANUNGO wrote more music during the pandemic than he ever did in his life

Singer-songwriter Arjun Kanungo had no option but to create music all through last year, due to lockdown induced by the pandemic. In hindsight, the 30-year-old feels it was the "best thing" that happened to him.

"(The pandemic) weirdly enough made me more focussed. I wrote more music in the pandemic than I have ever written in my life," he said.

"There were no distractions, no live shows, no travel and basically there was no socialising, except of course the social media lives. I could only make music. That really connected me to the roots of why I started playing music in the first place, and how I started playing music at home. We came back to that part of our journey and that kind of grounded everyone," added Kanungo.

Another thing the pandemic did was that it "accelerated" the growth of non-film music, he notes. While he agrees that indie and non-film music are as big as film music now, he is "still confused" about non-film music becoming the "primary source of listening to music" for the Indian audience.

"I am not sure about the two categories (film and non-film music) competing against each other. I feel it will take a



few years before non-film music starts generating the same kind of numbers as film music does. (That's why I think) they will co-exist. India is such a big market and there are so many people. It can definitely have two categories co-existing," Kanungo said.

"Right now, (it's) a bit confusing for me, in the sense that where does non-film music go from here. At this stage it depends on the audience. Will today's youth pivot towards non-film music? I don't know yet. It's more like

ly that people might consume both," he added.

Having said that, Kanungo points out that musicians no longer need the film industry to sustain themselves.

"Not just musicians who do non-film music primarily, but also guys who are into indie music — many of them have become stars now. COVID has helped musicians to move towards non-film music and in general the music scene has changed so much. You can (now) sustain yourself as a musician," he said.

This past week, on a school WhatsApp group, I got a reminder that it is a decade since I lost two batchmates in the space of a month to car accidents. Their names were Asem Chaturvedi and Vikram Rusell, and while they were both taken far too soon, I hope that time has allowed their families and their friends the opportunity to grieve. This reminded me about why we should take road safety seriously. Forget everything else, forget the loss of bright and talented individuals or the economic impact of losing 1,50,000 people annually in road accidents, this reminded me about the millions of family members and friends impacted by road fatalities every year.

The events of the past 12 months will ensure that road fatalities would have declined very sharply, yet as things have opened up, road fatalities have gone back to their pre-pandemic levels. In the past 12 months, India has officially lost 1,60,000 people, thanks to the Coronavirus, but that is not very far off from the number of people who died on Indian roads in 2019, at least officially. We shut down our economy, cost millions their jobs and, according to a recent report, pushed 75 million people back into poverty because of the potential damage a pandemic would have had on the Indian populace. Yet, while there has been a quantum leap in camera-based traffic enforcement in India over the past few years, no matter where you drive in India, it is almost comical at how entitled and selfish is the average Indian driver is. Across the board, from a cycle-rickshaw carrying iron-rebar rods to e-rickshaws not using their headlights, motorcyclists treating pavements as a carriageway and car drivers blithely ignoring speed limits or driving on the wrong side to save some time.

I will not be holier than thou and claim that I am a perfect driver. I most certainly am not. I have had accidents, thanks to my own carelessness. Although I would like to believe that I am a far better driver today than I was 10 years ago because I know that

A reminder to be safe

The government's mandate to carmakers that requires compulsory airbags, for driver and front passenger, is a good move but road safety needs much more work



KUSHAN MITRA



instead of Asem or Vikram it could have well been me inside a car. I do not want to be morbid here, but every single one of us has been impacted by someone we know dying or being badly injured in an accident yet we have not changed our behaviour on the roads.

Recently, the Ministry of Road Transportation and Highways mandated that carmakers fit a front passenger airbag compulsorily in all vehicles from the middle of the year. That will make a slight difference. Carmakers are increasingly fitting six or even seven airbags in their vehicles, some across their variant range including

base models. Automatic transmission vehicles are getting traction control and stability systems. But a vast majority of road fatalities happen to motorcycle riders and passengers and truth be told, other than in a few cities helmet usage or even stopping triple ridership has not been enforced. Heck, motorcycle companies actively advertise their products with stunts and a disclaimer in point size zero. When the government tried to mandate longer insurance terms for two-wheelers, the industry protested in unison. Across the board, accident and road insurance for vehicles are abysmal and it is believed that less than a quarter of motorcycles more than five years old have any sort of insurance. Yes, insurance adds to costs, but

a decent insurance package can ensure that those who get hurt the hardest by an accident, not the victims but their families, are at least taken care of to a certain degree.

Here is the thing, we cannot reduce road fatalities to zero. Even bringing down road fatalities to below 1,00,000 (2020 notwithstanding) will take a concerted effort by the centre, states and traffic police forces across the country. This is a manageable target, we owe it to the families to do this. And we cannot and must not ask the authorities to do it all. We have to change ourselves. We have to ensure that we are better drivers and riders because if we don't change ourselves, nothing, not higher fines or the fear of death will make us change.

TRENDBLAZER

VARUN SHARES MEMORIES FROM ARUNACHAL

Actor VARUN DHAWAN has shared a slice of the memories he has brought back from the recent location shoot of the supernatural film *Bhedhiya* in Arunachal Pradesh.

Varun posted a picture on Instagram, where he was seen posing with Abhishek Banerjee near a lake.

"Memories made forever. #teambhedhiya," Varun wrote as the caption.

Abhishek commented, referring to the clean air of the place: "Best oxygen *waali* memories."



fairtalk

AKSHITA MUDGAL



'I feel lockdown was a period where there was no entertainment on television. This is why people moved to OTT platforms to watch shows. OTT platforms were there earlier too, but people started switching because they were getting entertainment there. This is why viewership has increased and people give preference to OTT over TV.'

dailytalk

VAANI KAPOOR



'When you do big films, while you are bound to get more eyeballs along with it comes a lot of scrutiny. I have always been clear in my head that I want to be part of films that allow me to showcase my skills as an actor. My next films *Bell Bottom*, *Shamsher*, and *Chandigarh Kare Aashiqui* will hopefully entertain all of India.'

OLIVIA CAN'T RECALL HER OSCAR-WINNING SPEECH

Actor OLIVIA COLMAN, who won the Oscar as Best Actress for her role in *The Favourite* in 2019, has revealed that she has no recollection of what happened after the ceremony or even her winning speech, during which she thanked her co-stars, crew, and kids.

"My husband said it was the best night of his life. I can't remember what I said. I only know because I've seen it played back now. I still can't quite believe it happened," she said.



Walking into a magnificent structure with floor-to-ceiling glass windows and doors, which overlooks a serene garden, could instantly transport you to a state of zen. The Glass House at Hilton Garden Inn, Gurugram, is sophisticated, classy and peaceful to say the least. Though its permanent menu takes you around the world, the curated one '21 dishes of 2021' promises to embrace the best of the myriad of cuisines — both local and international — to enhance your dining experience.

Seated on a table for two, right next to the glass windows while enjoying 80s pop music, I was welcomed with a Dark chocolate dome. Plated with granola soil and a white chocolate cigar which bridged across the plate, connecting the granola soil with the chocolate dome. It read, 'Welcome to HGI, Shambhavi' in white chocolate, adding a warm, personal touch to the dessert. Once the chef poured the melted chocolate over the dome, it melted revealing the filling inside. I began cutting into the dome only to be surprised by the layers upon layers within it. At the very bottom of the dome was a dark chocolate brownie which was dense yet fluffy. Above the brownie was the light and airy whipped cream which was topped with some diced fresh strawberry and almond shavings. As I took my first bite, I began to think, 'this might be too chocolate-y', but I was wrong. The freshness and citrus from the strawberries with the airy whipped cream, brownie and some nuts and dome bits for crunch, made a deadly combination. The dark chocolate dome bits added some bitterness which helped the dish to not enter the 'overly sweet' zone. This dessert answers the question, 'how much chocolate is too much chocolate?' by proving that no amount of chocolate is too much if it is perfectly balanced.

Now, it was time for something to wipe the chocolate flavour from the palette. An amuse-bouche was served (typically bite-sized dish, served to refresh the palate between courses). This was the Compressed watermelon with mint and cucumber broth, and Cream



CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

At Glass House, you can travel the world through multiple plates, says SHAMBHAVI SURI

cheese quenelle. Served in a white bowl, the compressed watermelon looked like a beautiful piece of salmon at first. However, to my surprise, I had cut into the crisp piece of watermelon. The melon was submerged in the mint and cucumber broth, only revealing a bit of the piece over which the cream cheese sat. The beauty of the dish was that the flavours do not linger on the palette and was truly refreshing.

Next up was the Malaysian laksa. Served in a hollowed-out coconut, the dish was presented in a very creative way. Serving the laksa in the tender coconut was not merely for presentation. The chef explained that once the piping-hot broth is poured into the coconut, the pulp of the tender coconut melts, giving an enhanced flavour. The broth was thin in terms of its texture, making it light and delicious. The noodles were also topped with peanuts, carrots, broccoli and fried onions that added a crunch and some more layers to the dish. This bowl of laksa was comfort food redefined! The lightness of the broth had me going in for more.

While I was still enjoying the laksa, the Blue cheese *malai*



tikka with *anasas* chutney made its way to my table. The *tikka* came in a cylindrical-shaped, brass serving piece with the skewers inside. The serving piece was smoked with coal and made the entire place smell like Old Delhi at night, when all the *tandoors* come out into the narrow gali (ally). The *tikka* was soft and succulent, and came apart as soon as I put my fork on it. The pungent flavour from the blue-cheese was a lip-smacking variation to the traditional *malai tikka*. The blue cheese also added another layer of creaminess along with the *malai*. The flavours in the mouth that lingered after the bite were just the smokiness of the *tandoor* and the sweetness from the *malai*. In my next bite, I paired the *tikka* with the *anasas* chutney. It was

just tantalising! It was tangy, refreshing and the flavour of the pineapple was not curbed by the flavour of the red chillies or ginger in it. The pairing of the chutney and the blue cheese *malai tikka* was a match made in heaven. The acidity from the *anasas* chutney balances the heavy creaminess of the *tikka*, making the entire experience delightful.

The next appetizer served was a different take on the traditional *dahi kebab*. Known as yogurt polpettes, it was served with a Raw papaya relish. The polpettes were rolled out and shaped like a cigar, covered under a blanket of noodles and deep fried. The stroke of the fluorescent green raw papaya relish on the black plate was like a brush stroke in a painting.

Cutting into the polpettes, there was the hung-curd mixed with coriander, cashews and finely chopped green chillies. I put some relish on top and took my first bite. Just like the *malai tikka* and the chutney, this dish was also balanced perfectly with an almost citric and acidic condiment, paired with a heavy and creamy element. The fried noodles gave it an extra crunch which is missing in the traditional *dahi kebab*.

For the main course, I was served *Chaudhary saab ki biryani* alongside *Burari raita* and *salan*. The non-vegetarian variant of the *Chaudhary saab ki biryani* was with pieces of chicken, cloves, cardamom, mint leaves along with chicken *keema* and topped with fried onions. The *biryani* was served in a traditional earthen pot known as *matka*. The smell of the *desi-ghet* took over all my senses as soon as I took off the lid of the *matka*. With all my senses engaged, I took a bite and it transcended all my expectations. It was one of the best *biryani*'s I had in a very long time. The different flavours of the chicken pieces and the *keema* added layer upon layer to it accompanied by the spices. All this was brought together with the taste of *desi-ghet* which transported me to the roots of India.

After all this, the beautiful afternoon came to an end with a dessert. The Indian Dessert Board plated four different kinds of *barfi*. The first from the left was a round-shaped *pista barfi*, topped with almond shavings. Second was the rectangular beetroot *barfi*. Next was the strawberry-*khoya barfi* shaped in the form of a heart and the last one was the coconut *barfi*. This dessert board truly represented the great Indian desserts, celebrating the diversity of flavours and ingredients present in India.

With the sun rays getting fainter as the evening skies came about, it was time to end the journey that I took through the food served. The kind and friendly hospitality of the chef and the waiters at the restaurant made my afternoon even more memorable. For someone who is looking to take a trip around the world to experience different cuisines and flavours, you can do it right here.

Enter the world of single malts

ANGAD SINGH GANDHI shares a few trends that are going to dominate the industry and some interesting food pairings to try out with your whisky

Whisky has been an innate part of our lives for decades. While last year saw a dramatic shift in the spirits world with more home consumption and lesser venturing out, there are a few trends that have emerged and will amplify this year. So here is what we predict the whisky world will swirl and sip in 2021:



☐ Sustainable innovations will be on the radar: The current pandemic and growing concern for the environment has given rise to a more conscious consumer and producer base. From eco-friendly packaging to sustainable hospitality and bar culture, 2021 will be about rethinking convention and moving towards a more inventive and responsible whisky industry. Bars will focus on reducing wastage in drinks, eschewing disposables and sourcing ingredients that are locally grown and produced, sometimes even within the bar itself.

☐ Continual rise of new craft producers: The whisky world will witness a boom in the number of craft producers, micro distilleries and increased approachability when it comes to newer entrants. With rise in homegrown brands and rapid modern whisky movement, we can expect a big wave in number of craft producers with a nuanced and refined whisky collection.

☐ The next big whisky market: Lesser-known whisky regions will gain prominence. Changing lifestyles, higher incomes, increasing demand for premium spirits, change in demographics of the whisky drinkers, etc, will significantly contribute in bringing several countries on the whisky map of the world. Especially for a country like India where whisky culture has evolved by leaps and bounds from both producers and consumers end. The century old

whisky market has been gaining its momentum quiet steadily and will continue to be a preferred spirit this year as well.

While single malt as a category will remain a preferred choice among the mature consumers, it will continue to attract the young drinkers in times to come. In addition to these trends, food pairings will continue to be a great way to cherish your single malt. While most people are curious to try food pairings, they are not sure how to.

Consuming your single malt with food opens a world of aroma and flavour opportunities. The goal is not just to find things that go well together, but to create a match where the food brings out something new in the whisky or the whisky brings out something new in the food. In other words, the idea is to create gastronomic synergy to appreciate and savour the drink.

Don't be intimidated with the enormous length and breadth of food options to try out with your single malt just trust your taste buds. You can enjoy a dram with any food you like. Experiment a little and find out what works for you.

So here are a few food pairings that go extremely well with water of life aka whisky:

☐ Diverse culinary culture of

the South: Unexpectedly, have you ever cherished your single malt with fiery flavours of Andhra cuisine? If not, you're missing out. Gongura leaves and red chillies peculiar to both Andhra and Telangana delicacies work well with the fruity notes of your whisky. Choose from a wide variety of mouth-watering vegetarian and non-vegetarian delicacies.

☐ Exotic flavours of Kashmir: The extraordinary gastronomic journey of the Kashmiri cuisine is worth the mention. The traditional Kashmiri *wazwan* which comprises of slow cooked meat dishes is yet another wonderful pairing and enhances the spicy notes of the whisky. The spices and the condiments just accentuate your drinking experience.

☐ The South-East Asian bandwagon: When it comes to the global fare, the tangy flavours of South-East Asian cuisine are a perfect accompaniment with the malty notes a single malt offers. The aromatic component of the South-East Asian food adds a lot of flavour to your whisky.

☐ The secret ingredient: Elixirs created with fine ingredients is yet another way to experiment with flavours and tasting notes of single malts. For instance, each whisky variant pairs well with different ingredients that enhance the aroma and finish of the single malt serve, so there's a whole world of flavours to play with.

The rules are simple — choose a subtle dram to compliment lighter flavours or a spicier whisky to complement fuller-flavoured dishes. So, grab your glass of whisky and pair it with the food of your choice to relish every sip of it with added flavours. Slainte!

(The writer is the Brand Ambassador of Glenfiddich India.)

R E C I P E S

ALMOND & SESAME PINNI

WHAT YOU NEED

- Wheat flour: 2 cup
- Semolina: 2½ tbsp
- Roasted almond slivers: ¼ cup
- Roasted white sesame powder: ¼ cup
- Pure ghee: ¾ cup
- Gram flour (*besan*): 1½ tbsp
- Sugar: 1 cup

- Water: ½ cup
- Green cardamom powder: ½ tsp
- Roasted white sesame: 1 tbsp
- Roasted whole almonds: 3 tbsp

METHOD

- Heat ghee in a pan, add semolina and wheat flour to it.



Roast the mixture till a golden colour is achieved.

- Mix the sugar and water in a pan, and put it over low heat. Cook till single string sugar syrup is formed.
- Mix the sugar syrup with the wheat flour mixture. Add the green cardamom powder.
- Cook the mixture till it becomes a little dry. Add the

roasted almond flakes and ground white sesames to the mixture and mix well.

- Allow the mixture to cool. Divide the mixture into equal parts and shape it into rounds.
- Cut the roasted almond into halves and place it over the pinnis and roll the pinnis gently in roasted white sesame.

Courtesy: Chef Manish Mehrotra.

VEG BIRYANI

WHAT YOU NEED

- Basmati rice: 3 cups
- Whole green cardamom (divided): 18
- Cloves (divided): 12
- Salt: 3 tsp
- Ghee: 4.5 tbsp + 1 tsp
- Red onion (thinly sliced): 6
- Broken cashews: 6 tbsp
- Potato (cubed): 3
- Cauliflower florets: 150 gm
- Carrot (diagonally cut): 3
- Green beans (diagonally cut): 20
- Mil: 30 ml
- Saffron strands
- Ginger and garlic paste: 2 tbsp
- Green chillies: 6
- Oil: 30 ml
- Cumin seeds: 2 tsp
- Cinnamon stick
- Bay leaf: 3
- Whole black peppercorns: 13
- Curd: 1 cup
- Biryani masala: 4.5 tsp
- Red chilli powder: 1.5 tsp
- Water: 1 cup
- Cilantro (chopped): 8 tsp
- Mint (chopped): 7 tsp
- Rose water or kewra water: 3 tsp
- Garam masala: 1 tsp

METHOD

- Soak the rice in three cups of water for 35 to 40 minutes. Drain the water later.
- Heat a pot full of water. Add one black cardamom, three green cardamom, four cloves and 3/4



teaspoon salt to it. Let it come to a boil.

- Put rice and stir with a spoon.
- Let it cook uncovered (don't lower the heat) until it's almost cooked. This takes around six to seven minutes.
- Remove the pan from heat and drain the rice in a colander. Add a teaspoon of ghee to the rice. Set aside.
- Heat 1.5 tablespoon of ghee in a pan on medium heat. Once hot, add one sliced onion and cook until they turn golden brown and caramelize. Remove on a plate.
- To the same pan, now add cashews and cook until golden brown. Remove and set aside.
- To the same pan, add potato and cook for two minutes until light brown. Remove on a plate.
- To the same pan, now add cauliflower, beans and carrots. Sauté for two to three minutes
- until veggies appear light brown. Remove them on a plate.
- Heat two tablespoons of milk in a pan. Once warm, add saffron strands (crush it before adding). Set it aside.
- Crush ginger, garlic and chilli using a mortar and pestle. Set aside.
- Heat 1.5 tablespoons of oil in a pan on medium heat. Add cumin seeds, cinnamon stick, bay leaf, peppercorns, remaining three cardamom and remaining two cloves.
- Stir and let the spices sizzle for a few seconds. Add the sliced onions and also add 1/4 teaspoon of salt.
- Cook for three to four minutes until onions turn light brown. Then add the crushed ginger, garlic and green chillies paste. Cook for two minutes until the raw smell goes away.
- Remove the pan from heat and

whisk in the yogurt, whisking continuously until it's all absorbed.

- Put the pan back on heat. Add all the veggies and toss to combine.
- Add the *biryani masala* and red chilli powder.
- Add 1/4 cup of water. Let it cook for around six to seven minutes until veggies are almost cooked but not overcooked. They should be firm to bite. Remove from heat.
- Now take a heavy bottom pan. First grease it with ghee.
- Then add a layer of rice (half of the rice). Top with half of fried onion, half of fried cashews and half of cilantro and mint. Add 1/2 teaspoon of rose water. Now place the veggies on top (all of it).
- Then add another layer of rice on top of the veggies. Then top it with remaining with fried onion, cashews, cilantro and mint.
- Add the prepared saffron milk and the remaining one teaspoon of rose water on top.
- Finally drizzle one teaspoon ghee on top. Sprinkle some *biryani masala*.
- Cover the pan tightly with aluminum foil. Then cover with a fitted lid.
- Heat a flat pan on medium heat. Once hot, reduce the flame to lowest. Place your *biryani* pot on top of the pan and let it cook for 25 to 30 minutes on lowest heat.
- Scoop out the biryani from the bottom of the pan so that each serving has both the veggies and the rice.
- Serve hot vegetable biryani with *raita*.

Courtesy: The Biryani House.



DAAB CHINGRI

WHAT YOU NEED

- Prawns: 750 gm
- Onion
- Panch phoron: 1 tsp
- Green chillies: 4
- Turmeric
- Wheat dough: 20 gm
- Large tender coconut: 1
- Mustard paste: 3 tbsp
- Garlic cloves: 3
- Mustard oil: 2 tbsp
- Salt as required

METHOD

- Chop garlic, green chillies and onion. Scrape out the coconut flesh and put it in a grinder. Grind well to get a coconut flesh paste.
- Heat oil in a pan over medium flame and add *panch phoron* in it.
- Add the chopped green chillies, onions and garlic cloves.
- Now, take it out in a large bowl and add mustard paste,

turmeric, salt and coconut flesh paste.

- In the mixture, add the raw prawns and mix everything well.
- Cut the bottom of the coconut shell evenly to make it stand properly inside the pressure cooker.
- Put the prawn mixture in the shell and cover the top with wheat dough.
- Add some water in the pressure cooker and place the coconut shell inside it. (Note: The level of water should be about half the height of the coconut shell.)
- Put the cooker lid on and let it cook over medium flame until you hear three whistles.
- After removing it from the flame, let the dish be inside the cooker for 10 minutes more.
- Take it out and remove the wheat dough seal. Serve hot with steamed rice.

Courtesy: Swissotel Kolkata.

LAUKI AND KELE KI MALAIDAR KHEER

WHAT YOU NEED

- Full fat milk: 800 gm
- Bottle gourd (grated): 400 gm
- Banana (grated): 2
- Khoya: 30 gm
- Almonds (sliced): 20 gm
- Chironji: 10 gm
- Cashew (crushed): 10 gm
- Brown sugar: 90 gm
- Cardamom powder: 1 tsp
- Ghee: 25 gm
- Saffron: 8/10 strands

METHOD

- Heat ghee in a pan. Fry cashews and almonds. Also, keep some aside for garnishing.
- When they turn slightly brown, add grated *lauki* and cook it for eight to 10 minutes on slow flame.
- Add milk when it starts boiling. Simmer the heat and let it cook on slow heat for 25 minutes more.
- Keep stirring in between.
- Now add sugar, *khoya* and cook it for another two to three minutes.
- Put cardamom powder and saffron for enhancing the taste.
- Let the *kheer* cool at at room temperature. Then add grated bananas and mix really well.
- Garnish with leftover almonds and cashews. Serve cold.

Courtesy: Michelin Plate Winner, chef Dayashankar Sharma.



INDIA GEAR UP FOR SURYA NAMASKAR

Yadav to make ODI debut as Men in Blue target hat-trick of series win

PTI ■ PUNE

The immensely talented Suryakumar Yadav is likely to get a chance to showcase his 360 degree hitting skills when a rampaging Indian team takes on a rather clueless England, aiming to seal off another series victory in the second ODI here on Friday.

Shreyas Iyer's dislocated shoulder has once again brought Yadav in focus and his ODI debut, after a blockbuster T20 first outing, looks imminent after an all-round show by the hosts ensured an easy victory in the first game.

Iyer has been one of India's most prolific 50-over batsmen before the Covid-19 enforced lockdown but such is the team's strength that a debutant looks more formidable for a world champion opposition, who are no less menacing but seem utterly confused at this point.

Being spoilt for choices is always a good headache to have for the think-tank and skipper Virat Kohli will be more pleased than anyone else.

Kohli has not had Ravindra Jadeja's services

for close to three months but neither Axar Patel in Tests, and now Krunal Pandya in the ODIs, have let the team miss their maverick from Rajkot.

Prasidh Krishna, already a household name due to IPL, looked completely at home on his ODI debut, hurrying batsmen for pace in the absence of Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami.

And come to think of it, once Jadeja and Bumrah are back, a Krunal or Krishna will either cool their heels in the dug-out or even worse, not find a place in the squad, which is a testimony to India's unimaginable depth of talent pool.

The biggest positive during the opening game was Shikhar Dhawan's return to form with a match-winning 98. He was under pressure after being benched for a large part of the T20 series.

Rohit Sharma had sustained a blow to his elbow during the first match but is expected to be fit in time for the second game.

The pace trio of experienced Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Prasidh Krishna and the ever-improving Shardul Thakur took nine of the 10 wickets and would be keen to rock the England batting line-up again.

The best part was how they came back after first 15 overs of mayhem by Jason Roy and Jonny Bairstow.

Meanwhile, England will look to level the series and stay alive in the contest.

England have a lot to ponder on and injuries to skipper Eoin Morgan and batsman Sam Billings, while fielding, in the lung-opener have only added to their woes.

All-rounder Ben Stokes was firm in his belief that England do not have



Morgan out of final two ODIs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

England skipper Eoin Morgan will miss the final two ODIs of the three-match series against India in Pune after sustaining finger injury in the first game.

Vice-captain Jos Buttler will lead the side in absence of 2019 World Cup winning captain as Liam Livingstone is likely to make his ODI debut.

Morgan sustained a split webbing between his thumb and index finger in Tuesday's series opener, an injury that required four stitches. The captain went through a fielding drill during training at the MCA Stadium on Thursday and afterwards declared himself unfit.

too many reasons to worry despite the continuing disappointments.

"We've been formidable in the white ball format for over a number of years. Just because we lost the T20 series doesn't mean we need to start changing things around," he said on match eve.

Bairstow was among the runs as he blazed to 94 off 64 balls as was his partner Roy (46).

The two would be looking to put up another fine show and carry forward the aggressive brand of cricket, which was the cornerstone of the 2019 World Cup triumph.

However, their middle order hasn't performed up to its potential and the likes of all-rounder Ben Stokes, Jos

Morgan said: "I had the hand re-dressed before the start of training today but it quickly became apparent that I found myself protecting the injury and getting into the wrong positions to catch the ball."

"There's nowhere to hide on the field in International cricket these days, especially in limited-over formats so it didn't require any great thought to make myself unavailable."

"It was a freak injury and it's extremely frustrating but there's nothing I can do about it. It's now just a case of letting the cut heal. I have every confidence in Jos and the rest of the squad coping without me."

Billings did not train on Thursday after he suffered a bruised left collar bone while fielding in Tuesday's opening match. Dawid Malan, with the tour party as cover, has been drafted into the squad and is available for selection.

Buttler and Moeen Ali faltered with the bat.

If England have to put a big total or chase a score, the trio needs to fire in unison.

Their key spinners Adil Rashid and Moeen Ali haven't been able to trouble the Indian batters and both went wicket-less in the opening game.

They will have to step up and deliver and along with Tom Curran, who will need to compliment his brother Sam and pace spearhead Mark Wood, who troubled the batters with his speed.

Come Friday, it remains to be seen whether India are able to add "another sweetest victory" or if the visitors spoil their party.

KL isn't surprised by Krishna's sensational debut

PTI ■ PUNE

KL Rahul isn't surprised by India's newest pace sensation Prasidh Krishna's smash-hit International debut as he always felt that it was about time that he would join the ranks of big names from Karnataka, who have already donned national colours.

Prasidh, who had made a name for himself with his performances in the Indian Premier League for Kolkata Knight Riders, took four wickets on his ODI debut against England.

"Look, quite honestly, I am not surprised with what he (Prasidh) did yesterday (Tuesday). I was always very confident that the next player that is going to come out of Karnataka, is going to be Prasidh," said the pacer's state teammate.

"We weren't of the same batch, but I have watched him play a lot of junior cricket and in the nets, he is somebody, who will catch your eye," Rahul said at the virtual press conference.

The best part according to Rahul is Prasidh's ability to bowl quick.

"(He is a) tall guy (who) bowls quick, gets a lot of bounce from the wicket, and someone having played with him in the last couple of seasons for Mushtaq Ali and Vijay Hazare, I realised

that he is a brave boy."

Rahul is also impressed by his game sense.

"He has a great sense of the game, it's not just his skill but how he understands and reads the game. He is a very keen learner and he is, like I said, very brave and comes in with a lot of aggression," Rahul said.

Rahul is confident that Prasidh will be a great asset for Indian cricket if he keeps on working hard.

"We saw in the last game, he was trying to have a word or two with the batsmen and he enjoys being in a contest and that's something I love, about him," Rahul said.

"...And I am so happy to see that he is carrying on the same thing and he wasn't overwhelmed by the place he is in, playing his first game for the country, I am sure there will be lot of nerves but the way he came back after the first three overs, got those crucial wickets, so these are the qualities that a player and as a team, a lot of us are impressed with, what he has done."

For Rahul, the manner in which each newcomer has performed in this series can be attributed to consistent show in the domestic cricket for years.

"I think a huge part is the IPL and the confidence that these boys come in with. And whoever has come into the team, is not because they have performed in one season of the IPL or one season of first-class cricket but it has been 2-3 years of consistent performances and at whatever level they play, or wherever they play," said Rahul, who captains the Punjab Kings, in the T20 league.

But obviously having played all the top English players in IPL did help their performance, Rahul admitted.

"Obviously, you would have heard Surya (Suryakumar Yadav), Ishan (Ishan) and Krunal (Pandya), in their interviews saying that they have played against most of these guys in the IPL at some point and they know how they go about their games and IPL performances have obviously given them a lot of confidence and they have carried that confidence into playing for their country," he noted.



Animated outbursts isn't our way of operating: Stokes



PTI ■ PUNE

Animated and aggressive body language might work well for Virat Kohli and his Indian team but that doesn't have a bearing on England's modus operandi, said their premier all-rounder Ben Stokes.

The question was in reference to India captain Kohli's aggressive in your face demeanour while fielding or celebrating a fall of wicket.

"Every team and every player has a certain way of operating in the field, which makes them successful. As a team over the last four-five years, that's not the way that works for us," Stokes said on the eve of their must-win second ODI.

"We stick to what we do best and what we make it to build a better side. Each team is entitled to their own way of operations. India have their and we have ours," te dashing all-rounder said.

Asked whether he preferred a "nice or spiky" Virat, Stokes gave a smart reply:

"Personally, I prefer Virat doesn't get runs, because that's not good for us."

After their 66-run loss in the first ODI, England risk of being usurped for their No 1 ranking but Stokes said it's not their driving force.

"We deserve to be No 1 because of our results and how we played our cricket and we won't go away from that. Being No 1 is obviously a fantastic thing to have next to your name as a team, but it's not our driving force."

"Our driving force is the way that we go about it and our attitude towards playing the game. And that's what's made us be successful, and the more successful we are obviously the more chance and the more opportunity we've got to be at No 1."

With twin injury blows to Eoin Morgan and Sam Billings, England may hand a debut to Liam Livingstone and Stokes is confident that a "fearless" Livingstone would embrace the opportunity if picked for the second ODI.

Playing more games keeps me in good touch: Rahul

PTI ■ PUNE

Three months without a competitive game left KL Rahul a trifle rusty but the stylish right-hander had complete faith in his preparedness, something which helped him bounce back to form in the first ODI against England.

After an indifferent T20 series against the same team, Rahul had a good first ODI scoring a half century as well as a number of catches behind the stumps.

"As a batsman I feel being in the middle and playing games is what keeps me in good touch," Rahul said on the eve of the second ODI.

"Having not got as much game time as I would have liked, I mean I won't say it did not play



on my mind, but somehow or the other you have to find a way to be best prepared, be it at training or open net sessions," he explained.

"In terms of that, I tried to prepare in the best way possible but having said that, nothing beats game time," he added.

With Rishabh Pant back in the white ball mix and Ishan Kishan also grabbing his chance with both hands, Rahul knows that he cannot take his place for granted despite being one of the most prolific performers in the shorter formats.

"Look when you are a part of this Indian team you know that competition is going to be really, really high and you can never sit back and feel comfortable like you own a position. You will always be challenged

and that's how it is."

"Our country has got a lot of talent, you will always try to push yourself and keep training harder and working on your game. And when opportunity comes, try to grab it with both hands," he said.

The lean patch that he encountered is part of a journey for an international cricketer, something that didn't stress him much.

"This is part of the journey and everybody goes through this. I didn't do anything different or I wasn't too stressed."

Blue Tigers hold Oman for 1-1 draw

PTI ■ DUBAI

The Indian football team made a fine comeback in the second half to hold fancied Oman 1-1 in its first International match in more than a year though the Gulf side dominated the friendly here on Thursday.

India conceded a goal in the 42nd minute with Chinglensana Singh's clearance crossing the goal-line after hitting goalkeeper Amrinder Singh who started the match instead of Gurpreet Singh Sandhu.

Manvir Singh scored the equaliser in the 55th minute to help India pull off a rare draw against Oman in the first International outing after the Covid-19 lockdown.

India head coach Igor Stimac gave debuts to as many 10 players. He had said before



the match that he would give chances to maximum number of players for them to gain the experience of playing in big matches.

The first half was all about Oman attacking in waves with India not getting a single shot on target.

Oman, who have won both the two-legged matches of the 2022 World Cup qualifying against India, played a high defensive line with more men on attack. India were content defending their citadel with more players in their own half and just one man upfront most of the time.

The Indians lost possession too easily on most occasions as

straight to Amarinder Singh.

But Oman were not to be denied a goal in the first half. Al Aghbari got the ball on the left wing and sent a low cross on the face of the goal. Amrinder could not collect the ball cleanly and it hit Chinglensana Singh and went past the goal line.

Stimac made two changes at the start of second session with Lalengmawia and Raynier Fernandes replacing Jeakson Singh and Rowllin Borges.

The Indians dishied out a much improved show in the second half, holding the ball a lot more than the first 45 minutes and playing a more attacking game.

India equalised five minutes

before the hour mark. Bipin Singh sent in a delicious cross from the right flank which was headed home by Manvir.

Oman, ranked 81st as compared to India's 104th in the FIFA charts, then pressed hard for the winning goal but Amrinder was impressive behind the bar as he made two fine saves in the 63rd and 65th minutes.

India play their second International friendly against the UAE here on Monday.

The friendlies are a part of preparations for the joint qualifying round matches of the 2022 World Cup and 2023 Asian Cup to be played in June.

India women's win 25m team pistol Gold

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian juggernaut remained unstoppable at the ISSF shooting World Cup with the country's women shooters grabbing the spotlight by clinching the 25m pistol team Gold medal following a Silver in the 50m rifle 3 positions team event here on Thursday.

The seventh competition day was also marred by the Hungarian team's pullout from the men's rifle 3 position final — against India — after a dispute with its seasoned shooter Peter Sidi over a bipod that was attached to his rifle, leading to a postponement of the event to Friday.

The host nation's team will take on third-placed USA in the final.

There was positive news for India after that unprecedented act, as the triumvirate



Chinky Yadav, left, Manu Bhaker, center and Rahi Sarnobat pose for photo with Indian flag after the trio struck Gold in the women's 25m pistol Team event

of Chinky Yadav, Manu Bhaker and Rahi Sarnobat shot a total of 17 to beat Poland's Joanna Iwona Wawrzonowska, Julita Borek and Agnieszka Korejwo, who managed to score 7.

"In individual competitions if we make mistakes, we

are losing the points, nobody else. But here, we feel a little more responsible. It is very different from qualification, it is hit or miss here, but, in qualification, every shot counts in a different way," Sarnobat said.

Bhaker added, "I take everything as practice for my

main match. It's not like a test event or anything, it's just that we have to perform so we have to be at our best. I consider it the same thing, just the name has been changed."

The team Gold came only a day after Yadav, Bhaker and Sarnobat swept the individual final by winning all the medals on offer on Wednesday.

The victory in this event consolidated India's position at the top of the pecking order with 21 medals, including 10 Gold, six Silver and five Bronze.

Earlier in the day, India's Anjum Moudgil, Shreya Saksena and Gaayathri Nithyanadam claimed the Silver medal in the 50m rifle 3 positions team event.

The Indian rifle team shot 43 in the Gold medal showdown to finish behind the Polish team, which scored 47 to grab the top prize.

Saina enters Orleans quarters

PTI ■ PARIS

London Olympics Bronze Lmedallist Saina Nehwal advanced to the quarterfinals of the Orleans Masters after prevailing over France's Marie Batomene in the women's singles second round on Thursday.

Running against time to make it to her fourth Olympics, Saina recovered from the opening game reversal to see off world No 65 Marie 18-21, 21-15, 21-10 in a 51-minute clash in the Super 100 event, which is part of BWF's revised Olympic qualification period.

The fourth seeded Indian, will face either France's Yaelle Hoyaux or Malaysia's Iris Wang next.

Ira Sharma, ranked 162, also made it to the quarterfinals after beating Bulgaria's world No 71 Mariya Mitsova 21-18, 21-13 in 32 minutes.

Oranje stunned in Turkey

AFF ■ ISTANBUL

The Netherlands slumped to a dramatic 4-2 defeat by Turkey in their opening 2022 World Cup qualifier on Wednesday, while reigning champions France were held by Ukraine despite a brilliant Antoine Griezmann goal and Belgium came from behind to beat Wales.

European champions Portugal battled to a 1-0 victory over Azerbaijan, but 2018 World Cup runners-up Croatia lost 1-0 in Slovenia as they started their bid to reach the finals in Qatar.

In Istanbul, Turkey led 3-0 shortly after half-time through two Burak Yilmaz goals and a Hakan Calhanoglu strike, but substitutes Davy Klaassen and Luuk de Jong gave Frank de Boer's Dutchmen hope.

Yilmaz's wonderful free-kick sealed him a hat-trick and



Turkey's Burak Yilmaz celebrates after he completes his hat-trick ©EURO2020

Turkey a crucial win. The defeat was a dreadful start to the campaign for the Netherlands, who failed to qualify for either Euro 2016 or the 2018 World Cup.

France kicked off their title defence with a 1-1 draw against Ukraine at the Stade de France. Griezmann curled a fine

finish from outside the box into the top corner in the 19th minute to draw level with David Trezeguet in fourth place on France's all-time goalscoring list, with 34.

But Presnel Kimpembe put through his own net before the hour mark to draw Ukraine level.