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LUCKNOW, TUESDAY DECEMBER 11, 2018; PAGES 16 & 3



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KANGANA
14 VIVACITY

Urjit quits amid RBI-Govt feud

RBI Guv cites 'personal' reasons; Opp cries foul as PM hails Patel's contribution

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The continuing standoff between the Government and the RBI finally claimed the chair of Governor Urjit Patel, who resigned on Monday citing "personal" reasons, something not many people are ready to digest.

Patel, 55, who took over as the 24th Governor of the Central bank on September 5, 2016, had the shortest tenure at the RBI since 1992.

"On account of personal reasons, I have decided to step down from my current position effective immediately," Patel said in a brief statement.

The Government and the RBI stood divided over several issues, including transfer of surplus reserves to the Government. The Government also wanted the RBI to provide additional liquidity to credit-starved MSME sector in the wake of IILFS bankruptcy and align Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) norms for public sector banks with global practices.

Though Patel has cited "personal" reasons for his resignation, his ouster was on the cards ever since the Government threatened to invoke certain provision of the RBI Act to force him to consider its views on relaxing lending norms for segments such as small and medium enterprises, appropriate size of reserves the Central bank must maintain and easing norms for weak banks.

On October 27, RBI Deputy Governor Viral Acharya said Governments that "don't respect the RBI's independence will sooner or later incur the wrath of financial markets, ignite economic fire, and come to rue the day they undermined an important regulatory institution".



Dr Urjit Patel is a thorough professional with impeccable integrity. He has been in the Reserve Bank of India for about 6 years as Deputy Governor and Governor. He leaves behind a great legacy. We will miss him immensely. **NARENDRA MODI**

The Government acknowledges with deep sense of appreciation the services rendered by Dr Patel to this country both in his capacity as the Governor and the Deputy Governor of the RBI. It was a pleasure for me to deal with him and benefit from his scholarship. **ARUN JAITLEY**

I think, this is something that all Indians should be concerned about because strength of our institutions is really important for our growth, sustainable growth and equity in the economy. **RAGHURAM RAJAN**

RBI Governor is resigning because he's protecting the institution of RBI. Taking away reserves from RBI to save your skin is an act against this nation. I am very proud that people from all walks of life and institutions are standing up to it. **RAHUL GANDHI**

the stock market and give a push to the lending scenario.

Soon after Patel quit as RBI Governor, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday lauded his contribution saying he steered the banking system "from chaos to order" and ensured discipline. He said Patel is a thorough professional with "impeccable integrity".

The PM said Patel leaves behind a great legacy and will be missed immensely. "Dr Patel is an economist of a very high calibre with a deep and insightful understanding of macro-economic issues. He steered the banking system from chaos to order and ensured discipline. Under his leadership, the RBI brought financial stability," the PM tweeted.

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley too appreciated the service rendered by Patel saying it was a pleasure to deal with him and he has benefitted from his scholarship. "The Government acknowledges with deep sense of appreciation the services rendered by Dr Patel to this country, both in his capacity as the Governor and the Deputy Governor of the RBI. It was a pleasure for me to deal with him and benefit from his scholarship," Jaitley tweeted.

The Opposition has slammed the Government over Patel's resignation. Emerging from the Opposition parties' meeting, Congress president Rahul Gandhi said, "RBI Governor is resigning because he's protecting the institution of RBI. Taking away reserves from RBI to save your skin is an act against this nation. I am very proud that people from all walks of life and institutions are standing up to it".

It is understood that with an eye on the next year's poll, the Government would like to corner a portion of the RBI reserve to launch series of populist measures. The need for liquidity for the MSME sector and NBFC are also uppermost on the agenda of the Government to prevent slide in

against this nation. I am very proud that people from all walks of life and institutions are standing up to it."

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said, "From CBI to RBI, institutions have become total disasters; it is matter of great shock. BJP is behaving like dictators, there should be a campaign against this rule."

Senior Congress leader Kapil Sibal said, "People he (PM Modi) appointed are resigning, first Arvind Subramanian left as the Chief Economic Adviser and now it's Patel. The economy is suffering and Modi thinks that he's the biggest economist and he doesn't need them, so they are resigning."

Former Finance Minister P Chidambaram said he is saddened but not surprised by the resignation of Patel as RBI Governor and claimed no self-respecting scholar or academic can work in the NDA Government.

In a series of tweets, the senior Congress leader said the last meeting of the RBI Board held on November 19 was the "day of reckoning" and Patel should have resigned on that day. "Patel may have thought that Government will re-trace its steps. I knew it would not. Good he quit before another humiliating meeting. Saddened, not surprised, by Patel's resignation. No self-respecting scholar or academic can work in this Government," he said.

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Vijay Mallya speaks to the media as he leaves Westminster Magistrates Court in London on Monday

London court orders Mallya's extradition

Liquor baron gets 14-day time to appeal against order

PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/LONDON

A UK court on Monday ordered the extradition of liquor baron Vijay Mallya, the fugitive businessman who is wanted in India for fraud and money laundering involving an estimated ₹9,000 crore of a consortium led by the SBI and another set of loans by the IDBI. Westminster Magistrates' Court Chief Magistrate Emma Arbuthnot ruled that Mallya

can be extradited to India to stand trial on the charges brought by the CBI and the ED. The judge referred the extradition case to Secretary of State and Mallya will have 14-day time to appeal against the order.

The order is significant in the high-profile extradition trial that has lasted over a year and comes close on the heels of successful extradition of AgustaWestland accused Christian Michel. However, there is little hope that Mallya could be brought back to India shortly. His lawyers are set to challenge the order in the high court and that entire process could go on for months.

Hailing the UK court, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said the offender who benefited during the UPA rule is

being brought to the book by the NDA Government.

"Great Day for India. No one who cheats India will go scot free. The judgement of UK's Court is welcome. An offender benefited during the UPA. The NDA brings him to book," Jaitley said in a tweet. The 62-year-old former Kingfisher Airlines boss was on bail since his arrest on an extradition warrant in April last year. Mallya called the decision to allow his extradition to India "unfortunate".

Earlier, Mallya sought to disprove the narrative before the reporters outside the case that he has "stolen" the money and said his offer to repay the principal amount to the Indian banks was "not bogus".

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21 Opp parties vow to block BJP's comeback

SP, BSP give meeting a miss

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Top leaders of Opposition parties on Monday decided to come together to prevent the BJP from coming back to power in the next year's Lok Sabha polls.

In a meeting of Opposition parties attended by leaders and representatives of 21 political parties, including Congress president Rahul Gandhi, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, former Union Ministers Sharad Pawar, Sharad Yadav, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and her Delhi counterpart Arvind Kejriwal, it was resolved to take every possible step to defeat the BJP and protect the important institutions in the country.

However, two major political parties of Uttar Pradesh arch rivals Samajwadi Party and Bahujan Samaj Party were conspicuous by their absence. Both the parties in recent times have fought together in some of the important by-elections.

Briefing the media about the meeting, while Rahul said there was consensus that all



Congress president Rahul Gandhi addresses the media as Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and TDP president N Chandrababu Naidu, NCP chief Sharad Pawar, Loktantrik Janata Dal leader Sharad Yadav, Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad, DMK president MK Stalin, and other Opposition party leaders look on during a Press conference after a meeting of Opposition parties to discuss a grand alliance against the BJP for the 2019 Lok Sabha election in New Delhi on Monday

parties will work together to defeat BJP/RSS, Mamata said the Opposition leaders will soon meet the President of India over misuse of agencies and Government institutions and accused the Modi Government of behaving like a dictatorial regime.

Rahul said there is consensus among Opposition parties

to work together to defeat the BJP and protect India's institutions. The meeting was coordinated by TDP supremo N Chandrababu Naidu. The Congress president said India needs a Government that does not put a conspiratorial lid over multiple corruption scams like Rafale nor becomes an abettor to the

escape of bank defaulters. "India needs a Government where economic growth focuses on addressing the concerns of small traders, shopkeepers and micro, small and medium enterprises that have been devastated by demonetisation and the ill-planned implementation of GST," said Rahul.

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Guv: Performance of state varsities has improved

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

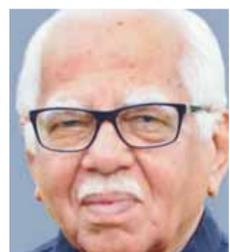
Uttar Pradesh Governor and Chancellor of state universities Ram Naik said that under his tenure the performance of universities had improved with regularisation of session, cheating-free examinations and holding of convocations as per schedule.

The Governor said that he also discontinued the colonial relic of hat and gown worn by students during the convocation.

Addressing media persons at Raj Bhawan in Lucknow on Monday, Naik claimed that during the past one year, there was an increase of 5 per cent (51-56 per cent) in the number of women students being awarded degrees by 26 universities. "Besides receiving medals, the girls outnumbered the boys by bagging 66 per cent medals," he said.

Naik said that when he took over as Governor in 2014, he was Chancellor of 25 state universities and their number rose to 29 in 2018.

The Governor also re-



ed the contention of promoters of private universities that the state government was attempting to undermine their autonomy by bringing a new UP Private University Act. "The discussion on the new bill on private universities is underway but nothing has been finalised. The bill has provisions for introducing more transparency in functioning of private universities and checking irregularities in the award of honorary degrees and other irregularities," he said.

Naik clarified that after reaching a consensus on the bill, it would be sent to him

for approval by the state government and if he found any flaw in it, he would refer it back to the state government.

The Governor said that the state government had assured him that the bill would be introduced in Assembly only after a consensus was reached with different stake holders.

Naik also lauded the role of Deputy Chief Minister and Dinesh Sharma, who holds the Higher Education portfolio, for his effort to improve higher education in the state.

Naik said that use of CCTV cameras in all state universities during examinations had ended the menace of copying and contributed in improving the quality of education. "This along with other measures introduced by state universities for checking cheating led to fall in number of students appearing for examinations," he said.

The Governor said that for the first time, convocations in all 26 state universities were completed.

Kushwaha parts with NDA, Govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After sulking for the past few months, Rashtriya Lok Samta Party (RLSP) president Upendra Kushwaha on Monday resigned from the Union Council of Ministers accusing Prime Minister Narendra Modi of reducing Cabinet to a "rubber stamp", "betraying" backward classes, and giving Bihar only "jumlas".

Making the announcement a day ahead of Parliament's Winter Session and counting of the votes in five State Assembly polls, the RLSP leader from Bihar said he is open to joining the Opposition alliance. He claimed the BJP-led NDA will not be able to win a single seat in the State. Kushwaha had been targeting the BJP and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar for weeks.

Congress congratulated Kushwaha saying the former Minister rejected the PM and decided to walk out of the NDA as he was distressed by the harassment of farmers, youth, women security and poor governance by the BJP and Nitish.

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CAPSULE

EX-JAMIA V-C MUSHIRUL HASAN DIES AT 69

New Delhi: Noted historian and former Jamia Millia Islamia vice chancellor Mushirul Hasan passed away here early on Monday after prolonged illness, the university said. He was 69.

SENSEX DIVES 714 POINTS POST CRITICAL EXIT POLLS

Mumbai: In its worst session in two months, Indian equity benchmark Sensex on Monday tumbled by 714 points after "unfavourable" State exit poll results for the ruling BJP.

AGUSTA FIXER MICHEL'S REMAND EXTENDED

New Delhi: Christian Michel James, the alleged middleman chargesheeted and arrested in the graft-tainted AgustaWestland VVIP chopper deal, was allowed by a Delhi court on Monday to be interrogated further by the CBI for five more days.

Farmers told to play radio to save self, big cats too

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

With sugarcane harvest approaching and controversy over killing of Maharashtra's Avni tigress in mind, forest officials in the Tarai Belt of Uttar Pradesh are going from village to village, creating awareness on essential dos and don'ts on how people should avoid conflict with predators like leopards and striped big cats.

People have been told to stay in group and carry sticks and torches while going to forests for defecation or other reasons.

In case anyone is alone, he should play radio on the way so that the big cats keep distance. They have been asked to keep doors of homes locked at night. Also since, tiger often lift animals at night, the livestock should be properly protected.

"We are also educating locals

in identifying the pug marks so that they can avoid confrontation with big cats. Sometimes, hyena is also mistaken for leopards. Also locals are being sensitising that how tigers when left to themselves, invariably avoid confrontation with humans," said Hemant Kumar, chief conservator of Forest, Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh.

Talking about the mitigating efforts being taken in his region, he said circulars in local languages as well as the posters illustrating pugmarks of predators like leopards, tigers and hyena have been distributed to help people identify the animals when venturing in the field. In case they sense its presence, they should inform the officials instead of tackling with the wild animals on their own.

The locals have been provided the numbers of the officials



to be contacted.

"At nights people usually sleep outside guarding their pump sets. But we have asked them not to do so as personnel safety is more important. We have also suggested them not to get agitated in case the big cats kill their livestock. The Government provides ample compensation in such cases," said Kumar, adding there are insurance compensa-

Forest department issues dos & don'ts list for UP villagers to avoid conflict with predators in sugarcane field

tion also. The villagers are also advised that make noise by beating the drums while entering the field for harvesting the crop will prompt the animal to flee the cropland on its own.

Kumar explained that during winter, tigers prefer to look for easy prey hiding in sugarcane fields. It is only when people surrounds the animal or try to mob or catch its glimpse that the predator attacks in retaliation. It's advisable to give way so that the predator goes back to the forests.

As human-tiger conflicts are

on increase due to various reasons, experts feel that such 'do and don'ts' have become a need of the hour over the years to take the locals in confidence and make them aware about the importance of tigers as a flagship species and the importance for its conservation for the biodiversity surrounding them.

A recent report "Living with the Wild: Mitigating conflict between human and big cat species in Uttar Pradesh" by the Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) and UP Forest Department says it all. "UP has the second-highest incidence of leopard-related human fatalities as well as tiger attacks on humans, and sees a large number of livestock kills. This is a region of great interest with respect to conflict between humans and large predators," it said.

As per the report, around

180 cases of conflicts between humans and big cats (tigers, leopards) leading to human deaths and injuries have been recorded between 2000 and 2018 in and around the Dudhwa-Pilibhit Tiger landscape in Uttar Pradesh. Of these, 98 pertained to tigers.

According to the WTI report, tiger attacks occurred largely inside forests or on their fringes (54.79 per cent), while (31.5 per cent) occurred in crop fields, primarily sugarcane. Only a small proportion of attacks (13.7 per cent) were recorded to have occurred within houses or near homes.

Only a small percentage of tiger attacks occurred at greater distances away from the forest edge. The data suggested that most attacks by tigers are due to accidental encounters between humans and tigers, as per the

report. Attacks by tigers were higher when people visited forests to collect firewood and other non-timber products (38.6 per cent), people doing odd jobs, sitting, moving, defecating or urinating in the village periphery or fringe forests.

Contrastingly, leopard attacks were mainly concentrated within or near village boundaries (92.1 per cent), with 47.6 per cent of attacks occurring inside houses or near homesteads, 15.87 per cent occurring within village peripheries and 28.6 per cent taking place in agricultural fields. Vivek Menon from WTI summed up in the report by saying that it's by understanding people, animals and the needs of the twin, and by devising a local settlement of these needs, that the single largest threat to wild animals and people can find resolution.

Develop Gorakhpur as education hub: Prez

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Advocating that Gorakhpur be developed as an education hub, President Ram Nath Kovind said on Monday that education was the key to development of the country and without the development of Poorvanchal, Uttar Pradesh could not move ahead.

Addressing the Founder's Week celebration of Maharana Pratap Shiksha Parishad on the Gorakhnath temple campus in Gorakhpur, the President said that Gorakhnath Peeth had made important contributions in spreading awareness and knowledge in the east UP region. "It is high time that Gorakhpur be made an education hub. It should emerge as a platform to spread light of knowledge across eastern UP," Kovind said.

Speaking about the Maharana Pratap Shiksha Parishad that has been imparting education to children since 1925, the President said, "It has helped in building character of youths by inculcating in them respect for culture, devotion for nation and readiness for social work."

Recalling the great men from the region like Paramhans of Nath sect, Sufi saint Roshan Ali Shah, Baba Raghav Das, Munshi Premchand, Ram Prasad Bismil and Firaq Gorakhpuri, Kovind asked the students to follow the path of Maharana Pratap, a Rajput warrior from the Mewar region of Rajasthan.

The President also praised the contribution of saints from



President Ram Nath Kovind and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath during the founder's week celebration of Maharana Pratap Shiksha Parishad, in Gorakhpur, Monday PTI

Nath sect in the field of education and their contributions to society and during the freedom struggle.

Exhorting students to follow the path shown by Maharana Pratap, Kovind said that UP had the highest number of youth in the country who could change the scenario by contributing in the development of society and making Gorakhpur a knowledge city by 2032.

On the occasion, the President also honoured 10 meritorious students and a teacher of Maharana Pratap Shiksha Parishad.

Lauding Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath for all-round development of Gorakhpur, Kovind

said that it was his first visit to the city as President of India but he had been coming here for the last two decades regularly. "The city is fast changing and all credit goes to the Chief Minister," he said.

The President also expressed sadness on the blocking of roads during his visit to different parts of the country, creating problems for the local people. "This is one reason why I try to visit less places," he disclosed.

In his address, Governor Ram Naik said that though UP had given nine Prime Ministers, but Kovind was the first President from the state and this was his maiden visit to

Gorakhpur.

Calling upon students to be physically active and regular studies, the Governor said that balancing education and physical activity could bring laurels to a student.

Earlier, President Kovind visited Gorakhnath temple and worshipped the deity for about 30 minutes. Kovind also paid floral tributes at the samadhi of Mahant Digvijay Nath, who founded the Maharana Pratap Shiksha Parishad, and Mahant Avaidyanath. He is the third President to visit the Gorakhpur and the first in the last five decades. Later, the President left for New Delhi from Gorakhpur airport.

Cops want Jeetu to own up inspector's death

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The UP Police agencies, including Special Task Force and Special Investigation Team (SIT), probing the Bulandshahr violence case are reportedly focusing on coercing arrested armyman Jitendra Malik alias Jeetu Fauji to own up the death of Inspector Subodh Kumar Singh.

On the other hand, it appears that no serious effort is being made to nab the prime accused having allegiance to right wing outfits as they are freely appearing in television interviews and uploading videos on social sites, pleading their innocence.

Even as four top police officers, including district police chief of Bulandshahr were shunted out as the Chief Minister felt that the incident was a well orchestrated conspiracy to disturb harmony, the cops seem to be least bothered on dropping the net on the prime accused ostensibly due to their right leanings.

Sources said that after producing armyman Jeetu Fauji in Bulandshahr court for the alleged killing of the inspector, the STF and local police claimed in case diaries that the accused had confessed to the crime.

Ironically, they failed to produce the murder weapon used by the armyman to kill the inspector on the fateful day. Interestingly, the armyman has denied his involvement in the killing of the inspector. He has said that he was present at the spot but neither was he involved in the violence nor did he open fire at anyone.

The team probing the case sought custody remand of Jeetu to grill him further and recover the murder weapon but it was overturned.

Sources said that all police agencies were merely focusing on Jeetu and were making little effort to nab prime accused Yogesh Raj, Shikhar Agarwal and Upendra Raghav who have connections with the

right wing organisations.

All three have been roaming around freely despite being named in the FIR as the cops have probably given them the long rope to avoid the wrath of the men who matter.

Both Raj and Agarwal had released their videos claiming their innocence and accusing the inspector for last Monday's violence. On Sunday, Agarwal appeared in an interview in the office of a TV channel. Sources claimed that despite senior officers knowing about the presence of the accused in the TV channel studio, no initiative was taken to nab them.

In fact, the SIT is looking for another accused, Hemant Chirangawati, who is said to be close to prime accused Yogesh Raj. The youth figured in most agitations in the district and carried illegal firearm. The youth was also seen standing with a handgun with the mob that attacked the inspector last Monday. The cops raided his house but he absconded before the police reached there.

CM to attend 'Sita Swayamvar' in Nepal on December 12

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will participate in the 'Sita Swayamvar' programme to be held in Janakpur (Nepal) on December 12.

The government spokesman said here on Monday that the Chief Minister would have a darshan of Janaki temple before attending the main function in the Himalayan nation.

The spokesman said that the Chief Minister would also have a meeting with political leaders in the Madhesh Bhawan before attending the main function.

"The Chief Minister will also partake in a bhog which will also be attended by over 500 sants," the spokesman added.

Opium worth over ₹1.07 cr seized

Lucknow (PNS): Sleuths of Central Excise seized opium worth over ₹1.07 crore in the international market from two smugglers in Barabanki late on Sunday night.

Official sources said on Monday that a man and his nephew were bringing around 71.5 kilograms of opium on their vehicle when the sleuths intercepted them near Barabanki toll plaza on Lucknow-Gorakhpur nation-

al highway on Sunday night. The contraband is worth ₹1.07 crore in international market.

The arrested drug smugglers were identified as Satnam Singh and his nephew Bittu Singh of Pilibhit district of Uttar Pradesh. During interrogation, the duo admitted that they were bringing the opium from Siliguri in West Bengal and were to deliver it in the NCR (National Capital Region).

WOMAN LOCKED INSIDE HOME BY SON, DIES OF HUNGER: POLICE

Shahjahanpur: An octogenarian woman, who was locked inside her home in Shahjahanpur allegedly by her son, was found dead, police said on Monday. They suspect the woman, 80, died of hunger. The body was found on Sunday after neighbours complained to police about foul smell coming out of the house.

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Akhilesh faces a tough challenge from Shivpal

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party's youngest president till date, Akhilesh Yadav, now faces a tough challenge from none other than his uncle Shivpal Singh Yadav, who now heads Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party (Lohia).

The chief of the fledgling PSPL demonstrated his political clout and organisational strength by organising a hugely successful rally in Lucknow on Sunday. The rally has given a clear message that Shivpal Yadav is ready for a no holds barred battle with his nephew and Samajwadi Party and that he is not interested in returning to the SP fold. Samajwadi Party now faces the uphill task of organising a rally in Lucknow ahead of 2019 Lok Sabha elections to match the crowd strength mobilised by the PSPL.

By adopting a strident anti-temple stance, Shivpal Yadav has added to the woes of Samajwadi Party, which had adopted a soft stance towards the Yogi Adityanath-led Bharatiya Janata Party government, issues concerning communal faultlines and mobilisations for the Ram temple construction in Ayodhya.



"By adopting the anti-temple stance, the PSPL gave out a clear message to Muslims to think about their long bonding with Samajwadi Party. That way the PSPL has succeeded in making a concerted bid to make inroads into SP's core vote bank — Muslims," said a former SP MP who is now with the PSPL.

By his strong anti-temple stance, Shivpal tried to fight the stigma of being in cahoots with the BJP by referring to the tough action taken by Mulayam Singh Yadav against karsewaks for protecting the Babri mosque at Ayodhya in 1990 and also the mosque demolition in 1992.

The presence of Mulayam Singh Yadav and his younger daughter-in-law Aparna Yadav at the rally immensely helped Shivpal to demonstrate that he



was not alone in the family.

By publicly blessing Shivpal Yadav, Mulayam Singh Yadav indicated that he may be with his son Akhilesh but his heart also throbbled for his younger brother Shivpal. This helped Shivpal Yadav in stamping the point that he was not defying the wishes of Netaji and this is being projected as a huge success of Shivpal.

Besides, a large number of former Samajwadi Party MLAs, MPs and members from Yadav community have already shifted their allegiance to the PSPL, making a substantial dent in Yadav vote bank of the Samajwadi Party.

Presence of former Rajya Sabha MP Sukhram Singh Yadav, who is son of tall Yadav leader Harmohan Singh Yadav, gave a clear message that the

Yadav clan could no longer be taken for granted by the Samajwadi Party leadership.

A PSPL leader said, "The huge turnout at the rally also sent out a clear message to the BJP that this party should not be taken for granted. Besides, Shivpal has the political acumen and clout in the state to establish PSPL as an independent political force.

"The rally demonstrated that PSPL is a broad-based mainstream political party enjoying the support of OBCs, Dalits and Muslims and other sections of society.

Shivpal faced humiliation in Samajwadi Party but he has the strength to fight back and it is impossible to write him off from the political scene of UP," said PSPL spokesman Deepak Mishra. The rally also has a message for the alliance of anti-BJP parties for 2019 Lok Sabha polls. Sources in PSPL claimed that Sunday's rally demonstrated that it would not be easy for anti-BJP parties to ignore PSPL for any alternative alliance.

They claimed that the PSPL has the capacity to spoil the electoral arithmetic of anti-BJP parties if it was ignored.

Two youths loot ₹1.10 cr from petrol pump van

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a sensational broad daylight loot in Kushinagar, armed miscreants shot a driver and looted ₹1.10 crore from the van of a petrol pump on way to deposit the cash in a bank branch near Hata Kotwali on Kaptanganj road on Monday.

As per reports, two unidentified youths on a motorcycle followed the van carrying cash from the petrol pump. They intercepted the van at some distance from the bank and took the petrol pump employees, including the driver, at gun point. When the driver tried to resist, one of the youths opened fire at him.

Later, warning the other employees on the van of grave consequences, the miscreants looted the cash and sped off from the scene.

The van staff raised an alarm but no one responded to their SOS. Upon learning about the incident, senior police officers rushed to the spot to supervise investigation. A case was registered and investigations are on.

Elsewhere, in Muzaffarnagar, unidentified miscreants shot a property dealer over old enmity.

SSP of Muzaffarnagar, Sudhir Kumar, said that the miscreants came on a motorcycle and shot Niraj Chouhan (40) in Khatauli town on Sunday evening. Chouhan was

rushed to a hospital where he was pronounced dead upon arrival.

Kumar said that the police suspect old enmity to be the reason for the killing. A case was registered and investigations are on.

In Balrampur, a seven-year-old girl was raped by her neighbour in a village in Utraula area.

The girl was playing outside her house when 33-year-old Paras took her to a secluded place and raped her. The victim is recuperating in a hospital. The accused has been arrested.

In Kannauj, a potato farmer, who had a debt of over ₹3 lakh, committed suicide by hanging himself at Siyarmau village in Jasoda area on Sunday evening. As per reports, Subhash Pal (50) had loans of over ₹3 lakh.

In his suicide note, Pal stated that he had 16 bigha land and his potato crop was damaged due to which he could not repay his loan. He also blamed the District Magistrate for his extreme step.

Soon after the incident, officials of district administration visited the farmer's house, consoled his death and assured his family of all possible help.

Last year, the Yogi Adityanath government had announced a ₹32,000-crore scheme to waive crop loans of small and marginal farmers.

अखिल भारतीय आयुर्विज्ञान संस्थान, रायपुर (छ.ग.)
All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Raipur (C.G.)
Tatibandh, G.E. Road, Raipur - 492 099 (CG), www.aiimsraipur.edu.in

No. AIIMS-RPR/Rect./Pub./SE/2018/536 Date: 11.12.2018
Director, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Raipur Chhattisgarh, GoI, invites e-tender for following:

E-SHORT TENDER CALL NOTICE

Tender Title	Estimated Cost	Published on CPPP/ Website	Pre-bid Meeting Date	Closing date
Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract of 25LPH Ion Exchange RO Water Purifier and USHA 150L Usha Water Cooler installed at AIIMS Raipur and AIIMS Residential Complex, Kabir Nagar, Raipur	Rs. 26,02,500/-	28/11/2018	NA	17/12/2018 03:00 PM

The details terms & conditions are available on the website - www.aiimsraipur.edu.in and CPP Portal www.e-procure.gov.in
Executive Engineer (Civil), AIIMS Raipur

North Central Railway, Allahabad

ABSENTEE NOTICE

No. T/Goods/T.U./Un.Ab/2017 Date: 04.12.2018
Name- Shri Pawan Kumar-II, (Goods Gaurd)
S/o- Shri Vijay Prasad,
Vill- Pauna,
PO- Guraru,
Distt- Gaya (Bihar)
Pin- 824118

This is to inform that you has been running absent since 16.05.2017, that you must report the office of Sr. DOM (Co.)/ALD, ground Floor, DRM Office, NCR, Allahabad within ten (10) days from the date of publishing of this notice. Otherwise, it will be deemed that you are not at all interested to continue in Railway Service and Railway administration will be compelled to ex-party decision against you.

Asstt.Divl.Operating Manager (Co.)
N.C.Railway, Allahabad

1245/18 Ad @CPRONCR

CLASSIFIEDS

NOTICE

NOTICE

Be it known to all that I have changed my son's name Raj Mohan from Rajan forever for all purpose. Radhaya Shyam Gupta, 567/93, Anandnagar, Baraha Road, Lucknow.

NOTICE

We Mr. Rakesh Kumar Singhal S/o Mr. Braham Prakash & Mr. Kinshuk Mohan S/o Mr. Rakesh Kumar Singhal, R/o K-938, Sector-K, Aashiana, Kanpur Road, Lucknow-226012 have lost our 15 original property receipts of Plot D-267, DFL Garden City, Purshani, Raibareilly Road, Lucknow.

Details of missing Receipts : GDN/CRB/00663/1211, GDN/CRB/00039/0312, GDN/CRB/00076/0312, GDN/CRB/00338/0412, GDN/CRB/00325/0612, GDN/CRB/00374/0912, GDN/CRB/00377/0912, GDN/CRB/00440/1212, GDN/CRB/00356/0313, GDN/CRB/00357/0313, GDN/CRB/00390/0613, GDN/CRB/00391/0613, GDN/CRB/00025/1013, GDN/CRB/0418/00005, GDN/CRB/0518/00055

Congress gain to affect SP, BSP more than BJP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Congress gaining an upper hand in three central states of India that went to polls recently, as predicted by exit polls, will have far more affect on two regional parties — Samajwadi Party and Bahujan Samaj Party — in Uttar Pradesh than the party's arch rival Bharatiya Janata Party.

Both Samajwadi Party and Bahujan Samaj Party had almost written off Congress when it came to formation of a grand alliance and also fielded candidates in these states and held the grand old party responsible for the present mess in the country.

Now Congress leaders feel that if they emerge victor in these three states, then ahead of the 2019 Lok Sabha polls they would be able to call some shots and strike a deal, if it hap-

ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

pens, on its own terms even in UP.

"BSP chief Mayawati has not just used abusive language against Congress but besides fielding candidates in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, also stitched an alliance with regional outfit in Chhattisgarh," said UP Congress Committee general secretary Siddharth Priya Srivastava.

Srivastava was airing his opinion on whether the Congress would like to join hands with the SP and BSP after the performance in the three central Indian states.

"Besides BSP, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav had also attacked Congress in a poll

rally saying that if they (SP-BSP) did not give space to Congress the grand alliance, where would it go," pointed out Srivastava.

"The two parties have forgotten that in the 2009 parliamentary elections, they contested on their own and won 22 seats. The result of the elections in three central Indian states will be a lesson for SP and BSP. It will strengthen the belief that the Congress can defeat the BJP in 2019 Lok Sabha polls on its own and hence it will be beneficial for them to come together and share the imminent victory," Srivastava stressed.

"Earlier, we made a mistake by going for alliance with the BSP and tasted defeat so the Congressmen want to go it alone but the a final call will be taken by the party high command," Srivastava added.

Protect secular identity of nation: Patkar

Lucknow (PMNS): Well-known for her association with Narmada Bachao Andolan, social worker Medha Patkar said that the Constitution of India had given the country the identity of a secular nation and it was the responsibility of every citizen to protect that identity. Addressing a programme organised in Bharatiya Sadan at Nangalmafi area of Shakumbri Devi at Saharanpur on Monday, Patkar said that the boundaries of the Constitution had to be kept in mind while initiating any struggle for the rights of an individual.

North Central Railway, Allahabad

E-Procurement Tender Notice No. 18/08 Dated: 03.12.2018
On behalf of the President of India, Sr. Divisional Material Manager, North Central Railway Allahabad invites the e-procurement tenders.

S.N.	Tender No	Description	Quantity	EMD (₹)
1	19185736	FREQUENCY SELECTIVE VOLT- METER, MODEL- FSV-03 MAKE- APLAB OR EQUIVALENT. TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION AS PER ANNEXURE 'A' ATTACHED.	20 Nos.	54700/-
2	19186548	Supply Installation testing and commissioning of 12 channel voice data logger/Monitor for control circuits as per RDSO Specification No. RDSO/SPN/TC/38-2002 Rev. 1.1. (with Amdt.No.1) consisting of 3 unit for 4 channel voice data recording and processing unit (VDRPU), Programming Terminal as per spec.01 No. 19 Inch Rack 32U-1 No. and UPS I KVA-1 No.	02 Nos.	42000/-

Tender Opening Date: 02.01.2019, NOTE :-1. The complete information of above E-Procurement Tenders are available on IREPS website i.e. <http://www.ireps.gov.in>. 2. Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above Tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with class III, signature certificates issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. 3. Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall only be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form / letter head if attached by vendor shall be straight way ignored and shall not be considered. 4. Documents being attached should be signed on their body. 5. Allocation for "Cost of drawings" is Z- 650 and for "Earnest Money deposit (EMD)" is Deposit Misc. stores-00844517. The above tender notice have been uploaded on "<http://www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in>" in case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the IREPS website may be approached. 1248/18 Ad

North Central Railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @CPRONCR

A stage-managed murderous assault that went awry

BJYM LEADER'S KILLING

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

With the arrest of five friends of BJYM leader Pratyush Mani Tripathi in his murder case, the Mahanagar police said that Tripathi had staged a murderous assault on himself but it later went awry claiming his life. In the half-baked 'good work', the police are yet to decide the IPC section to be slapped on the culprits. The police are yet to find out any eyewitness or CCTV footage to corroborate the crime of the accused persons. "Section 304 of IPC for attack on a man when the intention is not to kill but the attack causes death of the man will be imposed besides a criminal conspiracy," Mahanagar CO SK Singh said.



The five accused held for BJYM leader's murder on Monday

Pioneer

Giving details about the cracking the case, ASP, trans-Gomti, Harendra Kumar said Pratyush wanted to frame his rivals Salman, Adnan, Sheebu, Rohit and Dhruv, all of Aminabad, and so he involved his friends Anil Kumar Rana of Sarojini Nagar, Ashish Awasthi, Mahendra Gupta and Prabhakar Kumar aka Rishi, trio of Madaian and Amit Awasthi of Aliganj in the nefarious plan.

"Tripathi wanted a strong case against Salman and his friends due to his rivalry. He was suggested by some person that if he planned an attack on him and suf-

fered deep cut wounds, subsequently, it would pave way for the registration of a case of murderous assault against Salman and his friends," the ASP said.

As per the ASP, on the fateful, day, Tripathi, along with Mahendra Gupta went to Gadbadjhala market in Aminabad from where he purchased a machete for Rs 250. Tripathi later sent Mahendra to a medical store to purchase gloves so that finger prints could not be obtained on the knife used in attack. Anil Rana was asked to attack Tripathi. Later, Tripathi went to IT crossing where Amit Awasthi and Prabhakar Kumar met him. The group went to Mahanagar and while

returning to Aminabad, they decided to execute the murderous attack on Tripathi on his insistence. Anil Rana in the first attack was to slash Tripathi's left hand and this made Tripathi blow his top and asked Rana to attack in such a way that it looked like a murderous assault. "In the second attack, the point of the knife punctured Tripathi's lungs and he began to bleed. His friends got scared and they fled the scene abandoning him at the spot. Later, Tripathi died at the hospital," the ASP said.

He said the police were yet to recover the knife which the attackers threw in Kukrail drain while fleeing the scene.

Tripathi's wife seeks CBI probe

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

BJYM leader Pratyush Mani Tripathi's wife Pratima raised doubt over the police claim of solving the blind murder case by arresting five of his friends and demanded a CBI probe into the case. She had sought explanation from the Lucknow police on 11 points and threatened to stage fast unto death at the BJP office if her demand was not met.

Pratima said her husband was demanding security from the police after Salman and his aides attacked him on November 25. She said police did character assassination by propagating a fake case which Salman's sister had lodged and later made him guilty of self-staged murder when he was no more.

She asked why the police did not make the post-mortem report public and why it did not show her the CCTV footage as yet. Pratima also raised doubt over police enthusiasm in arresting Salman and Adnan who were already named in a murderous assault case.



Aspirants filling up forms at Aliganj Polytechnic where a job fair was organised on Monday

Pioneer

Tiger safety on mind, Forest dept launches mock drill

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The Forest department has begun mock tiger drills under the Tiger Safety Month in order to sensitise the people on how to react if a big cat enters their area. Chief wildlife warden Pawan Kumar said that they would be carrying this out at several places in the state, including Lucknow. This was happening for the first time in the state, he said. Kumar, while talking to *The Pioneer*, gave details of the activities which they were carrying out this month, which has been named as 'Tiger Safety Month' because it is the breeding period and important for tigers. "This will also include giving the gram pradhans a certificate calling them 'Tiger Guardians' and forming a Primary Response Team to alert the Forest department," he said.

Broadly, the activities which have been planned out are under two modules which include firstly management of the tiger in the sugarcane fields and secondly its management in the forest. "December is a crucial period because there should be less of disturbance in the forest as it creates stress in the animal and also disturbs the cubs. We have been doing this earlier but this time it is with a focused approach involving the villagers because if we are able to save the tiger we will be able to save the other wild beasts in the forest," he said. The Forest department has also selected a tagline for this which is 'Baagh ke bachche kar rahe hai baagh ka intezaar, baagh ko pahuchne do apne parivar.' The chief wildlife warden said that outside the forest,



in order to have a good relationship with the villagers, they had also started vaccination of cattle and health camps in the villages. "This is being done so that the villagers feel associated with the Forest department and to apprise the people that they will be available at the time of emergency," he said. Kumar said that they had also formed a Primary Response Team which would include gram pradhans. "As soon as these teams get any information of a tiger or a leopard straying into their areas they would contact us. This will be a proactive approach towards the issue." He said that they would also give certificates to the gram pradhans calling them 'Guardians of the Tigers' in the sensitive areas and entrusting them with the responsibility of saving the tigers.

Pawan said that they were also using technology to further the cause of saving tigers under which solar-backed Anider technology would be used to keep the tiger and the leopard away from the village. "This is a kind of Wi-Fi which creates a spark and a noise if an animal tries to enter the village," he added.

To tackle the floating tiger population which hides itself in the sugarcane fields, he said that the villagers should first understand that this population was useful for the eco system because it ate the wild boars and the blue-bulls. "The instruction that we will be giving to the villagers is that they should wear a helmet and a neckpad while going for harvesting sugar. They should go in groups and harvest in small portions of the fields. The people will also be advised as not to cut the sugarcane in a sitting style because the tiger could mistake them for a wild animal and pounce on them," he added.

Kumar said that in their interaction with the villagers they found that most of them were stepping outside at 1 am in the night to switch off the pumps which were switched on to irrigate their lands. "We have suggested that they should introduce auto-cut so that they did not have to step out which was risky in terms of encountering a wild animal," he added.

He said that within the forests the staff would be given all kinds of training for handling the tiger.

Several questions remain unanswered

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Even as the police claimed to have solved the BJYM leader's mysterious murder case on Monday, several questions remained unanswered.

SSP Kalanidhi Naithani said one of the accused Mahendra Gupta was found purchasing gloves from a medical store and the image was captured in the CCTV. But the police did not recover the gloves and it will weaken the case if not recovered.

The police said Tripathi in connivance with his friends had planned a murderous assault on him several days back. But the police failed to tell why they chose Mahanagar locality to execute their plan. The frustrated-looking SHO Mahanagar said: "We had a hard luck that Tripathi's nefarious plan was executed in Mahanagar." He later explained that one of the accused Rana dealt in business of providing labourers and they had gone to a site in Mahanagar where from they had to purchase mud. Police claims, however, looked flimsy. The crime took place at a place which had no CCTV camera access. "The crime scene is a little away from

range of a CCTV camera in the locality," the ASP, trans-Gomti admitted. The police were left agape when asked why Tripathi and his aides chose the lane in which Tripathi was found lying in pool of blood. In answer to a question if Tripathi and his friends decided the place instantly while returning to their houses, Aliganj CO Deepak Singh said the police had not ended the investigation and several facts related to the case were yet to be investigated. It was also beyond one's comprehension that Tripathi did not cry when he was attacked first time by his friend Anil Rana and he spurred on Rana to attack him second time and with a full force. The police failed to explain in exact terms what work Tripathi had that he visited Mahanagar on the fateful day. The police claimed that the attack was executed between 10.35 pm and 10.35 pm and the police got the information at 10.40 pm. It was also claimed that the police rushed Tripathi to Trauma Centre where he later died. "If the police reached the scene within five minutes after the attack, then how Tripathi died of excessive bleeding," sources in Police department pointed

Police lie exposed in Tripathi's case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The arrest of five friends of BJYM leader Pratyush Mani Tripathi nailed the police lie and forced them to backtrack from their previous claim. A day after the mysterious murder, the Lucknow police had arrested Salman and his brother Adnan on the complaint of Tripathi's wife Pratima, who also had named Salman's friends Sheebu, Dhruv and Rohit. A case of murder and rioting, while armed with weapons, was registered at Kaiserbagh police station against Salman, his brother and his above named friends. Police also slapped 7 Criminal Law Amendment Act on the above named accused.

The red-faced cops on Monday claimed that Salman and Adnan were sent to jail in a case lodged by Tripathi on November 25 at Kaiserbagh

police station. But police lie was exposed when a cross FIRs were lodged by Tripathi and Salman respectively against one another. Tripathi had accused Salman, Adnan and their friends of attacking him, looting Rs 50,000 and firing at him with an intention to kill him. On the same day, Salman's sister had lodged a case of eve-teasing against Tripathi accusing him of forcing her to tag him in her Facebook friends' group. On the other hand, the location of the cellphones of Salman and Adnan was not found around the crime scene. Both Salman and Adnan were nabbed when they were to surrender in court.

After a story that the location of Salman and Adnan's phones was not found around the crime scene in Mahanagar, the police's lie was out in the open. It was then only Mahanagar SHO Vikas

Pandey was asked to redo the probe into the case.

"Police acted hurriedly and sent those, who were not involved in the mysterious murder of Tripathi, to jail. If the media was not active in reporting the facts related to the incident, the innocent would have been languishing in jail," a police officer said while terming the Lucknow police approach in the case as ham-handed.

Pandey said Salman and others named in the case were yet to be given a clean chit. "It is a part of the investigation and it will take time to conclude the investigation," he said. He said Salman and other his aides had been sent to jail in a case lodged by Tripathi and not in the case lodged by Tripathi's wife. He refused to give the details of application which the police submitted after Salman and Adnan were arrested on December 4.

out. They said the doctors had claimed that Tripathi died of excessive bleeding. The ASP explained that the knife punc-

tured the lungs and it led to excessive bleeding.

Aliganj CO added that a photo in which Tripathi was

seen sitting with his legs crossed. "This showed that Tripathi was damn sure that he would not die," he said.

LESA starts Android billing

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

LESA has started Android billing for its consumers. The Android billing was started as a pilot project in the month of September in Aminabad area and it received a good response after which it has been officially begun in the trans-Gomti area now.

Talking to *The Pioneer*, LESA chief engineer Pramod Kakkar said that this billing was being done by an agency which had been selected through the tender process by Madhyantar Vidyut Vitran Nigam Limited and provided a more accurate way of doing it. An official from the agency, which is carrying out the Android billing,

while giving the details of this form, said that the meter reader visits the spot and takes the reading as well as a picture of it carrying the same reading and uploads the picture on the server. "This makes the process more transparent and clear that the reading has been taken from the same meter and has not been tampered with. The reader also generates a bill with the help of a bluetooth printer which it gives to the consumer," he said.

He further pointed out that in the coming days when the smart meters would be installed then the reader would not have to visit the residences. "The reading will go directly from the meter through the

cables," he said. He said that they were likely to complete covering the entire Lucknow under Android billing in the month of January.

Meanwhile, the LESA chief engineer said that they were now focusing on completing their revenue targets by January. "We have already completed 85-90 per cent of the target collections and in the coming days we will collect the remaining amounts through mass raids and the tapping of the long time defaulters through the administration," he added. He said that activities had been divided for the coming month uptill the end of the financial year in the month of March.

Missing youth jumps to death

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The missing son of an advocate was found dead under mysterious circumstances inside Eldeco Elegance in Vibhuti Khand police station area on Sunday night. Police claimed that the victim had gone to meet some person at the Eldeco Elegance Apartment and committed suicide. The cops failed to explain how he entered the gated colony.

As per reports, security guards deployed at the Apartment heard a thud around 12 midnight on Sunday and rushed to the back of the Apartment where they found a youth lying in a pool of blood. They informed the police and a team reached the place for investigation. It later surfaced that advocate RK Trivedi of Vinay Khand of Gomti Nagar



had lodged a case that his son Utkarsh Trivedi (23) had gone missing. The police contacted Trivedi who later identified the youth's body to be that of his son. "The youth had his head ripped off and he was lying dead there. The doctors announced him as 'brought dead' upon examination," the police said. Vibhuti Khand SHO DK Upadhyay said Utkarsh was suffering from some mental disease. "He left his house around 10 pm on Sunday and then reached

Police claimed that the youth had gone to meet some person at the Eldeco Elegance Apartment from where he jumped to death

Eldeco Elegance where he ended his life by jumping off from one of the terraces of the building. He was seen going upstairs and it seemed that he jumped off from the 11th floor," he said. He said the body had been sent for autopsy and the police were investigating the case. The police spokesman said Utkarsh had complaints of epilepsy. "He probably suffered a bout of epilepsy and fell down from one of the terraces of 14-storeyed building," he opined.



People taking part in a signature campaign against human trafficking at Gandhi Statue in Hazratganj on Monday

Pioneer



Youth for Human Rights India joined the world community to walk for peace and tolerance on the occasion of World Human Rights Day and represented India in the world celebrations. On Monday, the international walk was organised at 1090 crossing and scores of people assembled from all walks of life. The event began at 10 am and participants walked towards Kalidas Marg and back to 1090 crossing. Students of universities, colleges and schools besides NCC battalions, clubs, and parents and other communities joined the initiative to spread awareness among people to build peace, tolerance and use their human rights in doing so. National president of the organisation Arjumand Zaidi took this initiative to help make India crime and corruption-free. Her campaign is 'Peace and tolerance through human rights - Kashmir to Kanyakumari'.

'Chalk out plan to keep airport route clean'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Taking a strict note about the laxity of the officials from various departments in maintaining the Airport route from Transportnagar, Shaheed Path and Bandaria Bagh Pul which is used by the important dignitaries, District Magistrate Kaushal Raj Sharma has called a meeting on December 12 for different departments instructing them to chalk out a strategy for it.

The District Magistrate said that every department should appoint a nodal officer who should participate in the meetings in the coming future. The DM said that Lucknow

Municipal Corporation should come up with a detailed strategy for the cleanliness of the main route along with the service lanes, slopes and the Kanpur Road, Proper maintenance of the streetlights which should operate in the morning and closed at night, façade lighting of the Airport and the cleanliness of the divider in the centre.

He has asked Lucknow Metro Rail Corporation (LMRC) to prepare a plan for painting of the Lucknow Metro stations and also of the side railings and a provision of greenery on the main route. Similarly he has directed the Airport Authority officials to

DM'S DIRECTIVE TO OFFICIALS

prepare a workplan on the cleanliness inside the Airport premises, putting covered dustbins there besides arrangements for façade lighting within the airport, proper regulation of the vehicles in the parking area, banning the presence of beggars, improving the waterlogging problem in the premises and ensuring the fact that the passengers were not troubled by groups of pestering taxi drivers.

Lucknow Development Authority has been directed to clean all the memorials which can be spotted from the

Airport route and to remove the large cobwebs hanging from the electric poles. The Awasthi Vikas Parishad has been directed to prepare a workplan in which the buildings which are under its jurisdiction and which fall on the route remain illuminated at night and remain closed in the morning.

Lucknow Electricity Supply Administration (LESA) has been directed to ensure proper power supply on the route, to clean the electric poles and the transformers, reduce the number of wires which were running overhead, to connect

the streetlights on the Shaheed Path with the Uttaraitia power station and to fix panels on the poles.

The NHAI has been instructed to clean the areas adjacent to the main routes, put proper signages and remove the encroachments.

The SDM of Sarojinagar has been instructed to ensure that the movement of stray animals from Arjunganj village was prohibited and it was not treated as a dumping ground. The DM said that the sale of thermocol and polythene had to be prohibited in the area and shops selling chicken, fish and meat illegally should be removed from there.

Vandana impressed by Lucknow's tehzeeb

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Actress Vandana Pathak, who was in the city for promotion of her show titled 'Manmohini', looked impressed by Lucknow's tehzeeb. She said people of Lucknow and its culture were welcoming.

"I am really looking forward to having a good time in the city. I have been to Lucknow once or twice and I am a foodie too. I would love to gorge on the 'chaat' since I am a vegetarian," she said. About the show which is already on air, she said: "Fantasy or supernatural thrillers find an instant connect with the audience as they offer relief of escapism. I am playing



genre and this is something that drew me to the character." Set against the vibrant canvas of Rajasthan, the show is telling the tale of a witch called Manmohini, an unfulfilled soul who has been longing to reunite with her love (Ram) for 500 years and comes back from the past to haunt him and his wife Siya. "The show captures Siya's unconditional love for Ram and her spirited battle against an immortal force, as fierce as Mohini in order to keep her man. It is her obsession to get Ram that will set her up in a war against Siya. I am the Dayi Maa of the hero and protects him and have brought him up with love and care," she said. She admitted that there were several challenges because she had to learn the local language. "It was tougher than knowing how to wield a sword. In the coming days, I will be seen wielding a sword. For me, it was like going back to good old days when I used to learn my lines and then go in front of the camera. But then we have to keep learning because if artists don't learn, they don't grow," Vandana said, adding that she was also getting a lot of offers from the makers of web series and she was looking forward to doing some in future.

a typical Rajasthani woman who is traditionally rooted and dresses up like one too. The entire look and portrayal of the character is different from what I have done in the past. There is so much we can explore in the fantasy drama

PM's Rae Bareilly visit to kick off BJP campaign

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh unit of Bharatiya Janata Party is projecting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rally at Rae Bareilly on December 16 as the first step towards kick-starting the campaign for 2019 Lok Sabha polls from the parliamentary constituency of United Progressive Alliance chairperson Sonia Gandhi. BJP state president Mahendra Nath Pandey said that the Prime Minister would highlight the lack of development in the region and how the BJP attempted to change its face.

The Prime Minister is likely to flag off 900 newly-built coaches from Modern Rail Coach Factory at Lalganj

town Rae Bareilly the same day. Pandey said that during his brief visit, the Prime Minister would address a public meeting at Rae Bareilly, expected to be attended by three lakh people. Preparations for the rally have already begun. Having faced an aggressive resurgent Congress in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, the BJP brass realises that the road to 2019 poll is not going to be easy. The party will also face a formidable challenge in UP as Bahujan Samaj Party and Samajwadi Party are set for an electoral alliance.

In this backdrop, the BJP mandarins, especially party chief Amit Shah and Prime Minister Modi, probably want to keep the cadre in high



spirit and the Rae Bareilly visit fits into this perspective. It will give out a message that the BJP is neither on the defensive nor lacking in aggression.

BJP spokesperson Chandra Mohan, however, said, "No constituency or area is anyone's fiefdom. Rae Bareilly and Amethi have lacked on development for decades. The Prime Minister's visit to the town is in sync with our promise to bring development back to this region."

After Rae Bareilly, the Prime Minister will visit Prayagraj the same day for reviewing Kumbh Mela preparations. Later on December 29, Modi will visit his parliamentary constituency Varanasi and address a Rajbhara rally in east UP town of Ghazipur.

CITY BRIEFS

PhD AT KMCU

Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti Urdu-Arabi-Farsi University has rolled out forms for PhD in 13 subjects. Authorities said the forms would be available online for applicants at <http://uafuentrance.com>. The link to the online forms will also be available on KMCU website. Vice-Chancellor Mahrukh Mirza said the PhD programmes would be conducted in Urdu, Arabic, Persian, English, Journalism & Mass Communication, Home Science, Geography, History, Physical Education, Computer Science, Commerce, Business Administration and Education.

COURSE AT NBRI

Principal chief conservator (Forest) Pawan Kumar said on Monday that the rightful selection of scientifically validated plant species for green belt development around industries to minimise the air pollution load in ambient air was a crucial subject. He expressed these views at the inaugural of 'Green Skill Development' course at NBRI. The course is an initiative taken up by MoEF&CC and National Skill Development Agency for skill development in the environment and forestry sectors to enable educated youths to get gainful employment or self-employment. MoEF&CC and NSDA have approved this national stand-alone course to CSIR-NBRI as per National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF). Kumar emphasised the need of such programmes on green belt development for industries.

CAMP FOR GIRLS

Girls learnt legal and self-defence tactics in a three-day residential camp in Indranagar which was started in collaboration with FICCI FLO



Farmers press their demands under the banner of Bharatiya Kisan Union (Awadh) at Shaheed Smarak on Monday

Pioneer

Lucknow chapter and Red Brigade. It was made sure that the girls understood their legal rights and self-defence training was imparted to them. There were 35 girls in the age group of 18-25 years in the camp. The girls were explained the importance of legal information and self-defence tactics. Usha Vishwakarma, founder of Red Brigade (Lucknow), said they were trying to ensure that such camps were held continuously. FICCI FLO chairperson Renuka Tandon said their

target was to make all girls historically empowered and to see that 1000 girls were trained, who would become the carriers of change. Legal information was given to the girls by judicial magistrate Jyotsana Mishra.

AWARDED

With a view to ensuring customer satisfaction and to encourage the staff, LMRC honoured employees as a token of appreciation. Managing director Kumar Keshav said each per-

son associated with LMRC was committed to world class public transport system. Purna Majumdar (HR assistant), Akash Mishra & Anil Singh (security guards), Rajnish Awasthi (housekeeper) were recognised as 'staff of the month' for September. Vineet Gupta (station controller & train operator), Saurabh Singh (station controller), PK Bhatt (security supervisor) and Rekha (housekeeper) were chosen for 'staff of the month' awards for October.

उपरोक्त पावर ट्रान्smिशन कारपोरेशन लिमिटेड ई-निविदा संख्या-205 व 206 / वि.पा.मं. (प्र.)ल./2018-19 अधोहस्ताक्षर-कर्ता द्वारा अनुमोदी ठेकेदारों/ फर्मों से निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु अलग-अलग सीलबन्ध ई-निविदाओं को मांगों में ई-टेंडरिंग वेब साइट www.etender.up.nic.in पर आमंत्रित की जाती है। ई-निविदा के प्रथम भाग में घोषित वनराशि व वैयक्तिक, तकनीकी एवं अनुभव सम्बन्धित प्रश्न, व्यावसायिक व अन्य शर्तें आदि एवं दूसरे भाग में दरे व वाणिज्यिक नियम एवं शर्तें प्रदान करनी होंगी। निविदा प्रश्न मूल्य, धरोहर वनराशि एवं जीएसटी, पंजीकरण प्रमाण-पत्र, आवेदन पत्र के साथ संलग्न करते हुए इनकी Scanned copy upload करना अनिवार्य है। निविदा प्रश्न एवं घोषित वनराशि, जो कि अधीक्षण अभियन्ता विद्युत पारिषद मण्डल - प्रथम लखनऊ के खाता संख्या - 2408002190005438, I.F.S. Code - PUNB0691100 पंजाब नेशनल बैंक, लखनऊ के खाते में RTGS / NEFT के माध्यम से स्थानान्तरित कर यूटोडीआरओ संख्या तथा पे-इन-रिस्किंग की प्रति ई-टेंडरिंग वेबसाइट www.etender.up.nic.in पर निविदा प्रश्नों के साथ एवं स्व प्रमाणित PAN एवं GST पंजीकरण प्रमाण-पत्र की प्रति प्रथम भाग के साथ लगाना अनिवार्य होगा। वाणिज्यिक वनराशि एवं अन्य प्रश्न पूर्ण तथा उचित / स्वीकार योग्य न होने पर द्वितीय भाग को नहीं खोला जायेगा। ई-निविदाओं का विवरण निविदा शीट, कार्यों का नाम, धरोहर वनराशि, खुलने की तिथि व समय क्रमशः निम्नानुसार है: (1) अल्पकालीन 205-वि.पा.मं.-(प्र.)ल./2018-19- विद्युत पारिषद मण्डल-प्रथम लखनऊ के अन्तर्गत 132 के.वी. एच.जी.पी.जी.आई. पर 33 केवीओ (2x5 एम.वी.ए.ए.) कैपेसिटर की स्थापना का कार्य, धरोहर वनराशि रु. 3,00,00,000. निविदा दिनांक 29.12.2018, समय 16:00 बजे तक ई-टेंडरिंग वेब साइट www.etender.up.nic.in पर अपलोड की जा सकती है। भाग-1 खुलने की तिथि 31.12.2018, समय 12:30 बजे, भाग-2 (आइस वार्डर) खुलने की तिथि तदनुसार ई-वेबसाइट पर सूचित की जायेगी। निविदा प्रश्न मूल्य रु. 590/- मात्र (रु. 500.00 + G.S.T.@18% अतिरिक्त)। (2) अल्पकालीन 206-वि.पा.मं.-(प्र.)ल./2018-19, विद्युत पारिषद मण्डल - द्वितीय लखनऊ के अन्तर्गत 220 के.वी. उपकेंद्र सीओसी सिटी पर 2x5 एम.वी.ए.ए. कैपेसिटर की स्थापना एवं अन्य सम्बन्धित कार्य, धरोहर वनराशि रु. 3,00,00,000. निविदा दिनांक 29.12.2018 को 16:00 बजे तक ई-टेंडरिंग वेब साइट www.etender.up.nic.in पर अपलोड की जा सकती है। भाग-1 खुलने की तिथि 31.12.2018, समय 13:00 बजे, भाग-2 (आइस वार्डर) खुलने की तिथि तदनुसार ई-वेबसाइट पर सूचित की जायेगी। निविदा प्रश्न मूल्य रु. 590/- मात्र (रु. 500.00 + G.S.T.@18% अतिरिक्त)। ई-निविदा खुलने की तिथि को अवकाश की स्थिति में निविदा अगले कार्य दिवस पर खोली जायेगी। विस्तृत जानकारी एवं अन्य संशोधनों आदि के सम्बन्ध में सूचना एवं निविदा प्रश्न डाउनलोड करने हेतु ई-टेंडरिंग वेबसाइट www.etender.up.nic.in देखी जा सकती है। कृपया विस्तृत जानकारी, डाउनलोड, अन्य संशोधनों एवं ई-निविदा प्रस्तुत करने के दिनांक तक विस्तार आदि के सम्बन्ध में ई-टेंडरिंग वेबसाइट www.etender.up.nic.in देखी जा सकती है। ब्लैक लिस्टेड फर्मों एवं ऐसी फर्मों जिनके विरुद्ध कोई सार्वजनिक/सी.पी.आई. ऑर वल रही है अथवा लिम्बिट है उनकी निविदाएँ स्वीकार नहीं की जायेगी। अधोहस्ताक्षरकर्ता को बिना कोई कारण बताये किसी भी ई-निविदा अथवा सभी ई-निविदाओं को अस्वीकार / विनाशित करने का अधिकार सुरक्षित होगा। अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत पारिषद मण्डल-प्रथम, कक्ष सं. 111 से 114, विद्युत पारिषद भवन, निम्नलिखित संख्या-11, गोमती नगर, लखनऊ। फ़ोन 2443, दिनांक 10.12.2018 "साक्षरित में विजली बचाव"

U.P. POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LTD. E-TENDER NOTICE Following sealed Tenders are invited from the experienced / reputed contractors for the execution of following works and Manufacturers / suppliers for supply of following material on the prescribed tender forms which will be obtained on payment of Tender Cost. 1. Short Term E-Tender No. 252/AETC/2018-19 :- Erection work of 33 KV 2x5 MVAR capacitor bank along with equipments and structures at 132 KV Sub Stations Phoolpur under ETD, Azamgarh. Earnest Money : Rs. 2000.00 (Rs. Two Thousand) only. Tender Cost: Rs. 236.00 (Rs. Two Hundred Thirty Six) only. 2. Short Term E-Tender No. 253/AETC/2018-19 :- Erection work of 33 KV 2x5 MVAR Capacitor bank along with equipments and structures at 132 KV Sub Stations Bindwal Jaijrapur under ETD, Azamgarh. Earnest Money : Rs. 2000.00 (Rs. Two Thousand) only. Tender Cost: Rs. 236.00 (Rs. Two Hundred Thirty Six) only. 3. Short Term E-Tender No. 254/AETC/2018-19 :- Erection work of 33 KV 2x5 MVAR Capacitor bank along with equipments at 132 KV Sub Stations Lalganj under ETD, Azamgarh. Earnest Money : Rs. 2000.00 (Rs. Two Thousand) only. Tender Cost: Rs. 236.00 (Rs. Two Hundred Thirty Six) only. 4. Short Term E-Tender No. 255/AETC/2018-19 :- Erection work of 33 KV 2x5 MVAR Capacitor bank along with equipments at 132 KV Sub Stations Lalganj under ETD, Azamgarh. Earnest Money : Rs. 2000.00 (Rs. Two Thousand) only. Tender Cost: Rs. 236.00 (Rs. Two Hundred Thirty Six) only. 5. Short Term E-Tender No. 256/AETC/2018-19 :- Erection work of 33 KV 2x5 MVAR Capacitor bank along with equipments at 132 KV Sub Stations Kolsa under ETD, Azamgarh. Earnest Money : Rs. 2000.00 (Rs. Two Thousand) only. Tender Cost: Rs. 236.00 (Rs. Two Hundred Thirty Six) only. 6. Short Term E-Tender No. 257/AETC/2018-19 :- Erection work of 33 KV 2x5 MVAR Capacitor bank along with equipments at 132 KV Sub Station Mehnagar under ETD, Azamgarh. Earnest Money : Rs. 2000.00 (Rs. Two Thousand) only. Tender Cost: Rs. 236.00 (Rs. Two Hundred Thirty Six) only. 7. Short Term E-Tender No. 258 / AETC / 2018-19 :- Erection work of 33 KV 2x5 MVAR Capacitor bank along with equipments at 132 KV Sub Stations Azamgarh-II under ETD, Trans. Division, Azamgarh. Earnest Money: Rs. 2000.00 (Rs. Two Thousand) only. Tender Cost: Rs. 236.00 (Rs. Two Hundred Thirty Six) only. 8. Short Term E-Tender No. 259/AETC/2018-19 :- Erection of 33 KV 10 MVAR Capacitor Bank at 220 KV S/S Azamgarh under Electy. 400 KV S/S Division, Azamgarh. Earnest Money: Rs. 3000.00 (Rs. Three Thousand) only. Tender Cost: Rs. 354.00 (Rs. Three Hundred Fifty Four) only. 9. E-Tender No. 260 / AETC / 2018-19 :- Construction of retaining wall round foundation of location No. 22C of 132 KV Azamgarh-Mehnagar line under Electy. Trans. Division, Azamgarh. Earnest Money: Rs. 13000.00 (Rs. Thirteen Thousand) only. Tender Cost : Rs. 1534.00 (Rs. One Thousand Five Hundred Thirty Four) only. 10. E-Tender No. 261/AETC/2018-19 :- Fabrication & Erection of Protection mat at L.T. side of 40 MVA Transformer at 132 KV Machhalishahar & Mariyahu under Electy. Trans. Division, Jaunpur. Earnest Money : Rs. 2000.00 (Rs. Two Thousand) only. Tender Cost: Rs. 236.00 (Rs. Two Hundred Thirty Six) only. 11. E-Tender No. 262/AETC/2018-19 :- Cleaning of dense jungle in front and surrounding of 315 MVA T/F-I at 400 KV S/S Azamgarh under Electy. 400 KV S/S Division, Azamgarh. Earnest Money : Rs. 2000.00 (Rs. Two Thousand) only. Tender Cost: Rs. 236.00 (Rs. Two Hundred Thirty Six) only. 12. E-Tender No. 263/AETC/2018-19 :- Procurement of different type P.G. clamps for maintenance work at different 132 KV Sub Station under Electy. Trans. Division, Azamgarh. Earnest Money : Rs. 2000.00 (Rs. Two Thousand) only. Tender Cost: Rs. 236.00 (Rs. Two Hundred Thirty Six) only. 13. E-Tender No. 264/AETC/2018-19 :- Earthing of different type of Equipment and structure at 132 KV S/S Mubarakpur under Electy. Trans. Division, Azamgarh. Earnest Money: Rs. 8000.00 (Rs. Eight Thousand) only. Tender Cost: Rs. 944.00 (Rs. Nine Hundred Forty Four) only. Earnest money will be in shape of RTGS/NEFT duly pledged in favour of Superintending Engineer, Electy. Trans-mission Circle, UPPTCL, Azamgarh. Tenderer can upload their tender bids against Short Term E-Tender No. 252 to 255 up to 17.00 Hrs. of 26.12.2018 & the same will be opened on dated 27.12.2018 at 12:00 hrs., 13:00 hrs., 14:00 hrs. & 15:00 hrs. respectively through E-Tendering. Tenderer can upload their tender bids against E-Tender No. 17.00 Hrs. of 256 to 259 up to 12.12.2018 and the same will be opened on dated 28.12.2018 at 12:00 hrs., 13:00 hrs., 14:00 hrs. & 15:00 hrs. respectively through E-Tendering. Tenderer can upload their tender bids against E-Tender No. 260 to 264 up to 17.00 hrs. of 15.01.2019 and the same will be opened on dated 16.01.2018 at 12:00 hrs., 13:00 hrs., 14:00 hrs., 15:00 hrs. & 16:00 hrs. respectively through E-Tendering. Intima-tion regarding opening of tender Bid Part-II i.e. Price Bid will be given on above e-website in due course of time. Please visit website www.etender.up.nic.in for details download and for any other conditions / amendments / modification extension till the date of submission of tender. In case the tender opening date is holiday or undersigned remain out of headquarters the date of submission and opening of tender will stand extended to next working day. Undersigned has the right to reject/void any tender without assigning any reason / thereof. Conditional tenders shall not be accepted. Superintending Engineer (Trans.) Hafizpur, UPPTCL, Azamgarh No. 2499 Date 07.12.2018 **SAVE ELECTRICITY IN THE INTEREST OF NATION.**

SCHOOLSCAN



MOTHERS' DAY

City Montessori School, Mahanagar campus, organised the Annual Mothers' Day at Gomti Nagar Campus II auditorium on Monday. Tiny-tots in colourful dresses won the hearts of their loved ones with educational-cultural items presented by them. Grandparents were also invited to encourage their wards. The chief

guest was advocacy and partnership specialist (UNICEF) Geetali Trivedi, who inaugurated the function. She said children who grew up in the atmosphere of discipline and culture would be able to guide the society. She urged the parents and teachers to develop positive thinking and attitude in young minds and encourage them to be innovative.

LDA admn pulled up for not adhering to agreement conditions

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Principal Secretary (Housing) Nitin Gokarn on Monday pulled up the LDA administration for not adhering to the conditions laid in an agreement signed at the time of buying properties. A large number of residents living in 48 apartments are said to be peeved at the quality of the work and lack of other facilities. He took the officials to task at a meeting convened after the Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) officials asked the government to ensure facilities which the residents have been deprived of. A joint delegation of Residents' Welfare Association met RERA officials recently to draw their attention about the unfulfilled promises.

The Principal Secretary directed the LDA chief engineer to ensure basic amenities in the apartments. There is a general complaint by the residents that the drainage pipe is leaking at several

points, causing water stagnation. Residents of Ganga Jamuna and Sharda Nagar apartments complained that the LDA administration promised PNG pipelines for cooking, but instead provided an LPG pipeline and even it was non-functional. GP Dubey, a member of the association, demanded PNG pipeline at the earliest. Gokarn directed the chief engineers to inspect the apartments to repair the drainage system and roads lying in poor condition. Pointing out the contractor-engineer nexus, he said they would be held responsible for the poor quality of work. He said a case would be registered with police if any contractor was found involved in unscrupulous practices to hamper the civil work or hinder the progress of work. The Principal Secretary asked Vice-Chairman PN Singh to furnish details of the anomalies and status of the basic amenities in the apartments in question.

NORTHERN RAILWAY						
TENDER NOTICE						
Tender Notice No. : Va-VII/LED Display/LKO/18/5VG						Dated : 10.12.2018
SN	Name of Work & Station	Reserve price of contract for one year	Total reserve price of contract for 5 years	Earnest Money (Demand Draft/FDR/ Bankers Cheque in favour of Sr. Divisional Finance Manager, Northern Railway, Lucknow)	Completion period	Cost of Tender Form inclusive of 18% GST (in favour of Sr. Divisional Finance Manager, Northern Railway, Lucknow)
1	Installation of 65 LED screens for digital passenger information system (DIPS) integrated with public announcement system via commercial publicity mode inside station premises at Lucknow station	Rs. 20,64,806/-	Rs. 1,06,64,121/-	Rs. 10,96,410/-	05 Years	Rs. 5,900/-
Address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased Commercial Branch of the Divisional Railway Manager, Northern Railway, Lucknow						
Date & time for submission of tender details of the tender can be seen etc						
Submission of tender: from 10:00 hrs on 27.12.2018 upto 14:00 hrs on 15-01-2019 Opening Date & Time : on 15-01-2019 at 15:00 hrs						
Tender document can be downloaded from 10:00 hrs on 27-12-2018 upto 12:00 hrs on 15-01-2019 from railway website www.ir.indianrailways.gov.in Tender documents can be also obtained from Commercial Branch of the Divisional Railway Manager, Northern Railway, Hazratganj, Lucknow						

कार्यालय अधिशासी अभियन्ता, जोन-विकास नगर जलकल विभाग, नगर निगम लखनऊ

पत्रांक-233 / ज0वि0 / ई0ई0(वि0न0) / कार्या / 18-19 दि 10.12.2018

अल्पकालीन निविदा सूचना

जलकल विभाग में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से निम्नलिखित कार्य / आपूर्ति हेतु मोहरबन्ध निविदायें दि 17.12.2018 को अपरान्ह 3:00 बजे तक अधोहस्ताक्षरी द्वारा आमंत्रित की जाती हैं, जो उसी दिन सायंकाल 4:00 बजे उपस्थित निविदादाताओं के समक्ष खोली जायेगी। सन्धित कार्य हेतु निविदा किसी भी कार्य दिवस में दिनांक 17.12.2018 को अपरान्ह 2:00 बजे तक कार्यालय से प्राप्त की जा सकती है। अर्नेस्ट मनी एफ0डी0आर0/सी0डी0आर0/एन0एस0सी0 के रूप में अधिशासी अभियन्ता, जोन - विकास नगर के पदनाम से बन्धक होना अनिवार्य है। बिना अर्नेस्ट मनी के प्राप्त निविदाओं पर विचार नहीं किया जायेगा। एक या समस्त निविदाओं को निरस्त करने का अधिकार बिना कारण बताये अधोहस्ताक्षरी / महाप्रबन्धक, जलकल विभाग, नगर निगम-लखनऊ में निहित होगा। पूर्ण विवरण कार्यालय से किसी भी कार्य दिवस में देखा जा सकता है।

क्र0 सं0	कार्य का नाम	धरोहर राशि	निविदा मूल्य	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि
1	वार्ड-लोहियानगर में सेक्टर-4 स्थित ओवरहेड टैंक परिसर की बाउन्ड्रीवाल के पुनर्निर्माण का कार्य।	5100.00	300.00	01 माह
2	वार्ड-शंकरपुरवा तृतीय में सेक्टर-8 स्थित ओवरहेड टैंक परिसर की बाउन्ड्रीवाल के पुनर्निर्माण का कार्य।	7000.00	400.00	01 माह

निविदा प्राप्त करने की शर्त: 1. निविदादाताओं का सेल्स टैक्स एवं आयकर तथा जी0एस0टी0 में रजिस्ट्रेशन होना चाहिये।

अधिशासी अभियन्ता, जोन-विकासनगर जलकल विभाग, नगर निगम-लखनऊ

Day before counting, parties jittery

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



A day before the Assembly polls results, political parties are seemingly possessed with high expectancy and are almost on their edge given the split version of exit polls on Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh even as the sensetanked 714 points, indicating nervousness in the stock market.

The BJP and the Congress, the main contenders for the prizes in the five Assembly polls in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Telangana and Mizoram, are hoping that that voters aside luck too may favour them if the election results turn out to be a touch and go affair in some of the States.

The Parliament's Winter Session which is also taking off on Tuesday would be heavily

impacted by the poll outcome. A win for the Congress in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Telangana would be a great morale booster for the Opposition party which has been taking a regular beating at the hands of the BJP for a long time.

The Congress victory in any three of the five states may also galvanise the 'Mahagathbandan' at national and State levels against the BJP. On the contrary, if BJP

returns to power in three States of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan, it would be a win-win situation for the ruling party.

An indication of palpable uncertainty over the poll results came from Telangana where Opposition parties led by the Congress State president and possible Chief Ministerial candidate N Uttam Kumar Reddy urged the Governor to treat the People's Front (Congress, TDP & CPM) as a single entity and give it the first chance to form the Government in case it emerges a single largest formation in the new Assembly on Tuesday.

On the other hand, the Chief Minister and TRS chief K Chandrasekhar Rao held an unusual luncheon meeting with his ally Majlis-e-Ittehadul

Muslimeen president Asaduddin Owaisi.

Owaisi, who caught everybody by surprise by riding a motorcycle to Chief Minister's residence in Begumpet, had a detailed discussion with KCR. While there were speculations that in case of TRS falling short of numbers, MIM may extend outside support. Owaisi reiterated his confidence that the TRS will return to power with a clear majority.

Congress was also taking precautionary measures against the possibility of any attempt by the TRS to poach its members. Sources in Congress said that they were ready to follow the example of neighboring Karnataka where similar attempt by the BJP were foiled. It is learnt that the party has sought help from Karnataka strongman and

Minister DK Sivakumar, who had executed the plan to shift Karnataka Congress MLAs to Hyderabad and it led to collapse of BS Yeddyurappa Government in Bengaluru earlier this year.

The stock-market also felt the jitters on the eve of poll results with the benchmark indices settled around 2 per cent lower on Monday following a sell-off in the global markets.

The S&P BSE Sensex ended at 34,960, down 714 points or 2 per cent, while the broader Nifty50 index settled at 10,488, down 205 points or 1.92 per cent. This was a major slide in the stock-market in a about a year's time.

The rupee also traded on a weak note slipping to 71.44 against the US dollar in intra-day trade on Monday, down from its previous close of 70.82.

FROM SC 5 States get notice on amendments in 2013 land acquisition act

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday issued notices to five States seeking their responses on a plea challenging the validity of certain amendments made by them to a central law of 2013 on land acquisition.

A bench comprising Justices Madan B Lokur and Deepak Gupta agreed to hear the plea which has sought to struck down the alleged "contradictory amendments" made by Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu and Jharkhand in the Right to Fair Compensation and

Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013.

The petition, filed by social activist Medha Patkar and others, has claimed amendments made by these states have "adversely affected the rights of livelihood of land owners and farmers". It also alleged that the State amendments were violative of constitutional rights of citizens as key aspects like consent provisions, social impact assessment, participation of representative local bodies in acquisition of land have been exempted. **PTI**

INSHORT

BJP RESORTS TO DIVERSION OF CLEAN ENERGY FUND
New Delhi: CPI(M) General Secretary Sitaram Yechury on Monday alleged that the BJP Government at the Centre has been resorting to "illegal diversion" of clean energy funds to pay the States their share of Goods and Services Tax (GST).

SC REJECTS PIL ON J&K ASSEMBLY DISSOLUTION



New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday dismissed a PIL challenging the dissolution of the Jammu & Kashmir Assembly by Governor Satya Pal Malik. "We are not inclined to interfere (with the decision of the Governor)," a bench comprising Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justice S K Kaul said. The bench was hearing a PIL filed by BJP leader Gagan Bhagat, who was an MLA before the Assembly was dissolved.

PMO'S PRO. 72, DIES AFTER BRIEF ILLNESS

New Delhi: Public Relations Officer (PRO) in the Prime Minister's office and senior journalist Jagdish Thakkar passed away here Monday. Thakkar, 72, who was unwell for some time, passed away at AIIMS here. Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited AIIMS and spent time with the family of Thakkar. Condoling Thakkar's demise, Modi said he was a wonderful person who loved his work.

ONLINE SKILL TRAINING FOR SECURITY GUARDS

New Delhi: Central Association of Private Security Industry (CAPSI) on Monday introduced unique online skill enhancement programme for security guards. "Designed and developed by MTLI, under the guidance of CAPSI and Security Sector Skill Development Council, the programme has been designed exclusively for training unarmed security guards," said CAPSI and SSSDC Chairman, Kunwar Vikram Singh.

RLY MAN GETS SAHITYA AKADEMI AWARDS

New Delhi: Shyam Sunder Besra, chief inspector of ticket working in Asansol Division of the Eastern Railway, was conferred the coveted Sahitya Akademi Award for his novel 'Marom'.

45 Bill set to see light of day, PM seeks Opp help

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday sought Government and Opposition to cooperate in making Winter Session productive and successful, 45 bills are set to be part of the session that is set to witness much fireworks between the treasury and Opposition.

The controversial bill on triple talaq, on which Government brought an amendment will again be tested on the floor of the upper house where it could not be passed in the last session. Besides this, two other ordinances will also be replaced by the bills including Indian medical council (amendment) bill, 2018, and the companies ordinance (amendment) bill, 2018.

The last of the session of the 16th Lok Sabha will run for 29 days with 20 sittings which are expected to be full of political attacks and counter-attacks before the leaders set themselves into full campaign mode for the Lok Sabha polls which are only few months away.

The controversy over the purchase of Rafale fighter jet will also rock the session with the Congress taking its attack on the issue inside the Parliament. The Ram temple would be the Government's issue with one of its Rajya Sabha members expected to introduce a private member's bill in the upper house to force opposition take a stand on the politically sensitive issue.

According to leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Ghulam Nabi Azad, the Opposition made it clear during the meeting that it will press for a joint parliamen-

tary committee to probe the Rafale jet deal and raise several issues, including the "misuse" of probe agencies and autonomy for RBI.

Addressing an all-party meet on Monday convened ahead of the Winter session, Prime Minister assured the Opposition that the Government was willing to discuss all issues, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said quoting the Prime Minister at the meeting.

The Government is also understood to have suggested that both the Houses could work late to transact important legislative business and discuss important issues.

The Prime Minister was of the view that both the Government and the Opposition have to cooperate in running the House smoothly as it was in the interest of the people.

"It is a prime responsibility for all of us to contribute to the service of the nation and its people by ensuring smooth functioning of the Parliament", Modi said.

The Minister said Modi also told leaders from various parties that the Government is willing to discuss all issues. There was a consensus that disruption should be avoided and deadlock to be resolved with discussions, Government claimed.

Two-minute silence was observed by all the leaders to pay homage to former Cabinet Minister Ananth Kumar.

The Centre will bring supplementary demands for grants in the session through which it will seek Parliament nod for more expenditure.

Opp leader on statutory bodies' panel: Court seeks Centre's reply

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Monday sought response from the Centre on a plea that the leader of the single largest Opposition party be treated as the Leader of the Opposition and be included in high-level committees involved in the appointment of heads of statutory bodies like CBI, CVC, CIC and Lokpal.

The apex court issued notice to the Centre and the four statutory bodies on the PIL seeking direction that wherever the appointing committee includes the Leader of the Opposition, the same may be read as to mean the leader of the single largest oppo-

sition party in that House.

The top court also sought response from the Centre on the plea by 'Youth for Equality' NGO, seeking the quashing of section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act which provides a blanket protection to all public servants regardless of status from enquiry in graft cases. The NGO contended that the amendment by which section 17A has been incorporated was discriminatory, manifestly arbitrary and ultra vires of Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution as it requires sanction for initiating action against the public servants. **PTI**

Mosque in Allahabad High Court premises: Status quo ordered

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday ordered that status quo be maintained with regard to a mosque situated in the premises of the Allahabad High Court, which had last year directed that the structure be removed.

A bench of Justices Madan B Lokur and Deepak Gupta also issued notices to the Uttar Pradesh Government, Registrar General of the Allahabad High Court and others seeking their responses on a plea filed by the Waqf Board.

The Waqf Board has moved the apex court challenging the November 8, 2017 order of the high court which gave it three months to move the mosque out of the premises. **PTI**

Report denies any torture on Brijesh Thakur

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday said there was "absolutely nothing" in the medical examination report to suggest that Brijesh Thakur, prime accused in the Muzaffarpur shelter home sexual abuse case, was physically or mentally tortured in Patiala jail.

A bench of Justices Madan B Lokur and Deepak Gupta said they have perused the report of medical board and the doctors have not found any injuries to substantiate the claims of physical and mental torture of the accused in the jail.

Thakur was shifted to Patiala high-security jail in Punjab from Bihar's Bhagalpur jail. **PTI**

India Day held in run-up to Partners' Forum 2018

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Health Secretary Preeti Sudan on Monday inaugurated India Day, an official side event organised jointly by the Union Health Ministry and the development partners in the run-up to the Partners' Forum 2018.

She said that flexibility has been at the core of all the initiatives in reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent (RMNCH+A) programme and a major contributor to its success. She further added that States have launched various innovative initiatives under RMNCH+A that encourage people to be partners in



Preeti Sudan, Union Health Secretary

their own health and well-being. Manoj Jhalani, Additional Secretary and Mission Director, stressed on the various aspect of RMNCH+A. "Our focus is on children, adolescents and pregnant and lactating mothers, who we seek to strengthen through a series of initiatives like the Poshan Abhiyaan and Anaemia Mukh Bharat," he said.

India Day event is aimed to reflect on the journey of the RMNCH+A programme and to share and learn from the good practices and innovations implemented by different States/UTs and organisations to address various health challenges around maternal and child health in order to sustain progress on global goals.

In India, maternal, child, neonatal and adolescent health gained tremendous momentum

since RMNCH+A was rolled out. India's maternal mortality rate (MMR) has fallen from 556 in the year 1990 to 130 in 2014-16 (SRS data), as per a statement here.

It further said that the country's progress can be gauged from the 77% decline in MMR that it achieved during 1990-2015, compared to the global decline of 44% during this period. In child health also, India's achievements have been strong. Under-five mortality rate (U5MR) in India has fallen significantly from 126 per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 39 per 1,000 live births in 2016, the statement said.



Vice President of India and chairman of Rajya Sabha M Venkaiah Naidu and chairman of Russia's State Duma Vyacheslav Volodin on Monday calls for effective Parliamentary exchanges between both the countries for strengthening convergence during the fifth meeting of India-Russian Federation Inter-Parliamentary Commission. While Naidu flagged global terror a serious concern, Russia offered its help in tackling it. The 30-member delegation from Russia also called for enabling laws to fully tap India-Russia cooperation potential. Pioneer photo

VVIP CHOPPER CASE Christian Michel custody extended by 5 days

New Delhi: Christian Michel James, alleged middleman chargesheeted and arrested in the graft-tainted AgustaWestland VVIP chopper deal, was allowed by a Delhi court on Monday to be interrogated further by the CBI in its custody for five more days.

57-year-old Michel was produced before Special Judge Arvind Kumar on the expiry of his five-day CBI remand during which he was confronted with various documents relating to the case.

He will be produced again before the court on December 15. Seeking extension of Michel's police custody by nine days, the agency contended that he was "not cooperating" in the investigation and was giving "evasive" answers and when he finds himself in prob-



Michel Christian, the alleged middleman in the multi-crore AgustaWestland chopper deal, arrives at CBI Special Court of the Patiala House Courts in New Delhi on Monday. Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

lem, he gets out of it by denying it.

It contended that Michel was required to be confronted with some witnesses to unearth the deep rooted conspiracy and to identify his accomplices including the IAF offi-

cials, bureaucrats and politicians.

Prosecutor D P Singh, appearing for CBI, argued that Michel was being "tutored" by his advocates during their visitations at the agency's office and the court's order allowing

the lawyers to meet the accused twice a day was hampering their interrogation.

His counsel denied the allegation and said he was not being tutored.

Advocate Aljo K Joseph, appearing for Michel, said his police custody was not required any further and no incriminating evidence was shown to him during the interrogation.

When the defence counsel alleged that Michel was being "tortured", CBI prosecutor objected to the choice of the word and said the advocate was saying this only to create headlines in the media, and the accused was treated with "utmost respect".

Joseph said he sent a mail to the British High Commission on Saturday regarding an officer of the agency. **PTI**

Terrorists don't deserve privilege of human rights, says Naqvi

New Delhi: Union Minister for Minority Affairs Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi on Monday said terrorists who kill innocent people do not deserve the "cover or privilege" of human rights.

Addressing the Human Rights Day Function organised by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), he said advocating the human rights of those who kill innocent people, terrorise them and violate their rights, was not right.

"It is unfortunate that some organisations and people are more interested in raising their voice for the human rights of these terrorists who challenge

the national security and kill innocent people.

"Such terrorist organisations and some anti-social elements consider killing of civilians, attacking security forces, spreading terror and conspiring to disturb peace of the world, as their human rights and do not deserve any cover or privilege of human rights," Naqvi said.

The minister said the "social, economic, religious and other human rights" of every community are more safe and secure in India than any other democratic nation of the world.

He added that except for a few isolated incidents in some

states, the total number of cases of human rights violations in the country were comparatively less.

Tolerance, communal and social harmony is in the DNA of India. Social and cultural harmony is the source of unity of the country despite the prevalence of various languages, religions and communities, he said.

"We have to remain alert to ensure that no evil forces can weaken our strength of unity," the BJP leader said while lauding the NHRC for its role in the promotion and protection of human rights on the occasion of the Human Rights Day.

GoM formed post MeToo movement holds first meeting

New Delhi: A group of Ministers formed in the wake of the #MeToo movement to strengthen the legal and institutional frameworks to prevent sexual harassment at workplace held its first meeting on Monday.

Although the issues discussed in the meeting were kept confidential, sources at the Women and Child Development Ministry said Union minister Maneka Gandhi pushed for strengthening the National Commission for Women (NCW). The group of ministers (GoM) is headed by Union Home Minister Rajnath

Singh. Union Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari, Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Gandhi, the Women and Child Development Minister, are its other members. According to sources, except Gadkari, who is not in the city, all other ministers participated in the meeting. They said two more such meetings would be held wherein the GoM would recommend action required for effective implementation of the existing provisions as well as strengthening these frameworks for addressing issues related to sexual harassment at workplace. **PTI**

JIBE AT MANMOHAN 'Chaiwala' did better job of running country than an economist: Shah

New Delhi: BJP president Amit Shah on Monday took a jibe at former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, saying he respected his knowledge of economy, but a 'chaiwala' has done a better job than him.

Speaking at the release of a book, 'Narendra Modi: Creative Disruptor-The Maker of New India', Shah also rejected the opposition's criticism that Prime Minister Narendra Modi functions like an autocrat, saying his critics don't understand the difference between "firmness and autocracy".

Heaping praise on the BJP government at the Centre, he said it has not only controlled the fiscal deficit, but also brought down inflation.

"Manmohan Singh ji left the economy at the ninth position in ten years. We brought it to the sixth position in five years and in less than six months it will climb up to the fifth spot..."

"And they are teaching us economics. You (Singh) are an economist and we respect you. We have no issues with the depth of your knowledge, but a chaiwala did a better job of

running the country," Shah said.

Modi often refers to himself as a 'chaiwala'.

The BJP president asserted that he could list 30 'historic' decisions taken by Modi, while some of the past Governments could only list 4-5 such decisions in the period of 30 years.

"This Government has been here only for five years, but I can list 30 decisions which have secured a place in the history of the country...Whether it is the surgical strike, GST, demonetisation," he said.

HAL tests flies light copter upto 6km

Ready for high-altitude cold weather trials

KESTUR VASUKI ■ BENGALURU



Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) built Light Utility Helicopter (LUH) has achieved an important milestone of flying at 6 km altitude here in Bengaluru, recently. The chopper was flown by Chief Test Pilot Wg Cdr (Retd) Unni K Pillai and Test Pilot, Wing Cdr (Retd) Anil Bhamhani.

According to a HAL press release the flight was carried out under the envelope expansion tests and flying at 6 km altitude is a critical requirement towards the certification of LUH. The helicopter exhibited satisfactory performance and handling qualities. With the completion of this milestone, LUH can now undertake high altitude cold weather trials planned in January 2019.

The LUH is a 3-ton class new generation helicopter designed and developed by Rotary Wing Research and

Design Center (RWR&DC) of HAL to replace the ageing Cheetah and Chetak helicopters used by Indian Armed Forces. First flight of LUH PT-1 was carried on September 6, 2016 and the second Prototype flew on May 22, 2017. HAL has in principal order for 187 LUH that includes 126 for Indian Army and 61 for IAF.

The LUH is being indigenously developed by HAL to meet the requirements of both military and civil operators.

The helicopter with Glass Cockpit can be deployed for Reconnaissance, Surveillance roles and as a light transport helicopter. The helicopter will be capable of flying at 220 Kmph, with a service ceiling of 6.5 Km and a range of 350 Km with 400 kg payload. The LUH is powered by TM/HAL Ardden 1U/Shakti 1U single turbo shaft engine with sufficient power margins to cater to demanding high altitude missions.

KHURSHED WANI ■ SRINAGAR

The normal life was affected in Kashmir Valley on Monday in response to a shut-down call by separatist groups to commemorate the World Human Rights Day. The separatists alleged that the State authorities continue to suppress the human rights and disallow legitimate freedom of movement and speech to the common people.

The Joint Resistance Leadership (JRL), a grouping of separatist leaders Syed Ali Geelani, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and Yasin Malik, had asked the people of Kashmir to observe complete protest strike on December 10 to highlight the 'gruesome human rights situation' and also to register their regret at the apathy of international community and rights organisations towards the plight of people of Kashmir.

Shops, other business establishments, fuel stations remained closed while public transport was generally off the roads in summer capital

Srinagar. However, scanty private transport plied on the uptown city roads. The authorities deployed additional security forces personnel in parts of downtown Srinagar to thwart protests.

The train services had been suspended between Banihal and Baramulla due to law and order situation.

The speed of mobile internet was also reduced in Srinagar and some other places in Kashmir Valley.

"The JRL urges the world peace organisations, international community, Amnesty International Asia Watch, UNHRC and ICRC to take note of the Kashmir situation and put pressure on New Delhi to stop the grave human rights violations forthwith," the JRL said in a statement.

The JRL leaders wrote a letter to UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres urging him to intervene to end the sufferings of the people of J&K. "We urge you (UN Secretary General) to initiate measures for the resolution of the dispute on Jammu & Kashmir which is on UN Agenda since 1948 and

Kashmir shuts down on World Human Rights Day

Omar challenges BJP to announce CM candidate

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ SRINAGAR

Two mainstream political parties in Kashmir National Conference (NC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) have upped ante against BJP ahead of the announcement of Assembly and parliament elections in Jammu and Kashmir. On Monday, former Chief Minister Omar Abdullah accused the BJP of deceiving the people of Kashmir by rejecting their mandate twice.

Abdullah challenged the BJP to announce chief ministerial candidate if the people in the Valley give them a mandate. "I challenge the BJP to announce their chief ministerial candidate in the upcoming elections because they have cheated the people of Jammu and Kashmir twice... The people deserve to know whom the

BJP will make the CM if they give 25-26 MLAs to the BJP," Abdullah said.

Omar's reaction came in response to Union Minister of State Dr Jatindra Singh's statement that Kashmir's mainstream politicians are more dangerous than separatists.

In a similar reaction former Minister and senior PDP leader Naem Akhtar asked BJP to explain why it ignored its 25 MLAs and selected a CM candidate from Kashmir who has mere 2 seats in the assembly.

"Why were you (Jitendra Singh) or Kulvinder Gupta (former Deputy Chief Minister) or any other BJP leader not chosen as CM candidate of the party from the State. How can you people convince your own voters after such a decision has been taken by your party," Akhtar asked.

is the main cause of all Human Rights violations in Jammu & Kashmir," the letter reads.

The separatists had asked the people to observe human rights week between December 3 and 9. Protest demonstrations were organised at various places during the week to highlight human rights situation in

the valley. Meanwhile, clashes were reported between youth and the security forces in Hajin area of north Kashmir's Bandipora district following the burial of two teenage militants. Heavy stone pelting was reported from the area. Thousands of people

reportedly participated in the funeral prayers of two local LeT Mudasir Parrey (14) and Saqib Bilal Sheikh (17). Both were killed on Sunday along-with a Pakistani top LeT commander Ali Bhai in 18 hour gunfight with the security forces in Mujkund area on the outskirts of Srinagar.

MAHA MARATHA RESERVATION LAW

Pro-quota activist assaults lawyer outside HC

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Within a week after he moved the Bombay High Court challenging the newly enacted Maharashtra legislation granting 16 per cent reservations to Marathas, lawyer Gunratna Sadavarte was on Monday assaulted by a pro-quota activist outside the High Court.

Sadavarte, who has filed a PIL on behalf of his client Jayashree Patil of the Indian Constitutionalist Council (IC) challenging the new Maratha Reservations Act, was roughed up by an unemployed youth — identified as one Vajinath Mukne Patil from Jalna — soon after he finished briefing the media on the Maratha reservations outside the high court.

The drama unfolded soon after Sadavarte completed his media briefing and began to walk away. Patil, an unemployed graduate, suddenly came forward from the crowd, raised a now popular slogan 'Ek Maratha, Lak Maratha' (One Maratha is equivalent to one lakh Marathas), pushed and punched Sadavarte in the face. With his spectacles down on the ground, Sadavarte lost his balance.

Patil hurled abuses at Sadavarte and demanded to know from the latter as to why he had challenged the Maratha reservations in the court. Meanwhile, some policemen and lawyers rushed Patil's help and managed to catch hold of the attacker.

Meanwhile, attacker Patil taken to the Azad Maidan Police station where he was detained for questioning.

The incident took place within minutes after Sadavarte's PIL came up for hearing before a HC division bench of Chief Justice Naresh Patil and Justice MS Karnik.

The PIL, filed by Sadavarte, states that the new Maratha Reservations — better known as the Maharashtra State (of seats for admission in educational institutions in the state and for appointments in the public services and posts under the state) for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBC) Act, 2018 — is in violation of the 50 per cent cap imposed by the Supreme Court on reservations.

Among other things, the petition states that the Maratha community — the Kumbi-Marathas — have already been

given a reservation under the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category and the additional reservations will only create a class within a class, affecting those who do not belong to any reserved category.

Earlier, talking to media persons, Sadavarte said that ever since he filed a petition in the high court challenging the new Maratha Reservation Act, said that he had received more than one thousand threats.

"I have registered a complaint about threats to my with the Bhoiwada police station. I have also informed the Chief Justice about the threats received by me ever since I filed an PIL in the court. I have also urged the high court to provide adequate police protection to me," he said.

The high court, meanwhile, ordered that Patil and his family members be provided police protection.

It may be recalled that on December 3, the Maharashtra a caveat in the Supreme Court seeking a hearing in the event of anyone challenging the new Maharashtra Reservation Act granting 16 per cent reservations to Marathas in education and jobs.

The move came two days after Maharashtra Governor C Vidyasagar Rao signed the Maratha reservation bill enacting the law. The bill had earlier been passed unanimously by both the Houses of Maharashtra on November 29.

The caveat, filed by Advocate Nishant Katneswarkar on behalf of the Maharashtra Government in the apex court, reads thus: "No order be passed in the matter without notice to the Maharashtra Government. The caveator (Maharashtra Government) was the authorised party who issued the Maharashtra Act."

Their apprehension in the state government's mind that its new Maratha Reservation Act might get entangled in litigation can be evidenced from that by enacting a law granting 16 per cent reservations to Marathas, the Devendra Fadnavis dispensation has exceeded the 50 per cent cap on reservations imposed by the Supreme Court and in the process followed the suit of the Tamil Nadu Government.

Currently Maharashtra has 52 per cent reservations in jobs and educational institu-

tions. Of the total 52 per cent reservations, SCs and ST communities account for 13 and 7 per cent, respectively, while OBCs have 19 per cent per cent reservations. Together, Special Backward Class and Nomadic Tribes account for 13 per cent.

The Marathas, who have now been accorded 16 per cent reservations in education and Government jobs, account for nearly 33 per cent of the total 11.25 crore population of Maharashtra.

Once the Maharashtra State SEBC Act comes into force, then the total reservations in the State will go up to 68 per cent — next only to Tamil Nadu that has 69 per cent reservations.

Though Devendra Fadnavis dispensation has not clarified as to how it would face the scrutiny of the new law in the Supreme Court, it looks like the Maharashtra government will take the route taken by the Tamil Nadu government under late Chief Minister Jayalalithaa, which achieved its objective of increasing reservations to 69 per cent by passing the Tamil Nadu Act of 1994 and adding the 1994 Act to the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution.

MAHA CIVIC POLLS

BJP romps in Dhule Municipal Corp, Sena emerges single largest party in Ahmednagar

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The ruling BJP on Monday captured power in the Dhule Municipal Corporation (DMC), while its alliance partner Shiv Sena emerged as the single largest party in the Ahmednagar Municipal Corporation (AMC).

Scoring a clear electoral victory over the ruling Shiv Sena and all Opposition parties, the BJP walked away with 50 out of the total 74 seats in the DMC. All other parties did not cross the single digit figure in the polls.

While the NCP and Congress won nine and six seats respectively, the Asaduddin Owaisi-led All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) four seats. Samajwadi Party bagged two seats, while the BSP, Samajwadi Party and Loksangram Party won one seat each. An independent secured one seat.

However, in the 68-member AMC, the Shiv Sena emerged as the single largest party winning 24 seats, followed the NCP and BJP which

won 18 and 14 seats respectively. The Congress bagged five seats, while the BSP won four seats. Samajwadi secured one seat, while two independents romped home in the elections.

Available pointers said that the Shiv Sena might come to power in AMC in the alliance with the BJP.

Meanwhile, the BJP captured power in Shendurani Nagar Panchayat in Jalgaon district. The Shiv Sena came to power in Ner Nabapur in Yavatmal district, while the Congress captured power in Bramhapuri Municipal Corporation in Chandrapur district. Washim Nagar Vikas Agadi, a local outfit, captured power in Risod Municipal Council in Washim district.

The elections to the two municipal corporations and six smaller local bodies were held on Sunday. The counting of votes took place on Monday.

The BJP's success in DMC is in continuation of victories it had scored in the municipal

corporations of Jalgaon in north Maharashtra and Sangli in western Maharashtra in August this year.

In that election, the BJP had virtually swept the Jalgaon Municipal Corporation (JMC) polls by winning as many as 57 seats out of a total 75 seats and decimated hitherto-influential political outfit led by former minister and local Sureshdada Jain who controlled Jalgaon civic body for the last three and a half decades.

In the 78-member Sangli-Miraj-Kupwad Municipal Corporation (SMKMC) polls, the BJP secured a majority of its own by winning 41 seats as against 20 seats won by the Congress and 15 by the NCP.

Walking away with 57 out of the total 75 seats in the JMC, the BJP established supremacy over all the political parties. Its principal rival Shiv Sena managed to win just 15 seats in the JMC polls.

The AIMIM, which had contested the JMC polls for the first time, bagged three seats. Significantly enough, the Congress and NCP drew a blank in the polls.

Nothing in medical report of accused showing torture: SC

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Monday said there was 'absolutely nothing' in the medical examination report to suggest that Brajesh Thakur, prime accused in the Muzaffarpur shelter home sexual abuse case, was physically or mentally tortured in Patiala jail.

A bench of Justices Madan B Lokur and Deepak Gupta said they have perused the report of medical board and the doctors have not found any injuries to substantiate the claims of physical and mental torture of the accused in the jail.

Thakur was shifted to Patiala high-security jail in Punjab from Bihar's Bhagalpur jail following the apex court's

October 30 order.

Over 30 girls were allegedly raped and sexually abused at the Muzaffarpur shelter home. The issue was first highlighted in an audit report submitted by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) to Bihar's social welfare department.

An FIR was lodged on May 31 against 11 people, including Thakur, who was running the shelter home. Later, the probe was taken over by the CBI and so far 17 people have been arrested in the case.

During the hearing on Monday, the bench referred to

MUZAFFARPUR SHELTER HOME

the medical report of Thakur and told senior

advocate Vikas Singh, who was representing him, that no injuries were found during the medical examination.

On December 6, Singh had placed before the court a letter 'purportedly written' by two children of Thakur in which it was alleged that he was being tortured physically and mentally in the Patiala jail.

The court had then directed the jail superintendent to produce Thakur before the medical superintendent of a Hospital in Patiala in presence of a judicial magistrate.

It had asked the medical superintendent to constitute a medical board to examine him and submit its report in the court by Monday.

The court had passed the order to shift Thakur out of Bihar after the CBI had said he was an influential person and was found in possession of mobile phone inside the Bhagalpur jail.

At the fag end of hearing on Monday, Singh told the court that the NGO which was running the shelter home at Muzaffarpur has received a notice from the concerned department of Bihar government with regard to its four-story building there.

PTI

Mangroves could cure diabetes, claim scientists

KUMAR CHELAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Researchers of Centre for Advanced Studies in Marine Biology (CASMB) at Parangipettai in Tamil Nadu's Cuddalore district has developed a new drug capable of curing Type-1 and 2 diabetes as well as having the potential to be an anti-oxidant and anti-plasmodial properties. "It can function as an anti-cancer and anti-HIV drug," Thirugnanasambandam Ramanathan of the Marine Sciences Department, CASMB, told *The Pioneer*.

The surprising part of the invention made by the research team led by Dr Ramanathan is

that the drug has been developed from the fresh leaves of mangroves which are quite common along the shores of estuaries adjoining the CASMB. Prof Kathiresan, former head of the Department of Marine Sciences, CASMB, was the one who found out that mangroves were effective in mitigating the effects of tsunami waves which ravaged Tamil Nadu coast in December 2004.

The CASMB and nearby areas were saved from the deadly tsunami waves because of the thick growth of mangroves along the Parangipettai shore and since then the plant was a subject of interest to Prof. Kathiresan and his colleagues. They planted many varieties of

mangroves along the shoreline and it has paid rich dividends now.

The extract from the leaves of mangrove plants were tested in rats administered with type 1 and 2 diabetes mellitus. It was found that the rats responded to the extracts from the leaves of mangroves found along the Parangipettai coastline. "These mangroves were commonly used ethnomedicinal plants in the area. Our studies found that the plant has hypoglycemic, anti-oxidant, anti-cancer and anto-HIV properties because of the presence of alkaloids, flavonoids and terpenoids," said Ramanathan.

According to Ramanathan,

diabetes mellitus patients can have either Type 1 or 2 diabetes. "Type 1 is characterised by reduced production of insulin due to damaged pancreatic cells. Type 2 diabetes is caused by increased resistance to insulin uncton," said Ramanathan. He said the rats showed positive results when administered with extracts prepared from the mangrove leaves.

It may take couple of years for the drug to hit the market as clinical trials are a time consuming process. "But we are confident of developing a medicine from mangroves for diabetes," said S Gurudeeban, one of the researchers in the team.

Bikinis should be worn in private spaces only, not in temples, churches: Goa Min

IANS ■ PANAJI

Bikinis should only be worn in private spaces in Goa and the swim wear should not be allowed in the state's temples and churches, Goa's PWD Minister Sudin Dhavalikar said on Monday.

Dhavalikar, who recently returned from an official trip to Portugal, said in the past, his comments on bikinis were blown out of proportions, in the same way as his demand for an apology for injustices meted out to Goa during the colonial rule from Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa were also blown out of proportions. The latter, the Minister said, cost him several seats in the 2017 Assembly elections.

"I had then said that they (those wearing bikinis) should not visit temples. This is not our culture. They should not come to churches (wearing bikinis) and people in your

Dhavalikar had come under flak in 2014 after he said that bikinis and short skirts were 'unsafe' and against Indian culture and should not be worn in public places, including beaches

family will also agree that bikinis should not be worn in temples, in public places. They can do that in private places," Dhavalikar told a press conference in Panaji.

Dhavalikar had come under flak in 2014 after he said that bikinis and short skirts were "unsafe" and against Indian culture and should not

be worn in public places, including beaches.

Lavu Mamedar, an MLA from the Maharashtra Gomantak Party, which Dhavalikar is a senior member of, had also demanded setting up of a special "bikini" beach on Goa's beaches, where access would be allowed only with an entry fee.

Dhavalikar had demanded an apology from Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa to Goa in 2016, a few months before the February 2017 state Assembly elections, while the Assembly discussed moving a motion to congratulate Antonio Costa, who is of Goan origin, on his appointment as PM. Dhavalikar now hints at a political motive behind the controversy.

"It was just two months before elections. That (comment) was hyped by everyone. Because of that I lost seven seats," Dhavalikar said.

Siddaramaiah's foreign trip casts shadow on Cong

KESTUR VASUKI ■ BENGALURU

Former Chief Minister and chairman of the coalition Government Siddaramaiah's foreign trip ahead of the winter session has led to lot of political speculation in the State.

The winter session of the Karnataka assembly which began on Monday at Belagavi and the absence of Siddaramaiah who has declared that the cabinet expansion of the coalition government led by chief minister HD Kumaraswamy will take place on December 22 has left many congress aspirant MLAs high and dry.

The century old party which is facing a revolt for not expanding the cabinet has set out speculation of operation Lotus by the BJP with 104 seats to garner required seven seats to topple the government. Many of the aspirants from the Congress like MB Patil and others are

on their toes to attack the party for not including them in the ministry.

A senior Congress leader on the condition anonymity said that many rebels including powerful Jharkihole brothers of Belagavi are up against the party and threatening to quit. He said "they are also questioning the credibility of the party in aligning with the regional party JDS which is only playing opportunistic and politics of survival. The tomorrow's election results of the five state is crucial and its going to impact Karnataka politics."

Meanwhile the Congress Legislature Party (CLP) meeting, which was scheduled to be held in Belagavi on December 10 just before the start of the session, has been deferred to December 18.

Siddaramaiah has left for Malaysia to attend the wedding of one of his family friends and will return to



Bengaluru on Friday. The aspirants according to an insider are threatening to boycott the session putting the party in a fix. Chief Minister Kumaraswamy who is heading a fragile coalition has to face the winter session both inside and the outside where sugar cane farmers are protesting for MSP.

Congress has reason to worry as some of the dissent party MLAs are mulling to stay away from the legislature session during the debate on crucial issues to embarrass the ruling coalition. However, KPCC president Dinesh Gundu Rao dis-

missed such apprehensions. "We have able leaders to face opposition BJP in the Belagavi session," Gundu Rao said.

Siddaramaiah is expected to return on December 15 and he will remain absent during the first week of the two-week session, which has commenced on Monday.

Sources said that he is going to Malaysia to attend the wedding of his friend's daughter.

While Siddaramaiah himself has clarified that it was an earlier scheduled tour, the timing of his tour has led to speculation since the Congress is internally under stress from its legislators who are ministerial aspirants.

A senior leader of the congress said "I totally agree that a section of Congressmen are unhappy at being sidelined in the coalition regime, aspirants for berths are exerting pressure ahead of the proposed

Cabinet expansion on December 22. Some legislators are even threatening to stay away from the Legislature session. The party leadership is aware of it and finding ways to deal with it."

Opposition BJP led by former chief minister and state party president BS Yeddyurappa has been strategising to attack the coalition government in the absence of Siddaramaiah with many issues which include loan waiver to farmers and AGS report.

Congress working president Eshwar Khandre tried to douse the fire and said Siddaramaiah had informed his tour plans and no legislator will be absent during the session. He also said there is enough space for accommodating every one. Meanwhile Congress party is also planning to issue a whip during critical discussion in case of legislatures decide to abstain from the house.

TO FORM MAJORITY GOVT IN J&K

NC top brass eyeing voters in Jammu

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Top brass of the National Conference has started making rounds of Jammu, ahead of Assembly polls, with an aim to garner popular votes in the region.

After losing 2014 polls and winning only three seats from Jammu region, former Chief Minister Omar Abdullah paid little attention towards expanding the base of the party across Jammu region.

Occasionally, he visited frontier Rajouri and Poonch districts and addressed public meetings to stay connected with their traditional voters but largely speaking party made little efforts towards strengthening the party base in the region.

With the emergence of third front lead by Peoples Conference Chairman Sajjad Lone in Kashmir valley, National Conference, is gradually gearing up its poll machinery across Jammu tunnel to improve its performance in the forth coming Assembly polls.

Last week, party President and Member Parliament from Srinagar, Dr Farooq Abdullah, tutored party workers and local leaders in Jammu to remain united and strengthen the hands of the party candidates than stabbing them in the back.

"I will bury you in the ground if you will not support the party candidate during crucial Assembly polls", warned Dr Abdullah.

On Monday, it was the turn of former state Chief Minister, Omar Abdullah, to motivate them to work towards clinching majority votes in the 87 member legislative assembly. Addressing a day long con-



"A single party Government alone can meet the challenges confronted by the State, adding that his party will give a strong and stable Government at the strength of the peoples' massive support and NC's presence in every nook and corner of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh"

vention of party functionaries here at Sher-e- Kashmir bhawan Omar Abdullah announced the decision of the party against forming any alliance in the state. He said, "We will go alone without forging any alliance".

"A single party Government alone can meet the challenges confronted by the State, adding that his party will give a strong and stable government at the strength of the peoples' massive support and NC's presence in every nook and corner of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh".

He also urged the workers not to go on rumours of rotation of reserved seats in the Jammu region, as the Governor had assured the party delegation recently about no such move under the consideration of the government.

Exuding confidence about massive victory, the NC Vice President said Jammu and Ladakh will have to hugely contribute to the strength of National Conference in giving a responsive and accountable Government.

In 2014 National Conference had won only 3 Assembly seats out of 37 in the region. Party had won 12 seats from Kashmir valley, recording

its lowest ever score in the state elections so far.

On the occasion he also dared BJP to declare its chief ministerial candidate for Jammu and Kashmir ahead of elections to Legislative Assembly, saying it had lost face and credibility among people of Jammu by indulging in rhetoric and false claims.

"The BJP's bravado to have its own Chief Minister from Jammu fell flat twice, first by stitching alliance with 28-member PDP in 2015 and later while unsuccessfully attempting to form the government by surrendering before a party with two MLAs from North Kashmir", Omar Abdullah said.

Launching a scathing attack on BJP, Omar said, "With which face the BJP will now go to the electors of Jammu in upcoming elections, who know that after seeking their mandate they will again fall in the trap and lap of a few MLAs from Kashmir to share the power".

On the BJP's communal plank, the National Conference Vice President said that an atmosphere of fear and mistrust is being created across the country. He said passions are being generated over the issue of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya before the general elections.

ASSEMBLY POLLS RESULTS

Stage set for vote counting in Telangana

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

The fate of 1,821 candidates contesting the Telangana Assembly election will be decided Tuesday when the counting of votes will be taken up.

The maiden polls for the 119-seat Telangana Assembly were held on December 7 with a voter turnout of 73.20 per cent.

Chief Electoral Officer Rajat Kumar said necessary arrangements have been made for the counting day and the strongrooms, where EVMs are kept, secured with central paramilitary forces providing "first cordon of security".

One of the strongroom keys is kept with the external observer and as precaution, political parties are also keeping a watch, he said.

The counting will begin at 8am.

"EVMs will be brought out polling station-wise and kept at the counting centres which will have 14 tables (except in Medchal which will have 28). And counting will go on. This will be done after the completion of the full postal ballot count. Counting will be done in the respective constituencies," Kumar told PTI.

"The winning candidate will be declared and certificate will be prepared after obtaining clearance from the Election Commission. With the approval of the ECI, the Chief Electoral Officer, will submit the list of winning candidates party-wise to the Governor," he added.

Though some exit polls indicate a clear edge to K Chandrashekar Rao-led Telangana Rashtra Samithi, the "Praja Kutami" alliance of

Though some exit polls indicate a clear edge to K Chandrashekar Rao-led Telangana Rashtra Samithi, the "Praja Kutami" alliance of Congress, TDP, CPI and Kodandaram-led Telangana Jana Samithi, appears confident of forming the Government

Congress, Telugu Desam Party, CPI and Kodandaram-led Telangana Jana Samithi, appears confident of forming the Government in the country's youngest state, separated from Andhra Pradesh in June 2014.

"We will win 100 seats," Rao said repeatedly in campaign meetings.

Congress president Rahul Gandhi had said the alliance led by his party is confident of winning the election "hands-down" and claimed Rao was showing "signs of nervousness and insecurity" in meetings he addressed as the campaign wound down.

Predicting a fractured poll mandate in Telangana, the BJP claimed Sunday it would play a "vital role" in the formation of the government in the southern state.

AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi Friday exuded confidence that his party would be successful in the Telangana Assembly election.

The party has fielded candidates in eight assembly segments in Hyderabad and is supporting TRS in other segments.

India successfully test-fires N-capable Agni-5 missile

Balalore (Odisha): India successfully test-fired nuclear-capable ballistic missile Agni-5, which has a strike range of 5,000 km, from Dr Abdul Kalam Island off the Odisha coast on Monday. This is the seventh trial of the indigenously-developed surface-to-surface missile, defence sources said. Agni-5 is a three stage missile and is 17 metre tall and 2 metre wide. It is capable of carrying 1.5 tonne of nuclear warheads. "The missile was launched with the help of a mobile launcher from launch pad-4 of the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Dr Abdul Kalam Island in the Bay of Bengal on Monday afternoon," said a defence source.

"It was an user associated trial. Strategic force command along with DRDO scientists conducted it," the source added. During this trial, the flight performance of the missile was tracked and monitored by radars, tracking instruments and observation stations, said the source.

India has in its armoury the Agni missile series -- Agni-1 with a range of 700 km, Agni-2 with a range of 2,000 km, Agni-3 and Agni-4 with 2,500

km to more than 3,500 km range. The Agni-5 is the latest and most advanced variant in terms of navigation and guidance, warhead and engine.

"The high-speed on-board computer and fault-tolerant software, along with robust and reliable bus guided the (Agni-5) missile flawlessly (during the test)," an official said. The missile is programmed in such a way that after reaching the peak of its trajectory, it turns towards the earth to continue its journey to the target with an increased speed, due to the earth's gravitational pull, and its path precisely directed by the advanced on-board computer and inertial navigation system.

As the missile enters the earth's atmosphere, the atmospheric air rubbing its outer surface skin raises the temperature to beyond 4,000 degree Celsius. However, the indigenously-designed and developed heat shield maintains the inside temperature at less than 50 degree Celsius.

Finally, commanded by the on-board computer with the support of laser gyro-based inertial navigation system, micro inertial navigation sys-

tem (MINS), fully digital control system and advanced compact avionics, the missile hit the designated target point accurately, meeting all mission objectives, the sources said.

The ships located in mid-range and at the target point tracked the vehicle and witnessed the final event.

All the radars and electro-optical systems along the path, monitored the parameters of the missile and displayed them in real time.

The first two flights of Agni-5 in 2012 and 2013 were in open configuration. The third, fourth and fifth launch were from canister integrated with a mobile launcher, that enables launch of the missile in a shorter time as compared to an open launch. The missile has advantages of higher reliability, longer shelf life, less maintenance and enhanced mobility. The first test was conducted on April 19, 2012, the second on September 15, 2013, the third on January 31, 2015 and the fourth one on December 26, 2016. The fifth test was held on January 18 this year and the last one was held on June 3, 2018. All the trials were successful.

PTI



Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik meets Pakistan High Commissioner Sohail Mahmood at the secretariat in Bhubaneswar on Monday

Pawar cites Shah remark to slam Fadnavis over Maratha quota

PTI ■ PUNE

NCP president Sharad Pawar Sunday accused Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis of giving 'false' promises to the Maratha community over the issue of reservation in government jobs and education.

Pawar cited a reported statement of BJP chief Amit Shah and asked Fadnavis if he will defy his party chief in granting quota to the influential community.

The NCP leader said Shah's had recently remarked, while opposing quota to a minority community in Telangana, that the Supreme Court has set a limit of 50 per

cent on reservation.

The SC limit will be breached when the Maratha reservation is implemented in the state. He was speaking at a congregation of NCP workers and office-bearers here.

Pawar said Fadnavis had asked people to celebrate for his government passing a law on 16 per cent reservation to the Maratha community.

But Shah, according to Pawar, said at a rally in Telangana that any quota beyond the SC-set limit will not stand in court.

"When the president of the party (BJP) says it (more than 50 per cent quota) cannot stand in court, why are you giving false promises to the peo-

ple of Maharashtra?" Pawar said while hitting out at Fadnavis.

The former Union Minister said people in Ayodhya are upset over the decision to take over buildings located near the disputed site in the temple town.

"People are saying they are not opposing construction of a (Ram) temple, but are complaining that in the name of temple, there is an attempt to destroy everything."

Pawar, talking about pre-poll unity of opposition, said importance will have to be given to regional parties on the basis of their strength in their respective states while deciding on seat sharing.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

KUSHWAHA PARTS...

Kushwaha is likely to meet Congress chief Rahul Gandhi soon. Kushwaha, whose break-up with the BJP was expected, sharply attacked Modi on a host of issues in his resignation letter, which was also released to the media. He said he felt "betrayed and dejected" by the Prime Minister's leadership and alleged "fixing" political opponents and not working for the poor had become the Government's priority. The former Minister of State (MoS) for HRD also raised the planks of Other Backward Classes and social justice --- used by the Opposition to decimate the BJP in the Bihar Assembly polls in 2015 --- to target Modi. He alleged the Modi-led Government was implementing the RSS agenda and dubbed it unconstitutional. Kushwaha has been upset since the BJP made it clear that his party will not be given more than two Lok Sabha seats in 2019 against the three it had fought in 2014. The party has two MPs and two MLAs. BJP president Amit Shah's announcement that the BJP and the JD(U) will contest an equal number of seats also did not go down well with Kushwaha, who has long had a bitter equation with Kumar. The NDA won 31 of 40 Lok Sabha seats in Bihar in 2014 and has now been bolstered by the presence of the JD(U), which had fought against it in the last polls. Opposition parties believe political winds are no longer as favourable to the BJP in Bihar due to "anti-incumbency" against both Modi and Kumar and are hoping that Kushwaha's exit will further weaken the State's ruling alliance. "It (NDA) won't be able to open its account in the State this time", Kushwaha claimed. At a Press conference, Kushwaha said people like him were attracted to Modi in 2014 due to his OBC background and hoped that he would deliver on the agenda of social justice. "People believed 'achche din' will come. It did not happen. Bihar remains where it was," he said. Targeting the Modi Government for not releasing the census data of the OBCs, he said there is fear and confusion among the backward classes. "Ministers and officers posted in ministries have become figureheads as virtually all decisions are taken by you and the BJP president. Which is unconstitutional," his letter added. "The promise of providing Bihar with a special package has been the biggest juggle (rhetoric)," Kushwaha said, as he also attacked Kumar for leaving the State's infrastructure in a shambles.

URJIT QUITS...

Patel's predecessor Raghuram Rajan said "all Indians" should be concerned as strength of institutions is important for growth and development. "I think Dr Patel has made a statement and I think this is the ultimate statement that a regulator or a civil servant can make. I think the statement should be respected," Rajan told a news channel. "We should" go into the details as to why there was impasse, which forced this ultimate decision, he noted. "I think, this is something that all Indians should be concerned about because strength of our institutions is really important for our growth, sustainable growth and equity in the economy," said Rajan, who completed his three-year term as RBI Governor in September 2016. In his statement, Patel thanked his colleagues at the RBI but made no mention of the Government or the Finance Ministry. "It has been my privilege and honour to serve in the RBI in various capacities over the years. The support and hard work of RBI staff, officers and management has been the proximate driver of the bank's considerable accomplishments in recent years. I take this opportunity to express gratitude to my colleagues and Directors of the RBI Central Board, and wish them all the best for the future," he said. Patel had more than eight months of the first three-year tenure left and was eligible for a second term as was given to several of his predecessors barring Rajan. Prior to taking over on September 6, 2016, he was a Deputy Governor overseeing the monetary policy department at the RBI under Rajan and was known as his 'inflation-warrior'. Patel, who has worked with the International Monetary Fund, Boston Consulting Group and Reliance Industries, among other organisations, took over after Rajan completed his three-year term on September 4. Patel is among the few with a corporate background to become RBI Governor, the top post at the Mint Street that has been previously held by mostly career bureaucrats and economists. Patel was the eighth Deputy Governor at RBI to be made Governor, the last being YV Reddy. Besides, at least five former Governors had served at IMF before becoming RBI chief, while a few others went on to work at IMF after leaving the Central bank.

LONDON COURT...

Delivering the verdict, Chief Magistrate Judge Emma Arbuthnot said there is a prima facie case against Mallya and that

she is satisfied that his human rights would not be infringed in Barrack 12 of Arthur Road Jail in Mumbai, where he is to be held on being extradited. "Having considered the evidence as a whole, there is a case to answer... There is clear evidence of dispersal and misapplication of the loan funds and I find a prima facie case that Mallya was involved in a conspiracy to launder money," Judge Arbuthnot concluded. "There was no evidence which allowed me to find that he extruded Mallya was at real risk of suffering a flagrant denial of justice," she said, adding that she is sending the case to the Home Secretary of State for a decision to be taken on whether to order his extradition. Under India's extradition treaty with the UK, the sign off on the extradition order is made by the UK home secretary, in this case Pakistan-origin senior British Minister Sajid Javid, who has two months to formally order the extradition. Meanwhile, Mallya has the right to lodge an appeal in the UK High Court against the Chief Magistrate's order but that appeal would only be addressed once Javid has made his decision on the extradition order, until which time Mallya remains on the same bail conditions as before. "I am disappointed that the judge felt I made misrepresentations to IDBI bank and persuaded them to loan money to Kingfisher Airlines. Be that as it may, the judge is perfectly entitled to make whatever judgment she thought fit. I have my rights," Mallya told reporters after the verdict. Judge Arbuthnot was very categorical as she summarised her findings in court against Mallya, with the key word of her verdict being "misrepresentation" by him of the state of his company, now-defunct Kingfisher Airlines, to acquire loans. She was equally critical of the Indian banks for not using "common sense" when such loans were sanctioned. "It is either a case that the various continuing failures were by design and with a motive (possibly financial), which is not clear from the evidence that has been put in front of me, or it is a case of a bank who were in the thrall of this glamorous, flashy, famous, bejewelled, bodyguarded, ostensibly billionaire playboy who charmed and cajoled these bankers into losing their common sense and persuading them to put their own rules and regulations to one side," she noted. She said Mallya was not above using "round robin" methods to

long trial, which commenced on December 4 last year and has undergone a series of hearings over the course of the year. CBI spokesperson said the agency has come to know from media reports that Mallya's extradition was ordered by a London court. "We welcome the decision. We hope to bring him soon and conclude the case. The CBI has its own inherent strengths. We worked hard on this case. We are strong on law and facts and we were confident while perusing the extradition process," the spokesperson said.

21 OPP PARTIES...

We need a Government where harassment of businessmen and industrialists would end and the spirit of enterprise must be allowed full freedom, Rahul said. Mamata hit out at the Modi Government over Urjit Patel's resignation, saying it is a matter of "great shock". "Institutions, from the CBI to the RBI, have become total disasters. This has never happened before. It is a matter of great shock. We must protest," Banerjee said. She proposed that the meeting should continue on Tuesday and leaders of Opposition parties should also meet President Ram Nath Kovind over Patel's resignation. "The BJP is behaving like a dictator. There should be a campaign against this rule. Everybody has agreed to that," she said. "Financial stability is not there... Financial emergency has started," she alleged.

The meeting, held in Parliament annexe, came a day ahead of the results of the Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Telangana and Mizoram Assembly polls as well as the Winter Session of Parliament. Former Prime Ministers Manmohan Singh and H D Deve Gowda, also a Janata Dal (Secular) leader, Sonia Gandhi, DMK chief M K Stalin and National Conference supreme Farooq Abdullah were also present. Top Congress leaders Ahmed Patel, AK Antony, Ghulam Nabi Azad and Ashok Gehlot were also present.

The others who took part were Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav, CPI-M general secretary Sitaram Yechury, CPI leaders Sudhakar Reddy and D Raja, Loktantrik Janata Dal leader Sharad Yadav and Jharkhand Vikas Morcha's (JVM) Babul Marandi. All the leaders issued a joint statement accusing Modi and the current dispensation of attacking the democratic system of the country during the last 55 months.

Historian Mushirul's death condoled, laid to rest at Jamia

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Veteran historian and former Vice-Chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia Mushirul Hasan passed away on Monday after prolonged illness at a private hospital in Delhi. Hasan breathed for the last time at around 4 am in the morning after being admitted to the hospital on Sunday night. He was nearing 71 and was known for his work on partition and history of Islam in south Asia. Hasan served as Jamia Vice-Chancellor from 2004 to 09.

"He met with a road accident about four years ago and was mostly bed-ridden after that. He was also undergoing dialysis for kidney problems. Some health complications emerged and he was taken to hospital post midnight. He passed away there this morning," said Zafar Nawaz Hashmi, former secretary to Jamia V-C.

His namaz-e-janaza was performed at 1 pm at Babul Ilm and 2 pm at Jamia mosque, said family sources. As per the varsity spokesperson, Hasan was buried at the campus cemetery. Hasan's death was condoled



by celebrity and politicians such as Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Deputy CM Mnish Sisodia, CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury condoled the death.

The CPI(M) General Secretary remembered Hasan as a blend of syncretic culture and scholarship. "A Historian, A Teacher, A Vice-Chancellor, An Archivist: Mushir ul Hasan blended all fine qualities of our syncretic culture and scholarship. His work and his books continue to shape our consciousness. Condolences to Prof Zoya Hasan & others in his family," Yechury tweeted.

Condoled the death, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal tweeted, "Shocked to know about the sad demise of noted scholar and writer Mushir ul Hasan ji. His contribution to Jamia will always be remembered." "Passing away of Mushirul is a great loss not just to academia, but to all those who believe in standing up for what is right," said deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia.

He also held the posts of director general of National Archives of India, vice-chairman of Indian Institute of Advanced Study, and president of Indian History Congress.

No quick fixes

Opposition unity has to go beyond optics and take everybody along if it wants voters to be serious



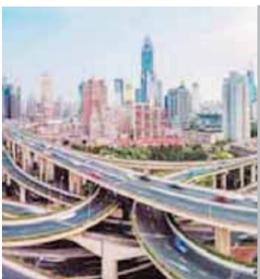
Whatever today's election results might be, they are bound to have some psychological hold in the run-up to 2019. The BJP needs the heartland verdict, its core base, more than the Congress, which, post its dismal showing in 2014, will be happy to resurrect its credibility even if it wins one or two states, never mind the infighting among its satraps. If the cliffhanger verdicts do hold true, then it would again roundly be attributed to the monolithic vigour and purposefulness of

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his paratrooping ability in swinging undecided public minds in the last leg. But what is unpredictable is Opposition unity and will. Dominant regional parties could still stitch together a formidable anti-BJP front, lording over as they do in half of the total Lok Sabha seats. If they still see themselves as negotiating their personal terrain in terms of which way the tide goes, then the pre-winter session meeting, initiated by TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu this time, will just be another case of wasted optics. And at this juncture, the mahagabandhan must stake its all and cannot continue to be iffy. Most Opposition Chief Ministers have attended the meet with UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi endorsing it beside Congress chief Rahul Gandhi. If the Opposition has to convert a ground swell of discontent into a semblance of a wave, then key players like BSP chief Mayawati, who is the most effective partner any party can have in terms of vote transference, and SP chief Akhilesh Yadav need to be assuaged immediately. Though both indicated that they would send their top aides, it is not enough considering they have proven with the bypoll results earlier this year that they can make things work on the ground in the most crucial electoral state. Both have avowedly maintained a distance from the Congress than be its B-team and the grand old party needs to make some ego adjustment here. For the unity platform won't be taken seriously if they are not on it. Already, TRS chief K Chandrashekar Rao and BJD chief Naveen Patnaik, seated comfortably in their perches, are staying out from national ambitions, keeping doors open to the side that enhances their state-level interests. The BJP is already scenting chances in this drift and has reciprocally not lambasted either Patnaik or Rao.

The crucial factor is whether Congress will be secondary to the federal front or if the front will need Gandhi as sheet anchor. First, the Opposition needs to sew up a cohesive strategy for Parliament, showing strength on crucial bills, forcing discussions on farmers' issues and Rafale. Second, constituents must take care of overlapping catchment areas in their states and settle seat-sharing issues before the resultant tension dilutes their goal. In states where they are rivals, a ground level justification is difficult to work out but as the SP-BSP scenario has shown, there could be a need-based understanding and even post-poll arrangements. Third, 2019 is not 1977 where the Emergency-tainted Congress was easy to root out. Though his government has taken hits, Modi's personal standing remains unaffected. He has managed to project himself as the doer who is hemmed in by circumstance, not intent. No leader in the Opposition camp has been able to project himself/herself as an egoless servitor of the nation as effectively. The federal front is a mosaic of leaders with conflicting temperaments, each of whom would be king than kingmaker. Already there are noises bring made about TMC chief Mamata Banerjee, who got the Opposition initiative going in the first place, and Chandrababu Naidu, who is helming the second round of grandstanding, if only to show that it is a democratic platform of equals. But the leadership and anchorage issue is something that the BJP is already beginning to play up. The federal front has to battle coalition era ghosts which almost led to policy paralysis in UPA times. So the combined Opposition must fight hard for numbers because past minority governments, like those of PV Narasimha Rao and AB Vajpayee, have managed to pull full terms with success. And Modi knows that.

Growth pangs

India has the fastest growing cities in the world. Little wonder that urban infrastructure can barely keep pace



A recent study by the Oxford Economics has empirically showed that India has some of the fastest growing cities in the world, with Karnataka's capital and Indian information technology hub of Bengaluru being the fastest city economy in the world along with Surat as the fastest growing. Normally, the words 'fastest growing' would be considered an accolade and would be celebrated with countless advertisements and news television debates. However, this event was ignored

by Indian news television (which seems to suffer from severe tunnel vision) and Central, state and local governments hoped the population at large did not use the survey to question them on what they would describe as an 'infrastructure gap' between service and equipment providers. The business of inverters and generators to deal with unreliable electricity, water filtration systems to deal with the fact that no Indian city provides potable water from the tap and lately the fast-growing air purifiers with most Indian cities, not just Delhi as many suspect (indeed, as of today Kolkata's air quality is far worse than the national capital) points to the inadequate infrastructure that is incapable of handling surging volumes and demand. Public transport, while improving with new Metro systems in many cities, is for the large part overwhelmed and the costs of retrofitting mass rapid transport systems have been immense for Indian cities, financially and for pollution.

Yet, this study proves that despite all this, the allure of large metropolitan areas remains for people from small towns and rural areas. The government's plan to create a 100 new smart cities has been stillborn and the attraction of a Bengaluru, Hyderabad and a Gurugram far outweighs the negatives in the mind of a domestic immigrant, even if they end up living far from public transport and in an area lacking even basic amenities such as piped water and a sewage system. There are several reasons for this, the most uncomfortable one being a perverse celebration of the farmer and the agrarian economy which saw far too little investment in cities by our polity. This has led to the collapse of the subsistence agrarian economy and tottering cities. India's developmental focus has to shift dramatically towards making cities liveable. Even if the 2021 census might not capture the dramatic population shift from rural to urban, one has to be blind to say that it isn't happening, which this study proves. Like it happened in China, policy-makers have to figure out how to plan and build going forward.

Delimitation sore issue in J&K

Governor Satya Pal Malik has taken some tough measures that bode well for residents. He must continue to remove regional disparity and not be intimidated by parties



SANDHYA JAIN

Having boldly dissolved the Jammu & Kashmir Assembly to prevent horse-trading, and repealed the Roshni Act, it is hoped that Governor Satya Pal Malik will continue with bold reforms and not be intimidated by political parties. The decision to make the largely State-owned Jammu & Kashmir Bank a public sector enterprise was welcome, as was the reported plan to review the issue of Permanent Resident Certificate (PRC). Sadly, political outcry forced a re-think on both issues, to the detriment of citizens of the State.

The Governor reportedly asked the State Administrative Council to examine changes in the law for granting Permanent Resident Certificates (PRC) to remove impediments observed by the Revenue Department. The PRC is issued to domicile citizens of Jammu & Kashmir and Maharaja Hari Singh, who created the concept of State Subjects, provided that those domiciled in the State for at least 10 years could become subjects. However, Article 35A, added to the Constitution of India by a presidential order in 1954, empowers the Jammu & Kashmir Assembly to define 'permanent residents', which has made the PRC acquisition problematic.

Refugees who fled West Pakistan in 1947 are denied their legitimate citizenship rights. While Article 370 gives special status to Jammu & Kashmir, it also gives wide powers to the Governor. Unfortunately, the December 1, 2018, move to review the process of granting PRCs was fiercely opposed by the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), National Conference and even the People's Conference of Sajjad Lone, with whom the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has aligned for the next Assembly election. As the Supreme Court reviews the legality of Article 35A, the BJP should ponder the terms of its collaboration with Sajjad Lone so that it does not compromise (read sacrifice) its constituency again, as happened under PDP president Mehbooba Mufti. It is well-known that Rohingya illegal infiltrators secured PRCs in Mufti's regime.

Governor Malik's decision to repeal the Jammu & Kashmir State Lands (Vesting of ownership to the occupants) Act, 2001, (Roshni Act) is a desirable step. The legislation was originally mooted to help farmers, who were farming on State lands, to legally acquire title to the same, but was grossly abused by the elite to grab large tracts of State lands. The State lost around ₹25,000 crore that was to fund electricity generation schemes (hence the name 'Roshni'). In February 2018, the PDP tried to unilaterally allow Gujjar-Bakarwal squatters on forest land to become de facto owners and ignored opposition from the BJP.

It would be appropriate for the Governor to consider fresh delimitation of constituencies and appoint a Delimitation Commission to remove the regional disparity long suffered by Jammu province, and also provide representation to all reserved categories in the State Assembly. It is pertinent to note here that the



Constitution of Jammu & Kashmir, enacted in 1957, was based on the Maharaja's Constitution of Jammu & Kashmir of 1939, which was still in force. After accession to India, the State Constituent Assembly was constituted under the 1939 Constitution, but Sheikh Abdullah's administration arbitrarily carved out 30 seats for Jammu region and 43 seats for Kashmir region and two seats for Ladakh region. This regional disparity became entrenched thereafter: Kashmir (46), Jammu (37) and Ladakh (four).

The last delimitation exercise in the State took place under challenging circumstances and was finally accomplished by the Justice (ret'd) KK Gupta Commission in 1995, when the State was under President's rule. As the Constitution provides for delimitation every 10 years, the next delimitation of Assembly constituencies should have taken place in 2005. However, in 2002, the National Conference Government froze delimitation until 2026 by amending the Jammu & Kashmir Representation of the People Act 1957 and Section 47(3) of the Constitution of Jammu & Kashmir. The amended Section 47(3) provided "that until the relevant figures for the first census taken after the year 2026 have been published, it shall not be necessary to readjust the total number of seats in the Legislative Assembly of the State and the division of the State into territorial constituencies under this sub-section".

WITH PAKISTAN TRYING TO INCORPORATE GILGIT BALTISTAN AS A PROVINCE TO SAFEGUARD THE CHINA-PAKISTAN ECONOMIC CORRIDOR, INDIA MUST ASSERT ITS CLAIM TO THE REGION MORE FORCEFULLY BEFORE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

This means the next delimitation can only take place after Census 2031, unless the Governor intervenes and rectifies this irregularity. The BJP, Jammu & Kashmir National Panthers Party, Jammu State Morcha and even the Congress have demanded the constitution of a Delimitation Commission to ensure a just number of seats to each region. It is pertinent that owing to the disturbed conditions in the Kashmir region from 1990 onwards, there has been a huge migration towards Jammu province, an exodus not limited to the Kashmiri Pandits. The concomitant rise in the population of Jammu does not reflect in Census 2011, which lacks credibility among large sections of the people.

The Panthers Party approached the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir, urging that stoppage of readjustment of the extent and boundaries of electoral constituencies adversely impacts democracy, as enshrined in the Constitution. On dismissal, senior advocate Bhim Singh approached the Supreme Court, which also dismissed the appeal, stating that Article 327 of the Constitution empowers Parliament to make laws regarding delimitation of constituencies, and Article 329A states that any law relating to delimitation of constituencies or allotment of seats to such constituencies "shall not be called in question in any Court". The Court said identical provisions have been made in Section 142 of the Constitution of Jammu & Kashmir.

This failed to tackle the core issue of arbitrary deferment of delimitation. As a result, persisting problems call for fresh application of mind. As delimitation follows a census, which records demographic changes, it ensures that the numbers reflect in the composition of constituencies. Deferment has created an imbalance in the composition of various constituencies.

Moreover, the State Constitution, under Section 48, reserves 24 seats in the 111-member Assembly for the area under Pakistani occupation (since 1947-48). Members of the diaspora of Occupied Jammu & Kashmir have been urging the Centre to fill these seats by nomination; West Pakistan refugee families could also be accommodated this way. With Pakistan trying to incorporate Gilgit Baltistan as a province to safeguard the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, India must assert its claim to the region more forcefully before the international community.

Finally, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes enjoy reserved seats in Jammu province, where rotation is overdue, but are unrepresented in the Kashmir valley. The backward Gujjar-Bakarwals received Scheduled Tribe status in 1991, but have not received their share of Assembly seats. These knotty problems are best resolved under Governor's rule. (The writer is Senior Fellow, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library; the views expressed are personal)

SOUNDBITE

It is unfortunate that the Government's priority is not to work for the poor and oppressed, but to fix political opponents by hook or crook.



RLSP president —Upendra Kushwaha

Washington should not blindly give Islamabad even a dollar until it steps up efforts to combat terrorism.



US Envoy to UN —Nikki Haley

I have made a career with unconventional choices and that's why I have created a different standing for myself in the film industry.



Actor —Anushka Sharma

The budget made unreasonable demands on GST. However, to judge the latter by what the Budget demands is unreasonable.



Ex-Chief Economic Advisor —Arvind Subramanian

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Insensitive remarks

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Careful with words" (December 8). Janata Dal (United) leader Sharad Yadav is a known rabble-rouser. He has a habit of making distasteful remarks. Earlier too he has made controversial remarks which have evoked strong condemnation from his rivals. It is, however, sad that there has been no change in his attitude. He continues with his insensitive comments.

Yadav's recent sexist remark against Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje is not only in bad taste but reveals his patriarchal mindset that is unacceptable in a present times when women are as much capable as their male counterparts in terms of executing tasks in every field. The Opposition, which has always made a hue and cry over remarks made any BJP member, must not rally around in support of Yadav. This would set a bad precedent. It will embolden rabble-rousers to sneer at women at the drop of the hat in future.

KR Srinivasan Secunderabad

It's high time we value precious lives

This refers to the editorial, "A gaping hole" (December 10). The Supreme Court's concern over people being killed in road accidents due to potholes is justifiable. The top court found that "such a large number of deaths takes place on roads due to potholes, probably more than those killed at the border or by terrorists." Though drivers must be held accountable, one cannot also overlook the poor road design and improper maintenance of the roads that are one of the leading cause for mishappenings.

During an inspection by officials of the Public Works Department (PWD) last year, 2,000 potholes were found on the roads in the national capital. This is terribly alarming. Besides potholes, broken footpaths, dislocated stones and uncontrolled growth of trees affecting the traffic are some of the other anomalies that account for an ever increasing number of road accidents in India. It is distressing to note that India ranks first in the



world in terms of road accidents with 1.46 lakh fatalities annually, as per the latest reports of the International Road Federation, Geneva. It is now obligatory for the Government to demonstrate its will and address the anomalies as soon as possible. It must be remembered that loss of any innocent life is indeed tragic.

Tushar Anand Bihar

Strike at the roots

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "A gaping hole" (December 10). The Supreme Court's concern over 14,926 deaths in road accidents due to potholes in the last five years shows the gravity of the situation. It even went to whiplash various States and the Union Government, stating that

the large number of deaths caused due to potholes across the country was probably more than those who were killed at border. What a shame!

The apex court's concern, however, will not solve the problem. The problem will also not end by holding the respective authorities, like the Municipal Corporations, the National Highways Authority of India, or

the State road departments accountable. To end this menace we must strike at the root of the problem: Corruption and the unholy nexus between the contractors and Government officials. It is a known now that road contractors and employees work in tandem, flouting even the rules of the tender process and overseeing the road-laying/maintenance work.

Contractors often grease the palms of the authorities and get contracts worth crores even as work completed by them is not up to the mark. The need, therefore, is of political will to clean up the entire system.

M Pradyu Thalikaivu Kannur

Well played

Sir — I would like to extend my heartiest congratulations to Indian wicket-keeper Rishabh Pant who finished with 11 catches, and equalled the record for most dismissals in a Test by a wicket-keeper, sharing it with England's Jack Russell and South Africa's AB de Villiers. Pant could have had 12 dismissals but unfortunately, he dropped Lyon in the 105th over off Bumrah. Before Pant, Wriddhiman Saha held the record for most catches in a Test match by an Indian wicket-keeper. We hope he continues to play well and makes the country proud.

MT Khan Secunderabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Saudi Game of Thrones

Muhammad bin Salman has many options at hand to save himself. He is likely to stay in power, perhaps to the ultimate ruin of the country he rules



GWYNNE DYER

Now is the moment of maximum danger for Saudi Arabia's *de facto* ruler, Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman (MBS). He has weathered the immediate storm over the murder of Jamal Khashoggi two months ago. He even went to the G20 summit in Buenos Aires a week ago and persuaded several other national leaders to stand beside him for photographs. But the real threat to his power (and maybe his life) is at home.

It's not the Saudi public he must fear. He's quite popular with young Saudis, who are a large majority of the population. He's relatively young himself (33). He has loosened some of the tight social and religious controls (women can drive now, and you can even go to see a movie). And most of them don't even believe that he is responsible for the killing.

MBS's problem is his family, who know perfectly well that he ordered the murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, and understand what that crime means for the kingdom's standing in the world. They also realise that his foreign policy has been an unmitigated disaster, from the futile war in Yemen to the blockade of Qatar, and that his economic policy hasn't been much better.

Many prominent Saudis also have personal reasons to hate him. Some were pushed roughly aside in order to facilitate his rapid rise to supreme power. Others were kidnapped, jailed and even tortured in order to extort billions of dollars from them, on the often shaky pretext that their money was the fruit of corruption. If you held a secret ballot among the 10,000 most influential Saudis, MBS would be gone in a flash.

It doesn't work like that, of course. This is still an absolute monarchy, and so long as MBS has the support of his elderly father, King Salman, he has absolute power — in theory. In practice, he must also have at least the grudging support of the royal family, which sees the Saudi state as a family business in which they all have a stake. It is a remarkable family, if only for its sheer size: An estimated 15,000 members, many of whom are direct descendants of the Kingdom's founder, King Abdul-Aziz Ibn Saud. When he died in 1953, he left 36 sons, and there are literally hundreds of grandsons. All these men, their spouses and their children and grandchildren are supported (quite lavishly) by the family business, but there are only a few hundred people who really matter. They matter a great deal, however, and by now they would be close to unanimous in seeing Mohammad Bin Salman as a wrecking ball who is endangering their own futures.

So how to get rid of him? In the past, the family's rule has survived the abrupt removal of kings: One king was forced to abdicate in 1964, another was assassinated by his own nephew in 1975. The Princes closed ranks, and the dynasty carried on with a new King. In theory, it should be even easier when you are only trying to remove the crown prince. Why not just work through his father, King Salman? After all, the King has already appointed and then dismissed two other Crown Princes; maybe he could be persuaded to do it again. The problem with this approach is that MBS zealously controls access to the 82-year-old King, who is believed to be suffering from mild dementia (Alzheimer's). An alternative would be for the Allegiance Committee, a family-run institution created in 2006 which adjudicates on succession issues, to declare King Salman incompetent because of illness, dismiss the Crown Prince, and appoint someone else as his successor. In the absence of more formal rules, any Prince descended from Abdul-Aziz would be eligible.

Plotters hoping to use this device would be risking their lives, of course, for MBS is a ruthless man who would strike first if he got wind of the plan. However, they may be emboldened by the fact that he has now arrested his own chief enforcers in an attempt to shift the blame for Khashoggi's murder. This betrayal will certainly have shaken the loyalty of their colleagues who still serve the crown prince. But there is one further consideration that is bound to give even the boldest plotters pause. If MBS concludes that he has decisively lost the support of the royal family, he still has a last card to play: War with Iran.

It's what he wants in the long term anyway, but his preferred option has been to get the US and Israel to do the actual fighting for him. If he had no other way of heading off a family-backed coup against him, however, he might take Saudi Arabia into such a war unilaterally, counting on the US and/or Israel to bail the country out. In the midst of a war, nobody at home would dare attack him. So on balance, MBS is likely to stay in power, perhaps to the ultimate ruin of the country he rules.

(The writer is an independent journalist)

RAM TEMPLE IS A CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLE BECAUSE FAITH SAYS THAT LORD RAM WAS BORN THERE AND YOU ARE ENTITLED TO A TEMPLE.

—BJP LEADER SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY

POINTCOUNTERPOINT



THE SUPREME COURT DOES NOT GIVE A VERDICT ON THE BASIS OF SENTIMENTS OF ONE PARTY. VERDICT IS GIVEN AS PER EVIDENCE AND LAW AFTER HEARING IT.

—AIMPLB MEMBER ZAFARYAB JILANI

Long road to education goals

Most children, who are still outside the ambit of schooling, are victims of child labour, migration of parents, trafficking, acute poverty and other such issues. We need to bring them into the system



JS RAJPUT

The Right to Education has now been accepted globally. Sustained efforts are being made nationally and internationally to bring every child within the fold of universal education. The global literacy rate of 86.2 per cent bodes well. But this great achievement also exposes the challenge of educating 57 million primary children who remain out of school. In actual practice, this number could indeed be higher. The task ahead — to bring these children to school — is really tough and has also been articulated among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals identified by the UN General Assembly in 2015, to be achieved by 2030.

Education is included as the SDG-4. The global promise is to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all." Considerable success has been made in bringing children under the fold of universal education. Making provisions for schooling is necessary but that alone is not sufficient. The Sustainable Development Goals Report of 2018 indicated that more than half of children and adolescents in schools worldwide are not meeting minimum proficiency standards in reading and mathematics. It also indicated that re-focused efforts are needed to improve the quality of education. Disparities in education along the lines of gender, urban-rural location and other dimensions still run deep. More investments in education infrastructure are required in less developed countries.

"At the global level, participation rate in early childhood and primary education was 70 per cent in 2016, up from 63 per cent in 2010. Lowest rates were found in sub-Saharan Africa (41 per cent) and Northern Africa and Western Asia (52 per cent). An estimated 617 million children and adolescents of primary and lower secondary school age worldwide — 58 per cent of that age group — are not achieving minimum proficiency in reading and mathematics. In 2016, an estimated 85 per cent of primary school teachers worldwide were trained; the proportion was only 71 per cent for Southern Asia and 61 per cent for sub-Saharan Africa. In the same year, only 34 per cent of primary schools in LDCs had electricity and less than 40 per cent were equipped with basic hand-washing facilities."

At present, sincere efforts are being made by practically every nation to reach the target of ensuring elementary education to every child and provide equality of opportunity of access and success to each one of them. It is a tough task for countries that are facing acute economic crisis and are facing severe deficiencies in infrastructure and competent human resources. UNESCO, too, is making significant efforts to assist,



through international collaboration, exchange of experiences and making human expertise available wherever required. Challenges confront the policy-makers at the national level, as also the agencies that coordinate and monitor educational developments globally in context of the right to education.

The nature of challenge, to bring the remaining children within the fold of education, changes as countries move ahead on the ladder to total literacy. In India, in spite of all the problems, the constitutional directive to provide free and compulsory education to all children 'till they attain 14 years of age' was indeed a very bold step. This set the tone. During the initial stages, the priority task was to convince parents how essential education was to the future of their children, particularly girls. Issues like gender bias, segregation prevalent on caste lines, social hierarchies and traditional practices had to be confronted with considerable poise and sensitivity. Slowly, every group of the populace realised the advantages of sending their wards to schools.

Consequently, a stage has been reached wherein the system no more needs convincing the parents — all of them not only want their children to get educated but education of good quality in good schools. There are certain other factors that still make things tough in dealing with the enrolment of children in the bracket above 90 per cent enrolment. As India marched ahead from a literacy rate of about 20 to the present of over 75, it has realised that it requires far greater efforts to bring the remaining children within the fold of education than was necessary in earlier years. In fact, in this bracket, parents have little role as external and undesirable factors have taken over the fate of their children.

Most children, who are still outside

the ambit of schooling, are victims of child labour, migration of parents, child trafficking, acute poverty and other such issues. Considerable attention is being given to liberate children from the clutches of circumstances that force them to become victims of unsocial and nefarious practices. While estimates differ, globally, over 200 million children are engaged in child labour. In India, estimates vary from 12 to 60 million. Even in the most posh areas of New Delhi, one could see children selling small items, obviously being managed and monitored by certain unscrupulous elements. The same is witnessed at railway stations. It is a well-known fact that forced to work in dirty, dangerous and unhealthy conditions, making match sticks, tobacco products and fire-crackers, children are invariably exposed to health hazards that could even be fatal. Many suffer on many counts, including emotional deprivation and malnutrition.

Further, deficient nutrition is a major concern in India. Around 3,000 children die every day due to malnutrition. Globally, three million children die of malnutrition every year. Overall, India suffers from "serious levels of hunger" and is ranked 103 amongst 119 countries on the Global Hunger Index. Obviously this is a very challenging situation, implications of which are most significant for children and their proper growth and right to education.

Considerable concern is being expressed globally for migrant children who are forced to leave their ancestral lands. A majority of them are forced to leave their home and health because of hunger, poverty, ethnic cleansing, racial discrimination, fundamentalism, insecurity and violence, among other problems.

Recently, UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring (GEM) report brought to fore details of the conditions

that children face in their new circumstance. It states: "The right of these children to quality education, even if increasingly recognised on paper, is challenged daily in classrooms and school yards, and denied outright by a few Governments... In the two years since the landmark New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, refugees have missed 1.5 billion days of school." The issue is indeed alarming. Hence, the 2019 report focusses on "migrant, displacement and education" and as expected, highlights the need for additional resources to countries that host most migrants and their children. Problems are well-known as they invariably arise in multi-cultural classroom everywhere. Most important is the right of the child to education in his own mother tongue. He/she also needs familiarity with his/her own culture, heritage and history. Even under tough conditions, initiatives must not get dampened. Every effort must be made by all concerned to put their best foot forward to support requirements of these groups of children.

It is in this light that the Director-General of UNESCO, Audrey Azoulay, said: "Everyone loses when the education of migrants and refugees is ignored... increased classroom diversity, while challenging for teachers, can also enhance respect for diversity and an opportunity to learn from others." A huge amount of Government resources as also from donors will be necessary as trends in immigrants show increase in activity in the near future.

Now let's revert back to the national scene. Migrant children can be mapped in practically every major city of our country. Very often, one learns about migrants from one State being vandalised by elements of the host province, resulting in avoidable misery. One must remember how Maharashtra

for Maharashtra's kept the migrants from south India on their toes. Similarly, the Hindi-speaking population in Mumbai from north India frequently become the target of parochial pride, resulting in loss of personal and public property, unnecessary disruption of professional pursuits and negative impact on the education of children.

Just a couple of months ago, a criminal incident that was highly deplorable led to attacks on the migrant population in Gujarat. There are several other encouraging signs as well. Kailash Satyarthi shared the Nobel Peace prize for his work on liberating lakhs of children from bonded labour. There have been numerous local-level initiatives that have been bringing excellent results in their respective areas. Sandip Singh runs a voluntary organisation in Gurugram. Singh began this initiative based upon his sensitive observation of children from Rajasthan who were loitering around.

After a decade, Singh has successfully changed the lives of several thousands of children by providing them education. He was quietly working on his own when others came to help him voluntarily. Today, his organisation — School Aapke Dwaar — is one major attraction for children in slum areas as also for their parents. One could find several such initiatives at individual and social levels. All they need is encouragement and support from the people. But India needs an effective organisation to deal with the issues of children suffering on several counts, some of which have been mentioned in this article. The efficacy, or otherwise of the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights, needs a thorough independent scrutiny.

(The writer is the Indian Representative on the Executive Board of UNESCO)

Disaster management a distant dream

The NDRF, bereft of funds, resources and staff, is today a truncated outfit. The armed forces continue to be the first responders in times of natural calamity. Better we hand over the languid set-up to them and create a composite response force



RAMESH DAVESAR

Thanks to nature's inheritance, perennial disasters are the worst holocaust humankind has been facing throughout. Incidents of natural calamities in the current decade, particularly the floods in Kashmir, Chennai, Uttarakhand and now the record-breaking flood fury in Kerala, are incidents enough to expose our hollowness in effectively combating the menace. They have raised serious questions about the efficacy of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF). Before we get into the nitty-gritty, it will be pertinent to understand the geographical and environmental legacies that we are confronted with.

India is the 10th most disaster-prone country in the world with 27 out of 29 States and seven Union Territories being most vulnerable. Out of a total

area of approx 32, 87,590 square km, 68 per cent is prone to drought; while 60 and 12 per cent are vulnerable to earthquakes and floods respectively. More alarmingly, it has been estimated that 30 per cent of all the world's landslides occur in the Himalayas.

These figures are not sacrosanct because, of late, due to global warming and the El-Nino/La Nina combo phenomena, global climate has undergone drastic changes, resulting in unpredictable situations. And on the seismic front, the "Indian plate" that saddles most parts of South Asia and South-East Asia, has undergone a major tectonic shift, making earthquakes a more recurring phenomenon in the region. From the earlier occurrence of 1.7 years during the 1950s, the frequency of tremors of magnitude five and above on the Richter scale has now gone up to 1.3 years.

Concomitantly, man-made fury, such as mass-scale deforestation, indiscriminate construction of hydel projects and unabated timber pirating have all imbalanced the already fragile eco-balance. The looming threat cannot,

therefore, be wished away. Without going into the matrix of men/material losses and political war games, we, as a nation, must imbue cogent measures in preparing for the disasters.

It is a gospel truth that even after a long hiatus since Independence, in the absence of any centralised agency, India has solely relied on the armed forces to cope with natural calamities. Thus, a need was felt to have a specialised nodal agency for Disaster Management (DM). This led to the creation of the National Disaster Response Force, under the aegis of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) in 2006, with the charter to provide "specialised response to threatening disaster situation or the disaster".

At present, the NDRF has a strength of 12 battalions drawn from various Central Police Organisations; each battalion designed to provide 18 rescue teams of 45 people each. In all, 216 teams are available. Prima facie, keeping in mind the vastness, doubt arises on its pan-Indian capability to fight disasters. Next, the DM, besides initiating immediate relief, is the explic-

manifestation of restoring public services, communication, provision of medical and other administrative support. Sadly, the present organisation, bereft of captive resources such as air effort, specialised equipment and lack of whereverwithal to administrative support, among others makes for a truncated outfit.

Without scratching the epochal records any further, let us study the recent Kerala floods which was the worst in the century. Lest I sound subjective and without taking away their credit, the NDRF deployed 55 teams with 38 boats that played a crucial role in providing relief in affected areas. But keeping in mind the magnitude, it drastically fell short of demand. To plug the void, axiomatically, the nation once again looked up to the Armed Forces.

True to their reputation of bailing the nation out of crises, it launched 'Operation Madad' — by far the largest rescue operation in the Indian history — and inducted over 100 columns (approx 80-100 personnel each), 10 Engineer Task Force, which were backed up by 1,350 boats, 37 helicopters

and 21 transport aircraft. Additionally, they took upon the task of providing logistic support to the victims. Out of the 23,000 persons rescued, around 660 were evacuated by the daringly specialised Winched up Rescue Missions, while the ETF repaired/reconstructed 15 bridges and cleared 22 landslides.

Similarly, unseasonal snowfall this September led to the cutting off and marooning of a number of habitats and tourists in Lahaul and Spiti district in Himachal Pradesh. Joint Army-Air Force operations not only restored the communication services but also ensured safe evacuation of tourists.

The aforesaid analysis highlights some glaring deductions. Keeping in mind the challenges and vastness of our country, the NDRF, with just 216 teams, is woefully inadequate, ill-equipped and becomes abnegated of handling the response independently. At best, it is just able to provide 'first aid' or carry out peripheral tasks. Also, even as the NDRF is around, the involvement of the armed forces has virtually remained unchanged. A point worth pondering is: If as a last resort

we have to fall back on the armed forces, then why not hand over the languid set-up to them and create a composite response force under their aegis comprising effective naval, air and specialised engineering support with corresponding representation from the civil administration?

This, besides encashing the inherent effective 'inter-services' operational coordination, would not only enhance operability but also ensure sustained relief operations and remove overlaps, resulting in avoidable loss of resources. The Army's Corps of Engineers by virtue of their role are best suited and this organisation can be formed around this core strength. The existing number of NDRF units is woefully inadequate, and apart from working out detailed modalities, a fresh study on disaster threat should be carried out to enhance the response effort. We may consider raising specialist Territorial Army Units in disaster management that can be mobilised to provide additional support.

(The writer is a retired Infantry Officer with vast operational experience)



DONALD TRUMP: THE NET CLOSES

There is no more damning evidence of Trump's ignorance and dishonesty, or of his abiding faith in the stupidity of his audience than his public speeches and tweets. Now his inadequacies of character and intellect are damaging even his supporters. His erratic pursuit of a trade war with China has destabilised stock markets. How long will his party continue to protect him? *(The Guardian editorial)*

6 fry debate

Deep fried foods such as French fries have been linked to many serious health conditions, including heart cardiovascular disease, hypertension, obesity & Diabetes. However, a latest comment by a Harvard University professor sparked outrage after he suggested that the ideal serving of French fries should only contain six pieces



DOCYARD

DR CHITRA KATARIA

Chief of Rehabilitation Services

INDIAN SPINAL INJURIES CENTRE, DELHI



Stretching for better health

Stretching is very important for flexibility, range of motion and injury prevention. Incorporating stretching into your day routine is just as important as regular exercise. Even if you are a regular at the gym, stretching can help your muscles to relax. However, stretching too has its own rules.

STRETCH AT WILL BUT KNOW WHEN

You can stretch the muscles anytime of the day, virtually anywhere where you can find some space to spread your hands and legs — when you wake up, before workout, before bed, or during breaks at work. Simple stretching moves that you can perform sitting on your desk not only breaks the monotony of work but also rejuvenates your muscles. You can also practise yoga or surya namaskar involving a series of simple yet synchronised movements stretches the body in a balanced manner and can give a good start to your workout regime and end heavy workouts like weight training or running.

STRETCHING EVERYDAY KEEPS AILMENTS AT BAY

According to the American College of Sports Medicine, you should stretch each of the major muscle groups at least twice a week for 60 seconds per exercise. Stretching can help keep your hips and hamstrings flexible even in your old age. Besides, it can also help resolve issues created by poor posture or repetitive activities. Stretching, especially the extended sessions performed in a slow and focused manner (the ones in yoga or Tai Chi), augment relaxation and reduce stress. Stretching directly before bed will even give you a more comfortable sleeping experience.

STRETCH, BUT HOW

Knowing how to stretch is very important. Avoid stretching too vigorously, or holding a stretch too long or until it hurts. Static stretching is probably the safest stretching method wherein you stretch through a muscle's full range of movement until you feel resistance but not pain. You may extend stretching until you feel mild discomfort, but if you feel any pain, stop immediately. Always start with mild exercises such as brisk walking, jogging in place, or riding a stationary bike for five to 10 minutes to warm up your body and the muscles before you move on to stretching. Avoid bounces during stretching and make sure you are stretching opposing muscles.

You may do static stretches along with active-isolated stretching and proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation (PNF). In active-isolated stretching, isolate one muscle and stretch it by contracting the opposite muscle. In PNF, you contract a muscle against resistance. You can also seek help from your trainer. After the contraction, relax, and then stretch, while your trainer pushes the muscle into a static stretch.

QUICK STRETCHES AT WORK

Back stretch:
Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and knees bent slightly. Lean forward and place your hands just above your knees. Round your back so that your chest is closed and your shoulders are curved forward. Then arch your back so that your chest opens and your shoulders roll back. Repeat several times.

Static Cat-Camel (arm stretch):
Lace your fingers together and turn your palms outward of you. Push your arms as far as you can, curving your back and shoulders forward. Hold for 10 seconds. Now release your fingers, and grab your wrists or fingers behind your back. Raise your arms as high as you can behind your back without releasing your hands so your chest opens and your shoulders roll back.

WARMFOODS

BROWN RICE: Brown rice is a whole grain that contains three parts of the grain kernel—the outer, fiber-filled layer called the bran, the nutrient-rich core called the germ, and the starchy middle layer called the endosperm. The outer, inedible hull is removed. Brown rice are rich in proteins, thiamine, calcium, magnesium, fiber, and potassium. For those trying to lose weight or those suffering from diabetes, it can prove a healthful staple given its low glycemic rating which helps reduce insulin spikes.

It is rich in selenium which reduces the risk for developing common illnesses such as cancer, heart disease and arthritis. One cup of it provides 80 per cent of our daily manganese requirements. Manganese helps the body synthesize fats. It also benefits our nervous and reproductive systems. The naturally occurring oils are beneficial for the body as these healthful fats help normalize cholesterol levels. The fiber content of brown rice keeps bowel function at its peak since it makes digestion that much easier. It is the perfect addition to the daily diet for those seeking bowel regularity. In addition, it also makes the tummy feel full which translates to smaller meal portions.



India creates history by performing world's first-in-human telerobotic coronary intervention in Ahmedabad. PIONEER HEALTH reports

MACHINE RULES THE HEART

The future of healthcare is changing dramatically with the advancement in medical technology and is empowered doctors to perform surgeries from far away. One such pathbreaking surgery was performed for the first time in the world where doctors sitting 32 km away did world's First-in-Human Telerobotic Coronary Intervention.

With the help of CorPath technology of Corindus Vascular Robotics, Dr Tejas Patel, chairman and chief interventional cardiologist of the Apex Heart Institute at Ahmedabad. This is world's first Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI) procedure performed from Swaminarayan Akshardham temple, located at a distance of roughly 32 km from catheterization lab of the Apex Heart Institute in Ahmedabad, where the patient was admitted and attended to by Dr Sanjay Shah.

The success of this study paves the way for large-scale, long-distance telerobotic platforms across the globe.

Talking about the surgery, Dr Patel, said: "The first-in-human case of remote robotic PCI represents a landmark event for interventional medicine. Cardiovascular

diseases, including stroke, are the number one cause of death worldwide resulting in nearly 18 million deaths per year. The application of telerobotics in India has the potential to impact a significant number of lives by providing access to care that may not otherwise have been possible. I'm honoured for contributing to this historic groundbreaking research which is going to earn a lot of glory and global respect for my country."

Telerobotic coronary interventional platform has the potential to dramatically improve patient access for both elective and emergent percutaneous coronary interventions and stroke in rural and underserved populations. It will reduce time to treatment for emergent procedures such as STEMI (ST elevation myocardial infarction) and stroke, and will also reduce variability in operator skills and thus, improve clinical outcomes.

Mark Toland, president and CEO of Corindus, stated: "Cardiovascular diseases, including stroke, are the world's most significant and undertreated clinical problem due to limited access to specialised, timely medical care. As a result of existing barriers to care,



FOLLOWING THE SUCCESS OF TELEROBOTIC CORONARY STENTING SURGERY, THE NEW TECHNOLOGY WILL REVOLUTIONISE CARDIOVASCULAR TREATMENT BY PROVIDING SPECIALISED & TIMELY MEDICAL CARE TO ANYONE, ANYWHERE

including increased global poverty and a declining number of trained specialists, only a fraction of patients worldwide receives life-saving treatment, resulting in substantial death or disability. We anticipate that our technology will revolutionise cardiovascular disease treatment by providing specialised and timely medical care to anyone, anywhere."

To improve patient outcomes, Corindus has pioneered the world's first remote telerobotic interventional platform to deliver highly specialised and timely cardiovascular care to underserved patient.

Following the success of FIH telerobotic coronary stenting surgery, the company plans to initialise commercialisation planning for the system and expand its interventional platform to address stroke care.

Cardiovascular disease, including stroke, are the number one causes of death worldwide resulting in nearly 18 million deaths per year. Geographic barriers, socioeconomic status and a rapidly shrinking number of skilled specialists significantly hinders patient access to timely, specialised cardiovascular care.

This is especially of concern during highly emergent medical events, such as heart attack and stroke, where ideal treatment must be received in as little as 90 minutes or within 24 hours, respectively, to avoid death or permanent disability.

DadiKaKehna

This is the season of festivities and marriages. We tend to overeat which often leads to acidity and heartburn.

ROSHANI DEVI shares home remedies without popping pills



Most of us tend to overeat during festivals and marriages. This sometimes causes heartburn — that painful, burning feeling in the chest or throat. Here are a few tips that can help:

The most obvious cure for heartburn is to avoid overeating. This means eating small meals rather than a large one. Don't pile up your plate with food. Serve smaller portions.

Drinking alcohol and coffee may also increase the severity of heartburn. Either totally avoid them or limit the intake.

Mix two tablespoons of apple cider vinegar with 100 ml of water. Drinking little vinegar

will neutralise the acid in the stomach.

Drink aloe vera juice — around one-fourth cup — just 30 minutes before a meal to soothe the burn.

Though some people say that milk increases heartburn. Some people find that it works wonders. Drink fat-free or skimmed milk.

Fennel seeds or saunf is another wonder spice that helps. You can either chew a few seeds or soak them in water and then drink this for relief from heartburn.

Basil leaves or tulsi can give you instant relief as well. Eat a few leaves or boil 3-4 leaves in a cup of water and let it simmer for a few minutes. Sip this frequently.



TIPTOP

Winter is the season of heart attacks, especially early in the morning, as the blood vessels constrict at that time due to sympathetic over activity and if the atmosphere is full of smog the risk can even double.

Recent statistics indicate that India is home to the top 10 smoggiest cities by both PM 2.5 and PM 10 measures. The small particles of air pollution, or PM 2.5, pose the greatest threat to human respiratory systems, according to the World Health Organization. The larger ones or PM 10 also have numerous health effects. Winters bring low wind speeds and increased humidity levels in the air. All this in turn will lead to worsening of the smog conditions since the pollutants hang low and do not disperse. Air pollution is a reality today.



Several studies have demonstrated the association of poor air quality with diseases like respiratory and heart diseases, global warming making it a major public health problem of concern.

According to Dr Aggarwal, who is also the Group Editor-in-Chief of IJCP, said: "Exposure to smog has known adverse health effects. Acute ill-effects may include redness of eyes, coughing or throat irritation, difficulty in breathing. Smog can trigger acute asthma attacks; it may even trigger a heart attack, stroke, arrhythmia. Children, elderly, patients with diabetes, heart and lung diseases are especially vulnerable to the adverse effects of smog and so should take special precautions to protect themselves."

SLIMLINE

The 19th Congress of the International Society for Burn Injuries brought together experts from all around the globe to deliberate on burn treatment, management and rehabilitation in New Delhi.

This was the second time that an international conference of this scale was taking place and on the topic most relevant for our country that registers a very high incidence of burn injuries (over 250 cases of burn injuries were reported by various

hospitals in Delhi this Diwali alone in spite of the ban on crackers). The congress aimed to promote the concept of one world and one standard of care for patients suffering from thermal injury. It will also hold training sessions on caring for the burn-injured patient in resource-restricted countries.

The conference was inaugurated by Dr Harsh Vardhan, Minister, Ministry of Science & Technology, Ministry of Earth Sciences & Ministry of Environment & Climate Change.

BALANCE BODY & MIND



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In today's world, we encounter stress and anxiety at every turn. The nature of stress has also evolved overtime. Earlier, a big financial loss or personal calamity could lead to mental anguish causing stress. These days, stress can be triggered at any age and for deceptively simple reasons. While problems, like too much or too little activity or workload, ambiguity and uncertainty in daily tasks, feelings of isolation, unpredictability in behaviour, strict timelines pressure and pressure to perform in school or office, are a part and parcel of the life cycle of an individual, when all of these problems happen simultaneously and frequently, they tend to chip away at a person's inner peace, tranquillity and their self-confidence.

A person in a constant state of stress is likely to have low concentration, poor decision-making skills, lack in appetite, is always exhausted and displays erratic behaviour. This mental anguish leads to intense physical and health repercussions such as clinical depression, diabetes, hormonal imbalance, anxiety disorder, heart disease etc. So, it is very important to know the tools to control and avoid mental stress.

MEDITATION — Meditation can be a simple effective technique to control our emotions and our reactions to situations.

While it may seem hard to concentrate at first and learn the art of the freeing of one's mind and letting go of all worries and problems, its been proven to have miraculous results for peace of mind since ancient times.

Meditation is like knowing your inner self. It is making a very deep connection with your own soul and being more sensitive towards yourself and your surroundings. Meditation, contrary to the belief do not need hours and can be done in as less as two minutes with some extraordinary results.

DIET — You become what you eat. Our body is 70 per cent water which can be consumed as liquid or through food. Effect of food we eat is sooner or later going to manifest in our mental and emotional health. Choosing right food combination is essential for cognitive development of human brain.

Shweta Diwan, leading dietitian and founder of Shilage Diet Clinic, says: "Protein, carbohydrate and good fat are all necessary for brain function and development and maintaining a right mix is very important. Even issues like diabetes or stroke can be reversed just by making diet and lifestyle changes."

Certain foods boost overall immunity and help in dealing with stress. A diet with plenty of fruits and seasonal vegetable is considered to be one of the best to fight stress. Protein source such as cottage cheese, pulses or soya is also important aspect of diet. Certain fish are rich in omega 3 which is essential for cognitive ability. Nuts like walnut are also proven to be good for our brain.

The mind is a human being's most important asset and just like we service our car and clean our house, we need to pay attention to our mind and keep it clean and stress free.

Wellness coach Abhiit Manoharr from Aum Sharnam says that through guided meditation, Rapid Rejuvenation Technique (RRT) and balanced diet, many people can benefit and keep health issues at bay.

"A holistic healing approach is the need of the hour. It starts with body by correcting diet and goes to mind and soul by providing guided meditation sessions, yoga and teaching other mindfulness techniques which can be applied to deal with stress and anxiety," he says.

STUDYCENTRE

Most liver diseases are silent. By the time the symptoms appear, there is already about 50% or more damage done. In the absence of timely detection and treatment, cirrhosis (scarring) of the liver sets in, especially in viral Hepatitis B and C. Apart from this, in cirrhotic cases, tumor may develop any time. In about 70% of the cases, cirrhosis leads to liver cancer, which is one of the fastest growing cancers today.

An effective vaccination programme plays an important role in preventing HBV infection. It is known to decrease the incidence of chronic liver disease and hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) or liver cancer.

Some common symptoms of liver cancer include loss of weight and appetite; nausea or vomiting; enlarged liver and spleen; pain in the abdomen or near the right shoulder blade; swelling or fluid build-up in the abdomen; itching; and yellowing of the skin and eyes (jaundice).

Some tips from Heart Care Foundation of India:

- Limit the use of alcohol and tobacco. If you can't go for harm reduction
- Eat healthy and consume plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. These are rich in antioxidants and prevent the formation of free radicals in the body.
- Aim to get at least 30 minutes of exercise every day. This will not only keep you fit but also reduce excess weight.
- Get vaccinated for Hepatitis B.

Sensex drops 714 pts on poll results eve

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Market benchmark Sensex buckled under heavy selling pressure Monday, plummeting 714 points as investors panicked over exit polls suggesting the Congress giving a tough fight to the ruling BJP in state elections as also the bruised rupee and weak global cues further dampened sentiment.

The BSE Sensex cracked below the 35,000 mark, plunging 713.53 points, or 2 per cent, to close at 34,959.72.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty fell 205.25 points, or 1.92 per cent, to 10,488.45.

Exit polls for the recently concluded assembly elections have predicted a tight finish between the ruling BJP and the Congress in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh and a win for

the opposition party in Rajasthan, impacting trading pattern on the domestic bourses in a big way.

Besides, a weakening rupee, which hit 71.44 per dollar intra-day, and fresh foreign fund outflows further pulled the key indices.

All sectoral indices on the BSE and NSE ended in the red, led by realty, banking, metal, pharma, pharma and financial stocks.

Kotak Bank shares cracked over 6 per cent after the bank said it had moved the Bombay High Court against RBI's decision with respect to the bank reducing promoter holding using preference shares.

In August, Uday Kotak, the founder and promoter of Kotak Mahindra Bank, has pared down his stake in the bank to 19.70 per cent from about 30

per cent following issuance of preference shares.

Within few days, the Reserve Bank said the stake dilution by Kotak does not meet its regulatory norms on the same, something the private sector lender contested.

Other top losers include Reliance Industries, Asian Paints, Tata Motors, Adani Ports, Bharti Airtel, Sun Pharma, L&T, PowerGrid, HDFC, Axis Bank and Bajaj Auto, falling up to 4 per cent.

Coal India and Maruti were the only two gainers on the 30-share index, rising up to 0.79 per cent. Multiple factors impacted the market sentiment as the bears held complete control of the market from opening till the closing bell, said Joseph Thomas, Head Research, Emkay Wealth Management.

This was the biggest one-day fall in the last two months for both indices, falling up to 2 per cent, he said.

On a net basis, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) sold shares worth ₹81.70 crore Friday, while domestic institutional investors (DIIs) were net buyers to the tune of Rs 242.56 crore, provisional data available with BSE showed.

Brent crude oil futures was trading at 0.31 per cent down at USD 61.48 per barrel.

Elsewhere in Asia, Korea's Kospi fell 1.06 per cent, Japan's Nikkei dropped 2.12 per cent, Hong Kong's Hang Seng shed 1.19 per cent and Shanghai Composite Index tumbled 0.82 per cent. In Europe, Frankfurt's DAX shed 0.67 per cent and Paris' CAC 40 fell 0.47 per cent in early deals. London's FTSE too slipped 0.41 per cent.

Connaught Place sixth most-expensive office location in Apac: JLL

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Connaught Place has emerged as the sixth most-expensive office location in Asia Pacific region, slipping three positions since last year, according to property consultant JLL India.

The financial hub, Mumbai, is ranked 14th on JLL's list of 20 major markets in the Asia Pacific region. In 2017, Delhi and Mumbai were ranked third and 11th, respectively, JLL India said in a statement. "Connaught Place in New Delhi has the sixth most-expensive rentals for premium offices among 20 major markets in Asia Pacific region," JLL said.

The average occupancy costs – including rent, taxes and service charges – in Connaught Place are at USD 142 per sq ft, which is higher than Pudong in Shanghai, Shinjuku in Tokyo and even Singapore. Mumbai is ranked 14th with occupancy costs at USD 96 per sq ft.

The rankings are based on the fourth edition of JLL's Premium Office Rent Tracker (PORT) for 2018, that calculates data on the achievable rent in the highest quality building in the premier office districts of 61 cities.

Ramesh Nair, CEO and Country Head, JLL India, said: "The commercial office segment is a strong growth driver for the real estate market in Delhi-NCR. Since early 90s, and especially in the post-liberalisation era, Connaught Place has been one of the most preferred and sought-after office locations by leading Indian and global corporates." It's centralised location in the heart of Delhi, robust infrastructure and good connectivity makes Connaught Place the perfect destination for companies to have an office address there, he added.

"Driven by single-digit stable vacancies, steady lease rentals and high absorption, CP continues to be the premier and leading office market for corporates from across broad spectrum of different businesses in Delhi NCR," said Samantak Das, Head of Research and Chief Economist, JLL India.

PV sales dip in Nov, see fourth monthly decline

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Domestic passenger vehicle sales declined in November, the fourth monthly decline since July, as spike in interest rates and high fuel prices cramped consumer demand.

According to the latest data released by Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), passenger vehicle (PV) sales in November stood at 2,66,000 units as against 2,75,440 units in the year-ago month, down 3.43 per cent.

PV sales had risen 1.55 per cent in October, snapping three months of consecutive decline. In July, August and September PV sales have declined by 2.71 per cent, 2.46 per cent and 5.61 per cent, respectively.

"We have been witnessing flat growth in PV sales for last couple of months due to factors like high interest rates and rising fuel prices. However, fuel prices have started to come down and we expect to see its positive impact going ahead," SIAM Director General Vishnu Mathur told reporters here. In November, particularly, consumer sentiments remained low due to all these factors leading to a muted sales growth during the month, he added. Mathur, however, said that overall sales across various segments during the month remained robust. Vehicle sales across categories registered a rise of 5.03 per cent to 20,38,015 units from 19,40,462 units in November 2017.

"Even during the April-November period of this fiscal, PVs have grown by 5 per cent, commercial vehicles by over 31 per cent, three-wheelers by over 21 per cent and two-wheelers by over 10

per cent. So the overall sales growth during the period has been around 11 per cent," Mathur said.

He, however, admitted that it would be difficult to meet growth of 7-8 per cent (earlier forecast) in the PV segment with just three months remaining in the current fiscal.

During the month, market leader Maruti Suzuki India posted a marginal decline in PV sales at 1,43,890 units. Rival Hyundai Motor India also reported marginal decline at 43,709 units. Homegrown utility vehicle major Mahindra & Mahindra posted 1.26 per cent increase in its PV sales at 16,191 units in November. Tata Motors saw sales dip 3.26 per cent at 18,226 units during the month. Car sales declined marginally to 1,79,783 units last month as against 1,81,435 units in the same month last year. SIAM said total two-wheeler sales in November were up 7.15 per cent to 16,45,791 units as against 15,36,015 units in the year-ago month.

"The growth was mainly on the back of good motorcycle sales, which increased 9.36 per cent last month to 10,49,659 units compared to 9,59,860 units in November 2017.

"Three consecutive years of good monsoon have led to a strong demand coming from rural markets for motorcycles which is driving the sales growth to a large extent," SIAM deputy director general Sugato Sen said. During the month, market leader Hero MotoCorp saw its bike sales grow by 4.98 per cent to 5,36,193 units. Rival Bajaj Auto also witnessed a 44.6 per cent jump at 2,05,259 units, while Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India (HMSI) saw motorcycle sales dip 14.97 per cent.

Jio to become No. 1 telecom operator by 2021: Report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Richest Indian Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd could become the country's No. 1 telecom operator by revenue in 2021 and on a subscriber basis by 2022, a Sanford C Bernstein & Co report said.

Reliance Jio started operations two years back with free voice calls and data offering. It started to charge for data -

voice calls to be free-for-life - last year and had amassed about 227 million subscribers to rank third largest telecom operator in the country behind Vodafone-Idea combine and Bharti Airtel Ltd.

Bernstein in the report said when it in 2015 initiated coverage of the Indian telecommunications market, it knew Jio was destined to profoundly change the landscape - the company had national

spectrum, had been building out national fibre, and had the backing of the richest man in India. "We expected 'unlimited' voice and 'big buckets of data' to put pressure on the market - forcing consolidation of the many smaller players. We even contemplated Jio could eventually surpass Idea Cellular to become the third largest operator in the country," it said. "We never expected, nor did we think possible, that it

could eventually become the leading operator in the market."

No startup operator has managed such a feat anywhere - and certainly not in a market where penetration levels among the 'middle classes' were already high.

Bharti Airtel had survived extreme Darwinian competition to emerge a highly competitive market leader (in 2015), while Vodafone has the backing of a global giant.

NIFTY 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE
NIFTY 50	10598.70	10588.85	10474.95	10488.45	-205.25
IOC	129.50	135.70	127.50	134.30	4.55
BPC	318.00	332.50	317.20	331.00	5.60
COALINDIA	234.75	239.10	228.35	237.50	0.75
HINDPETRO	216.00	228.55	216.00	225.45	0.65
MARUTI	7200.00	7395.00	7170.00	7325.00	11.05
EICHERMOT	2298.20	2359.80	2185.00	2270.00	0.75
CIPHA	509.90	514.85	503.10	512.50	-1.10
DREDDY	2623.10	2707.00	2623.10	2684.00	-8.55
SBIN	271.00	276.40	270.15	274.50	-1.05
GAIL	332.80	337.85	328.00	332.50	-2.20
INDUSINDBK	1540.00	1573.00	1537.05	1556.00	-10.80
YESBANK	162.00	169.50	160.00	164.95	-1.25
TECHM	687.00	705.00	680.05	688.70	-5.55
HINDALCO	212.40	220.25	211.45	217.00	-1.80
INFRAEEL	251.70	251.70	246.25	250.45	-2.40
TITAN	905.00	916.00	898.00	907.00	-9.60
HEROMOTOCO	3025.00	3060.00	3005.00	3034.00	-32.80
HDFCBANK	2065.90	2104.80	2065.90	2084.50	-23.10
ITC	272.00	272.30	269.15	270.50	-3.55
HINDUNILVR	1796.80	1815.00	1790.00	1800.00	-24.30
TATASTEEL	499.40	509.50	497.00	502.45	-6.85
GRASIM	790.00	796.20	778.00	790.00	-12.30
UPL	740.00	758.50	739.60	746.00	-11.70
M&M	710.00	725.50	700.00	710.00	-11.10
NTPC	135.90	139.25	134.70	135.70	-2.15
ONGC	138.50	141.25	135.15	137.10	-2.30
ICICIBANK	346.50	349.45	344.25	346.25	-5.95
TCS	1975.00	2011.00	1960.00	1961.00	-34.20
VEDL	191.40	195.65	190.20	192.25	-3.45
INFY	669.90	683.80	665.20	670.30	-12.50
LT	1374.70	1386.40	1358.20	1372.00	-27.90
BAJAJFINSV	5612.00	5788.00	5612.00	5727.70	-122.20
POWERGRID	180.50	182.40	176.65	178.65	-4.00
AXISBANK	295.00	301.50	285.30	290.55	-13.40
BAJAJ-AUTO	571.00	579.95	568.20	572.05	-66.15
HDFC	1924.15	1939.90	1901.25	1905.00	-46.35
HELIXTECH	959.95	970.70	937.10	938.80	-23.15
WIPRO	328.30	336.50	325.10	325.15	-8.15
ZEEL	470.00	474.05	463.75	465.20	-12.20
SUNPHARMA	405.00	409.25	397.05	399.00	-12.25
TATAMOTORS	159.90	160.50	156.50	157.10	-5.30
JSWSTEEL	294.50	299.70	292.35	292.50	-9.90
ASIANPAINT	1280.00	1306.25	1262.30	1274.95	-43.70
ADANIAPORTS	360.10	365.50	357.60	360.35	-13.10
BAFINANCE	2140.45	2443.90	2382.35	2395.60	-90.75
BHARTIARTL	298.45	301.65	290.85	292.00	-11.95
ULTRACEMCO	3880.10	3880.10	3761.80	3775.00	-157.30
RELIANCE	1110.00	1114.30	1083.10	1085.00	-48.80
IBULHSGFIN	690.00	704.00	680.70	682.50	-34.35
KOTAKBANK	1244.10	1289.90	1188.00	1201.50	-78.15

BSE 500

Script	Last	Price	Change	%
3MINDIA	20967.25	-718.45	-3.31	
8KMILES	163.30	-8.55	-4.98	
AARTIND	1377.25	-67.20	-4.65	
ABB	1400.00	7.55	0.54	
ABBOTINDIA	7396.65	-148.95	-1.97	
ABCAPITAL	95.15	-2.05	-2.11	
ABFRL	180.50	-0.55	-0.30	
ACC	1410.50	-34.15	-2.36	
ADANIAPORTS	361.00	-12.75	-3.41	
ADANIPOWER	49.00	-3.45	-6.58	
ADANITRANS	210.00	-7.65	-3.51	
ADVENZYMES	166.25	-6.60	-3.82	
AEGLISLOG	205.05	-5.25	-2.50	
AIAENG	1660.00	-13.75	-0.82	
AJANTPHARM	1018.70	-28.40	-2.71	
AKZOINDIA	1508.15	-45.40	-2.92	
ALBK	44.10	0.95	2.20	
ALKEK	1914.85	20.10	1.06	
ALLCARGO	103.45	-0.95	-0.91	
AMARAJABAT	692.00	-11.10	-1.58	
AMBAJACEM	205.95	-6.20	-2.92	
ANDHRABANK	26.60	-0.35	-1.30	
APARINDS	616.60	0.25	0.04	
APLAPOLLO	1301.20	-16.30	-1.24	
APLITD	614.00	-0.40	-0.07	
APOLLOHOSP	1172.00	-35.55	-2.94	
APOLLITRYE	225.00	-0.55	-0.24	
ASHINDIA	245.15	-3.10	-1.25	
ASHOKA	125.55	5.35	4.45	
ASHOKLEY	100.20	-2.40	-2.34	
ASIANPAINT	1272.70	-45.90	-3.48	
ASTERDM	148.30	-2.75	-1.82	
ASTRAL	1050.00	-6.10	-0.58	
ATUL	3323.50	-53.30	-1.58	
AUBANK	591.10	-19.05	-3.12	
AUROPHARMA	732.00	-19.65	-2.61	
AVANTI	345.95	-9.75	-2.74	
AXISBANK	590.00	-13.25	-2.20	
BAJAJ-AUTO	2722.00	-57.75	-2.08	
BAJAJCORP	343.20	-4.55	-1.31	
BAJAJELEC	462.65	-7.55	-1.61	
BAJAJFINSV	5675.95	-173.65	-2.97	
BAJAJHLDNG	2941.00	-41.05	-1.38	
BAJFINANCE	2397.75	-90.35	-3.63	
BALKRISIND	880.90	-11.45	-1.28	
BALMLAWRIE	179.10	-3.00	-1.65	
BALRAMCHIN	186.65	-1.50	-0.80	
BANDHANBANK	471.20	-0.90	-0.19	
BANKBARODA	105.85	-0.45	-0.42	
BANKINDIA	77.80	-1.70	-2.14	
BASF	1537.00	8.20	0.54	
BATAINDIA	1016.75	-42.00	-3.97	
BAYERCROP	4315.00	19.65	0.46	
BTC	1231.65	-77.25	-5.90	
BEL	77.55	-2.85	-3.54	
BEML	718.10	9.95	1.41	
BERGEPAIN	305.40	-5.15	-1.66	
BHARATFIN	981.15	-7.85	-0.79	
BHARATFORG	506.60	0.20	0.04	
BHARTIARTL	294.30	-9.60	-3.16	
BHEL	63.05	-2.95	-4.47	
BIOCEN	609.75	-3.00	-0.49	
BIRLACORPN	578.05	-23.45	-3.90	
BLISSGVS	142.00	1.90	1.36	
BLUEDART	3016.10	-76.90	-2.49	
BLUESTARCO	630.00	-10.50	-1.64	
BOMDYEING	86.10	-3.60	-4.01	
BOSCHLTD	18383.20	-134.40	-0.73	
BPC	330.25	5.25	1.62	
BRITANNIA	2985.00	-21.85	-0.73	
CADILAH	341.20	-8.20	-2.35	
CANBK	239.10	-7.90	-3.20	
CANFINHOME	235.85	-3.60	-1.50	
CAPP	492.10	-8.95	-1.79	
CAPPL	389.85	-6.55	-1.66	
CARBORUNIV	342.00	-4.65	-1.34	
CATERATING	986.10	-5.15	-0.52	
CASTROLIND	143.70	-1.45	-1.00	
CCL	268.00	-0.70	-0.26	
CEATLTD	1236.75	-11.55	-0.93	
CENTRALBK	28.10	-0.25	-0.88	
CENTRALUM	36.80	0.00	0.00	
CENTURYPLY	180.15	-2.40	-1.31	
CENTURYTEX	851.70	-19.15	-2.20	
CERA	2295.00	-50.00	-2.13	
CGPOWER	37.00	-0.60	-1.60	
CHAMBLFERT	141.00	-5.10	-3.49	
CHOLANPETRO	263.40	-8.50	-3.13	
CHENAFIN	1201.00	-28.00	-2.28	
CIPLA	513.00	-2.10	-0.41	
COALINDIA	238.60	1.80	0.76	

Sirisena accuses foreign forces of intimidating him

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's current political crisis is a result of a clash between external and local values, defiant President Maithripala Sirisena has said as he accused "foreign forces" of intimidating him. The island nation has been in a political crisis since October 26 when Sirisena removed Ranil Wickremesinghe and installed ex-strongman Mahinda Rajapaksa in his place.



Sirisena later dissolved Parliament, almost 20 months before its term was to end, and ordered snap election. The Supreme Court overturned Sirisena's decision to dissolve Parliament and halted the preparations for snap polls.

Sri Lanka's Supreme Court on Friday reserved its verdict on a bunch of petitions against Sirisena's controversial decisions. "When I acted according to the principles of nationalism without giving in to foreign forces and without being intimidated by their threats, foreign forces have become a challenge. The shadows of the old imperi-

alism stand in our way," Sirisena said, without naming any country. The current crisis is the result of the concern by the world powers over the affairs of our country due to Sri Lanka's geographical importance or its location in the world map," Sirisena was quoted by Daily Mirror as saying at a gathering in his home base Polonnaruwa on Sunday.

"This is an issue between those who believe in foreign thinking and those who respect local values", Sirisena said. Sirisena said that he would

accept whatever the Supreme Court's ruling on the petitions filed against the gazette notification issued by him to dissolve Parliament. "I look forward to the constitutional interpretation of the Supreme Court. Whatever it may be, I will take future political decisions accordingly, to the best interest of our motherland, not to the benefit of any person, group or party," the president tweeted earlier on Sunday.

His remarks were apparently aimed at the United National Party, with whom Sirisena was running the national unity government since 2015. The partnership ended on October 26 when Sirisena fired Wickremesinghe, who is the leader of UNP, triggering a never-before-seen political stand-off in the island nation.

Since firing Wickremesinghe, Sirisena has highlighted the "shortcomings" of Wickremesinghe in a bid to justify his sacking and dissuade his reinstatement. The president has already said he has no intention of making Wickremesinghe

Prime Minister again no matter what the outcome of the case is.

Both Wickremesinghe and Rajapaksa claim to be the prime ministers. Wickremesinghe says his dismissal is invalid because he still holds a majority in the 225-member Parliament.

Speaker Karu Jayasuriya has officially conveyed that the House does not recognise Rajapaksa as the legal prime minister until he proved his majority in the House.

The United National Front (UNF) coalition led by Wickremesinghe has moved three motions of no trust against Rajapaksa. However, he refused to step down. Prior to the crisis, Wickremesinghe's party UNP had the backing of 106 parliamentarians, while Rajapaksa and Sirisena combine had 95 seats.

Rajapaksa has, so far, failed to prove his majority in Parliament. Wickremesinghe, with the support from the main Tamil party, claims to have the support of more than 113 legislators, required for simple majority.

China hopes resumption of military drills will provide impetus to bilateral ties

PTI ■ BEIJING

China on Monday expressed hope that the resumption of military exercises between the Indian and Chinese armies that will begin on Tuesday would inject impetus and yield good results for the improvement of bilateral ties.

An Indian military team headed by Col Puneet Tomar has arrived in China's southwestern Chengdu city to take part in the 'Hand-in-Hand' military drills between the two armies starting there from Tuesday, the Indian Embassy here said.

Officials earlier said both sides would field 100 personnel to take part in the seventh edition of the exercises. The inaugural ceremony would be held on Tuesday and the drills would be concluded on December 23.

The drills are being held after a gap of one year as they could not be held last year because both armies were locked in a 73-day standoff at Doklam in the Sikkim sector.

Asked about how China viewed the exercises being resumed after Doklam,



Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang said "we hope this can have a good result".

He referred to the informal summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping at Wuhan in April this year and the "important consensus" reached between the two leaders to improve relations.

He noted that the two leaders had met four times this year.

The two countries should implement the consensus between the two leaders including the exchanges between the two militaries,

Guoqiang had said last month. "True to its name which is 'Hand-in-Hand', we believe China and India's militaries should work hand-in-hand to bring benefits to our people," he said.

After the Doklam standoff, the two militaries made efforts to improve relations following the Wuhan summit.

Besides resuming the defence dialogue after the standoff, the two countries also held the 21st round of border talks.

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and China's State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi, who are the Special Representatives for the border talks, held the discussions on November 24 in Chengdu during which they called for intensifying efforts to find a solution to the vexed border dispute.

The two sides also held the ninth defence dialogue on November 13 led by Defence Secretary Sanjay Mitra and Lt General Shao Yuanming, Deputy Chief of Joint Staff Department of Central Military Commission of China.

EU insists will not renegotiate Brexit deal

AFP ■ BRUSSELS

The EU has already offered Britain the "best and only possible" Brexit divorce deal and will not renegotiate it, the European Commission warned Monday on the eve of a vote in the British parliament.

"Our position has not changed and as far as we're concerned the United Kingdom is leaving the European Union on the 29th of March 2019," spokeswoman Mina Andreeva told reporters.

British Prime Minister Theresa May spoke with the president of the commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, on Sunday to give him "an update on the state of play" as she pre-

pare to take the deal to parliament.

And earlier Monday, the European Court of Justice ruled that Britain has the unilateral right to withdraw its plan to leave the European Union if it so decides before Brexit day at the end of March.

But Andreeva said the court decision does not alter the European negotiating position.

"We have an agreement on the table that was endorsed by the EU council in Article 50 format on the 25th of November. As president Juncker said, this deal is the best and only deal possible. We will not renegotiate," she said.



British Prime Minister Theresa May arrives at 10 Downing Street in London, on Monday.

US President's potential next chief of staff pick leaving White House

Washington (AFP): The White House official widely touted as Donald Trump's favourite to succeed his outgoing chief of staff John Kelly is instead leaving the administration at year's end, he tweeted. Nick Ayers, the 36-year-old chief of staff to Vice President Mike Pence, tweeted on Sunday that "I will be departing at the end of the year but will work with the #MAGA team to advance the cause," referring to Trump's campaign.

"Thank you @realDonaldTrump, @VP, and my great colleagues for the honor to serve our Nation at The White House."

Trump announced Saturday that Kelly, 68, would leave the administration - the latest key personnel move at a time of mounting pressure from the Russia election-meddling probe that comes amid increased focus on preparing for the 2020 elections. Shortly after Ayers said he would not take on the role, Trump jumped online to tweet: "I am in the process of interviewing some really great people for the position of White House Chief of Staff."

"Fake News has been saying with certainty it was Nick Ayers, a spectacular person who will always be with our #MAGA agenda," he continued, adding that "I will be making a decision soon!" Ayers reportedly would not commit to signing on through 2020 to the president's irritation. And according to sources cited by The Washington Post, the youthful but politically savvy senior staffer was "skeptical" of taking the position because of the rocky tenures of Kelly and his predecessor Reince Priebus.

UN conference adopts migration agreement

AFP ■ MARRAKESH (MOROCCO)

Adopted a migration pact in front of leaders and representatives from around 150 countries in Morocco on Monday, despite a string of withdrawals driven by anti-immigrant populism.

The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration — finalised at the UN in July after 18 months of talks — was formally approved with the bang of a gavel in Marrakesh at the start of a two day conference. But the United States and 15 other countries either opted out or expressed concerns, with some claiming the pact infringes national sovereignty.

Billed as the first international document on managing migration, it lays out 23 objectives to open up legal migration and discourage illegal border crossings, as the number of people on the move globally has surged to more than 250 million. Describing it as a "roadmap to prevent suffering and chaos", UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres sought to dispel what he called a number of myths around the

pact, including claims that it will allow the UN to impose migration policies on member states. The pact "is not legally binding", he said. "It is a framework for international co-operation... that specifically reaffirms the principle of state sovereignty. 'We must not succumb to fear and false narratives', he told an audience that included German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Panama's President Juan Carlos Varela and Greek Premier Alexis Tsipras. Merkel launched an impassioned defence of the pact and multilateralism, saying her country "through Nazism brought incredible pain to humanity".

"The answer to pure nationalism was the foundation of the United Nations and the commitment to jointly searching for answers to our common problems," she said. The pact, said Merkel, seeks to prevent, rather than encourage, illegal migration. "This is about safe orderly and regular migration — it says (this) clearly in the title." On Friday, the US hit out at the pact, labelling it "an effort by the United Nations to advance global governance at the expense of the sovereign right of states."



U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres reads his speech while Moroccan Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Nasser Bourita, right, looks on, during the opening session of a UN Migration Conference in Marrakech, Morocco, on Monday.

China slams 'inhumane' treatment of Huawei executive in Canada

Beijing (AFP): China on Monday ratcheted up its protest over the arrest of an executive of telecom giant Huawei on a US warrant in Canada, calling reports of her treatment "inhumane" as she seeks her release on bail for health reasons. China's latest tirade over the case came as Meng Wanzhou, the daughter of the company's founder, faces a Canadian court's decision on bail later Monday in Vancouver.



Meng's arrest on December 1 has infuriated Beijing, rocking stock markets and raising tensions amid a truce in the US-China trade war. A Chinese vice foreign minister summoned the US and Canadian ambassadors at the weekend, demanding that the US withdraw its arrest warrant and warning Canada that it faces "grave consequences". Meng, 46, faces US fraud charges related to alleged sanctions-

breaking dealings with Iran. In a 55-page sworn affidavit, Meng said she has suffered from severe hypertension for years and has been treated in a Canadian hospital since her arrest. "I continue to feel unwell and I am worried about my health deteriorating while I am incarcerated," the document read. Meng said that she has had "numerous health problems" during her life, including surgery for thyroid

cancer in 2011. "I wish to remain in Vancouver to contest my extradition and I will contest the allegations at trial in the US if I am ultimately surrendered," she said. China's state-run Global Times newspaper reported, without citing sources, that "it seems that the Canadian detention facility is not offering her the necessary health care".

"We believe this is inhumane and violates her human rights," foreign ministry spokesman Lu Kang said at a regular press briefing, citing such reports.

Lu also said the Canadian government did not immediately notify the Chinese embassy or consulate about Meng's arrest, as it should have under a consular agreement. China has itself faced global criticism over its human rights record and treatment of detained activists and minorities.

Bangladesh all set for poll campaign

Dhaka (PTI): Political parties in Bangladesh will begin campaigning on Tuesday for the December 30 general election with the main opposition BNP crippled as its leader and ex-premier Khaleda Zia remains in jail for corruption. The election commission (EC) is expected to complete allocation of symbols for the parties on Monday evening.

"The poll symbols are being distributed today so the candidates and their supporters can launch the campaign from tomorrow until December 28 midnight - the timeline set by the commission," an EC spokesman said. He said the commission simultaneously issued directives for executive magistrates and law enforcement agencies to stay alert to prevent any untoward situation during campaigning while the army would be later deployed to aid the civil administration. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's ruling Awami League and several

of its allies in the incumbent grand alliance government are contesting the polls on the party's traditional 'boat' symbol across 30 constituencies, while the BNP - the main opposition outside parliament - is represented by its 'paddy' symbol.

Hasina would begin campaigning for her party from the southwestern Tungipara sub-district, which is the birthplace and location of the shrine of her father and Bangladesh's founder Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who was assassinated in a 1975 coup along with most of his family members. Hasina will contest polls from Tungipara while she is set to travel across Bangladesh to rally support for candidates of her party and alliance partners which includes former president H M Ershad. Arch rival BNP is set to launch its campaign later on Monday evening in the absence of party chairperson Zia and her son and 'fugitive' acting chief Tarique Rahman.

Iraq marks anniversary of victory over Islamic State

Baghdad (AP): Iraq on Monday celebrated the anniversary of its costly victory over the Islamic State group, which has lost virtually all the territory it once held but still carries out sporadic attacks. The government declared victory last December after a grueling three-year war in which tens of thousands of people were killed and hundreds of thousands displaced. Entire towns and neighborhoods were reduced to rubble in the fighting.

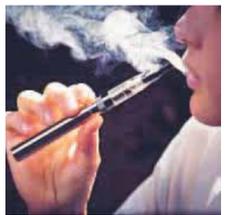
State group, which traces its roots back to the insurgency that followed the 2003 US-led invasion, swept into Iraq from neighbouring Syria in the summer of 2014. It carved out a self-styled caliphate across a third of both countries, imposing a harsh form of Islamic rule and massacring its opponents. The group abducted thousands of women and girls from the Yazidi religious minority and forced them into sexual slavery. Iraqi troops, along with Iranian-backed paramilitary groups and a US-led coalition, eventually drove the group from all the territory it once held in Iraq, including in the climactic battle for Mosul, the country's second-largest city.

IS still holds a small pocket of territory in Syria, near the Iraqi border. Iraq is still grappling with the legacy of the extremist group's brutal rule. More than 1.8 million Iraqis remain displaced across the country, and a staggering 8 million require some form of humanitarian aid, according to the Norwegian Refugee Council.

Graphic warnings can keep kids away from cigarettes: Study

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Graphic warning labels on cigarette ads, which contain images such as bleeding, cancerous gums and lips, can effectively deter children from smoking, a study has found. Such labels cancel out the effect of ads that prompt children to think of smoking as cool, rebellious and fun, according to a study published in the journal Health Education Research.



"This study suggests the value of graphic warning labels extends beyond just getting people to have more negative feeling about smoking," said Jeff Niederdeppe, an associate professor at Cornell University in the US.

"It also seems to have the added benefit of reducing the influence of 'social cue' ads that entice young people to want to smoke in the first place," said Niederdeppe. Researchers studied the graphic warning labels' effect on 451 adult smokers and 474 middle schoolers in rural and urban low-income communities in

the Northeast. Each participant was randomly assigned a set of six ads. Some saw ads with social cues — such as a group of smiling people taking a selfie with a graphic warning label covering 20 per cent of the ad. Other groups saw ads with various combinations of text-only warnings, graphic warnings, the current surgeon general warning, brand imagery and social cues. Researchers tracked study participants' eyes to measure what parts of the ad they looked at and for how long.

After viewing the ads, participants reported the degree to which they felt negative emotions, including anger, fear and sadness. The graphic warning label drew viewers' attention away from ads and toward the warning, regardless of whether the warning was graphic or text only, more than the current surgeon general warning.

The graphic warning labels also aroused more negative feelings than the text-only labels and reduced the children's perceptions that cigarette brands are attractive and exciting.

"That's important, because there's pretty good evidence that the visceral reactions to these warnings are a main driver of their effectiveness," Niederdeppe said. "These ads are trying to create a positive brand image, and the graphic warning labels help suppress that," he said. The study also found participants felt the same levels of negative emotion whether they looked at a graphic warning label covering 20 per cent of a full page ad or 50 per cent of a much smaller cigarette pack.

GLOBE TROTTER

Katie Cassidy and Rodgers get married

Los Angeles: "Arrow" actor Katie Cassidy and Matthew Rodgers are a married couple now. The duo exchanged wedding vows in front of family and friends at Sunset Key, Florida. Cassidy announced the news on her Instagram page. She also posted a picture of her kissing her new husband. She wore a long-sleeve, lace Pronovias gown and her hair in a bun, with no veil and she wore a white jacket over black pants. "I can't help falling in love with you... YES! It's official! #MrsRodgers I love you my husband," she wrote. Cassidy, daughter of the late David Cassidy, announced her engagement in June 2017.



Camila taking a break

Los Angeles: Singer Camila Cabello says she has decided to take a breather before her "next era" begins. The "Never Be The Same" said she would be taking her first break in six years - going to get some rest and inspiration for the next era, I CAN'T WAIT (sic) Cabello posted on Twitter. The singer recently received two Grammy nominations.

Haley: Pak continues to harbour terrorists

... US should not give it even one dollar

PTI ■ NEW YORK

Pakistan continues to harbour terrorists that turn around and kill American soldiers, US ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley has said, asserting that Washington should not blindly give Islamabad even a dollar until it steps up efforts to combat terrorism. Haley, the first Indian-American ever appointed to a Cabinet position in any US presidential administration, said the US did not need to give money to countries that wish harm to America, go behind its back and try and "stop us from doing things".



"I think there should be a strategic view on which countries we partner with, which ones we count on to work with us on certain things, and move forward accordingly. I think we just blindly allow money to keep going without thinking that this is real leverage. We have to use it," Haley told US magazine 'The Atlantic'.

The one example I'll give you is, look at Pakistan. Giving them over a billion dollars, and they continue to harbour terrorists that turn around and kill our soldiers — that's never okay. We shouldn't even give them a dollar until they correct it. Use the billion dollars. That's not a small amount of change," she said.

Haley will step down as the UN envoy at the end of this year. US President Donald Trump last week nominated chief State Department spokeswoman and a former Fox News journalist Heather Nauert as Haley's successor. In October, Haley announced that she was leaving the post by the end of the year. The 46-year-old former South Carolina governor has served nearly two years in the post. She said Pakistan should be told "you have to do these things before we will even start to help you with your military or start to help you on counterterrorism". Asked if she does not agree that foreign aid

can turn an adversary into an ally, or can make a country more favourable than it would be otherwise, Haley said, "no, I think it absolutely can. I think that you do have to use it as leverage".

"I don't think you should blindly give it and then expect goodwill. You have to ask for goodwill and then give it when you see good things happen," she said. In September, the Trump administration cancelled USD 300 million in military aid to Islamabad for not doing enough against terror groups active on its soil.

Last month, Trump defended his administration's decision to stop hundreds of millions of dollars in military aid to Pakistan, saying Islamabad does not do "a damn thing" for the US and its government helped late al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden hide near its garrison city of Rawalpindi.

Referring to Laden and his former compound in Abbottabad in Pakistan, Trump told Fox News, "you know, living — think of this — living in Pakistan, beautifully in Pakistan in what I guess they considered a nice mansion, I don't know, I've seen nicer." "But living in Pakistan right next to the military academy, everybody in Pakistan knew he was there," Trump said.

The US Naval Special Warfare Development Group forces, in a daring helicopter raid, killed Laden in 2011 and

demolished the compound. "We give Pakistan USD 1.3 billion a year... (Laden) lived in Pakistan, we're supporting Pakistan, we're giving them USD 1.3 billion a year - which we don't give them anymore, by the way, I ended it because they don't do anything for us, they don't do a damn thing for us," he said.

"We give Pakistan USD 1.3 billion a year... (Laden) lived in Pakistan, we're supporting Pakistan, we're giving them USD 1.3 billion a year - which we don't give them anymore, by the way, I ended it because they don't do anything for us, they don't do a damn thing for us," he said.

The relations between Pakistan and the United States nosedived this January after President Trump accused Islamabad of giving nothing to Washington but "lies and deceit" and providing "safe haven" to terrorists.

"The United States has foolishly given Pakistan more than 33 billion dollars in aid over the last 15 years, and they have given us nothing but lies and deceit, thinking of our leaders as fools," he wrote. "They give safe haven to the terrorists we hunt in Afghanistan, with little help. No more!" Trump added.

The US Congress also passed a bill to slash Pakistan's defence aid to USD 150 million, significantly below the historic level of more than USD one billion per year.

Indian diplomat walks out of SAARC meeting in Pakistan over PoK minister's presence



PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

An official of the Indian High Commission in Pakistan staged a walkout of a SAARC meeting over the presence of a minister from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) at the event, according to source here. Diplomat Shubham Singh, left the meeting to register India's protest over the presence of PoK minister Chaudhary Muhammad Saeed at the SAARC Chambers of Commerce and Industry meeting on the SAARC Charter Day in Islamabad on Sunday.

India considers Kashmir as its integral part and does not recognise any minister for Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). In 2016, India had

pulled out of the 19th SAARC summit that was to be held in Islamabad after the deadly terrorist attack on an Indian Army camp in Uri. The summit was called off after Bangladesh, Bhutan and Afghanistan also declined to attend. No SAARC meeting has happened ever since.

India called off the foreign minister-level talks with Pakistan on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York in September after the brutal killing of policemen in Jammu and Kashmir and the release of a postage stamp by Pakistan that glorified Kashmiri militant commander Burhan Wani.

'Pak will continue to lend full support to people of Kashmir'

Islamabad (PTI): Pakistan would continue to lend full diplomatic, political and moral support to the people of Jammu and Kashmir, Prime Minister Imran Khan said Monday.

Khan's remarks came in a message on the Human Rights Day which is observed every year on December 10. This year, the Human Rights Day marks the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

"On the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we reaffirm our full diplomatic, political and moral support to the people of Jammu and Kashmir in their just struggle for human dignity, respect and inalienable right to self-determination," he said.

He said this year is also



significant for Pakistan as it has joined the UN Human Rights Council.

"Pakistan's membership of the Council, for the fourth time, is a testimony to the confidence of the international community in Pakistan, as a consensus builder within the international human rights policy framework," he said.

'Yellow vest' protests to cut Q4 growth: Bank of France

Paris (AFP): The Bank of France on Monday slashed its fourth quarter growth forecast in half, to 0.2 per cent from 0.4 per cent, citing the impact of the "yellow vest" protests which have rocked the country. "Services activity has slowed under the impact of the movement. Transport, the restaurant and auto repair sectors have gone backwards," the French central bank said in its latest company survey.

Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire had warned Sunday that the protests sweeping France were a "catastrophe." "It's a catastrophe for commerce, it's a catastrophe for our economy," Le Maire told reporters as he visited shops in Paris hit by looting during anti-government riots a day earlier. The Bank of France's latest estimate for the three months to December is well short of the 0.8 per cent that would be needed to meet the government's 2018 growth target of 1.7 per cent. The French economy expanded 0.4 per cent in the third quarter and 0.2 per cent in both the first and second, according to official statistics.

Le Maire, speaking earlier on RTL, said he expected the protests to cut fourth quarter growth by 0.1 percentage point but refused to comment on a possible downward revision of the full-year 1.7 per cent figure. "I am not going to revise the figures for the moment but we will certainly have 0.1 percentage point less growth at the end of this year," he said.

"That cannot be made up. That is the reality — for commerce, small business owners who have seen their shops damaged, vandalised, looted," Le Maire said. "That is also the reality for the foreign investors who are looking at us... I see already the impact that has abroad and it is not good for (image) of our country," he added.

Russia denies role in 'Yellow vest' protests

AFP ■ MOSCOW

The Kremlin on Monday denied involvement in the "yellow vest" protests that have rocked France, after reports that Russia-linked social media accounts are waging a campaign to encourage unrest.

Britain's The Times reported Saturday that hundreds of accounts linked to Russia have "sought to amplify" the protests. They had posted photographs purporting to show injured protesters, the newspaper reported, but which were in fact taken at other events, citing analysis from a cybersecurity company.

French authorities have launched checks into the reports, sources told AFP on Sunday, but officials have said that it is too early to comment on the allegations.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told journalists on Monday that Russia "considers all that is happening



French President Emmanuel Macron, left, and Environment Minister Francois de Rugy meet with representatives of trade unions, employers' organizations and local elected officials at the Elysee Palace in Paris on Monday. AP

exclusively the domestic affairs of France. "We have not interfered and we don't plan to interfere in the domestic affairs of any country including France," he said. Reports to the contrary were "nothing but

slander," he added.

The US Justice Department has accused a notorious Russian troll farm of interfering with its congressional elections in November and in 2016 presidential elections won by

Donald Trump.

Russia denies this. Trump is at the centre of a probe into whether his 2016 presidential campaign conspired with Russian operatives to tilt the election in his favour.

Armenia PM's bloc wins by landslide in snap polls

AFP ■ YEREVAN

The electoral bloc of Armenia's acting prime minister Nikol Pashinyan won a landslide victory in Sunday's snap parliamentary elections, which were triggered by the reformist leader seeking to cement his political authority in the post-Soviet country. The bloc led by Pashinyan's Civil Contract party had 70.45 per cent of the vote, and trailing in distant second place with 8.37 per cent was the Prosperous Armenia party, according to results from 90 per cent of precincts, the central election commission said.

The centrist My Step bloc also includes the Mission Party headed by rights activist Manuk Sukiasyan. A small liberal pro-Western party, Bright Armenia, also cleared an electoral threshold with 6.33 per cent of the votes, the commission said. Pashinyan became prime minister in May after spearheading weeks of peaceful anti-government rallies that ousted veteran leader Serzh Sarkisian.

The 43-year-old former journalist has pledged to root out endemic corruption and address widespread poverty, earning him supporters in the impoverished landlocked nation of about three million people.



Acting Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan casts his ballot in a polling station during an early parliamentary election in Yerevan, Armenia on Sunday. AP

"After the elections, we will be developing Armenian democracy and make an economic revolution happen," Pashinyan told reporters after casting his ballot. Pashinyan's reform drive had been stalled for months by opposition from Sarkisian's then-ruling Republican Party, which dominated the National Assembly until his calculated resignation triggered parliament's dissolution last month.

The Republican Party took 4.56 per cent in Sunday's elections, failing to clear the five-per

cent threshold to make it into parliament. At a polling station in central Yerevan voters expressed optimism about the political change promised by Pashinyan and vented their anger at former corrupt officials. "Thanks to the revolution, we will finally have fair elections," 72-year-old pensioner Parzik Avetisyan told AFP. "I voted for the positive change promised by Nikol (Pashinyan)," he added. Another voter, 52-year-old painter Garnik Arakelyan, said: "I want all those corrupt officials

who for many years were robbing and humiliating people to be jailed." Turnout was 48.63 per cent when polls closed at 8:00 pm (1300 GMT), the election commission said.

Last week, Pashinyan promised "the best elections Armenia has ever seen", without ballot stuffing or voter intimidation. Parliamentary polls had not been scheduled to be held until 2022. Analysts say Pashinyan sought new elections while he is at the peak of his popularity. In September, his bloc scored a landslide victory

in municipal elections, winning more than 80 per cent of the vote in the capital Yerevan, where nearly 40 per cent of the former Soviet Republic's population lives.

"The elections were called on the wave of a revolutionary euphoria," analyst Gevorg Poghosyan told AFP. "But after the polls, that sentiment will inevitably weaken and Pashinyan and his team will face a reality check."

On foreign policy, Pashinyan has said Armenia will "further strengthen (our) strategic alliance with Russia and, at the same time, step up cooperation with the United States and European Union".

Nine political parties and two electoral blocs were competing for mandates in the 101-seat National Assembly.

A party needs at least five per cent of the vote to be elected to parliament, while an electoral bloc must clear a seven-per cent barrier.

But — regardless of how many votes they win — opposition parties will take at least 30 per cent of parliamentary seats, according to Armenia's electoral law. More than 2.6 million people were eligible to vote in the election monitored by international observers from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Report: I can't breathe were Khashoggi's final words

Washington (AFP): Jamal Khashoggi's final words were "I can't breathe," CNN said Sunday, citing a source who has read the transcript of an audio tape of the final moments before the journalist's murder. The source told the US network the transcript made clear the killing was premeditated, and suggests several phone calls were made to give briefings on the progress.

CNN said Turkish officials believe those calls were made to top officials in Riyadh. Khashoggi, a Saudi contributor to The Washington Post, was killed shortly after entering the kingdom's consulate in Istanbul on October 2.

The transcript of the gruesome recording includes descriptions of Khashoggi struggling against his murderers, CNN said, and references sounds of the dissident journalist's body "being dismembered by a saw."

The original transcript was prepared by Turkish intelligence services, and CNN said its source read a translation version and was briefed on the probe into the journalist's death.

Saudi Arabia's foreign minister on Sunday meanwhile rejected demands to extradite

Lithuania blacklists Saudi officials over jouno's killing

Copenhagen (AP): Lithuania has become the latest Western country to blacklist Saudi officials over the slaying of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi by Saudi agents in October.

Rasa Jakilaitiene, spokeswoman for the Baltic country's foreign minister, tells the Baltic News Service the names of 17 Saudi officials have been put on the list "in solidarity with international partners." The region's main news agency said Monday the list includes suspected killers and close advisers to Saudi Crown Prince



Mohammed bin Salman. BNS said the names were listed by the Lithuanian Migration Department under the so-called Magnitsky law blacklisting people for human rights violations.

suspects connected to the murder of Khashoggi as sought by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

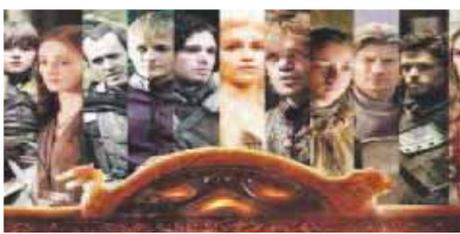
Erdogan has repeatedly called on Saudi Arabia to hand over suspects in the killing. According to Turkey, a 15-member Saudi team was sent to Istanbul to kill Khashoggi. Saudi Arabia, however, holds that it was a "rogue" operation gone wrong — a claim undercut by the reported transcript.

For his part US President Donald Trump has refrained from blaming Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman, even though the CIA reportedly concluded that he ordered the assassination.

The murder has damaged Riyadh's international reputation and Western countries including the United States, France and Canada have placed sanctions on nearly 20 Saudi nationals.

Scientists decode how to survive in GOT

Melbourne (PTI): Staying loyal leads characters of the popular TV series 'Game of Thrones' to an early death, say scientists who analysed over 300 deaths in the show to decode who is more likely to survive the next season. The research, published in the journal Injury Epidemiology, shows that characters were more likely to survive if they switched their allegiance.



For example, Tyrion Lannister avoids death by switching allegiances between the houses Lannister and Targaryen. Researchers at Macquarie University in Australia, evaluated the deaths of all important Game of

Thrones characters across seven seasons of the show.

The risk of death was also greater for characters that were "lowborn" (not a Lord or Lady), compared to those that were "highborn." The risk of death is high among characters in

Game of Thrones," Reidar Lystad, injury epidemiologist at the Australian Institute of Health Innovation. "By the end of the seventh season, more than half of the characters had died — 186 out of the 330 characters we included in

this study — with violent deaths being the most common by far," said Lystad. "While these findings may not be surprising for regular viewers, we have identified several factors that may be associated with better or worse survival, which may help us to speculate about who will prevail in the final season," he said.

Researchers found that the majority of deaths occurred in Westeros (80.1 per cent), and the most common place of death was in the home. The most common causes of death were injuries (73.7 per cent), and particularly wounds of the head and neck, including 13 decapitations.



The Peace Prize laureates Dr. Denis Mukwege from Congo 2nd left, and Nadia Murad from Iraq, left, during the Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony in Oslo Town Hall, Oslo on Monday. Dr. Denis Mukwege and Nadia Murad receive the Nobel Peace Prize recognising their efforts to end the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war and armed conflict.

Trend Blazer

Ronnie ropes in Ivanhoe Pictures

RONNIE SCREWVALA'S RSVF and SIDDHARTH ROY KAPUR'S Roy Kapur Films have brought in Golden Globes nominated Ivanhoe Pictures, producers of the recent blockbuster Hollywood romantic-comedy *Crazy Rich Asians*, as a co-producer and co-investing partner for their much anticipated Hindi language family drama, *The Sky is Pink* (tentative title). Starring Priyanka Chopra, it is written and directed by National Award winning filmmaker Shonali Bose and is based on a true story.



'Mardaani is and will always be extremely close to my heart. Right since its release, everyone has asked me time and again when I would be doing Mardaani 2 Gopi has written an extraordinary script that we all love and I can't wait to start shooting this film,'

—Rani Mukerji



Superstar RAJINIKANTH has revealed that his upcoming Tamil action drama *Petta*, directed by Karthik Subbaraj, is an entertaining throwback to the kind of films he did in the 1990s. At its audio launch, Rajinikanth opened up about the project and described it as an "action-packed entertainer". "When Sembian and Kannan from Sun Pictures came home and requested me to act in their production, I immediately agreed. Karthik Subbaraj had pitched a story to me. It was on my mind and as I listened to other filmmakers, I wasn't quite satisfied," he said.

One Direction might reunite

Singer LIAM PAYNE has hinted that he will reunite with his former One Direction bandmates for Christmas. He said: "I spoke to Niall, we spent like four hours on FaceTime, I hadn't spoken to him in ages. I hope to (see him over Christmas). I mean, the thing about it is I can understand that we're all quite tired. Like I was saying to him the other night, 'Oh I'll come over or whatever' and then he flaked me twice so I was like 'look, listen, I'll just text you next week and we'll see what's happening. Just let me know when you're available'."



AN ODE TO A SARI

Actor KANGANA RANAUT bats for the versatility of this ancient drape which is suited for every occasion. By TEAM VIVA

It seems that after the big fat weddings of Deepika-Ranbeer and Priyanka-Nick, the traditional sari is making a comeback and how. We do not need Rekha to remind us of the gorgeous Kanjeevaram being an irreplaceable piece of couture. Younger actors are carrying on the baton rather well with or without the greatest sari proponent of them all, designer Sabyasachi. What is encouraging is that the most stylishly turned out film actors have embraced the sari as a cause celebre. The latest to join them is Kangana Ranaut, who is even endorsing a brand of yardage.

Speaking at the launch ceremony, she recalled that as a young girl she was fascinated with her mother's wedding sari. "I would like to try and get hold of it. It was kept in knotted shiny fabric and we looked at it as if it was a treasure. We kept eyeing it but were not allowed to touch it. When we were 10-12, I asked my mother if I could look at it and when she obliged, I felt all grown up and special. It was an amazing feeling," she recalls. However, it was only after some time that she finally got to wear a sari.

"During a function in my school I was playing a character from Ramayana and I took a sari from my mother and completely destroyed it but she was very generous about it," says the fashionista who can be seen wrapped up in the six yards everywhere — from the airport, to the red carpet, including at Cannes.

However, the actor regretted discovering the sari much later in life.



THE SARI IS BOTH A CONSERVATIVE ATTIRE AND A SENSUAL DRAPE BECAUSE IT VERY DELICATELY COVERS YOUR CURVES

"Unfortunately the sari was not very popular in Garhwal. It was only when I travelled a lot that I saw different attires and silhouettes. I discovered these as an artist and realised that structured garments are only for sometime. As a woman, when you discover your freedom, you start to love the sari and come to terms with the six yards of the fabric," she said.

To a large extent it is the dichotomy that the sari offers that has the actor enthralled. "For the longest time, I could not understand whether the sari was a conservative attire or was it sensual because it very delicately covers your curves. You can expose your back or cover your head and look like a goddess. The possibilities of the sari is what attracted me as an artist," she said dressed in a Banarsi.

What also added to the appeal was the numerous possibilities that the garment offers. "A sari could be 50 years old as you have inherited it from your grandmother but it could be new because of your expression. You can wear it like a skirt and tie the pallu around your waist or you can let it drag behind like a trail as in a gown. You can decide if you want to look sensual or demure," she said and added that sari was like poetry so that all the different forms of a woman whether it is a mother daughter, sister, achiever or a friend find expression in it. "It is thousands of years old and a very sophisticated expression of your personality. What I am wearing is what was worn 5,000 years ago and we have the responsibility, towards this great piece of art, to pass it on to the generation that comes after us," she said.

While social media hashtags have promoted the garment, it has not had the desired result, feels Ranaut as a lot of weavers are still suffering while many of the handicrafts are disappearing. "These were traditionally passed on from one generation to another but as these are not doing well, this is not happening."

Kangana believes that the sari is a really versatile garment. "It can be paired with sneakers, worn at the airport, or while going out with friends for a brunch. The traditional sari is the most popular during pujas and weddings but it does not have to be restricted to these occasions. What I love about the sari is that it makes me completely feminine and also, it is a combination of Egyptian gown meets skirt meets beautiful drape," said the actor who has about 40-50 saris in her wardrobe, most of them acquired over the last four to five years.

Photo: Pankaj Kumar



'I play varied kinds of mothers'

Actor SUPRIYA PATHAK believes that she can show off her versatility in age-appropriate roles

Veteran actress Supriya Pathak, who played an unwed mother in *Masoom* and an unschooled mom in *Wake Up Sid*, knows that while she plays the character all the time, but each one is different. She says she tries to bring in variations in her roles — and she always finds them exciting.

She attained a cult status in the country for playing Hansa Parekh in the comedy franchise *Khichdi*. But the audience also loves her work in films like *Bazaar*, *Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela* and *Delhi-6*. While she has played various characters during her career that started in the early 1980s, one thing she accepts is that she often gets to essay a mother's role in movies.

"I know that I play a mother all the time, but each is a different kind. Every time I get a role of a mother, I try to find a different area, person or milieu where I can put the mother... that's always exciting. That's the age bracket I am in, so that is the role that I will get. It's me who has to make it more interesting and find things to do in it," Supriya said.

Even in *Tigers*, which released in India last month on ZEE5, she plays a mother.

"I found the subject to be relevant and an important issue to be brought forward. I feel that cinema, if made entertainingly with a certain meaning, reaches out to a lot more people. It makes them aware of issues or things that help people to understand what's around them," she explained. "It was a kind of subject that needed to be told," she added about the movie that tells the story of a salesman, who works for an international company that manufactures baby formula products. When he discovers that the products have killed hundreds of children, he decides to expose the company.

Directed by Oscar winner Danis Tanovic, the film had premiered at the Toronto International Film

Festival back in 2014. "I feel that a film is made with so much of hard work and if it doesn't see the light of day... that's sad. As actors we like our work to be watched by people. That's the reason why we work and if it is not seen, it is upsetting. Now that it has come out, we are happy," said Supriya.

Tigers is not her first international film. She had also featured in *UNindian*, which starred former Australian cricketer Brett Lee.

Asked about working on an international film, she said: "I learnt a lot from the director (Tanovic). He was very clear with what he wanted. He taught me how to look at a character and be precise."

The year 2018 also saw her making her debut in Telugu film *Aravindha Sametha Veera Raghava*, helmed by Trivikram Srinivas.

"I really enjoyed working with the people. It was wonderful. My director was a wonderful person. I hope I get an opportunity to work there again," said the actress, who had starred in the 1985 Malayalam movie *Akathale Ambili*.

"Those days, a lot of Hindi films were made in south India. Then also, it was much more organised than in Mumbai or north India. My idea of south (Indian film industry) was always that it was more organised and that attracts you because it has got discipline. People are professionals and, still, there is a kind of basic emotion surrounding it and very work-oriented," said Supriya, whose mother tongue is Gujarati.

She wants to experiment more as an actress. "I am very fond of acting. My only interest, love and passion is acting. Wherever you put me, if you ask me to act, I will be the happiest. I am ready to explore any avenue, any role. Anything given to me which I feel I can do something with, I will take it up," said the theatre actress. —IANS

Rajamouli blown away by KGF's visuals

The director of *Baahubali* says that the VFX of the film is original

The trailer of *KGF* has been making waves across the country. This film with Kannada superstar Yash in the lead has some breathtaking visuals that have even impressed the *Baahubali* director SS Rajamouli.

The director spoke highly about the superstar and praised his work and said, "A bus driver's son has become a top star in Kannada industry." Rajamouli also said, "I was blown away by the visuals of *KGF*. They have some original ones which have not been copied from Hollywood movies. The makers want it to be a pan-Indian movie. Merely spending a lot of money wouldn't make it one. The subject should be universal and that is what makes *KGF* a real pan-Indian film."

The director further added, "They (Telugu audience) warm up to any good film regardless of which industry it is coming from. I am really proud of my people."

The makers had to recreate two specific eras at two different places for the film, which also included a lot of VFX. This is Excel Entertainment's most ambitious project and is set against the backdrop of the Kolar Gold Fields in Karnataka.



the fields of Karnataka's Kolar region.

The film has been made in five languages including Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Hindi and Malayalam.

KGF traces the period of glory of the gold mine and its history.

Starring Yash, Srinidhi Shetty, Ramya Krishna, Ananth Nag, John Kokken and Achyuth Rao in the lead, *KGF* is a Homabale Films production directed by Prashanth Neel, produced by Vijay Kiragandur while Ravi Basrur has composed the music.

KGF would mark Excel Entertainment's first Kannada venture and the production house is elated to be associated with a mega ambitious project as such.

The period drama traces the tenure of late 70s and will be made in two parts. The first of which will be titled *KGF Chapter 1* which is slated to release on December 21.

The perils of helicopter parenting

Parents are over-extending themselves since they fear that they are not doing enough to help their children succeed. By DIVYA PALANIAPPAN

Bringing up a child can be quite a task, especially if you are a first-time parent. Just when you are done with toilet-training, the responsibility of enrolling your child in a reputed school comes up. On top of that, you want your little one to excel in extra-curricular activities. Sounds hectic? Imagine, how it would be for the toddlers who have just started memorising the alphabet.

Getting top grades is no longer considered sufficient; they need to be good at things outside the classroom as well. In fact, children now hardly get any free time after school as their schedule is packed. As childhood becomes increasingly competitive, parents often feel the need to push their children beyond their natural capacity. They are constantly made to fear that they are not doing enough to help their children succeed in a cut-throat world. This gives birth to a dangerous parenting trends that does more harm than good to the young ones.

One such trend is helicopter parenting, a metaphor to describe a breed of over-controlling parents who closely monitor and get involved in every aspect of their children's lives. While the seemingly innocent parenting style may improve your children's school performance, it can have adverse effects on their psychological well-being. The trend is on the rise in India.

HELICOPTER PARENTING IN INDIA

Earlier, while academic performance was a priority, one rarely heard of parents who were equally invested in every little detail of their child's life, like their extra-curricular activities, their relationship with their peer group, their appearance and more.

A few years later, in the wake of globalisation in the 1990s, the education sector in India went through many changes. Government schools started losing their value with the mushrooming of private English-medium ones. These new schools offered curriculums that were a burden for little children as there was an emphasis on focussing not only on academics but also out-of-class-



Colleges and universities look out for well-rounded students who have multiple talents along with high marks

WHY INDIAN PARENTS ARE TURNING TO THIS TREND?

The admission policies of higher education institutions also contribute to the rise of helicopter parenting since these colleges and uni-

versities look out for well-rounded students who have multiple talents along with high marks. Therefore, Indian parents are leaving no stones unturned to make sure that their children grow up into over-achievers. As a result, helicopter parenting has now become quite the norm in the country.

DANGERS OF HELICOPTER PARENTING

Being familiar with your children's lives is crucial, but a boundary needs to be drawn somewhere. Helicopter parents, however, don't believe in these. From dropping them off at numerous activity classes to finishing their projects, they are virtually shadowing the lives of their children. This unfortunately

results in children of such parents failing to develop emotional and behavioural skills of their own, which is imperative for their overall growth.

It has been observed that children of helicopter parents might struggle to control their feelings and impulses compared to their counterparts. Their inability to manage emotions can cause problems in schools and other outdoor settings. In fact, helicopter parenting can make children feel unprepared to face the challenges of the real world.

There is a lot of research that discusses the harmful effects of helicopter parenting on young minds. Some of the common issues faced by helicoptered children are anxiety, lack of mental resilience, inability to make decisions and so on. In extreme cases, these children might crumble under pressure and slip into depression and might have other such complications.

HOW TO NOT BE A HELICOPTER PARENT

There is a thin line between being a supportive and a helicopter parent. Make sure you are not crossing that line. Keep a track of your children's day-to-day life without being too intrusive. The young ones are more capable than we give them credit for and in most cases, they can take care of their own problems. One should ask about their day, but not every minute details.

Instead of expecting them to beat everyone in the class, encourage them to develop a spirit of camaraderie by introducing fun game-based learning methods. Give them the time and space to discover what they like doing and to take it ahead on their own. Also, let your children socialise with their peers so that they learn interpersonal skills and the importance of human values like compassion, empathy, being helpful and love.

Ultimately, the happiness of your children should determine how successful you are as a parent and not their exam grades or trophies.

(The writer is a child psychologist.)

STICKATHON

England, France win in cross-over

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

A dominant England sailed past New Zealand 2-0 in the first cross-over match to book their place in the quarterfinals of the men's hockey World Cup here on Monday.

England scored through Will Calnan's (25th minute) field strike and penalty corner conversion by Luke Taylor (44th) to register the comfortable win.

England will face Olympic champions Argentina in the first quarterfinal on Wednesday.

World No 7 England were by far the better side against New Zealand in the opening two quarters, creating more goal scoring chances than their ninth ranked opponents.

England had the first scoring chance in the fifth when they earned their first penalty corner but they failed to utilise the opportunity.

After a barren and eventless first quarter, England drew first blood in the 25th minute when Will Calnan deflected in a high ball from skipper Phil Roper from the left flank.

Two minutes later, a Liam Ansell strike from close range went just inches off the target as England wasted a golden opportunity.

The Black Sticks tried to forge a comeback towards the end of the second quarter and in the 28th minute a Nick Ross' strike from top of the strike was padded away by England goalkeeper George Pinner.

Seconds later, England were awarded a penalty corner but they failed to stop the push but wasted the chance to go into the breather a goal down.

England continued from they left after the change of ends and secured back-to-back penalty corners just after the resumption of play but wasted both the chances.

The Black Sticks tried to bounce back but they could find the net after entering the England circle.

England earned their fourth penalty corner just a minute away from the final quarter and Taylor scored after David Condon's initial try was saved by New



England's players celebrate after winning the cross-over match against New Zealand; (below) French and Chinese player battle for possession during the second match

PTI/Hockey India

Zealand goalkeeper Richard Joyce.

New Zealand came close to reducing the margin in the 49th minute but Stephen Jenness' shot from inside the box was easily parried away by England Pinner.

With two goals down, a desperate New Zealand took out their goalkeeper Joyce nine minutes from the final hooter for an extra player but the move backfired as England became the only team to earn two penalty corners without a goalkeeper but Cory Bennett put his body on the line and took a heavy knock to keep England afloat.

In the final minute of the match, New Zealand secured another penalty corner but Pinner made a smart save to keep a clean slate and keep intact England's record of never finishing below eighth in the World Cup.

CHINA WENT DOWN LOSING
France eked out a narrow 1-0 win over debutants China in the second cross-over match to advance to the quarterfinals.



The lone goal of the match came in 36th minute from the stick of Timothee Clement.

France might be the lowest ranked team in the tournament at 20, but they had already shown the world that rankings hardly have any significance by stunning Olympic champions Argentina 5-3 in the pool stages.

France will face two-time defending champions and world number 1 Australia in the second quarterfinal on Wednesday.

The Frenchmen started on a bright note against world number 17 China and took the early initiative by earning four back-to-back penalty corners as early as in the second minute but wasted all the opportunities.

China made a subdued start to the game and allowed France to dominate the possession, relying mostly on their counter-attacking ability to stun their opponents.

In the 19th minute, a selfish play from

Charles Masson denied France a great opportunity. After cutting inside the box from the right flank, Masson, instead of passing the ball to his teammate, went for glory and hit straight at the body of Chinese goalie Caiyu Wang from a tight angle.

China came close to scoring in the 21st minute but E Wenhui missed from close range after Ao Suozhu controlled a long ball over the French defence and made his way into the circle showcasing 3D skills.

Two minutes from half time, France were unlucky as Etienne Tynevez's deflection from a Jean-Baptiste Forgues pass hit the crossbar.

In the never next move, the Chinese goalkeeper once again came to his side's rescue by keeping out Blaise Rogeau's reverse hit from top of the box as the Frenchmen failed to break the 'Great Wall of China' in the opening two quarters.

China came out with more purpose after half time and came tantalisingly close to breaking the deadlock in the 33rd minute but a sliding E Wenhui's deflection from Zixiang Guo pass was parried away by an alert France goalie Arthur Thieffry.

France finally broke the resolute Chinese defence in the 36th minute through Clement.

The move was started by Viktor Lockwood, who got to the baseline with a blazing run down the left flank and cut back to Maximilien Branicki in the centre. Branicki unleashed a fierce reverse stick at the far post which was deflected by Clement into the net.

A minute later, China secured their first penalty corner of the match but failed to capitalise on it.

The third quarter witnessed three penalty corners — one to France and two to China.

In a desperate need for a goal to take the match into shoot-out, China pressed hard and earned two penalty corners in succession minutes away from full time but the French goalkeeper Thieffry was upto to the task on both occasions to keep a clean slate and ensure a last eight berth for his side.



Spurs face make-or-break Barca clash

AFP ■ LONDON

Tottenham are sitting pretty in the Premier League but face a potentially season-defining match against Barcelona in the Champions League on Tuesday.

Mauricio Pochettino's men have amassed 36 points from 16 Premier League matches, with 12 wins, leaving them in third place behind Liverpool and Manchester City.

That they have managed that despite playing in their temporary home of Wembley and after a World Cup in which so many of their players featured until the final weekend, makes their achievement all the more impressive.

However, with City and Liverpool in such rampant form, few expect Spurs to win the Premier League, putting increased emphasis on their match against the Spanish league leaders in Group B.

Pochettino must somehow find a way past Lionel Messi's Barcelona to reach the knockout stages but he remains positive ahead of the daunting trip to the Camp Nou to face the five-time European champions.

"We need to win and deserve to win. The mentality is going to be 200 percent to try to win. We are going to arrive in the best condition, Barcelona are one of the best teams in Europe." Spurs took just one point from their first three games in Group B, losing to Inter Milan and Barcelona and drawing with PSV.

But they beat PSV at home and then scored late through Christian Eriksen to beat Inter 1-0 at Wembley, leaving them in second place on seven points, the same as the Italians.

With Barcelona already guaranteed to top the group, Spurs must match Inter's result to guarantee progress.

Barcelona vs Spurs
Live from 1:30am IST
SONY TEN 2 & 2 HD

'NEXT LEVEL'

Pochettino has in the past talked about how only the Premier League or Champions League title will take the club to the 'next level', even though the trophy cabinet has been empty since 2008.

Spurs have played in the Champions League for the past three seasons but they cannot boast the pedigree or history of Manchester United or Liverpool in Europe's top club competition.

They have only progressed beyond the Champions League group stage twice, reaching the quarter-finals in 2011.

Barcelona, who beat Spurs 4-2 at Wembley, have already made sure of winning their Champions League group for a record 12th successive season.

Dauntingly for Spurs, Barca are unbeaten in 28 Champions League home matches and the Londoners will not be encouraged by the fact that the Spaniards have only lost two home matches in 33 against English opponents.

But Spurs themselves, with a vibrant collection of attacking players including Kane, Eriksen, Dele Alli and Son Heung-min, have won eight out of their past nine fixtures in all competitions and will be hoping that Ernesto Valverde's side take their foot off the gas.

Beating the Catalan club would be particularly sweet for Pochettino, a former player and coach at Barcelona's city rivals Espanyol. The Argentine earned his first win as a manager in a derby at the Camp Nou in 2009.



Liverpool look to Salah & Anfield for Napoli battle

AFP ■ LIVERPOOL

Liverpool must again rely on fortress Anfield to inflict Napoli's first Champions League defeat of the season if they are to avoid the disappointment of a group stage exit just over six months since appearing in last season's final.

The five-time European champions will most likely even have to win by two goals if they concede due to Napoli's 1-0 triumph when the sides last met in September.

Yet, such a scenario is nothing new for Liverpool and even rekindles fond memories of similar permutations when they hosted Olympiakos in the final Champions League group game of the 2004/05 season.

Brazilian legend Rivaldo's early free-kick left the hosts needing three goals, which they got in dramatic fashion in the second half as Steven Gerrard's spectacular strike sealed a famous 3-1 win four minutes from time.

Inspired by Gerrard, the Reds



went on to win their last Champions League title that season with a far inferior squad to the one that is off to a club record unbeaten start and top of the

Premier League after 16 games.

Overcome the huge challenge facing them in midweek and Liverpool will again be among the favourites to lift the Champions League in Madrid next June.

However, in stark contrast to their consistency in the Premier League, Jurgen Klopp's men have lost three of

their five European encounters in Group C to put their chances of reaching the last 16 in serious peril.

There is some comfort for Klopp that all three defeats came on the road to Napoli, Red Star Belgrade and Paris Saint-Germain, while Liverpool haven't lost in 18 European games at Anfield.

The German coach also isn't as reliant on an individual figure for inspiration as Rafael Benitez's vintage 14 years ago were on Gerrard.

The signings of centre-back Virgil van Dijk and goalkeeper Alisson Becker over

the past year have drastically improved Liverpool's defensive record.

'BACK TO HIS BEST'

But the focus will be on Mohamed Salah to produce the goods up front after looking more like the player that scored 44 goals in his debut campaign at Anfield with a hat-trick in a 4-0 win at Bournemouth on Saturday.

Liverpool rode the free-scoring form of Salah, Roberto Firmino and Sadio Mane, who each scored 10 Champions League goals, to reach last season's final.

Salah's weekend treble took his tally for the season to 12, but the Egyptian's only two goals in the Champions League came in a routine 4-0 win over Red Star in October.

Against a Napoli side that has only failed to score in three games this season, Liverpool may well need another two or more from Salah or another source to avoid a big European night at Anfield falling flat.

'Try something new, come to Italy,' Ronaldo urges Messi

AFP ■ MILAN

Cristiano Ronaldo has urged long-time rival Lionel Messi to be more like him and push his limits by challenging himself in another league than Spain.

"I'd like him to come to Italy one day. I hope he accepts the challenge like me, but if he's happy there then I respect that," Ronaldo told the Italian press on Monday.

The two strikers have been rivals for the past decade winning five Ballon d'Or trophies each before their domination was bro-

ken by World Cup runner-up Luka Modric last week.

Asked if he missed the 31-year-old Argentinian, who has spent his entire senior career at Barcelona, Ronaldo replied: "No, maybe it's him who misses me ...

"I've played in England, Spain, Italy, Portugal and for my national team, while he's still in Spain."

"Maybe he needs me more... For me, life is a challenge, I like it and I like to make people happy."

"He's a fantastic player and a good guy, but I don't miss anything here. This is my new life and I'm



happy."

"I left my comfort zone and took on this challenge here in Turin, everything has gone well, I've proven I'm still an incredible player," said Ronaldo.

Ronaldo joined Juventus for 100 million euros (\$114 million) last summer as the Turin giants bid to lift the Champions League trophy after two runners-up finishes in the past four seasons.

To mark his 150 days in Italy he gave interviews on Monday to three leading sports dailies: La Gazzetta dello Sport, Corriere

dello Sport and Tuttosport.

"I had different options. I won't say which but I had them. Juventus is a solid club. It has a long history," he said of his decision.

"I knew the atmosphere in the stadium. I'd played several times in Italy. I like the city, the people and the club. I knew it could work."

"I couldn't be 100 percent sure I was joining the best club in the world. After nine years at Real Madrid it was difficult to compare. Now I'm 100 percent sure it was the right option."

Sindhu handed tough draw in Tour Finals



PTI ■ GUANGZHOU

Olympic Silver medallist shuttler P V Sindhu has been handed a tough draw in women's singles but debutante Sameer Verma will fancy his chances of making it to the men's singles knockout stage at the BWF World Tour Finals starting here on Wednesday.

Sindhu, who had finished runners-up at the last edition in Dubai, will have a tough task at hand as she has been clubbed with defending champion Akane Yamaguchi of Japan, world number 1 Tai Tzu Ying of Chinese Taipei and United States' Beiwen Zhang in Group A.

Sameer, who defended his title at the Syed Modi International last month to qualify for the \$ 1,500,000 event at the last moment, has been put alongside Japanese world number 1 Kento Momota, Indonesia's Tommy Sugiarto and Thailand's Kantaphon Wangcharoen.

The top two players from each group will qualify for the semifinals, after which a knockout draw will be conducted.

Only eight top players compete in the prestigious season-ending event.

Sindhu, who will be making her third successive appearance at the tournament, have a 9-4 head-to-head record

against Yamaguchi but she has lost four times to the Japanese in five meetings this season.

The 23-year-old from Hyderabad also have found the going tough against Asian Games Champion Tai Tzu Ying, who has beaten her in all their last six encounters. The last time Sindhu defeated Tzu Ying was at the 2016 Rio Olympics.

Against Zhang, Sindhu has a 3-3 head-to-head record but the Indian has lost twice in the last three meetings, which included a final defeat at the India Open World Tour Super 500 tournament in New Delhi.

Sameer, who is the second Indian men's player after K

Srikanth to qualify for the tournament, will have a less difficult path to the semifinals. He has a 1-1 head-to-head record against both Sugiarto and Wangcharoen. Sameer's main worry will be Momota, whom he has defeated en route to his Swiss Open title but the Japanese has emerged as a formidable force ever since.

Saina Nehwal has represented India at the prestigious tournament — earlier known as Super Series Final — seven times, reaching the finals at the 2011 edition.

Indian mixed doubles pair of Jwala Gutta and V Diju also had finished runners-up at the 2009 edition.

INDIA END 10-YEAR BARREN RUN

Dominant visitors cash in on late hiccups by Aussie lower order to win first Test by 31 runs & lead four-match series 1-0



Indian players celebrate after dismissing last Australian batsman and winning first Test by 31 runs on the final day of first Test at Adelaide

PTI ■ ADELAIDE

India gave wings to their quest for a maiden series win in Australia with a 31-run victory in the opening Test, their first in the country since 2008, with Rishabh Pant equalling a world record along the way here Monday.

Chasing 323, the hosts were bowled out for 291 in 119.5 overs shortly before tea on day five with Ravichandran Ashwin, Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami taking three wickets each for a 1-0 lead in the four-match series.

This was the first time India won the opening Test of a series in Australia in 70 years.

Things went too close for comfort for India as Nathan Lyon (38 not out) and Josh Hazlewood (13) put on 42 runs for the last wicket and frustrated the Indian bowling. The sparse crowd at Adelaide Oval cheered every single as the duo edged closer and the odd

Margin	Opponent	Venue	Season
13 runs	Australia	Mumbai	2004-05
28 runs	England	Kolkata	1972-73
31 runs	Australia	Adelaide	2018-19
37 runs	West Indies	Port of Spain	2001-02
49 runs	West Indies	Kingston	2005-06

Faisel Features

boundary didn't help matters.

Finally, things came to a close as Ashwin had Hazlewood caught at second slip in the 120th over to register India's sixth Test win on Australian soil.

"It's important to stay calm. The odds were stacked up against them as soon as we got Pat Cummins out. I wouldn't say I was cool as ice but you try not to show it," Kohli said at the end of the match.

Post lunch, India had a big early breakthrough when Australian skipper

Tim Paine (41) played an uncharacteristic pull shot off Bumrah and only managed to loop it up for Pant to take an easy catch.

The visitors then were bothered by two lower-order stands. First, Mitchell Starc (28) and Pat Cummins (28) put on 41 runs for the eighth wicket and carried Australia past 200 in the 89th over. While Shami broke through that partnership, things didn't ease out. Pant could have had 12 dismissals but he dropped Lyon in the 105th over off Bumrah.

Four overs later, Kohli didn't make any mistake at first slip as he helped dismiss Cummins, albeit he was frustrated with his 31-run stand with Lyon.

In the morning session, India removed Travis Head (14) and Shaun Marsh (60) as Australia reached 186 for six at lunch.

Starting from overnight 104 for four, the Head-Marsh partnership lasted only 7.4 overs before India

TWITTER REACTIONS

"What a way to start the series! #TeamIndia never released the pressure. Superb batting by @cheteshwar1 with crucial knocks in both innings, @ajinkyarahane88 in the 2nd innings and excellent contributions by our 4 bowlers. This has brought back memories of 2003."
— Sachin Tendulkar

"It's been a great first match at the Adelaide Oval! Thank you so much for your wishes. Really delighted with the way we played as team and put up a great fight! On to the next one now!"
— Cheteshwar Pujara

"Test Cricket is Best Cricket. Great fight by Australia in the end but India were too good. Winning after being 41-4 in first innings is a special effort. Outstanding Test match for Pujara and great effort from our bowlers. Promises to be a great series."
— Virender Sehwag

"Amazing grit displayed by the Australian lower order, but this is a moment to savour for a long time for India. The bowlers gave it everything and let's just enjoy this and carry the momentum into the Perth Test."
— WS Laxman

"Congratulations Team India! What a way to start the test series! Congratulations on the win. Top stuff by @cheteshwar1 and all the bowlers doing a great job."
— Harbhajan Singh

"So close... Fighting effort from the Aussies today. Congratulations to India on a very impressive Test Match victory."
— Michael Clarke

"Congratulations to India. Loved Australia's fight to the end, need to move on quickly from this loss & prepare for Perth which is a quick turn around."
— Mitchell Johnson

"I love test cricket & its drama! Great fight from Australia's lower order today and it should be - this is test cricket. Terrific test match & congrats to @imVkohli & his men on a wonderful victory! Bring on Perth."
— Shane Warne

"It's a great win. This will be a hard-fought and highly competitive series. All the matches will be result-oriented."
— Sourav Ganguly



'Collectively we were better & deserved to win'

PTI ■ ADELAIDE

Captain Virat Kohli on Monday said he was not "cool as ice" after the Australian lower-order's spirited resistance delayed India's march to victory in the opening Test here.

"These things happen in Tests, ups and downs through a game. Odds were stacked against them. They fought really well but we executed our plans well," Kohli said at the post-match presentation ceremony.

Asked if he felt the heat, the India skipper said, "I wouldn't say I was cool as ice but you just don't try to show it. Jasprit was getting worked up in his last over but I just told him to relax. Super proud (of the bowlers), to have four bowlers and take 20 wickets is a great achievement. Something that we haven't done in the past."

Kohli said India were "collectively better" in the Test and hoped his batsmen would step up regularly after the bowlers played a part.

"(It) shows us that if the batsmen step up regularly, we will be gunning for a win in every Test match. Collectively we were the better team and deserved to win," Kohli said.

It was Cheteshwar Pujara's century, which bailed India out of a difficult situation on the first day, and the senior pro contributed handsomely in the second essay too, scoring 71 and attracting Kohli's praise.

Did he think the target of 323 was enough and Kohli replied, "I think our lower middle order and lower order could have done better. We could have added another 30-35 runs more which could have taken the game totally beyond Australia."

"So these are things that we have to think about going to Perth but if someone had told me before the series that I would be 1-0 up as soon as we started the series, I would have taken it with both hands."

PANT EQUALS RECORD OF MOST CATCHES

ADELAIDE: Rishabh Pant on Monday equalled the world record of most catches in a Test by a wicketkeeper, snaring 11 in the first match against Australia while breaking the Indian mark. The 21-year-old is now level with Englishman Jack Russell (vs South Africa in 1995) and South Africa's AB de Villiers (vs Pakistan at J'burg in 2013). He eclipsed the India record of 10 catches in a game by Wriddhiman Saha.

Pant equalled the world record after taking Mitchell Starc's catch off Mohammed Shami's ball in the second innings at the Adelaide Oval. The wicketkeeper caught six batsmen in first innings and five in the next on way to the record. "I'm happy to contribute to the team. I always enjoy troubling batsmen, I love it when they concentrate on me and not on the bowlers," said Pant, who was heard egging on the stump mic.

PTI

SINGLES

RIVER WIN COPA LIBERTADORES

MADRID: River Plate won the Copa Libertadores by beating their fiercest rivals Boca Juniors 3-1 after extra time on Sunday, bringing an end to a final tainted by violence and moved more than six thousand miles away from Argentina. Boca took the lead through Dario Benedetto but Lucas Pratto equalised before Juan Quintero and Gonzalo Martinez scored in extra time, aided by Wilmar Barrios being sent off, to win a fittingly dramatic contest for River. It means River prevailed 5-3 on aggregate after the first leg finished 2-2 and reclaim the trophy they had last won in 2015, lifting it for the fourth time in their history. "We have shown we are superior," River's Leonardo Ponzio said. "After trying to stay quiet about everything that happened, we showed on the pitch we were better." "The only thing I feel is sadness for not winning the cup and giving it to the people of Boca," Boca coach Guillermo Barros Schelotto said.

AKILA SUSPENDED FOR ILLEGAL ACTION

DUBAI: Sri Lanka off-spinner Akila Dananjaya has been suspended from bowling in international cricket over an illegal action, the International Cricket Council announced on Monday. Dananjaya was reported over a suspect bowling action during last month's first Test of the England series in Sri Lanka, which the tourists won by 211 runs on their way to a 3-0 whitewash. He underwent an independent assessment of his bowling action on November 23 in Brisbane which revealed his deliveries exceeded the 15-degree level of tolerance permitted under the regulations. Dananjaya's suspension will be also enforced by all national cricket federations for domestic matches, though he may be able to play domestically in Sri Lanka with the permission of Sri Lanka Cricket. The 25-year-old must now modify his action before applying for further testing and possible reinstatement.

AC MILAN LET INTER OFF THE HOOK

MILAN: AC Milan missed a chance to pile pressure on local rivals and fellow Champions League chasers Inter Milan in Serie A after being held to a goalless draw by Torino at the San Siro on Sunday. Gennaro Gattuso's fourth-placed Milan are three points behind Inter, who lost to leaders Juventus on Friday, after wasting opportunities to win the match, with forward Patrick Cutrone missing a golden chance with four minutes left and Gonzalo Higuain, returning from a two-match ban, also denied late. Milan's wastefulness wasn't punished by Torino, four points behind Milan in sixth and still unbeaten away from home, thanks to goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma denying Iago Falque and Andrea Belotti. "I don't consider it a missed opportunity, as we knew very well that Torino are a difficult team," said Gattuso.

HARDIK NAMED IN BARODA SQUAD

VADODARA: All-rounder Hardik Pandya, out of cricket since September due to back injury, has been named in the Baroda squad for their Group A Ranji Trophy game against Mumbai commencing in Mumbai on December 14. Snehal Parikh, secretary in-charge of the Baroda Cricket Association, confirmed Pandya's inclusion in the Baroda squad on Monday. Hardik replaced Babashafi Pathan, also an all-rounder, in the Baroda Ranji squad to take on hosts Mumbai at the Wankhede Stadium. While, Shreyas Iyer has been roped into Mumbai's squad in place of Suryakumar Yadav.

Agencies

'CAN'T BE HAPPY WITH JUST ONE WIN'



Virat Kohli walks back to pavilion

PTI ■ ADELAIDE

Adelaide done and dusted, Indian captain Virat Kohli on Monday warned Australia that there will be no let up in intensity and the visitors will go for the kill in the remaining three Tests.

"We can't be happy with just one Test match. We will not be satisfied with just one Test. Yes we are happy about this victory but this is something we need to build on. We literally have nothing to lose," Kohli said.

India had come close to winning the opening match at the Adelaide Oval in 2014 before losing by 48 runs.

"Four years back, it was 48 runs on the other side. This one is way better — 31 on our side. It is a great feeling - never taken lead in a series in Australia, that for us is a huge boost," Kohli said after India notched up their sixth Test win on Australian soil.

'STAY LONGER AT CREASE TO FRUSTRATE AUSSIES'

ADELAIDE: India did not bat smartly in the first innings, reckoned skipper Virat Kohli on Monday, asking his team-mates to show more patience and application to frustrate the Australian bowlers in the remaining Tests of the four-match series. "In the first innings, we did not bat smartly in the first session and allowed their bowlers to get back in the game," said Kohli after India bowled out Australia for 291 in their innings to take a 1-0 lead in the series.

"The longer we stay at the crease, they will have to bowl 2nd or 3rd



spells and you have more scoring opportunities because when the kookaburra gets softer, you can play shots easier," he said. "In the second innings we had to take a different approach because there was time in the game, we did not want to score runs too early

because if we keep them in the field, they will get frustrated and we will get runs later. That was one thing that we have to keep in mind for the next Test," he said. The Indian skipper underlined the importance of Adelaide win in the context of the team's overseas cycle. "Earlier we used to say that we have played very well but didn't win — we don't even want to think about. We don't want to think about playing well and not winning. Our aim is just to win and if the opportunity is there we will go to win," he said.

PTI

"It has given us the right momentum to play in a big series like this. We have had to work hard for five days. The physical and mental toil, and the emotion of it all come together in a result, so it

is a very special feeling. "Having never done it in Australia, to take the lead first up, is a good achievement on the team's part, and something we are looking to build on."

The Indian skipper also hailed his four-man bowling attack for scripting the victory.

"That's a very positive sign (to take 20 wickets with four bowlers). Especially with the Kookaburra, we

have not been able to sustain that pressure long enough in the past," said Kohli.

"I think to pick 20 wickets with four bowlers, away from home, especially with a ball that does not offer you that much is something we can be proud of.

"Day one went against but the way Pujara brought us back into the game, we didn't let up again for the remaining four days. This time around we need to learn quicker from mistakes," he added.

Kohli said that the key to using four bowlers was to utilise them at different stages, with spinner R Ashwin bowling as many as 86.5 overs in two innings and picking up six wickets.

"If Australia had been 50-4, we would have gone with our strike bowlers. The fact that we went with Ashwin and Ishant was because we had a template where they were scoring at 1-2 runs an over maximum," he said.

We will go Perth with real belief: Paine

PTI ■ ADELAIDE

Australian skipper Tim Paine found the 31-run defeat to India "hard to take" but said they will take inspiration from their fighting fifth-day effort in the opening Test and head to Perth with "real belief".

"It won't be any more difficult than this is. Every Test match is a huge challenge and we've expected this series to be an absolute arm-wrestle from the get go," Paine said at the post-match press conference.

"If you want to be a good team you have got to be hard to beat and today we were hard to beat, we made India work really hard, I think we made them work harder than they thought they were going to have to work.

"We have picked the same team for the first two Tests and we are going there (Perth) with real belief."

Australia batted more overs than India in this Test, yet ended up on the losing side. Paine said this was an area of improvement for the series ahead.

"Sitting back now it is a huge opportunity because we didn't cash in the first innings and didn't have batters out there today when they were tiring. Had we taken either of those chances, we would have won this Test match, so it's pretty hard to take.

It's a really key element for us, to get lots of overs into them and I am sure



India are thinking the same with us. They want to see our fast bowlers bowl a hell of a lot of overs."

Paine underlined that they need to get more runs from the top-order going ahead.

"The batting conditions in first innings were not easy. It was hard to score. India bowled superbly throughout, built a lot of pressure on us and we couldn't quite get through those tough periods," Paine said at the post-match press conference.

"There were a number of reasons why we lost. I thought we could have cleaned them up on day one for 200-210 and we let that slip a little bit."

Australia were bowled out for 235 in their first innings, in reply to India's 250.

"Clearly we would like to score more than 230 in the first innings in Australia and there were other things along the way. We need to tighten up."

Talking about the lower order's batting contributions, which almost proved to be the difference between victory and defeat, in both innings, he added, "The lower order gets to face the bowlers when they are a little bit more tired traditionally and that makes a difference.

"If we can get through tougher conditions at the start we want our top six batting. This Test we haven't been able to get a set batter right through or a number of batters right through."

To hell with the nets, boys need rest: Shastri



Ishant Sharma celebrates after dismissing Aaron Finch during the second day of first Test

PTI ■ ADELAIDE

To hell with the nets," was what Ravi Shastri said on Monday after a memorable 31-run win in the opening Test against Australia, the India coach stressing more on resting his players.

Having suffered back-to-back defeats in South Africa and England, India began the Test series against Australia in earnest, winning the opening match Down Under for the first time in over seven decades.

"We lost the first Test in England by

31, lost the first Test in South Africa by 60-70, so this is a very good feeling for the boys to come out on top. When you get off to a good start, there's belief," Shastri said.

The teams will be heading to Perth for the second Test that starts on December 14 and Shastri, who is confident that the fast bowlers will have a crucial role to play, hinted at ditching net practice ahead of the clash.

"They have to rest up, to hark with the nets. You just come there, mark your attendance and get away to the hotel. We know the Perth track is quick, it's a drop in surface, there will be something there for the fast bowlers."

A collective performance by the four-man Indian bowling attack — pacers Ishant Sharma, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami and spinner Ravichandran Ashwin — helped India earn a 15-run first innings lead before they completed a rare win in this part of the world.

"The bowlers were brilliant in the first innings, defending 250, the discipline was magnificent. They've worked on it, it's not come in overnight. As a bowling unit, when you show that discipline, it doesn't matter which side you play against. You will be successful," Sahstri said.