

**WORLD 5**  
THERESA REBUFFS GROWING  
CALLS FOR 2ND BREXIT VOTE

**OPINION 6**  
MUCH ADO  
ABOUT NOTHING

**MONEY 10**  
VIBRANT GUJARAT GLOBAL TRADE  
SHOW 2019 FROM JAN 18 TO 22

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## Baghel sworn in as CM

TS Singh Deo, Tamradhwaj Sahu take oath as Ministers

Guv administers oath in presence of Rahul Gandhi, Manmohan Singh

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT ■ RAIPUR

Seasoned Congress politician Bhupesh Baghel was on Monday sworn in as the third Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh, bringing an end to 15-year rule of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the mineral-rich state.

The two other Congress heavyweights in the state- TS Singh Deo and party's OBC cell national chairman Tamradhwaj Sahu also sworn-in as Ministers amid cheering by thousands of enthusiastic party supporters.

The swearing-in ceremony was held at a jam-packed Indoor stadium in Raipur as the authorities shifted the venue from sprawling Science College ground due to incessant rain throughout the day.

Baghel, who represents Patan Assembly constituency in Durg district, was administered the oath of office and secrecy by Governor Anandiben Patel in the presence of Congress President Rahul Gandhi, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and BJP's Raman Singh among other dignitaries here.

The firebrand leader Baghel is largely hailed as the architect of Congress' landslide victory in the tribal-dominat-



Congress President Rahul Gandhi with Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel and two Cabinet Ministers TS Singh Deo and Tamradhwaj Sahu on Monday in Raipur on the occasion of the swearing-in ceremony

**AFTER THE SWEARING-IN CEREMONY, RAHUL GANDHI TOOK TO TWITTER TO THANK THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE. 'WE WILL WORK SHOULDER-TO-SHOULDER TO BUILD A NEW CHHATTISGARH. FARMERS, YOUTH AND WOMEN WILL HAVE A SPECIAL CLAIM TO THIS GOVERNMENT,' HE SAID**

ed state where it won 68 seats in the 90-member Assembly.

A powerful leader of the OBC community, Baghel was a Minister in Digvijay Singh's cabinet in undivided Madhya Pradesh and later became a Minister in Ajit Jogi's government after Chhattisgarh was carved out of Madhya Pradesh on Nov 1, 2000.

Launching his political career as a students' leader in early 1980s, Baghel was elected to the undivided Madhya Pradesh Assembly for the first time in 1993. Baghel's top political opponent Ajit Jogi who had deserted the

Congress in 2016 to launch his own outfit, skipped the swearing-in ceremony.

After the swearing-in ceremony, Rahul Gandhi took to twitter to thank the people of the state and vowed to build a "new Chhattisgarh".

"We will work shoulder-to-shoulder to build a new Chhattisgarh. Farmers, youth and women will have a special claim to this government," said Gandhi expressing his gratitude to party workers and leaders for the hard earned victory.

## AT FIRST CABINET MEETING

### Farm loan waived, MSP hiked, SIT formed



STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel announced to waive off farmers' bank loans amounting to ₹6,100 crore. The minimum support price(MSP) on paddy has been hiked up to ₹2,500 per quintal. An SIT has been formed to probe into Jheeram valley massacre of Congress leaders in 2013.

Hours after he took oath as the Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh, Baghel presided over a Cabinet meeting and decided to waive off farm loan which would benefit 16.65 lakh farmers who were reeling under steep debt.

The farm loan waiver was a prime promise of the Congress to the farmers in assembly poll campaign that

helped the party to bag 68 seats in a 90-member state assembly. The farm bank loan waiver announcement has been widely hailed by farmers' representative bodies.

Addressing the first ever press conference as chief minister, Baghel briefed media persons about the cabinet decisions and said that SIT probe will unravel conspiracy behind Jheeram valley massacre in which several Congress leaders were killed by Maoists including the then state Congress chief Nandkumar Patel, veteran leader VC Shukla and tribal leader Mahendra Karma.

Baghel reiterated that his government would not carry on the politics of vendetta. He added that his Government would also contain unnecessary

**Addressing the first ever press conference as CM, Baghel briefed mediapersons about the Cabinet decisions and said that SIT probe will unravel conspiracy behind Jheeram valley massacre in which several Congress leaders were killed**

Government expenditure to boost fiscal health of the State.

## Gaurav Dwivedi appointed CM's secretary



PNS ■ RAIPUR

Senior IAS officer Gaurav Dwivedi was appointed as secretary to Chief Minister



Taran Prakash Sinha

Bhupesh Baghel on Monday, hours after he took oath as the third Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh.

Taran Prakash Sinha, IAS, has been appointed as deputy secretary to the Chief Minister and he would also hold charge of Commissioner, Public Relations.



Taran Singh Sonwani, who is presently the Commissioner, Surguja, has been appointed as joint secretary to Chief Minister.

## Two kids die under debris as JCB rams Noida school wall

STAFF REPORTER ■ NOIDA

Two children were killed and three others injured after a wall of a school building collapsed on them in a village on Monday around 10 am at Khazan Singh KS Public School, a private primary school in Salarpur village under Sector 49 police station limits, police said.

Taking a serious note of the incident, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has ordered an enquiry and directed officials of Gautam Buddh Nagar district to ensure proper treatment to the injured.

According to eyewitness, children were playing when a wall collapsed on them as a JCB collided with the school wall. Five school students identified as Akash, Naitik, Reshu, Bhupendra and Vivek, who were the victim, were rescued from the debris and rushed to a nearby hospital where Bhupendra (10) and Vivek (8) were declared brought dead while Akash, Naitik and Reshu are being treated.

Senior Superintendent of



It is understood the school was being run a plot owned by one Amit Bhati. Police are trying to identify the people running the school. A First Information report has been lodged at sector-49 police station and probe has been launched, a police official said.

## Pak releases Indian prisoner after 6 years

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan on Monday released Indian prisoner Hamid Nihal Ansari, who was detained by the country's intelligence agencies in 2012 and subsequently sentenced to three years' imprisonment by a military court in 2015 for possessing a fake Pakistani identity card.

Ansari, a 33-year-old Mumbai resident, was lodged in the Peshawar Central Jail after being sentenced by the military court on December 15, 2015. His three-year jail term ended on December 15, 2018 but he was not able to leave for India as his legal documents were not ready.

On Thursday, the Peshawar High Court gave the federal government a month deadline to complete his repatriation process.

"Ansari is being released upon completion of his sentence and is being repatriated to India," Pakistan Foreign Office Spokesperson Mohammad Faisal said.

He claimed that Ansari was an "Indian spy who had

illegally entered Pakistan and was involved in anti-state crimes and forging documents."

Ansari went missing after he was taken into custody by Pakistani intelligence agencies and local police in Kohat in 2012 and finally in reply to a habeas corpus petition filed by his mother, Fauzia Ansari, the high court was informed that he was in custody of the Pakistan Army and was being tried by a military court.

He entered Pakistan from Afghanistan, reportedly to meet a girl he had befriended online.

A two-judge Peshawar High Court bench, comprising Justice Roohul Amin and Justice Qalandar Ali Khan, on Thursday heard an appeal filed by Ansari through his lawyer Qazi Muhammad Anwar.

Anwar informed the bench that both the Ministry of Interior and authorities of prison, where he was lodged, were completely silent about his release and deportation to India.

## Lens on Dragon's projects export sans funds

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Chinese investment in India is as low as US \$5 billion, but Chinese companies are executing projects of Indian entities pegged at a whopping \$63 billion. A parliamentary panel has pointed to this "projects export" by China without "bringing any actual investment" and pushed for an immediate stress on investments by Chinese companies in India. The Committee has also outlined the security implications of Chinese projects saying they should be examined with circumspection on a sectoral basis. The trade deficit between the two countries stand at nearly \$52 billion.

While cumulative Chinese investments in India are substantially low at round \$5 billion, the value of Indian projects currently executed by Chinese companies is estimated to be as high as \$63 billion. China is engaged in project exports in India without bringing its own capital for investment. Such a trend is not healthy for the overall growth of Indian economy," said the parliamentary committee on External Affairs, headed by Congress MP Shashi Tharoor in its report. The report was tabled in the Lok Sabha on Monday.

The Committee pointed out that trade deficit with China is totally loaded against India. The factors which is responsible for this include non tariff barriers imposed by China to Indian goods and services, dumping of goods, lack of genuine investment profile



on the part of China, security imperatives are some of the concerns which India faces on the matter.

In its report, the Committee recommended that India should persuade Chinese companies to bring more investment into India rather than merely resorting to project exports. "The continuously ris-

ing trade deficit which has increased to \$52 billion in 2016-17 and is at present \$63 billion is unsustainable and requires concrete steps to be taken for redressal," it said.

Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhle, who appeared before the Committee, had submitted that there has always been a difference between the Indian

figures and the Chinese customs statistics. "The Chinese calculate the data on calendar basis while India calculates on financial year basis. It is virtually impossible to reconcile the figures. As far as the Indian Government data is concerned in the three previous financial years of 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, the deficit was \$48.47 billion, \$52.69 billion and \$51.09 billion. In each case, the Chinese exports were around \$60 billion and the Indian exports were in the range of nine billion to \$10 billion. According to the Chinese customs statistics, in that same period for 2014, 2015 and 2016 calendar years, the deficit was \$37 billion; \$44 billion and \$47 billion," the Foreign Secretary had submitted told the Committee.

On the issue of Chinese ease of entry to Indian markets and project exports, the Ministry of External Affairs said the value of projects currently under execution is estimated to be \$63 billion. So while the cumulative Chinese investments in India are substantially low which is about \$5 billion, the project exports are substantial and the Government's effort has essentially been to persuade the Chinese to invest into the country and not to utilise Indian capital by bringing projects into the country.

The Committee questioned as to why the Government has not been able to leverage with China the fact of a massive \$80 billion market next door as to compel it to bring some degree of equity in the bilateral trade.

## CAG sends report on Rafale to MoD, seeks reply within 4 weeks

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

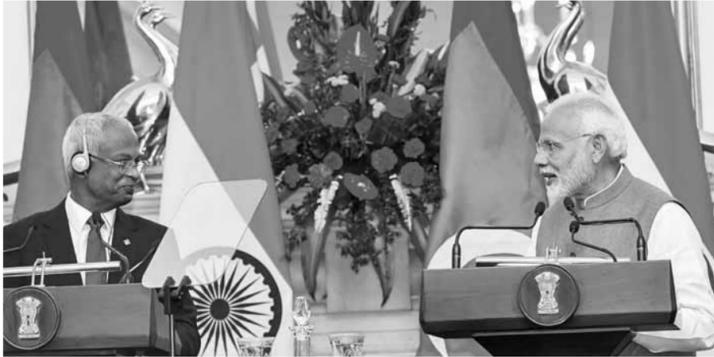
Just two days after Congress leaders held a Press conference saying no CAG report on pricing of Rafale jets has been shared with the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), the CAG has sent a draft report on Rafale deal to the Ministry of Defence for its comment.

Highly placed sources said that the CAG has asked the Ministry of Defence to revert within four weeks on the draft report. The draft report was sent to the Ministry of Defence two weeks ago. However, the report is unlikely to be tabled in the ongoing Winter Session of the Parliament.

The controversy erupted over the CAG report on Rafale ever since the Supreme Court mentioned about this while giving clean chit to the Government.

The senior Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge, who is the Public Accounts Committee chairman, accused the Government of misleading the apex court. "The Government lied in the Supreme Court that the CAG report was presented in the House and in the PAC, and PAC has probed it. The Government said in the Supreme Court that it (the report) is in public domain. Where is it? Have you seen it?" Kharge, alleged.

# Modi OK's \$1.4 bn aid to Maldives



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Maldivian President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih deliver a joint Press statement at Hyderabad House in New Delhi on Monday

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday announced \$1.4 billion financial assistance to Maldives after he held extensive talks with its visiting President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih.

During the talks, the two sides vowed to deepen security cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region.

The two countries also inked four pacts, including one on visa facilitation besides agreeing on maritime cooperation. "We held successful talks in a cordial atmosphere. We vowed to strengthen ties," Modi said in his press statement, with Solih by his side.

Modi also said the security interests of the two countries were intertwined and both sides will work together to further strengthen cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region.

"We will not allow our countries to be used for activities which can be harmful to each other's interests," Modi asserted.

The Prime Minister said India is extending \$1.4 billion as budget support, currency swap and line of credit for the social and economic development of Maldives.

"We want greater trade ties with Maldives. There are increasing opportunities for

Indian companies in the island nation," he said.

On his part, Solih said the two sides agreed to strengthen maritime security cooperation in the Indian Ocean region through coordinated patrol and aerial surveillance.

Solih arrived here on Sunday on a three-day state visit, his first foreign trip after assuming the charge of the top office in the island nation a month ago.

Modi had attended Solih's swearing-in ceremony on November 17.

Earlier, External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj called on Solih and discussed issues of bilateral and regional concern. Relations between India and the Maldives plummeted after then President Abdulla Yameen imposed emergency on February 5 this year.

India had criticised his decision and asked his government to restore the credibility of the electoral and political process by releasing political prisoners. The emergency lasted for 45 days.

The two sides signed Agreements/MoUs/Joint Declaration of Intent during the visit like Agreement on the Facilitation of Visa Arrangements, Memorandum of Understanding on Cultural Cooperation and MoU for Establishing Mutual

Cooperation to Improve the Ecosystem for Agribusiness;

A Joint Declaration of Intent on Cooperation in the field of Information & Communications Technology and Electronics was also signed.

The two sides also agreed to work together to create institutional linkages and to establish a framework of cooperation in the areas of health, particularly cancer treatment, Mutual Legal Assistance on Criminal Matters, Investment promotion, Human Resource Development and Tourism.

Solih is accompanied by his wife First Lady Fazna Ahmed and a high level delegation comprising of Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdulla Shahid, Minister of Finance Ibrahim Ameer, Minister of National Planning and Infrastructure Mohamed Aslam, Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation Aishath Nahula, Minister of Economic Development Uz Fayyaz Ismail, senior government officials, and a business delegation.

In an important gesture, Solih is staying in the Rashtrapati Bhawan as a special guest of President Ram Nath Kovind. "This demonstrates the close ties between India and the Maldives, and the warmth and mutual respect between the two Governments, a release issued by Government said.

# Cong, BJP wage privilege notice war over Rafale

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress and BJP on Monday sparred over the Rafale issue in both the Houses of the Parliament giving notices of privileges against each other in both the Houses for allegedly airing misleading statements.

The Congress gave notices of breach of privilege in both Houses of Parliament, demanding an explanation from the Government on why it provided the Supreme Court "wrong" information on the Rafale deal. The Congress gave privilege notices against the Government and law minister Ravi Shankar Prasad.

Soon the BJP also stepped up attack on Rahul Gandhi over the Rafale issue with three members of the ruling party in the Lok Sabha moving a notice of breach of privilege against the Congress president, alleg-

ing that he spoke "falsehood" and "misled the House" over the fighter aircraft deal in his speech during a debate in July.

BJP MPs Anurag Thakur, Nishikant Dubey and Sanjay Jaiswal have sought action against Congress president over his speech during the debate on the no-confidence motion against the Narendra Modi Government in Parliament's Monsoon Session.

BJP has intensified its attack on Rahul following the last week's Supreme Court verdict dismissing petitions seeking a probe into alleged irregularities in the Rafale deal. The apex court had said there is no occasion to doubt the decision-making process in the procurement of 36 fighter jets from France.

Rahul has, however, stuck to his allegations of corruption in the purchase and demand-

ed a probe by a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC). In their notice against the Congress leader, the BJP MPs quoted Rahul as saying that the UPA Government had agreed to buy the aircraft at Rs 520 crore per unit but when the BJP-led NDA Government signed the deal, it cost Rs 1,600 crores "by magic".

"The above statement is entirely untrue... We categorically assert that the price comparison given by Rahul Gandhi is a figment of imagination, incorrect and utter falsehood. It was an attempt to mislead the House," they alleged in their notice. On the part of the Congress Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Ghulam Nabi Azad sent the notice to the chairman of the Upper House, Congress' leader in the Lok Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge Kharge gave the notice in the Lower House.

"I have given a breach of privilege notice against the Government and in particular against Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad as it was the Law Ministry that gave the go ahead for presenting the affidavit before the Supreme Court," he said.

This is the first time that a Government has provided wrong information to the Supreme Court, he said.

"This is why our demand for a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) becomes more relevant. We demand that a JPC be formed to probe the theft in the Rafale deal," Azad said.

"We have no faith in this Government as it is misleading the Supreme Court by giving false information and is also misleading the people of the country," he alleged.

The Congress, through its

notices, is demanding answers from the law minister on why the government provided wrong information to the Supreme Court about the CAG report on the Rafale pricing issue, he said.

Senior Congress leader Anand Sharma alleged that the Government was guilty of committing breach of privilege of both Houses of Parliament by claiming that the CAG report on Rafale aircraft pricing was presented to the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament.

## Parliament panel concerned over Chinese infra close to Doklam

New Delhi: It took 13 rounds of diplomatic discussions between India and China to resolve the face-off between their militaries in Doklam last year, according to a report by a parliamentary panel.

The report by the committee on External Affairs termed the Chinese intrusion at Doklam as a "blatant but unsuccessful attempt" to unilaterally change the status quo at the India, Bhutan, China tri-junction in Doklam, seriously affecting India's security interests.

Complimenting the government's handling of the face-off, the committee said it remained concerned that Chinese infrastructure built "uncomfortably" close to the tri-junction has not yet been dismantled. The committee, headed by former Minister of state in External Affairs Ministry Shashi Tharoor, said Doklam was not a sovereignty issue for India as the disputed territory was Bhutanese, but nevertheless it was major security challenge for New Delhi.

"The committee will like to put on record their highest appreciation for the brave and timely action of our security forces which checked the PLA (Peoples Liberation Army) troops from continuing with their road construction activity in South Doklam," panel said in the report tabled in Parliament on Monday. **PTI**

## DGP conference to focus on cross-border terrorism, J&K militancy

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The three-day-long annual DGPs conference to be hosted by the Union Home Ministry will start on December 20 at the site of the tallest statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in Gujarat. Militancy in Jammu & Kashmir, cross-border terrorism and attempts to radicalise youth will top the agenda of the conference inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Issues like clashes due to communal tension, circulation of communally sensitive news and pornographic materials through social media are also expected to be discussed at the three-day meeting, a Union Home Ministry official said.

The top police officers of the country will be closed for multiple sessions of discussions on issues concerning the country, including militancy in Jammu and Kashmir, cross-border terrorism, attempts to radicalise youth, Naxal menace and the situation in the Northeast, the official said.

# Lok Sabha passes Bill to empower transgenders

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Monday passed a Bill seeking to empower the transgender community by providing them a separate identity. The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2016, seeking to define Transgenders and prohibit discrimination against them, was introduced in the Lok Sabha two years ago. It was passed with 27 amendments amid protests over the Rafale deal and Cauvery issue.

While their colleagues were protesting in the Well, five Opposition MPs, including Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar (Trinamool Congress) and Badaruddoza Khan (CPI-M), participated in the debate, questioning the provisions of the legislation. The Opposition MPs, while participating in the debate reminded the Government that they are cooperating with this bill due to its noble cause.

Presenting the importance of the bill, Union Social Justice

and Empowerment Minister Thawar Chand Gehlot said the Bill was sent to the standing committee and the Government has accepted 27 amendments, requesting MPs to pass the Bill. Initiating the debate on the Bill, Congress member Shashi Tharoor said the bill was "flawed" and the minister should withdraw it.

"Defer consideration of the bill as it needs serious discussion. I request the minister to withdraw the Bill," he said. We need to recognise Transgenders' identity" as it goes beyond male and female, Tharoor said, adding the government has "blindly" borrowed the definition of Transgenders. The Bill also fails to define discrimination against Transgenders and there is a need to redraft certain clauses," he said.

Bartruhari Mahtab (BJD) said there was no clarity on the term "self perceived gender identity" and "how it will be enforced". He said the definition of Transgenders was not complete and that other terms

such as transmen and transwomen were not defined.

Mahtab said there were several laws in the country and it was not clear how these laws, including the Companies Act would be applied to transgenders. "Adequate attention has not been given in drafting this Bill," he maintained, adding the government itself has moved 27 amendments.

Supriya Sule (NCP) said a Transgender commission at the national level was not enough. "We are asking for a welfare board for Transgenders. They need equal rights," she said, demanding a helpline number for the community.

The Minister said the objectives of the Bill includes protecting interests of Transgenders, defining of the term "Transgender", to give them recognition and setting up of a national Transgender council. "A long discussion has taken place on this issue. It has also gone to the parliamentary standing committee. We have included several of their suggestions," he said.

and China to resolve the face-off between their militaries in Doklam last year, according to a report by a parliamentary panel.

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## SC grants protection from arrest to scribe in sting operation against BJD MLAs

New Delhi: The Supreme Court has granted protection from arrest to a news channel journalist who had allegedly conducted a sting operation on four ruling Biju Janta Dal (BJD) MLAs in Odisha. A Bench of Justices DY Chandrachud and MR Shah also sought response from the Odisha Government on the plea of journalist Ravi Sharma seeking anticipatory bail and challenging the order of High Court dated December 5.

"Having regard to the above position and having due regard to all the facts and circumstances, we direct that there shall be a stay of arrest in the meantime," the Bench said.

At the outset, advocate Rahul Shyam Bhandari, appearing for Sharma contended that the journalist was wrongly framed in the case since he had conducted the sting operation against the four MLAs of BJD.

He said there is no absolute bar for grant of anticipatory bail in the case where alleged offences are under the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

Sharma was booked in the complaint case lodged by MLA Bijay Naik of Karanjia constituency under various Sections of IPC and provisions under the Act. In 2016, a regional news channel had aired a sting operation in which four BJD MLAs — Seemaram Nayak (Hindol); Susant Behera (Chhendipada); Bijay Naik (Karanjia) and Anam Naik (Bhawanipatna) were seen demanding money from an industrialist in lieu of providing him facilities for setting up industries in the State. **PTI**

SC seeks explanation from Raj Govt on hate speech videos uploaded from Jodhpur jail

New Delhi: The Supreme Court has asked the Rajasthan Government to explain as to how some videos of hate speech were uploaded on the internet from Jodhpur jail premises by Shambhu Lal Raigar, who is accused of hacking and burning alive a Muslim labourer from West Bengal.

The top court also sought response from Raigar as to why he should not be transferred to Delhi's Tihar jail or any other jail out of Rajasthan.

"Issue notice to the newly added respondent (Raigar), returnable on January 21, 2019. In the meantime, the State of Rajasthan shall file its counter affidavit to these proceedings. The State shall, in particular, explain whether a video was uploaded from within the jail premises by the newly added respondent and, if so, how that was possible," said a Bench of Justices DY Chandrachud and MR Shah.

Senior advocate Indira Jaising, appearing for Gulbahar Biwi, wife of the victim who was allegedly killed by Raigar in on December 6 last year, said that the accused has been continuously uploading videos of hate speech on the Internet and should be transferred to Tihar jail or any other prison outside the State. **PTI**

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## PSUs, Central Depts fail in National Award 2018

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Like last year, this time too, Public Sector Units (PSUs) and Central Government Departments have intriguingly drawn a blank in qualifying in any category for the prestigious National Award 2018, announced on International Day of Persons with Disabilities (PwD) on December 3.

The award is given every year by the Union Ministry of Social Empowerment and Justice to individuals and institutions working for the welfare of the PwDs.

A total 16 institutions and 56 individuals from the private sector and a few States were conferred with the award at an event held to mark the day.

There were three categories where nominations were sought from the PSUs and Government Departments too.

However, the fact that none of its departments and Navratnas (PSUs) could meet the criteria to clinch the best employer award under the category 'Award for the Outstanding Wok in the Creation of Barrier-Free Environment for the Persons with Disabilities,' speaks volumes of the long way the Modi Government has to go to meet the aspirations of the sector such as ensuring enough jobs and inclusive environment.

The Government has launched mega India Accessibility Campaign to create universal accessibility environment for the sector.

In private sector, Karnataka-based IBM bagged the award under the category 'Award for the Outstanding Wok in the Creation of Barrier-Free Environment for the

Persons with Disabilities.' From the private sector, Radhambika S on behalf of Sivavasu Electronics from Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala bagged the award under the segment 'Award for Best Employers and Placement Officer or Agency'.

In fact Madhya Pradesh stole the show with its district Singrauli, Indore and Nagda Municipal Corporations walking away with the award.

Similarly, no PSU and government department was found to be inspiring enough to be felicitated under the 'best employee or agency' category even as Employment Department of the National Association for Blind (NAB) and R Hari, GM Human Resources of the Lemon Tree Hotels Ltd bagged the award under the segment.

Tripura-based Abhoy

# Cabinet gives nod to 2 AIIMS in TN, T

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Cabinet on Monday approved increasing the allotment of deposit free LPG connections to poor under PM Ujjwala scheme, establishment of two new AIIMS hospitals in Madurai, Tamil Nadu, and Bibinagar in Telangana. Cabinet also approved a new four-lane 14 kilometre road bridge across river Ganga in Patna in Bihar.

Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved expansion of beneficiaries list under PM Ujjwala Yojana to release deposit free LPG connections to poor families so far uncovered. This is subject to fulfilling eligibility norms and furnishing required documents, said Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, while addressing media along with Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad.

Pradhan said people in seven categories are identified for this allotment of deposit free LPG cylinders to poor. "SC/STs households, beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri AwasYojana (PMAY) (Gramin), Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAJ),

Forest dwellers, Most Backward Classes (MBC), Tea & Ex-Tea Garden Tribes, people residing in Islands / river islands, whose names did not appear in the SECC list," said the statement issued by Government.

Cabinet approved the project for construction of a 5.634-km long new four lane bridge in Patna across river Ganga, just 38 metres on upstream side of the existing MG Setu. The construction period for the project is three and a half years and likely to be completed by January 2023.

"This mega project is 14,500-km long and passes through Patna, Saran and Vaishali districts of Bihar. The project includes 5634-metre long major bridge parallel to the existing old MG Setu, 4 number of Vehicular Underpasses (VUPS), one Rail Over Bridge (RoB), 1580-metre long one viaduct, 110-metre long one flyover, 4 minor bridges, 5 numbers bus shelters and 13 road junctions," said the statement. Cabinet also sanctioned establishment of two new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at Madurai, Tamil Nadu at a cost of Rs 1,264 crore and Bibinagar, Telangana at a cost of Rs 1,028 crore.

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Cabinet approved the project for construction of a 5.634-km long new four lane bridge in Patna across river Ganga, just 38 metres on upstream side of the existing MG Setu. The construction period for the project is three and a half years and likely to be completed by January 2023.

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## No Govt funding for adopt a heritage: Min

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Monday said the Government was not doling out funds to the private or public companies under the 'Adopt a Heritage: Apni Dharohar, Apni Pehchaan,' scheme launched last year.

"No fund is given by Ministry of Tourism. The project envisages involvement of private/public companies / organisations and individuals to adopt monuments, natural heritage sites and other tourist sites in the country, primarily under CSR," said Minister of State (independent charge) for Culture, Dr Mahesh Sharma, in reply to a question in the Lok Sabha.

He said the scheme envisages development and maintenance of tourist amenities at heritage sites and making them tourist friendly, to enhance

tourism potential and cultural importance in a planned and phased manner. A political controversy had erupted in April this year after the news broke that the Dalmia Bharat group signed an agreement with the Government to maintain Red Fort with Opposition accusing the Government of 'handing over the monument to private party.'

However, the Government said the project primarily focuses on providing basic amenities that include cleanliness, public

MONUMENTS ADOPTED UNDER THE SCHEME SO FAR	AGENCY/MONUMENT MITRAS	MONUMENT (STATE)
Dalmia Bharat Ltd.	Red Fort (Delhi), Gandikota Fort (Andhra Pradesh)	
Adventure Tour Operators	Area surrounding Gangotri Temple & Trail to Gaumukh (Uttarakhand) Association of India	
Mt. Stok	Kangri Trek, Ladakh	
Apeejay Park Hotels	Jantar Mantar (Delhi)	
Bliss Inns (V-Resorts)	Suraj Kund ( Haryana)	
Yatra Online	Qutub Minar (Delhi), Ajanta Caves (Maharashtra) Leh Palace, Leh and Hampi (Hazara Rama Temple) Karnataka	

conveniences, safe drinking water, ease of access for tourists, signages, illumination, Wi-Fi etc. The MoU signed specifies the installation of one signage at the monument indicating that monument has been adopted by respective firm/organisation, the Minister said.

He maintained that providing basic facilities/amenities (e.g. drinking water, toilet blocks, facilities for physically challenged, pathways, cultural notice boards/signage, vehicle parking, cloak rooms, etc.) to tourists visiting centrally protected monuments and sites are the regular activities undertaken by the Archaeological Survey of India.

Further, Archaeological Survey of India has identified 100 monuments as "Adarsh Smarak" for upgradation of existing facilities/amenities like Wi-Fi, cafeteria, interpretation centre, brail signage, modern toilets etc. on the basis of actual requirement and feasibility on case to case basis.

# Inclement weather leads to host of flight diversions

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Two flights arriving from Delhi, and one flight each from Shamshabad, Indore and Mumbai were diverted from Raipur due to bad weather conditions in the city on Monday morning.

Most of the flights were diverted to Nagpur but later landed at Raipur after weather conditions improved.

As per Airport Authorities, Indigo flight number 6E2757 from Delhi to Raipur was diverted to Nagpur at 8.16 am but it then returned to Raipur at 11.16 am when weather conditions improved.

Jet Airways flight number 9W746 from Delhi to Raipur was diverted to Nagpur at 8.36 am and returned at 10.56 am.

Indigo Flight Number 6E384 from Shamshabad to



Raipur was diverted to Nagpur at 9.03 am and returned to Raipur at 11.31 am.

Indigo Flight Number 6E811 from Indore to Raipur was diverted to Shamshabad at 09.06 am and it landed back at Raipur at 1.27 pm.

Similarly, Jet Airways Flight Number 9W377 from Mumbai to Raipur was diverted to Nagpur at 09.16 am and landed back at 11.24 am.

As per weather department, cyclone 'Pethai' has affected Chhattisgarh region which has resulted in rainfall in the capital and also other parts of the state.

Jagdalpur recorded 21 mm of rain fall. Due to the cyclonic storm 'Pethai' over Bay of Bengal off Andhra Coast, a forecast was made that light rainfall over Raipur and other parts of the state is likely till Monday evening.

# Data accuracy & data quality, 2 important factors in survey:Bhatt



STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

In the process of sample survey and data collection, data accuracy and data quality are two important factors. Scientific data collection is used by the policy makers for preparing policy for different sectors and different sections of our society, such as agriculture, farmers, income, debt and investment, land and livestock holdings etc., said Ashish Bhatt, Secretary, Planning and Statistics, Government of Chhattisgarh on Monday.

He was addressing the four-day State-level Training Conference of 77th round of Socio-Economic Survey organised by National Sample Survey Office- NSSO (Field Operations Division), Regional office, Raipur here.

"Having accuracy and maintaining quality in sample survey on data collection process, it will certainly help in effective data processing it will take less time as well," he added.

Roshanlal Sahu, Deputy Director General NSSO, Regional Office Raipur said

that for the first time, N.S.S.O. is also conducting "Time Use Survey" Starting from January 1, 2019 and ending on December 31, 2019, officials of all offices of Chhattisgarh viz. Durg, Bilaspur, Ambikapur and Raipur will be imparted training.

On Debt and investment, the survey aims to study the demand for credit from rural families and supply of credit by credit agencies both institutional and non institutional, the results of which will be used for formulation of banking policies."

"The survey on "Land and Livestock Holdings" of Households and situation Assessment of agricultural households will also be conducted from January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019 in rural areas of the country. Information on situation of agriculture households, use of technology in agriculture system, awareness regarding minimum support price, technological development and welfare programmes in agricultural sector will be collected through this survey," Sahu added.



Rain spoilt Science College Ground venue preparations for the swearing-in ceremony of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel which forced the administration to shift venue to Indoor Stadium in the city on Monday



Santosh Sahu | Pioneer

# Baghel invites Raman to swearing-in ceremony

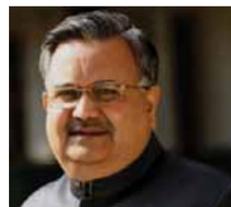
STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Newly-appointed State Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Monday called up outgoing Chief Minister Raman Singh and personally invited him for former's swearing-in ceremony which was scheduled at Sardar Balbeer Singh Juneja Indoor Stadium in Raipur.

Singh along with his colleagues — former Minister for Agriculture and Water



Resources Brijmohan Agrawal and former Speaker of Chhattisgarh Assembly



Gaurishankar Agrawal were also invited for the ceremony by Baghel.

# Why BJP lost miserably in Chhattisgarh

LAW KUMAR MISHRA

BJP's dismal performance in Chhattisgarh is shocking, not surprising. They did not expect they would get only 15 seats, (recognition for 15 years of uninterrupted rule), an all time low.

Worse, they polled 31 per cent of valid votes against over 46 per cent by the Congress, all time high. They too would listen to qualms of conscience and they will ponder why 95 per cent of Cabinet colleagues

of a visibly humble Chief Minister Raman Singh lost.

Weeks before elections, all sections of people, including businessmen and industrialists, professors have been telling me there was wave of change (*pariwartan lahar*), which the policy planners of BJP too must have noticed. BKS Ray, a retired IAS (1972) had repeatedly written "the corrupt and anti-people government is being thrown out".

The RSS led by Saudan Singh, had been active since

long, played an active role in selection of candidates to campaign. He had been staying at Raipur since 2003 elections and got credit for subsequent victories of the BJP. We remember the Vanwasi Kalyan Kendra's were active in Bastar, RSS activists campaigned on cycles, the then union minister of state for home camped in Bastar, central paramilitary forces and Punjab police conducted polls when Gen KM Sheth was Governor. Late BJP leader Dilip Singh Judeo had

his influence through ghar wapsi movement. But now, BJP lost miserably in Bastar (1/12), wiped out in Jashpur, Koriya, Raigarh, Surguja and even in the plains of Raipur (1/12).

BJP Government was dependent on certain sections of bureaucrats to run the government and the party. They have now become scapegoats.

Arrogance of unbridled Power, money was definitely reflected in actions and talks of civil servants and ministers

of the polite Raman Singh. Massive mandate against BJP leads to end of 15 years long political 'Vanvas' of Congress.

Former minister in BJP government and state's seasoned politician Brijmohan Agarwal was right in admitting it was storm (Aandhi) against BJP.

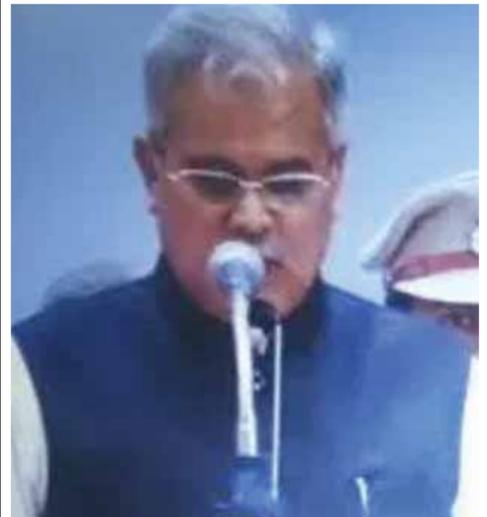
(The writer is a senior journalist who worked in several states including Chhattisgarh. The views expressed by him in the article are his personal)



Outgoing Chief Minister Raman Singh greets newly-appointed Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel after his swearing-in ceremony at the Indoor Stadium in Raipur on Monday

Santosh Sahu | Pioneer

# Bhupesh Baghel takes oath in his trademark dress



STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel wore his trademark outfit Kurta-Pyjama and a jacket during his swearing-in ceremony held at Sardar Balbeer Singh Juneja Indoor Stadium at Budhpara here on Monday.

Baghel after taking the oath greeted the distinguished guests present on the dais and

waved at the legislators and people sitting in the auditorium.

T S Singhdeo after being administered oath shook hands with distinguished guests present and touched the feet of veteran Congress leader Motilal Vora and took blessings from him. Tamradhwaj Sahu was the second person to take oath followed by Singhdeo.

# MINING MISHAP CM orders instant relief of ₹75K to victims' families

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Expressing deep grief over the death of three employees of South Eastern Coalfields Limited in a mishap that occurred at Bagdeva coal mines in Korba district, newly-appointed Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Monday directed officials to ensure all possible assistance to the families of those deceased. The mishap occurred due to discharge of a poisonous gas in the

**One Mining Sardar Laxmikant and two carriers lost their life in the mishap**

underground mine. One Mining Sardar Laxmikant and two carriers lost their life in the mishap. Two of the employees are in critical condition and have been referred to Bilaspur for further treatment. The rescue team had rushed to the spot after inci-

dent was reported. Senior officials of SECL and Police were also busy with the rescue efforts. The Chief Minister took details from Korba District Collector and directed to provide all assistance to the affected and expressed his deep condolences to the grieving families. He also directed the district administration to provide immediate relief of ₹75,000 each to the family of the deceased.

# CM greets people on Guru Ghasidas Jayanti

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Monday extended hearty greetings to the people of the state on the eve of Guru Ghasidas Jayanti on Tuesday (December 18). In his message Baghel said, "Guru Baba Ghasidas Ji was one of the gems of 'Chhattisgarh Mahtari' and 'Mother India', who lived his life on highest values of truth, non-violence, compassion, mercy and charity, inspiring the country as well as the world to follow the path of humanity." "His teachings are relevant

even today. Our Government is committed to follow the footsteps of Guru Baba Ghasidas, while realizing the vision of New Chhattisgarh," he said. The Chief Minister said, "Birthplace of Guru Baba Ghasidas, 'Girodpuri Dham' is one of the most sacred pilgrimage spots of the country." Baghel said that the thoughts and teachings of Guru Baba Ghasidas are beneficial and relevant to every human being. On the occasion, the Chief Minister wished for peace, prosperity and progress in lives of people of Chhattisgarh.

# INLD-BSP begins 3rd phase of 'Jan Adhikaar Yatra'

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Eyeing 2019 polls, the INLD-BSP combine on Monday began the third phase of "Jan Adhikaar Yatra" from Ellenabad assembly constituency in Sirsa. Leader of opposition and INLD's senior leader Abhay Chautala, who is also MLA from Ellenabad promised to give one government in each household and unemployment allowance of Rs 15000 to educated, if the INLD-BSP comes to power in Haryana. While addressing the people on the occasion, he

**Chautala also attacked the Haryana Government over the issues of its employees**

demanding construction of SYL canal, Dadpur Nalvi Irrigation project, Mewat canal, debt waiver for farmers and implementation of Swaminathan report. Chautala also attacked the Haryana Government over the issues of its employees. The BJP Government has an anti-employee attitude and

has failed to resolve their problems, he alleged. He added that the "Jan Adhikaar Yatra" will continue till the State Government accepts our demands. The yatra will reach Tosham on December 18, Safidon on Dec 20, Hodal-Punhana on Dec 21 and Narnaul on Dec 22, Chautala said. The yatra will cover Kharkhoda-Bahadurgarh on December 26, Mahendragarh-Dadri on Dec 27, Meham-Narnaud on Dec 28, Bawani Khera-Nalwa on Dec 29 and Kalayat-Asandh on December 30.

# Haryana CM approves new rail line from Panipat

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal has accorded approval to the proposal of establishing a 95 kilometers new rail line from Panipat to Asaoti in Palwal via Rohtak-Jhajjar-Farukhnagar-Patli-Manesar-Sohna rail route bypassing Delhi.

up Haryana Rail Infrastructure Development Corporation (HRIDC), said an official spokesman. He said that this new route would provide direct connectivity for Faridabad, Ballabgarh, Palwal, Sohna and Gurugram with other districts of Haryana and Chandigarh and thus facilitate fast passenger connectivity (avoiding Delhi) to all the

important places including the capital of the state and running of Shatabdi like trains from Gurugram to Chandigarh. This would decongest Delhi rail network and immensely beneficial to the National Capital Region from an environment point of view by reducing the high density of both passenger and goods traffic in Delhi, he said.

The spokesman also said that the passage of rail network of Gurugram, Faridabad, Ballabgarh and Palwal area through Delhi is a major bottleneck in its industrial growth. The proposed new line would, thus, open up a new era of development of state's economy. While divulging details about the new rail line, he said that the major part of the route

already exists on Indian Railway network and only missing links would be required to be provided. The route from Panipat to Jhajjar via Rohtak already exists. Jhajjar could be connected to already existing station at Farukhnagar through a new Railway line of about 30 Kilometers, the spokesman said. He further said that while

Farukhnagar to Garhi Harsaru and Garhi Harsaru to Patli are existing Railway lines, Patli to Asaoti new railway line via Manesar and Sohna, of about 60 Km length, would be required to be constructed. In addition, provision of Y-connections would be made at Garhi Harsaru, Patli and Asaoti Railway Stations. The spokesman said that the development of this route

is likely to give rise to new Greenfield Projects of Multi Modal Logistic Parks (MMLPs) in this region by the CONCOR or other players. This route would also facilitate direct connectivity (avoiding Delhi) for the major CONCOR depot at Tughlakabad to various important destinations in Haryana, Punjab and Rajasthan and Gujarat states, he said.

Besides, this would also give connectivity to the DFC at Asaoti which would facilitate traffic inflow/outflow from the entire Haryana State to Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India (DFC-CIL). Thus, the Public Sector Undertakings like CONCOR, DFCCIL and HSIIDC could also be incorporated as partners with the HRIDC, he added.

# IAF flies first military plane with bio-jet fuel

Chandigarh: In a first, experimental test pilots and test engineer of the Indian Air Force (IAF) flew an An-32 military transport aircraft using blended bio-jet fuel. The sortie was flown at Chandigarh on Monday morning. The project is a combined effort of IAF, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), the Directorate General Aeronautical Quality Assurance (DGAQA) and CSIR-Indian Institute of

Petroleum. "The IAF carried out extensive engine tests on the ground. This is now followed by flight trials using 10 per cent bio-jet blended ATF. This fuel is made from Jatropa oil sourced from Chattisgarh Biodiesel Development Authority (CBDA) and then processed at CSIR-IIP, Dehradun," the IAF said in a statement. IAF intends to fly the An-32 transport aircraft using bio-jet fuel on 26 January 26, 2019 at the Republic Day flypast. IANS

# Sidhu lands in another controversy

MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH

The flight of the stuffed black partridge from across the border has landed Punjab Cabinet Minister Navjot Singh Sidhu in another controversy. Brought with love for his Chief Minister Amarinder Singh from Pakistan, the 'tittar' from Pakistan has virtually put Sidhu in dock as the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) has sought within three days on alleged violation of animal welfare rules by the former cricketer. The Board chairman SP Gupta has written to the Director General of Forests, Additional Director General (WL), and the Chief Wild Life

**Brought with love for his Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh from Pakistan, the 'tittar' from Pakistan has virtually put Sidhu in dock as the Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) has sought within three days on alleged violation of animal welfare rules by the former cricketer**

Warden on the issue asking them "to submit a report within three days for necessary action, if any offence is committed under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, or the rules made there-under". The decision came after the Board took cognizance of reports claiming that Sidhu has brought the bird which is pro-

tection under the Wild Life Protection Act. Citing rules, the Board underlined that it is illegal or prohibited to keep nails, hair, skin of any animal or its bringing into the territory of India without permission. The Animal Welfare Board is a statutory body established under Section 4 of the

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, and its main aim is the promotion of animal welfare, generally for the purpose of prevention of cruelty and for protecting animals from being subject to unnecessary pain or suffering, in particular. Notably, in his first meeting with Capt Amarinder after controversy over his "captain" remark and Pakistan visit for Kartarpur ground-breaking ceremony, Sidhu had gifted the stuffed partridge to the Chief Minister which he denied to accept citing wildlife permission. It has been learnt that the Chief Minister's office had sent the stuffed bird to the wildlife department asking if it could keep it.

# Madras HC bans online medicine sales

Chennai: The Madras High Court on Monday banned the sale of medicines online till the central government notifies the regulations. The court set January 31, 2019 as the deadline for the central government to notify the rules. The court passed the order on a plea by the Tamil Nadu Chemists and Druggists Association. According to the Association, online purchases may be convenient but there exists the risk of unlicensed online outlets selling fake/expired/unapproved med-

icines. Reacting to the court order Pradeep Dadha, Founder and CEO, Netmeds.com, said, "We would be filing an appeal and taking the required recourse available under the law. The benefits of affordable and accessible medicines through our services have been appreciated by customers across the country, and as a fully licensed pharmacy, Netmeds.com is committed to adhering to all the guidelines and standards as prescribed under the Drugs and Cosmetic Act of 1940."

# Hry Minister Anil Vij hits back at Kejriwal

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

A day after Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party convener Arvind Kejriwal attacked the BJP led Haryana Government for not improving health and education services in the state, Haryana Health Minister Anil Vij on Monday hit back saying that Delhi Government cannot compete even in dreams, with the achievements made and works done in

the health sector in Haryana "During the regime of present State Government, under National Rural Health Mission, the remaining construction work of buildings of 21 Community Health Centres (CHCs), 77 Primary Health Centres (PHCs) and 216 Sub Health Centres (SHCs) has been completed in Haryana," claimed Anil Vij. Besides, new buildings of 13 hospitals, 14 CHC, 26 PHC and 37 SHCs have been constructed

and about 30 buildings have been repaired. Apart from this, six hospitals, 14 CHC and 5 PHC have been upgraded, he added. Vij was responding to the statements made by Arvind Kejriwal in Kaithal and Sonapat during his rallies in the past two days. The Health Minister said that Kejriwal must tell how many new hospitals have been constructed in Delhi by AAP government in his over three

year's regime. Kejriwal just wants to do politics of lie and deceit, he alleged. Eyeing 2019 polls, the AAP is hard selling its Delhi Government's achievements in the field of education and health sectors to the voters of Haryana. AAP has announced to contest Lok Sabha and assembly polls in Haryana next year. Attacking Kejriwal on the issue of Sutlej Yamuna Link canal, Vij said that before visiting the state, Kejriwal must clar-

ify his stand on SYL canal that whether he is in favour of giving SYL canal water to Haryana or not? "Kejriwal is playing with the sentiments of people of Haryana. By reaching Punjab, he advocates the people not to give SYL water to Haryana, whereas he tries misleading the people of Haryana on other issues. The people of the state must ask Kejriwal, what is his stand on SYL?," Vij added.

# BJP and Congress continues war of words over Rafael deal

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Union Minister of State, Jitendra Singh on Monday alleged that by making Rafael deal's discussion public, Congress has put matters of country's national security at risk. The matters of national security should never be a topic of public debate. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi's formidable leadership has frustrated Congress and they are engaging in such inac-

curate, baseless and illogical accusations against the government, said Singh while talking to the mediapersons here. Chandigarh State President Sanjay Tandon was also present on the occasion. Singh said, the Congress party filed four petitions in the Supreme Court regarding this matter alleging irregularities on three issues - pricing, procedure and offset partner. The Supreme Court after hearing and scrutinizing the documents has set aside all

petitions. The Court noted that all set standards and procedures were followed by the government, the Minister said while condemning the Congress for their allegations in Rafael deal. The Supreme Court has upheld that the procurement procedure carried out was independent, transparent with no scope or solid basis to doubt this agreement vindicating the government of all charges of irregularities in the deal, he added.

# LIFE FOR SAJJAN IN 1984 CASE Punjab politicians, including Capt, hail HC order convicting Cong leader

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Cutting across the party lines, Punjab's politicians, including Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh, on Monday hailed the conviction of senior Congress leader Sajjan Kumar in 1984 riots case. Right from the leaders of the opposition parties, including SAD, BJP, and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), leaders from the ruling Congress too joined them in welcoming the Delhi High Court's verdict awarding life term to the former Congress MP. Saying that the "justice has finally delivered to the victims", the Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh defended the Gandhi family reiterating that neither the Congress nor Gandhis were involved in the conspiracy, while lashing out

at the Badals for dragging their names. "It is a case of justice finally delivered to the victims of one of the worst instances of communal violence in independent India. The reversal, by the High Court, of the earlier acquittal of Sajjan by a trial court has once again proved that the judiciary in India continues to stand tall as a pillar of the nation's democratic system," said the Chief Minister. Capt Amarinder said that the conviction vindicated the stand he had been taking since those dark days of the violence perpetrated on thousands of innocent Sikhs in the wake of the assassination of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. "I have been naming Sajjan Kumar, along with a few other former Congress leaders



including Dharam Das Shastri, HKL Bhagat and Arjun Das, for the past 34 years, based on the information I had personally received from the victims in refugee camps in Delhi during the riots," said Capt Amarinder, hailing the long-awaited verdict. Incidentally, Sajjan Kumar was the only surviving former Congress leaders implicated in the riots, as the others had since passed away. "The name of Sajjan Kumar has repeatedly cropped up in my interactions with the victims in the refugee camps," said Capt Amarinder, who had last month also welcomed the first death sentence awarded in the 1984 riots case. Capt Amarinder had, through the years, been calling

for the strictest of punishment for the handful of individual Congress leaders who had been involved in instigating the riots. "These leaders, who included Sajjan Kumar, did not have any official party sanction and deserved to be punished for their horrendous crime," he maintained. Reiterating his stand that neither the Congress party nor the Gandhi family had any role to play in the rioting, Capt Amarinder lashed out at the Badals for continuing to drag their names into the case at the behest of their political masters - the Bharatiya Janata Party, who were clearly shaken by the clear mandate given by the people to Rahul Gandhi's leadership in the recent Assembly elections in

three states. "There was no Congress conspiracy behind the violence and the names of the Gandhis did not come up even once during his visits to the refugee camps," he said adding that it was vested political interests that had been trying to draw the Gandhi family into the controversy and the conspiracy for their personal motivations. Also welcoming the verdict, Punjab Congress president and Gurdaspur MP Sunil Jakhar said that the party has been clear that whoever was involved in the riots should be brought to justice. "Yes, justice has been delayed but delivered finally. Nobody is above law and anyone who is involved in such a heinous crime should be brought to justice," he said outside the Parliament. Jakhar said that Congress leader Kamal Nath's name never figured in the list of those involved in the riots. SAD MP from Bathinda and the Union Food Processing Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal on Monday demanded action against the Gandhi family for extending political patronage to the perpetrators of 1984 Sikh massacres. SAD MP from Bathinda and the Union Food Processing Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal on Monday demanded action against the Gandhi family for extending political patronage to the perpetrators of 1984 Sikh massacres. SAD MP from Bathinda and the Union Food Processing Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal on Monday demanded action against the Gandhi family for extending political patronage to the perpetrators of 1984 Sikh massacres.

hopeful that Jagdish Tytler and Kamal Nath will also meet the same fate soon". She also castigated the Congress for continuing to patronize Kamal Nath by nominating him as the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh. Majithia said that it was unfortunate that Sajjan was defended in the court by Amit Sibal, who is the son of senior Congressman and former Union Minister Kapil Sibal. "This apparently can happen only due to personal intervention of the Gandhi family," he said. Cheema said that it was his personal opinion that now that the courts had accused the Congress party of patronizing the accused, the Election Commission should derecognize the party immediately. Praising Phoolka, AAP SAYS JUSTICE DELAYED BUT SATISFACTORY Haling Sajjan Kumar's conviction and appreciating the efforts made by AAP leader and senior lawyer HS Phoolka for the same, the Leader of Opposition in Punjab Vidhan Sabha Harpal Singh Cheema on Monday said that even though it takes very long time to deliver justice to the victim families, "the decision is satisfactory".

"It is the outcome of Phoolka's struggle of 34 years that those responsible for killing innocent Sikhs have to feel the heat," said Cheema. Cheema said that the journey to justice was long and tiring as even after formation of seven commissions, the culprits were roaming freely. "Had 1984 riot culprits given punishments at an early stage, the religion or caste based riots happened after that could have been avoided," he said. Cheema demanded that the cases related to people with political background must be taken on priority basis so that they cannot be saved by their political bosses using power. Criticizing Congress, BJP and Akali Dal for protecting the culprits, Cheema said that they were provided security by the government despite their names figured in the FIR. "The other leaders of Congress and BJP, who are responsible for 1984 riots, must also put behind bars," he said. Cheema, criticizing senior Congress leader Salman Khurshid for his statement that the party will challenge the decision in Supreme Court, said that rather than sacking such leaders, the Congress is still patronizing them.

**CHHATTISGARH STATE POWER GENERATION CO. LTD.**  
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (PURCHASE & WORKS) (D), SPM TFS, KORBA (EAST),  
DIST: KORBA, PIN: 495677 (C.G.), PHONE NO.: (0775) 228501, TELEFAX 228501 Email: sspgm.dspgmle@cspsc.co.in

**E-TENDER NOTICE NO. 1961/18**

Online bids are invited by the undersigned through CSPL e-bidding system (SAP SRM) from experienced contractor for the work as mentioned below for DSPM TFS, CSPGCL, Korba (East)-

S. No.	Tender No.	RFx No. (E-Tender No.)	Particulars	Qty	Last date & time of bid submission	E.M.D./Tender Cost (Rs.)
1.	25-03/DSPM/TFS/P&W/EE/I/BI/MD/1-2221/18	81000/11978	Work contract for Filtration of coal mill lub. oil of DSPM TFS Korba East.	30000L	04.01.2019 up to 16.00 Hrs.	Rs. 7250/- + Rs. 550/- Incl. GST

NOTES:- (1) For more details, Tender Documents along with Annexure visit our website: <https://www.cspsc.co.in> e-bidding > e-bidding web portal OR <https://bidding.cspsc.co.in:50700/irjportal> (Helpline no. 0771-2578672 (EITC, CSPDCL) between 11.00 AM to 05.30 PM on all working days).

Any Corrigendum / amendments, if required, shall be displayed on above websites only.

**SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER(P&W) DSPM TFS, CSPGCL, KORBA EAST**

# Theresa rebuffs growing calls for 2nd Brexit vote

AFP ■ LONDON

Prime Minister Theresa May will on Monday warn MPs against supporting a second Brexit referendum, as calls mount for a public vote to break the political impasse over the deal she has struck with the EU.



"Let us not break faith with the British people by trying to stage another referendum," she will tell parliament, according to extracts from her speech released by Downing Street.

"Another vote... Would do irreparable damage to the integrity of our politics," May will say, adding that a second vote "would likely leave us no further forward".

Britain voted to leave the European Union in a shock referendum in 2016 and is set to leave on March 29 next year, although the prime minister is struggling to persuade parliament to accept a divorce agreement she struck last month.

May has said she is engaged in talks with the EU to seek "assurances" about the Brexit deal, but European Commission spokesman Margaritis Schinas on Monday said "no further meetings with the United Kingdom are foreseen".

The draft deal was agreed only after tortuous talks in Brussels that began in March last year and EU leaders have ruled out any renegotiation, while the British economy has been languishing due to uncertainty over Brexit.

May last week survived a confidence vote initiated by

members of her own Conservative Party because of her Brexit strategy, but she is badly weakened after a third of her parliamentary party voted to be rid of her.

In the face of calls for a second referendum to resolve the impasse, she has argued that this would betray the 2016 result and undermine public confidence in politics.

The issue provoked an extraordinary public clash on Sunday between May and former prime minister Tony Blair, a leading supporter of continued EU membership and holding another poll.

May accused Blair of insulting voters and trying to undermine her government by meeting officials in Brussels.

Blair, who was premier between 1997 and 2007, in turn accused the Conservative leader of being "irresponsible".

But campaigners for a referendum said May's comments on Monday showed that the idea was being taken seriously.

"A new public vote would

be different from the referendum in 2016 because we now know more about what Brexit means," said Margaret Beckett, an MP from the main opposition Labour Party and "People's Vote" supporter.

"Any effort to force Brexit over the line without checking that it has the continued consent of the British people will only reinforce divisions," she said.

May has delayed a crucial vote by MPs on the draft Brexit deal until next month, leaving the political scene in limbo.

If parliament fails to approve the text, Britain could crash out of the EU regardless -- a prospect that experts warn could lead to serious trade disruption and trigger a financial crisis.

Dozens of MPs from all sides support a second referendum and there have been reports that officials are considering the possibility of giving the public a vote.

Another proposal being put forward if May's deal does not pass parliament is for MPs to hold indicative votes on dif-

# Dutch PM warns against copying Brexit 'chaos'

AFP ■ THE HAGUE

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte warned the Netherlands on Monday against emulating the "chaos" and division of Britain's decision to leave the European Union.

"I compare the Netherlands to a fragile vase, held by its 17 million citizens," Rutte said in a full-page advert, printed in the popular daily tabloid Algemeen Dagblad.

In order to preserve this 'vase,' compromises often have to be made in which difficult problems are solved in a sensible way," he said.

But Rutte, who has been Dutch premier since 2010 and currently leads a shaky coalition government, said there are examples in society "where the vase has been dropped."

"Look at Great Britain. There, its politicians and its people have forgotten what they've reached together," Rutte said.

"Now they are caught up in chaos," he said.

Rutte was the first stop on British Prime Minister Theresa May's unsuccessful tour to seek assurances for a Brexit deal from EU leaders last week.

The Dutch premier was one of several leaders defending her afterwards at a summit in Brussels -- or at least in comments he made in English.

In Dutch, however he warned at the summit against any move to take the Netherlands out of the EU, saying "If anyone in the

Netherlands thinks Nexit is a good idea, look at England and see the enormous damage it does."

The Netherlands has been anxiously watching developments in Britain, a key trading partner and one-time ally on many European matters, as it prepares to leave the EU on March 29, 2019.

Rutte himself originally invited May's predecessor David Cameron to Amsterdam give the fateful speech leading to the 2016 referendum that led to Brexit, although it ended up being postponed and shifted to London. Observers say Monday's advert is the start of Rutte's campaign for his Liberal VVD party in the run-up to European parliament and Dutch provincial elections next year.

Known for his upbeat character and his man-of-the-people habit of riding his bicycle to work, Rutte "wants to beat his opponents with positivity and optimism," the NOS public broadcaster said.

Rutte also warned about those creating division in the Netherlands -- compared them to "screaming football fans on sidelines". He referred to recent demonstrations for and against Black Pete, or "Zwarte Piet", a blackface Christmas-time character accused of being a racist stereotype.

"People were so busy shouting for and against Zwarte Piet that they forgot about the children," for whom Rutte said the early December festival is organised.

# Lankan PM to register new pact to contest future polls

Colombo: Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, who was recently reinstated as the premier by President Maithripala Sirisena, said Monday he would register a new political alliance 'National Democratic Front' (NDF) to contest future elections.

Addressing his first rally of United National Party (UNP) supporters after his re-appointment, Wickremesinghe said that Parliament can vote with two-thirds to hold elections.

"We are currently working on forming the National Democratic Front (NDF) to face the next election," he said.

"We are ready to hold elections constitutionally," Wickremesinghe said.

Wickremesinghe said abolishing the executive Presidency and bringing about a political solution will be part of the agenda of his new Govt.

# White House closer to partial shutdown with wall demand

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Pushing the Government to the brink of a partial shutdown, the White House is insisting that Congress provide \$5 billion to build a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border despite lawmaker resistance from both parties. Without a resolution, parts of the federal government will shut down at midnight Friday. President Donald Trump kept up the pressure on Democrats Monday, tweeting: "Time for us to save billions of dollars a year and have, at the same time, far greater safety and control!"

On Sunday, White House senior adviser Stephen Miller said: "We're going to do whatever is necessary to build the border wall to stop this ongoing crisis of illegal immigration."

Asked if that meant having a government shutdown, he

said: "If it comes to it, absolutely."

Trump said last week he would be "proud" to have a shutdown to get Congress to approve a \$5 billion down payment to fulfill his campaign promise to build a border wall. But the president doesn't have the votes from the Republican-controlled Congress to support funding for the wall at that level.

Both major political parties in Congress have suggested that Trump would likely need to make the next move to resolve the impasse. The House is taking an extended weekend break, returning Wednesday night. The Senate returns Monday after a three-day absence. The Democratic congressional leaders, Sen. Chuck Schumer and Rep. Nancy Pelosi, have proposed no more than \$1.6 billion, as outlined in a bipartisan Senate bill.

# Meghan Markle's father pleads with her to stop 'ghosting' him

PTI ■ LONDON

Duchess of Sussex Meghan Markle's estranged father Thomas on Monday pleaded with his daughter to stop "ghosting" him and get in touch with him over Christmas.

Thomas, who has not spoken to the new member of the British royal family since she got married to Prince Harry in a grand ceremony at Windsor Castle in May this year, said he had been texting his daughter

every day and writing letters to her but she has been "ghosting" him -- a term used when someone ends all communication with another person.

"I'm not sure why it's happening. I have been trying to reach out for several weeks, every day I try to text her, but haven't received anything back," the 74-year-old retired Hollywood lighting director told ITV's "Good Morning Britain" in an interview from his home in San Diego in the US.

"I love you very much, you're my daughter and I would really like to hear from you. Whatever differences we have, we should be able to work them out," he said, making a direct plea.

Thomas dismissed accusations that the 37-year-old former actress was "rude" in reference to media reports of a feud between her and sister-in-law Kate Middleton, but admitted that she could be a controlling person.

# US conducts 6 airstrikes against Somalia extremists, 62 dead

AP ■ JOHANNESBURG

The US military says it has carried out six airstrikes in the Gandarsh area of Somalia which killed a total of 62 al-Shabab extremist rebels.

In a statement issued Monday, the US military's Africa Command said it carried out four strikes on December 15 in which 34 people were killed and two more on December 16 which killed 28.

All the air attacks were in the Gandarsh coastal area south of the capital, Mogadishu, it said.

No civilians were injured or killed in the attacks, it said.

All six strikes were carried out in close coordination with Somalia's government, it said.

The airstrikes were "conducted to prevent al-Shabab from using remote areas as a safe haven to plot, direct, inspire, and recruit for future attacks," it said.

Al-Shabab uses parts of southern and central Somalia to plot and direct extremist attacks, steal humanitarian aid, extort the local populace to fund its operations, and shelter radicals, said the statement.

With these attacks, the U.S. Military has carried out at least 46 airstrikes so far this year against al-Shabab, which is allied to al-Qaida and Africa's most active Islamic extremist group. Al Shabab controls parts of rural southern and central Somalia and continues to stage deadly attacks in Mogadishu and other cities.

# Chinese city bans Christmas sales

FIANS ■ BEIJING

A city in northern China has banned Christmas sales and decorations to keep the city clean for an upcoming award function.

The authorities in Langfang, however, clarified the move is not targeted at Christmas.

An officially atheist country, China dissuades its people from celebrating Christmas, calling it a Western religious culture which has a wrong influence on its youth.

Christianity is one of the five recognised religions in China.

The Urban Management Bureau of Langfang in north China's Hebei province issued a notice on Sunday that bans Christmas trees on streets, the Chinese state media reported.

# Fraud claims as Kremlin candidate wins vote re-run

AFP ■ MOSCOW

Kremlin-backed candidate Ahas won a key gubernatorial election in Russia's Far East but critics denounced the vote as a fraud after a popular opposition figure was not allowed to run.

An electoral crisis erupted in the Far Eastern region of Primorsky Krai in September when opposition protests and claims of widespread irregularities in favour of a candidate backed by President Vladimir Putin forced officials to order a re-run of the vote.

During the new gubernatorial poll held on Sunday, acting governor Oleg Kozhemyako -- backed by the

Kremlin -- took 61.88 per cent of the vote, final results showed.

His closest rival, Andrei Andreichenko of the nationalist LDPR party, took 25 per cent.

It was the first time in modern Russia an election was re-run after protests over vote-rigging allegations.

A popular opposition candidate, the Communist Party's Andrei Ishchenko, who had accused a ruling party representative endorsed by Putin of "stealing" his victory in the initial election, was not allowed to stand on Sunday.

Authorities said he did not receive the required number of signatures from local lawmakers.

# Leaked video shows Pak Min vowing to 'protect' Hafiz Saeed and his party

PTI ■ LAHORE

Exposing Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's seriousness on combating terrorism, his junior interior minister has vowed to "protect" Mumbai attack mastermind Hafiz Saeed and his party in a leaked video.

The leaked video showed Minister of State for Interior Shehryar Afridi talking to the Milli Muslim League (MML) leaders and when his attention was drawn towards non-registration of Saeed's party by the Election Commission (ECP) as a political party due to the US pressure and the ECP's plan to declare it a terrorist organisation, the minister said: "We will not let this happen."

"As long as we (the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf) are in the government all those including Hafiz Saeed who are raising voice for Pakistan and righteousness, we are with them," Afridi said, adding "this is our belief."

"I request you to come to the National Assembly and see whether we are supporting those who on the right path or not," he told them.

Saeed was declared a global terrorist by the US and the UN after the 2008 Mumbai

attack and was put under house arrest in November 2008 but freed by a court some months later. He carries a USD 10 million American bounty on his head for his role in terror activities. India has been demanding Pakistan not only to arrest the LeT founder and try him in the Mumbai attack case but also punish all those involved in this carnage.

In the leaked video, an MML leader said the high court ordered the ECP to register the MML as a political party but the top election body said that it had come to know that the US had declared MML a terrorist organisation.

On this, the minister assured that "this will not happen in the Imran Khan's government."

Saeed launched the MML in August 2017 with a so-called mission to implement the ideology of Pakistan in accordance with the 1973 Constitution.

In April, the US placed the MML on its list of foreign terror organisations for its links with the Lashkar-e-Taiba.

The interior ministry had written to the ECP recommending not to register the MML as it is an off-shoot of Saeed's Jamat-ud Dawah.

# Police to charge Strasbourg gunman's 'accomplice'

Paris: French anti-terrorist officials said on Monday they would shortly file charges against a man arrested in connection with the mass shooting in Strasbourg last week. AFP

## PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT DELHI NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

The Executive Engineer, PWD, West Road-1, R.R.Lines, Ring Road, Near Metro Pillar No. 63, New Delhi-110010 invites, on behalf of President of India, Online Percentage/Item Rate tender on two bid system for following works.

NIT No. 63/EE/PWD WR-1/2018-19 Tender ID No. 2018\_PWD\_63566\_1, Name of Work : **A/R & M/O Various Roads under Sub Division WR-14, Division WR-1, New Delhi dg. 2018-19. (SH:- Providing and fixing M.S. fencing in front of G.S.S.S. Baprola).** Estimated Cost: Rs 20,90,171/- Earnest Money: Rs. 41,803/- Time of Completion: 02 (Two) Months. The last date to fill/upload the tender through e-tendering is 24.12.2018 upto 03.00 P.M.

NIT No. 64/EE/PWD WR-1/2018-19 Tender ID No. 2018\_PWD\_163569\_1, Name of Work : **A/R & M/O Various Roads under Sub Division WR-13, Division WR-1, New Delhi dg. 2018-19. (SH:- Repair and maintenance of foot over Bridge Janakpuri).** Estimated Cost : Rs. 17,79,480/- Earnest Money : Rs. 35,590/- Time of Completion : 02 (Two) Months. The last date to fill/upload the tender through e-tendering is 24.12.2018 upto 03.00 P.M.

NIT No. 65/EE/PWD WR-1/2018-19 Tender ID No. 2018\_PWD\_163575\_1, Name of Work : **A/R & M/O Various Roads under Sub Division WR-12, Division WR-1, New Delhi dg. 2018-19. (SH:- Providing and placing RCC Jersey Barriers at 60 feet Road Mahaveer Enclave Part-III).** Estimated Cost : Rs 30,77,374/- Earnest Money : Rs. 61,547/- Time of Completion: 02 (Two) Weeks. The last date to fill/upload the tender through e-tendering is 24.12.2018 upto 03.00 P.M.

NIT No. 66/EE/PWD WR-1/2018-19 Tender ID No. 2018\_PWD\_163579\_1, Name of Work : **A/R & M/O Various Roads under Sub Division WR-13, Division WR-1, New Delhi dg. 2018-19. (SH:- Repair and Maintenance of footpath from PVR complex to Anand Kunj Society on Guru Vijnan Marg in Vikaspuri).** Estimated Cost: Rs 68,67,048/- Earnest Money : Rs.1,37,341/- Time of Completion : 03 (Three) Months . The last date to fill/upload the tender through e-tendering is 24.12.2018 upto 03.00 P.M.

## Report: China is driving use of armed drones in Middle East

AP ■ BEIRUT

The use of armed drones in the Middle East, driven largely by sales from China, has grown significantly in the past few years with an increasing number of countries and other parties using them in regional conflicts to lethal effects, a new report said Monday.

The report by the Royal United Services Institute, or RUSI, found that more and more Mideast countries have acquired armed drones, either by importing them, such as Jordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, or by building them domestically like Israel, Iran and Turkey.

China has won sales in the Middle East and elsewhere by offering drones -- otherwise known as UAVs or unmanned aerial vehicles -- at lower prices and without the political conditions attached by the United States.

## GLOBE TROTTER

### TRUCE IN YEMEN'S HOEDEIDA DUE TO START TODAY

Dubai: A ceasefire in Yemen's battleground port city of Hodeida and its surroundings will start on Tuesday, a UN official said, after renewed fighting threatened the hard-won accord struck in Sweden. The deal announced on Thursday between Yemen's Saudi-backed Government and the Huthi rebels included an "immediate ceasefire" in Hodeida, whose Red Sea port serves as a crucial gateway for humanitarian aid.

### COLIN KROLL, CO-FOUNDER OF HQ TRIVIA, FOUND DEAD

New York: Colin Kroll, a tech executive who co-founded the HQ Trivia app, has died. He was 34. The New York Police Department says officers went to Kroll's Manhattan apartment early Sunday after getting a call asking for a wellness check on him. They found him unconscious and unresponsive on his bed. He was pronounced dead at the scene. The medical examiner's office will determine the cause of death. "He had so much talent and had accomplished so much at such a young age," his father, Alan Kroll, told The New York Times.

**UJVN Limited**  
H.O.: "UJWAL", Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006  
Telephones: 0135-2763808 & Fax-0135-2763508  
CIN No. U49101UR20021SGC025886

**TENDER NOTICE**  
The Office of The Executive Engineer (Gen.), Ramganga Power Station, Kalagarh (Pauri-Garhwal) invites sealed tenders from interested & experienced firms/contractors/authorized dealers. Brief summary of work/supply and details of tender is given below.  
T. No. 09/EE (Gen)/2018-19 : General Cleaning of Ramganga Power Station, Kalagarh.

Approx. Value of Tenders : ₹ 5,79,880/-  
Earnest money : ₹ 17,400/-  
Tender cost : ₹ 590/-  
Last date of downloading tender documents : 07/01/2019 up to 11.00 Hrs.  
Last date of receipt of Tenders : 08/01/2019 up to 16.00 Hrs.  
Date of opening : 11/01/2019 at 11.00 Hrs.

For eligibility criteria and fuller and further details kindly visit our website **"www.uttarakhandjalvdyut.com"** (Bidders are advised to regularly visit our website for tender notice) Tenders can only be downloaded from our website & their cost has been to be paid at the time of submission.

पत्र सं 740 - 17/12/2018  
Executive Engineer (Generation.)  
"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

## PUBLIC NOTICE

मैंने अपना नाम जाफरी शमीम से बदलकर शमीम जाफरी कर लिया है मुझे शमीम जाफरी पत्नी सख्यद शबीर हसन निवासी घेर बस्ती रामपुर के नाम से जाना जाए। मेरी जन्म तिथि 18 अगस्त 1950 है।

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given on behalf of Mr. Sunder Singh Rawat who is purchasing the Third Floor with Roof Rights out of Property No. 35 & 36 measuring 58 Sq. Yds. Out Of Khasra No. 243, situated in Razaipur Khurd, Mohan Garden C-1 block, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi from Mrs. Prem Lala and further mortgaging against the Financial assistance from Vastu Housing Finance Corporation Ltd. To comply the requirement of bank/NBFC, we give this public notice that if any person(s) having any objection regarding ownership and/or creating mortgage of the said property please hereby requested to intimate in writing to the undersigned within 08 days from the date of this notice at below address:

Lucern Legal LLP  
269, Rama House, Ground Floor,  
Majid Moth, Opp. Uday Park, South Ext.,  
New Delhi -49 # 011-40046316

## POSSESSION NOTICE

### ICICI Bank

Registered Office: ICICI Bank Ltd., ICICI Bank Tower, Near Chakki Circle, Old Padra Road, Vadodara- 390007.  
Corporate Office: ICICI Bank Towers, Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra (E), Mumbai - 400051  
Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd., 2nd Floor, Videocon Tower, Jhandewalan Ext., New Delhi- 110055

Whereas The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of property/ Date of Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Sunil Kumar / Mansi Aggarwal/ LBGUR0002248415	Flat No. K-1311, 13th Floor, Building Kumar Golf Vista, Block No. K1, Gh Plot No.6, In The Township Crossings Republik, Ghaziabad, Up / 12-12-2018	Nov 29, 2016 Rs.59,40,486/-	Ghaziabad

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 days Notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date : 18-Dec-2018  
Place: Delhi/NCR  
Sd/-  
Authorized Officer  
ICICI Bank Limited

## NIRMAN VIHAR, DELHI BRANCH

A-1, Raja Tower, Guru Nanak Pura, Laxmi Nagar, Delhi-110092  
E-mail : br.90501@syndicatebank.co.in

Ref No. DN/50637417/9050/1 Date : 23-10-2018

To Borrowers :

- Romir Pandey, S/o Sh. S.N. Panday ; T6 5 Air Force Station, Vayusena Baad, Hamdard Nagar, Delhi-110062
- Sneha Pandey, D/o Sh. S.N. Panday ; H.No. 7-3/4, M.B. Road, Opp. Tigr, A.F. Station, Vayusena Baad, New Delhi-110062

Also At : 39, B-1002, ATS Indrapuram, Ghaziabad-201301, (U.P.)  
Dear Sir/Madam

### Notice U/S 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002

1. We have, at your request, granted to borrower/s various credit limits for an aggregate of Rs. 5,50,000 and we give below full details of various credit facilities granted by us :

Sl. No.	Nature of facility Account number	Limit	Outstanding liability	NPA Date
1.	90509790000062	550000	448357.60	30/09/2018
		550000	448357.60	

- As you have defaulted in repayment of your liabilities, we have classified your account/s as Non performing Assets on the dates mentioned above in accordance with the directions of guidelines issued by the Reserve Bank of India.
- In view of continued default in payment as against agreed terms of loan documents, the whole amounts has become payable Hence a sum of Rs. 448357.60 (Rupees Four Lakh Forty Eight Thousand Three Hundred Fifty Seven and Paise Sixty Only), is due along with interest form 01-10-2018 and costs etc.
- We also inform you that in spite of our repeated notices and oral requests for repayment of the entire amount due to us, you have not so far paid the same.
- You are aware that the various limits granted by us are secured by the following assets (secured assets):  
i) Hyundai Xcent vehicle No. DL 7CM 3093 Chassis No. MALA841D1FM121747 Engine No. D3FAFM366233 owned by Romir Pandey
- For the reasons stated, we hereby call upon all of you to discharge in full your liabilities to us within a period of 60 days from the date of this notice, failing which, we will be exercising the powers under Sec.13 of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act against the secured assets mentioned above. The powers available to us under Sec. 13 of the Act inter-alia includes (i) Power to take possession of the secured assets of the borrower including the rights to transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale for realising secured assets, (ii) Take over the management of the business including the rights to transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale & realise the secured debt, and any transfer of secured asset by us shall vest in the transferee all rights, or in relation to, the secured asset transferred as if the transfer had been made by you.
- The amount realised from exercising of the powers mentioned above, will first be applied in payment of all costs, charges and expenses, which in this opinion of us have been properly incurred by us or any expenses incidental thereto, and secondly applied in discharge of the dues of us as mentioned above with contractual interest from the date of this notice till the date of actual realisation, and the residue of the money, if any, shall be paid to you.
- Please Take note that after receipt of this notice, you shall note transfer by way of sale, lease or otherwise and of the Secured Assets referred to in this notice, without prior written consent of the bank (Secured Creditor). If done it is an offence punishable Under Section-29 of the act.
- Your attention is also invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.
- Please take further note that this is without prejudice to the rights of the bank to proceed against all of you before the DRT/Competent Court for recovery of the entire balance amount outstanding or any part thereof along with interest payable and costs till the date of realization.

Date : 14/12/2018  
Place: New Delhi  
(Authorized Officer)  
Syndicate Bank

## Not far enough

Did the recently concluded climate talks in Katowice, Poland achieve anything at all?

The world is warming up and its climate is going totally out of whack. Extreme weather phenomena such as the Kerala floods earlier this year are wreaking havoc across the world, putting people in harm's way and could even signal the end of days as many religious holy books predict. And here is the funny thing — we have known about humanity's impact on the planet for decades now, we have physically seen the disappearance of Himalayan glaciers and huge chunks of ice the size of a small Indian state break away from the Antarctic ice shelf. Yet when it comes to doing something about them, the solutions we know about appear impossible to implement. So every few years global leaders and scientists sit down at a place to thrash out the details on how to redress the crisis.

But much like a heroin addict who finds it impossible to go cold turkey when the time comes to make tough choices, there is much hand-wringing. Here is a truism, humanity is addicted to carbon and those of us who can afford it love the good life. The use of air-conditioning, for example, the very nature of which increases the local temperature even more, cannot be begrudged by anyone who has seen a Delhi summer. Yet, as more and more Indians can afford cooling, the irony is that they are participating in the warming of the planet. Therein lies the rub. How do you and how can you deny the new middle-class in India their aspirations? Whether it is an energy-inefficient car compared to a motorcycle or new consumer durables such as a washing machine, do we say that this is not for you or do we embrace low-cost manufacturing and agree that everyone should have a level of equal access to modern conveniences?

So at Katowice, the hand-wringing continued. We know that we are in the midst of a crisis but the crisis hasn't hit as yet, or rather it has in fits and starts. Sea level rises have not displaced millions till date but can politicians increase the taxes on petrol beyond a point even if they realise the carbon implications of burning more petrol and diesel? Can any politician or bureaucrat tell people that they should be judicious when they use their air-conditioning? We tried that in India and elite liberals saw that as government 'interference.' After all the rich, whether they are nations or rich citizens, do not want to pay the price of changing their habits. They would want air-conditioning and car ownership restricted but not for themselves. So the result at Katowice, where after 13 days of talking the only conclusion was that we should try and prevent global temperatures from rising beyond 1.5C by 2030, was far from ideal. By that time it may be too late to drive more change. The global impact of a warmer world will be felt by all of us, rich and poor alike although the latter will be harder hit. It is contingent upon politicians to understand that they need to educate their people about the impact of climate change. We might feel the impact of climate change in a sputtering manner right now but by 2030 it might be too late.

## Sindhu's golden moment

The World Tour Finals win has put the shuttler in the league of extraordinary sportswomen



For once, shuttler champion PV Sindhu wasn't tired of answering any questions. For she had given a thundering response to the one that had been niggling her mind after a string of six silvers in major finals this year. Why couldn't she convert her shots to a championship win? At the World Tour Finals this Sunday, Sindhu decided she had had enough of silver and boldly changed the colour of her medal, remaining unbeaten through the week and taming her contemporaries, some of whom had been her nemesis before. Predictably, she slumped in relief after beating Nozomi Okuhara 21-19, 21-17. The win takes her to world number 3 and is another milestone along the blazing path set by her predecessor Saina Nehwal in a sport that has for long been considered the preserve of the East and Southeast Asian talent. Indians were never considered too good enough to get to worldmark standards. In her initial games and wins, even Saina Nehwal had admitted that while she worked on her physical strengths and primed her core skill set, it was in the mind that she had to win first and overcome the myth that her other Asian compatriots had the greater endurance. Once she built her patience, focus and self-confidence levels to do everything right, she could get out of her own mental trap. Sindhu did that, too, at the Guangzhou championship. What stood out was that she was as taut about her game as the opponent's and was able to capitalise on the little room that Okuhara gave, though they were very slim. Sunday's game saw a new Sindhu, one who matched her natural athletic ability, height and smashes with a new-found aggression and power. She kept the opponent guessing about her moves, befuddling her with her strokes. She even displayed a rare hunger and obsession, dismissing post-match highs and emphasising that she would like to change the colour of her Olympics medal. Most importantly, she cast aside her self doubts and stuck to the plan of getting her point on merit than risk knee-jerk moves. That consistency of tempo should stop critics from looking back at her matches so far to assess where she can go now.

Due credit must be given to coach Pullela Gopichand for working on her steadfastly although every final victory that she missed compounded her performance pressure. But the mentor knew that a historic title would change that perception and kept the focus on working her latent ability to a winnable one. And Sunday's mega title put paid to a tidal wave of doubt. With this outing, Sindhu even took home her biggest single-week pay cheque totalling ₹86.30 lakh and ramped up her earnings of the year to ₹4.22 crore in 2018. And she is just 23 with a train of endorsements. Badminton may not have the reach of tennis across the globe but Sindhu sure has pitched herself close to the aura of illustrious women players and athletes of her time. A crowd favourite across age groups given her maturity and reserve, Sindhu has the demonstrative potential too, given the frequency of title clashes lined up for her. And if she can deliver as she did on Sunday, then she can surely emerge to be India's millennial sports icon.

# Much ado about nothing

It is laughable that some parties have been recklessly equating Rafale with Bofors. There is no commonality between them except that both relate to defence procurement from foreign companies



A SURYA PRAKASH

The Supreme Court's recent judgement on a slew of petitions *vis-à-vis* the Rafale deal, envisaging the purchase of 36 of these aircraft from a French company, will hopefully alert the people about the reckless sloganeering that is currently on and the silly attempts being made in some quarters to equate Rafale with Bofors.

At the moment, there is nothing in common between the two, except that they both relate to defence procurement from foreign companies. There, the similarities end. In the case of Bofors, there were specific allegations that this Swedish company paid kickbacks to win the contract and the payments were fully established in respect of certain entities, including Ottavio Quattrocchi, a dear friend of UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi and her late husband Rajiv Gandhi. In respect to Rafale, there are no such allegations of kickbacks or corruption; although the choice of the offset partner has been raised. In any case, the Supreme Court has categorically dismissed the petitions filed before it for several reasons, one of which is the vagueness of accusations.

On the other hand, just take a look at the kind of evidence of kickbacks that emerged in Bofors. Some part of these payments have been meticulously documented by the Delhi Bench of the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT) comprising RP Tolani and RC Sharma. The tribunal tracked the money trail with clinical precision and presented its findings in its order many years ago. Unlike the humming and hawing and the vagueness of the allegations that are being hurled against the Government *vis-à-vis* the Rafale deal, there was clinching evidence of payoffs by Bofors.

The tribunal noted that Ottavio Quattrocchi, the Italian friend of Sonia Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, remained in India from February 28, 1965, to July 29, 1993, except for a brief interval from March 4, 1966, to June 12, 1968. He was a certified Chartered Accountant by profession, working with Snamprogetti, an Italian multinational company, but "neither Snamprogetti nor Quattrocchi had any experience of guns, gun-systems or any related defence equipment." Further, although the Rajiv Gandhi Government declared that suppliers should not have agents, it entered into a consultancy agreement with a company called AE Services Limited in the UK on November 15, 1985.

This was done at the behest of Quattrocchi. The most intriguing aspect of this contract was that Bofors agreed to pay three per cent of the total value of the contract to this company if it won the India contract by March 31, 1986 (that is within 137 days of the signing of the contract on November 15, 1985). And, lo and behold, the Rajiv Gandhi Government signed the contract on March 24, 1986 — just a week



before the deadline set by Bofors expired.

Once the contract was signed, the Indian Government released the first tranche of payments to Bofors on May 2, 1986, which was equivalent to 20 per cent of the contract.

Bofors promptly remitted \$7.343 million on September 03, 1986, to A/c No: 18051-53 of AE Services Limited at Nordfinanz Bank, Zurich, which was three per cent of the advance paid. The tribunal found that this remittance to AE Services was transferred in September 29, 1986, to Account No: 254.561.60W of Colbar Investments Limited in the Union Bank of Switzerland, Geneva. On July 25, 1988, again, these funds were moved to Account No: 488.320.60 X of a company called Wetelsen Overseas, SA, in the same bank. Thereafter, on May 21, 1990, the money was further transferred to Account No: 123983 of International Investments Development Company in Guernsey (Channel Islands). The ITAT said: "These accounts of Colbar Investments as well as Wetelsen Overseas were being controlled by Ottavio Quattrocchi and his wife Maria Quattrocchi."

But the most extraordinary development was that AE Services unilaterally announced that it would forego the rest of the commission due to it from Bofors, after the bribery scandal broke out in April 1987, and the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi struggled to explain the dubious payoffs by Bofors.

In the final analysis, the ITAT said 243 million Swedish

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**AGAINST THE UNIMPEACHABLE EVIDENCE OF KICKBACKS RECEIVED BY A CLOSE FAMILY FRIEND OF THE NEHRU-GANDHIS, WHEN INDIA BOUGHT FIELD GUNS FOR ITS ARMY, ALLEGATIONS REGARDING THE RAFALE DEAL DO NOT SEEM TO HAVE ANY LEGS TO STAND ON. THE COURT SAID AS MUCH**  
 ”

Kroners was pocketed by Quattrocchi and Win Chadha. But the most clinching link between Quattrocchi, who got the kickbacks, and the Nehru-Gandhis came when former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh got the UK Government to lift the freeze on Quattrocchi's bank account which had been imposed at the behest of the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Government. This enabled Quattrocchi to run away with the loot.

As against this unimpeachable evidence of kickbacks received by a close family friend of the Nehru-Gandhis, when India bought field guns for its Army, the allegations regarding the Rafale deal do not seem to have any legs to stand on. The Supreme Court has found it necessary to comment on the inadequacy of the petitions and on the excessive reliance on Press reports.

The court has said, "We find no reason for any intervention by this Court on the sensitive issue of purchase of 36 defence aircraft. Perception of individuals cannot be the basis of a fishing and roving enquiry by this Court, especially in such matters." Again, while discussing the allegations regarding choice of the offset partner, the court said, "mere Press interviews or suggestions cannot form the basis for judicial review by this Court... We do not find any substantial material on record to show that this is a case of commercial favouritism to any party by the Indian Government..."

A critical issue raised in the writ petitions related to the pricing of the aircraft. The

Chief of Air Staff was opposed to disclosure of price. Yet, the court noted that "despite this reluctance, the material has still been placed before the Court to satisfy its conscience". The court said it had "examined closely" the price details and said it would not carry out a comparison of price details "in matters like the present" and that there was need to maintain confidentiality in the matter.

Significantly, the court observed that "adequate military strength and capability to discourage and withstand external aggression and to protect the sovereignty and integrity of India, undoubtedly, is a matter of utmost concern for the nation. The empowerment of defence forces with adequate technology and material support is, therefore, a matter of vital importance". Therefore, the court felt that the parameters of judicial scrutiny in such matters of defence procurement cannot be the same as in judicial scrutiny of tenders and contracts.

Those who are making reckless and unsubstantiated allegations about the Rafale deal need to absorb these lessons. This writer has elaborated on the Quattrocchi money trail just to emphasise the kind of investigation that is needed to make an allegation stick. Therefore, the attempt by some political parties to claim that the Rafale deal is Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Bofors moment' is laughable. Sloganeering is no substitute for evidence.

(The writer is Chairman, Prasar Bharati)

## SOUNDBITE

People who used to call Rahul Gandhi a *pappu* should know that he has become a *pappa* (dad) now. He should marry soon to become a *pappa*.  
**Union Minister**  
 —Ramdas Athawale



It's praiseworthy when our armed forces eliminate militants but it pains when innocent civilians are killed. The Pulwama killing is unacceptable.  
**Congress leader**  
 —Ghulam Nabi Azad



As an artiste, I am incomplete. I always think how I can bring in something new, in whatever capacity I can within cinema  
**Actor**  
 —Shah Rukh Khan



India welcomes the resolution of the political situation in Sri Lanka. It's a reflection of maturity demonstrated by all political forces.  
**MEA spokesperson**  
 —Raveesh Kumar



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### End freebie culture

Sir — If the elections are fought and won on the promise of loan-waivers, free electricity or water, subsidies or money in the form of enhanced pension, unemployment allowance without statutory restrictions by the ever vigilant and hyperactive Supreme Court or the Election Commission of India, we are heading for anarchy and empty coffers with no funds for infrastructure, health or education.

While suicide, by the farmers or the distressed, remains a crime constitutionally, the self-appointed leaders of civil society and the secular-liberal spokespersons in the media cry foul over the suicides and shed crocodile tears on such cowardly acts. If India has to progress morally, economically and physically, it would be prudent for the Election Commission and also the apex court to ban all such electoral promises in letter and spirit which make people dependent on freebies and destroy work culture. The top court should also summon the leaders of the national political parties asking

### An end to Constitutional crisis in Sri Lanka

This refers to the editorial, "Back on course" (December 17). As Sri Lankan President, Maithripala Sirisena's every action from the day he tried to replace the democratically-elected Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe with the autocratic Mahinda Rajapaksa went wrong because it was illegal. His very way of functioning was unconstitutional. Rajapaksa had no moral authority to occupy the Prime Minister's chair. The sore point in this whole drama was the point-blank refusal by Rajapaksa to vacate the chair as President Sirisena did nothing to uphold democracy by reinstating Wickremesinghe who enjoyed the confidence of the House.

At last, the month-long political crisis came to an end after a full Bench of the Supreme Court concurred with the order given by the lower courts. This has left Sirisena with no other option but to restore the democratically-elected Government headed by



Wickremesinghe. It is high time that Sirisena stops swimming against the tide and follows the highest traditions of democracy by allowing the present Government to complete its term in the larger interest of the island nation.

KR Srinivasan  
 Secunderabad

for a time barred withdrawal of the reservation policy which was originally envisaged for a limited period of 10 years.  
**Jai Prakash Gupta**  
 Ambala

### Stand united

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Generational conflict"

(December 15). Victories in three Assembly States of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan have come as a huge morale booster for the Congress. And if the party wants to further corner the BJP in the 2019 general election, the experience of the old guard will be much needed.  
 There is no denying the fact that both leaders, Jyotiraditya

### Unnecessary ruckus

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "The Rafale soars" (December 15). The Supreme Court's dismissal of all petitions that sought a court-monitored SIT probe in the Rafale deal has come as a major blow to Congress president Rahul Gandhi who had been unnecessarily raking up the issue.

The apex court said that there is nothing to doubt the process of decision-making in the award of contract for the purchase of 36 Rafale jets and that there is no material to show commercial favouritism. After the top court's clean chit to the Modi Government, it was expected of Rahul Gandhi to stop his tirade against the Government and show magnanimity by ending matters here. Regrettably, he decided to continue with playing politics and has again made demands for a Joint Parliamentary Committee probe.

MC Joshi  
 Lucknow

Send your feedback to: [letterstopioneer@gmail.com](mailto:letterstopioneer@gmail.com)

Bal Govind  
 Noida

**FIRST COLUMN**

# Resurrect Indian economy

In the run-up to the 2019 poll, the country needs not farm loan-waivers but pro-farmer policies



SHIVAJI SARKAR

The Indian economy will be in a cyclical phase of loan-waivers now that the Congress has come back to power in three crucial States. It is the banks, who hold people's deposits, and not the Governments that are an easy prey. But nobody seems to be concerned about alleviating farmers' distress logically. Then there arises a problem of perception too. The present RBI Governor, Shaktikanta Das, said that besides being a stakeholder, the Government runs the economy and manages the financial institutions. Das is correct to the extent that the Government manages the institutions. This is the task bestowed upon the Government by the people but it has to be as per people's wishes and not as the Government decides. People are rarely even consulted.

The economy is run and managed usually by entrepreneurs and financial institutions. The Government is an institution that was formed by the people to take care of issues of daily management. Its role was that of a custodian and not the owner. Governments that adhered to it, possibly the Atal Bihari Vajpayee did and to some extent the United Front too, made the people happy. So, whichever party forms the Government, it has to adhere to the basics and should not gloat over the euphoria of numbers. People expect that as custodians of their money and managers of institutions, the Government must protect their wealth. Since 2014, seven States have unveiled loan-waivers, totalling to nearly ₹182,802 crore. Agriculture economist Ashok Gulati reckoned that in the run-up to the general election, farm loan-waivers may touch ₹4 lakh crore as other States are expected to join the fray. Let the nation also not feel that sudden changes in the RBI will make the stock market buoyant. The same happened in March 1992 which later opened a can of worms — the Harshad Mehta stock scam. The present move may come as a boost but the stock market is not really an indicator of the economy. It is definitely not at present. The buoyancy is often the result of behind-the-scenes operations.

Despite occasional gains, the value of the rupee remains volatile. This needs to be taken with a pinch of salt as it results in an unstable economy, uncertain job markets, makes the investors wary and the stock movement unreal. For much of this year, the Ujjit Patel-led RBI was seen resisting pressure as well as entreaties from the Government, industry and financial firms to ease lending and capital norms for stressed public sector banks (PSBs), particularly those under the prompt corrective action framework, to open a special liquidity window for non-banking financial companies with a precarious asset-liability position and to push the flow of credit to small enterprises. Of course, voters do not understand intricate issues. So, populism marked the electoral campaigns in the states. Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley was right in saying that populism does not help in the long-run. Political parties practise it to get the numbers to form a Government. Ignoring numbers of the finances causes the real problem. The industry, the biggest defaulter in loan repayment, is also known to have withdrawn the largest cash along with many other players before the elections. Why? Everyone knows the answer.

So except for a cosmetic treatment, not much can be realised and PSBs, who hold people's deposits, are in severe crisis due to NPAs. It is true that this Government did not proffer the bounties. Their predecessors did. But once again, people have the problem of a cyclical nature of politics. So, if this Government is finding it difficult, would the next Government not do it? Or would they again play with people's money to which no Government has the right to lay their hands on? The sufferings of the people, forget about mitigation, is mounting. The RBI was supposed to raise interest rates to help the poor depositors, senior citizens, women and the deprived Jan Dhan account holders. The rate rise is required not just to help the depositors but to protect the nation's wealth. People's money is not for the big corporates. The farmer and MSMEs also have a claim to it.

Loan waivers create an unwanted culture. As elections approached, farmers, who could repay loans, didn't. The industry willfully ignored its duty. Meanwhile, the Government is recapitalising banks with the taxpayers' money. This is a vortex and the only solution is to raise farmer incomes with a proper farm policy in place. People need succour and protection. The year 2019 will belong to those who can ensure relief and safety of banks. Yes, the Government has been given the task to direct the economy but it can't run it. It has to fulfill its tasks without hurting the people, their deposits or threatening to play with their wealth in the banks. India needs pro-people, pro-farmer policies for livelihood creation. (The writer is a senior journalist)

**POINT COUNTERPOINT**

**THE GOVERNMENT MISLED THE SUPREME COURT TO GET A MANIPULATED JUDGEMENT. WE DEMAND THAT THE COURT IMMEDIATELY RECALLS ITS JUDGEMENT.**

—SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER ANAND SHARMA



**IT IS FOR THE SUPREME COURT TO DECIDE OR TO SAY THAT YOU MISLED US OR YOUR ERROR WAS MALAFIDE IN THE RAFALE AFFIDAVIT.**

—BJP LEADER SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY

# No salvation in shooting the reformist

Post the BJP's electoral debacle in five crucial States, there will be more movements among mainstream parties. Prime Minister Modi has to script a powerful narrative



BINDU DALMIA

If only the Supreme Court's dismissal of the petition seeking a court-monitored probe into the Rafale deal had come before the State elections, it can be conjectured that the results might well have been different for the BJP, considering how minimal the 'swing' in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan was. For months, Congress chief Rahul Gandhi worked hard on building his campaign on a web of unsubstantiated allegations. This, to make corruption the central electoral issue and to spite Prime Minister Modi for doing so in 2014. Sadly, voters' choice in the Hindi heartland reflected that five years were long enough a time to grant absolution to the Congress as collective amnesia set in. The voters' fury that was felt on 2G and a series of scams of the UPA-II receded. The Lutyens' clique of fixers, bureaucrats, bankers, cronies and media tried hard to undermine Modi's inclusive agenda. But in hindsight, the systemic rot is too deeply entrenched in the body polity of the nation to weed it out in a single tenure.

Because, in contrast to previous regimes, the Modi Government delivered more to the bottom 70 per cent of the population through Direct Benefit Transfer and Ease of Living parameters. So, if the Prime Minister is not able to solve all of the nation's problems in five years, should we vote for those who created those very problems over 70 years? Salvation does not lie in a change of regime; nor does the solution lie in a disparate Opposition uniting to 'shoot the reformer' for attempting to weed out a parallel economy, through a collective revival of the old establishment brigade of dynastic satraps, like the scam-tainted Yadavs, the DMK clan or the disproportionate assets-accused, like BSP supremo Mayawati.

To deal with the deluge of disenchantment, it's time for Modi to invent a buoyant yet realistic narrative to address concerns of all sections of society that are seen moving away from the BJP's fold — from farmers to first time voters to the middle classes and the traders. Modi must persist with an achievable sequel to the promise of *vikas*, while admitting to some regime lapses and spell out a roadmap with stated timelines. However, in the long-term, India needs to make the much-required shift towards a non-agrarian economy to match with other developing economies that are only 10 per cent reliant on agricultural income. That transition has not happened yet. What the voter now seeks with immediacy is redressal of economic woes instead of catchy sloganeering.

These may not be the best of times to make prophecies about 2019 or to admonish a ruling regime that is already in corrective mode. For that,



Prime Minister Modi already has a battalion of Twitter economists who offer instant expertise on how to course-correct by the minute. We are aware that issues on the socio-economic and political front are riddled with much deeper complexities. Embedded within these contradictions are tectonic shifts in the offing that can alter India's political architecture. While Modi remains the front-runner candidate for 2019, despite the loss of three saffron bastions, popularity ratings between him and his closest rival are steadily narrowing, establishing the Congress as a natural fulcrum for any anti-Modi grand alliance.

So, one can only expect more attrition and exodus in mainstream parties while alliance partners of the BJP can be expected to make more upstartish demands. Also, expectations are high about a huge shift and shuffle in the BJP's voter base that was at its optimal saturation point in 2014. This is the time to woo back the core voter base through speedy redressal of livelihood issues. While local anti-incumbency in the three heartland States is not necessarily reflective of a trend reversal at the national level, there are some inferences to draw from the just-concluded State elections. The lifeline the BJP needs to infuse is some instant economic deliverables, even if it means that fiscal deficit figures exceed the target in an election year. The Government must go for enhanced spending over the next two months; announce income-support schemes along with farm loan-waivers in the interim in a bid for competitive populism; announce subsidies on fuel; cut interest rates and provide tax relief to the citizens, especially the middle class.

Because, should it be Modi 2.0, he will have all of five years to rectify fiscal profligacy. The Centre needs to boost capital spending. Even if it is at a deficit of 4.5 per cent of the GDP, it's fine when

the objective is to push the growth rate. Spending on roads, affordable housing, construction, irrigation, rural electrification, broadband, farm produce godowns and cold storages and mass rapid transit systems will help boost labour-intensive sectors that create employment. This will help yield social and political dividends. So, the Centre should hope that a pliant RBI Governor agrees to transfer excess reserves to the Government — this is much-needed to spend on growth and to fund MSMEs in order to ease sectoral distress.

With the industry's reluctance to spend on capex, who else will spend if not the Government? So, if the Government of India's investments augment growth, that translates into higher revenues, deficits would take care of themselves. Because despite achieving optimal targets in affordable housing, rural electrification and Modicare schemes, investing in public and household assets alone has not helped the ruling party's electoral cause. This assumption is validated through recent losses in the heartland States which came from the rural voters, who account for about 74 per cent of the electorate. Farm distress is an obstinate problem that has persisted since decades with no magic wand.

As time is running out, in order to win back support among India's 263 million farmers, even if as much as four trillion rupees (\$56.5 billion) in loans are written off in a bid at competitive populism, it is not unusual in an election year to resort to such quick-fixes. This was the eventuality resorted to even by the previous Congress-led UPA, which waived loans worth nearly 720 billion rupees in 2008 that helped it return to power in 2009. While the BJP-led NDA succeeded in keeping food inflation low, this came at the cost of compromising on farmers' remuneration. However, income-support schemes, enhancing non-agricultural employment, gener-

ating gainful urbanisation and funding more employment-intensive projects should be long-term solutions.

If the BJP-led NDA was beset with legacy issues of policy paralysis, reckless lending and mounting NPAs, the successive regime, which could well be another Modi-led Government, would also inherit the negative legacies of the present regime. The worst of them is that institutional heads did not adhere to the *dharma* of bureaucratic discipline by resolving conflicts within closed doors but took an adversarial stance with the Government. This sent out signals of erosion of the central authority like the open revolt in the Supreme Court, the CBI and the RBI as also the embarrassment of successive economists resigning "for personal reasons". The other inherent problem for the next regime, though not a 'legacy' one, will also be that despite retaining the lead in being the fastest growing economy at 7.3 per cent, India will need to accelerate growth to nine per cent in future for any elected Government to fulfill its commitment in jobs for all, which will remain the biggest challenge.

However, the current dilemma is that if a large section of the BJP's core voter base remains anti-incumbent, where will incremental votes come from? Aside from redressal of farmers issues, 100 million millennials who will be first-time voters are unenthused as compared to first-time voters of 2014 because of under-employment. And despite Modi's best intent, *triple talaq* is unlikely to make Muslim women politically beholden to the BJP, even as the minorities will continue to stay with secular parties. It is because the perception of intolerance has become synonymous with the regime. Despite major strides taken by this Government in financial inclusion, the success of many social initiatives has not got prominence. False narratives have obscured achievements.

The other vital question is to what extent will the BJP infuse nationalist

issues and concerns of migrant infiltration, as dictated by its ideological parent, the RSS, or attempt a revival of religious issues of the 1990s? A recent survey showed that reviving the *mandir mudda* holds only 11 per cent traction as issues of livelihood have gained primacy. Supportive evidence of this is the fact that the BJP fared badly in areas where Yogi Adityanath campaigned. He hijacked the development narrative with a parochial one, which showed a disconnect and apathy to livelihood issues. The party, in its re-strategising bid, is unlikely to switch track completely to issues of faith, as man cannot live by prayer alone. Only economic deliverables will convert to votes.

The BJP will enter the *kurukshetra* of 2019 with five *brahmastras* in hand: Its mascot Modi; powerful messaging being planned to undo misinformation spread by Opposition; some anticipated quick-wins with a pre-poll spending spree on welfare and putting more money into the hands of rural voters and urban middle class; splurging on campaign spend with its huge financial war-chest; and the combined manpower resources of six crore *karyakartas* of the BJP-RSS combine, so as to fire on all fronts.

Let's not forget that the Modi-Shah duo lost the crucial States of Bihar and Delhi three years ago only to resurrect by course-correcting fast enough to expand the BJP's national footprint into 19 States before the recent loss of three States. Sadly, Governments in power only heed the voice of their voter when on edge. The prospects currently may not be one of 'India shining', reminiscent of the negative associations with 2004, but it will surely be an 'India dimming', should a politically and ideologically incoherent 'coalition of rivals' come to power in 2019, which would be more disastrous. So think twice why it must be Modi once more.

(The writer is an author and columnist)

# A policy on MSP will be fiscally suicidal

In all probability, the Government must not tread the path of giving legal backing to MSP. Already, it is struggling to find resources for food subsidy under NFSA. An alternative path is to find platforms where farmers can sell their produce



UTTAM GUPTA

On November 30, 2018, tens of thousands of farmers congregated in the national capital to protest against their financial distress arising out of non-remunerative price for their agricultural output and ever-increasing farm debt burden. They wanted a special session of Parliament to discuss their problems and demanded the passage of two laws (i) to guarantee Minimum Support Price (MSP) for all crops based on the recommendations of the National Commission on Agriculture under MS Swaminathan (2006) and (ii) 'one-time' farm loan-waiver. Truly speaking, the enactment of both these laws can be fiscally catastrophic. To understand the implications, let us

look at how MSP is fixed and its connect with subsidy.

To incentivise food production and to make it available at affordable price to the target beneficiaries (mostly poor), the Government had already directed State agencies, such as the Food Corporation of India (FCI), to procure produce from the farmers at MSP and arrange its supply through the public distribution system (PDS), at a price much lower than the actual cost of procurement. The differential amount was then to be reimbursed to the agencies, as subsidy.

Under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), beneficiaries are allowed to get five kg of cereals per person, per month. Besides, 81 crore people are provided wheat at the rate of two rupee per kilogram, rice at the rate of three rupee per kilogram and coarse cereals at the rate of one rupee per kilogram. With low sale price covering barely one-tenth of the cost and the NFSA requiring this network to supply an estimated 60 million tonnes of sub-

sidised grains per year, it entailed a food subsidy of ₹140,000 crore (2017-18). In addition, ₹35,000 crore was to be spent on price support for pulses and oilseeds.

With the inclusion of over a dozen crops under the MSP and using the methodology recommended by Dr Swaminathan — viz 50 per cent profit over cost of production (paid out expenses or A2 plus family labour) for its determination, which has already been implemented by the Government — during the current year, expenditure on food subsidy is already expected to cross ₹200,000 crore.

But farmers want C-2 cost (in addition to A2+FL, and this includes imputed cost of owned capital and owned land) to be used for calculation of 50 per cent profit. This is illogical. They have already been provided for return on owned land and capital under C-2. To give profit over and above this would be fortuitous.

Yet, if the Government recalculates on this basis, it will lead to even sharper increase in MSP and

correspondingly, in food subsidy. On top of this, if the MSP, too, gets the legal backing, implications will be mindboggling.

Apart from covering farmers, who sell their produce to State agencies (for meeting requirements of the PDS), those selling their output in the marketplace will be entitled to claim reimbursement for the shortfall in realisation (*mandi price*) *vis-à-vis* the MSP. Even subsistence/marginal farmers, who produce food for self-consumption and, hence, have nothing to offer for sale, will qualify for reimbursement. In short, almost the entire food production of 285 million tonnes (target for 2018-19) will come under legally-protected MSP.

These reimbursements on food sold/consumed outside NFSA/PDS, or over 200 million tonnes, will impose an additional burden of at least ₹100,000 crore (assuming shortfall of a bare five rupee per kg in market price *vis-à-vis* MSP). This will be over and above ₹200,000 crore currently being spent for distributing 60 million tonnes under

the NFSA, plus the price support for pulses and oilseeds.

Going by the magnitude of loan-waiver promises being made to the farmers in the States that have gone to polls in recent times, the second legislation for a one-time waiver to farmers' debt will cost the exchequer more than ₹200,000 crore. Already, the Centre is struggling to find resources for food subsidy under the NFSA with dues pending to the tune of ₹200,000 crore to FCI. One shudders to think of a scenario whereby it will be required to cough up an additional amount of at least ₹300,000 crore next year, contingent upon passage of the two laws.

This will completely destabilise the budget and play havoc with the Government's fiscal consolidation drive. Its ability to fund development works, including investment in irrigation, rural roads, markets *et al*, will be seriously undermined. This will also affect the farmers' ability to increase production and sell, leading to a further drop in income. It will be a case of giving from one hand

and taking from the other.

A legally-backed MSP will be suicidal. The Government should avoid treading this path. The genesis of low price realisation by farmers lies in them being forced to sell the produce at notified agriculture produce market committees. These are cartelised and mostly controlled by powerful traders who have connections with politicians and bureaucrats. They pay less to farmers and rake in *moolah* by selling their produce to consumers at a high price.

Instead of using the taxpayers' money to compensate farmers (that will only help traders continue with their loot), the problem has to be tackled at source. Focus should be to dismantle these cartels and invest heavily in establishing alternative platforms to enable them sell their produce. Removal of restrictions on exports and unencumbered foreign direct investment in retail are other potent policy incentives that will help them realise better price. Will Modi crack the whip? (The writer is a freelance journalist)



**HOPE AMID CLIMATE TALKS**

The UK's bid to host the 2020 UN climate change summit should focus minds, not least on the contradictions of an energy policy that combines phasing out coal with the promotion of fracking. While the UN framework is essential, it cannot do the heavy lifting of cutting emissions, which will be done by nation states or not at all. (The Guardian editorial)

VALLEY SHUTDOWN

# March to XV Corps HQ foiled

KHURSHED WANI ■ SRINAGAR

The authorities on Monday sealed off all roads leading to headquarters of XV Corps in Srinagar to thwart separatists plan to stage a protest demonstration in the garrison area against the spree of civilian killings. Police detained two main separatist leaders Mirwaiz Umar Farooq and Yasin Malik to foil their march towards the largest cantonment in summer capital Srinagar.



Police personnel detain JKLF chairman Mohammad Yasin Malik, who was leading a protest march against the civilian killings in Pulwama in Srinagar on Monday. PTI

The separatists had called for a protest demonstration in front of the office of the XV Corps Commander who commands the military operations in the entire Kashmir Valley. The army had counselled the people against paying heed to the separatists' call. The proposed protest was part of 3-day shutdown called by the separatists against the killing of seven civilians in Sironoo village of south Kashmir's Pulwama district on Saturday. Three Hizbul Mujahideen terrorists and an Army soldier were also

killed in the encounter. The locals blamed the security forces for "target killings."

Senior separatist leader Mirwaiz Umar Farooq defied police restrictions on his mansion in Nigeen area of Srinagar outskirts and led a group of his supporters to march towards the cantonment area. However, he was intercepted by a large contingent of police, mostly masked personnel, who took

him into brief custody after a bout of slogan-shouting. Before being whisked to police station, Mirwaiz was allowed to address his supporters. He blamed the state authorities for unleashing a reign of terror by killing what he called innocent civilians.

"After indiscriminate killings, civilians are branded as over ground workers and terrorists which is preposterous in

itself, but what is worse is that this propaganda is used as a means of endorsing and justifying the civilian killings by armed forces. Delhi has overplayed the terrorist, Pak proxy and instigators card and no one is buying this narrative except some people in India at whom it is aimed for electoral gains," Mirwaiz said adding the world sees for itself the ever-growing graph of atrocities and massacres of Kashmiris who are seeking peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute.

Another separatist leader and JKLF chairman Yasin Malik also detained by police after he tried to march towards Badami Bagh cantonment in Srinagar. Reports said Malik along-with his supporters including several women assembled at Gaw Kadal locality to begin their march.

Eyewitnesses said as soon as Malik reached near Budshah bridge a police party swung into action and detained him. Police fired tear gas smoke shells to disperse the crowd.

# Cyclone Phethai kills 1 in Andhra

**Amaravati:** Cyclone Phethai barreled through coastal Andhra Pradesh on Monday, triggering heavy rains, uprooting trees and electric poles, and claiming one life, officials said.

Train and air services were also disrupted because of the cyclone.

East Godavari district bore the brunt of the storm as it made landfall near Katrenikona in the afternoon, forcing evacuation of 20,000 people, who have been sheltered in relief camps.

Howling winds that gusted up to 85-90 kmph uprooted electric poles and trees in Katrenikona, Tallarevu and Malkipuram in East Godavari, disrupting power supply. No casualties were, however, reported.

A man named R Durga Rao aged 28 was killed when a loosened soil hurtled down a hillock following heavy rains in Vijayawada city, according to sources in the state's Disaster Management Authority.

Krishna district Collector B Lakshmi Kantham announced an immediate relief of ₹50,000 to the deceased's family.



Trees face heavy winds as Cyclone Phethai barrels through coastal Andhra Pradesh, near Kakinada in East Godavari on Monday. PTI

Deputy Chief Minister (Home) N China Rajappa is camping at Bhairavapalem village in East Godavari district to oversee relief and rescue operations.

The Real-Time Governance Centre (RTGS) at the state secretariat said 'Phethai' weakened into a cyclone after making landfall. It moved towards Kakinada,

hitting the town with downpour, before rolling towards Visakhapatnam district, officials said.

Chief Executive Officer of the RTGS Babu Ahamed said precautionary steps taken by the authorities had minimised damage to life and property.

He said trees were uprooted in some 20 places and rescue teams had cleared the

debris in 15. Spare electric poles were kept ready, he said.

The South Central Railway cancelled and rescheduled several trains, while air traffic to and from the port city of Visakhapatnam was hit by turbulent weather conditions. Some flights had to be cancelled or diverted to Hyderabad. PTI

# PDP protests inside civil secretariat



MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

The corridors of power inside civil secretariat complex in Jammu on Monday reverberated with chants of 'Save Kashmir, stop killings of innocent Kashmiris' as group of PDP lawmakers, along with their supporters, allegedly violated Section 144 before storming the seat of power.

They were led by sitting PDP MLC Firdous Tak and former MLAs Aijaz Ahmed Mir and Yawar Mir. The PDP leaders were protesting against the killing of protesters in Pulwama district of south Kashmir during gunfight with terrorists.

The entire security grid present inside the civil secretariat remained mute spectators and didn't even prevented any one from coming closer to the office premises of Advisors to the Governor on first floor of the secretariat complex.

Slogan shouting PDP protesters moved across several floors without facing any resistance from security personnel.

After taking out the protest march Firdous Tak told media persons in front of the main civil secretariat building, "I strongly believe the central Government is drawing a sadistic pleasure out of these killings in Kashmir and fulfilling the long desire of RSS and BJP." "The desire and thirst of blood of Kashmiris,"

# 1984 ANTI-SIKH RIOTS

## BJP asks Rahul Gandhi to resign, demands Kamal Nath's expulsion

KESTUR VASUKI ■ BENGALURU

In a major attack on the Congress, the BJP on Monday sought the resignation of Congress president Rahul Gandhi over the court ruling on the anti-sikh riots. BJP's spokesperson Sambit Patra in a press conference in Bengaluru demanded the resignation of Rahul Gandhi and asked him to expel Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath from the party. He said Kamal Nath's name has cropped up along with affidavit and evidence submitted in a report to the Nanavati Commission, Patra also demanded that Rahul Gandhi should step down as Congress president.

"Rahul Gandhi should resign as Congress' chief. Kamal Nath's name crops up along with affidavit and evidence submitted in a report submitted to Nanavati Commission," he said. "A man involved in anti-Sikh riots has been made the Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister. Rahul Gandhi must expel him from the party," Patra demanded.

Earlier in the day, the Delhi High Court convicted

Sajjan Kumar in a case related to the 1984 anti-Sikh riots and sentenced him to life imprisonment. A fine of ₹5 lakh was also imposed on him. The court had asked Kumar to surrender before December 31. The High Court reversed the trial court verdict of 2013 and sentenced Sajjan Kumar and five others in a case related to the killing of five members of a Sikh family in Delhi's Cantonment area in November 1984, following the assassination of the then prime minister Indira Gandhi.

After her assassination by her Sikh bodyguards in 1984, around 3,000 people were killed in anti-Sikh riots when mobs targeted innocent people.

Former Union Minister and senior Congress leader Kapil Sibal said in Delhi that neither Sajjan Kumar — convict in the 1984 anti-Sikh riot case — was given a ticket by the Congress, nor he does not hold any office. Refuting allegations against the Congress party for saving the accused of Sikh massacre, Sibal said, "Sajjan Kumar wasn't given any ticket by our party and he doesn't hold any office."

# Transgenders allowed to pray at Sabarimala

**Thiruvananthapuram:** Four transgenders, who were denied permission to visit the Sabarimala temple a day ago, on Monday got the sanction to pray at the temple, said one of them.

Speaking to the media on Monday evening, Ananya said they approached a Kerala High Court-appointed top police official here in the morning and insisted that they wanted to visit the shrine wearing sarees.

After meeting Director General of Police A. Hemachandran, Ananya told the media in the morning that they had placed their demand before the DGP, and wished to pray in the dress of their choice -- a saree.

"He (Hemachandran) has said he will check with the other two committee members and get back to us and he also asked us to meet IG of Police Manoj Abraham. Now we have got the permission to pray at the temple and we will be soon going for the darshan," said Ananya.

If required, they would also be given police protection for the darshan.

Ananya said they were so happy that their efforts had paid off and with this, trans-



genders from now on could freely go and pray at the Sabarimala temple.

On Sunday, the four-member transgender team, who came from Ernakulam, was stopped by the police at Erumely, the first base camp of the temple town.

The police first told them that if they change into men's attire, they would be allowed. However, later the police refused them the permission to visit the Lord Ayyappa shrine.

Ananya said they were subjected to ridicules, threats and asked to return by the police.

From there, the team went and complained to Kottayam Superintendent of Police, A. Harishankar.

On Monday, they arrived

in the state capital to meet Hemachandran.

The Kerala High Court on November 27 had set up a three-member observer panel to oversee the Sabarimala pilgrimage season, after numerous complaints surfaced against the manner in which the police were acting in the temple town.

Besides Hemachandran, the panel also consisted of P.R. Raman and S. Sirijagan, both retired high court judges.

The temple town has witnessed protests by Hindu groups since the September 28 Supreme Court verdict that allowed women of all ages to enter the temple, including those hitherto banned girls and women aged between 10 and 50. PTI



Protesters holding brooms shout slogans as they march to State Secretariat (Nabanna) demanding a liquor-free State in Kolkata on Monday. PTI

# BJP moves HC again, says padyatra 'Plan-B'

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Even as the BJP moved the Calcutta High Court for the second time on Monday seeking reversal of the State Government order denying permission to its Rath Yatra the party leadership said it was considering an "alternative" padyatra or long march if the Rath Yatra continues to get mired by legal procedures.

"The party is considering a padyatra in absence of the Rath Yatra (as proposed earlier)," State BJP president Dilip Ghosh who on Monday led one of the protest marches denouncing the Trinamool Congress Government's "brutal murder of democracy in Bengal," said. He said "we are keeping all

options open. The legal battle will continue in the court but a parallel struggle will resume and continue on streets to awaken and unite the people against TMC's dictatorship."

The BJP plans multiple long marches throughout the State particularly along the proposed Rath Yatra routes to be led by bigger leaders. The long marches would be interspersed by large rallies to be addressed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and party president Amit Shah, BJP sources said.

The BJP's petition filed at the Court of Justice Tapabrata Chakrabarty would be taken up for hearing on Tuesday. In the petition the party has sought permission for Rath Yatras preferably on December 22, 24 and 26, sources said.

The same Court had earlier deliberating on a petition from the saffron outfit directed the State Government to sit with the BJP leaders and discuss the possibilities of the Yatra and record the reasons of its decision. The State took an adverse decision denying the Yatra on grounds of law and order and communal tension.

It however allowed the BJP to organise mass meetings to be addressed by Modi and Shah. Denouncing the Government's decision senior BJP leader and Union Minister Smriti Irani said "we had asked for a permission to take out a Yatra to save democracy but the State Government denied permission proving the real condition of the State's law and order situation and showing

how the democratic system works in this State."

Reposing faith in the Judiciary she said "we believe in judicial system and have supreme faith in it. But having said that our struggle will continue against the Trinamool Congress as institution of democracy has gone to dogs in this State."

Reacting sharply to the BJP's demand for a Rath Yatra permission Trinamool Congress MP and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's nephew Abhishek Banerjee on Monday said "this is no Rath Yatra but an Asur Yatra (march of the demons) in a seven star bus which has all the luxurious amenities for those BJP leaders who would ride it: often coming out of it to ignite commu-

nal tension and riots before sleeping inside it to enjoy seven star luxury."

Another senior TMC leader and Minister Partho Chatterjee said "this Yatra means for nothing to the people of Bengal who will never be swayed by this communal exercise. It sounds attractive in speeches but on ground the BJP and its Yatra will have no impact in Bengal."

The CPI(M) on the other hand said much of the Yatra politics was a device of the two parties to provide political mileage to each other. "Both of them rely on communal politics and each one is complementary to the other. This Yatra politics is a part of it," said CPI(M) leader Tanmoy Bhattacharya.

# TN fishermen get ISRO gadgets for timely alerts

**Chennai:** Eighty fishing boat groups were on Monday provided with 200 ISRO developed satellite enabled communication devices by the Tamil Nadu Government, that will provide them real-time alerts on cyclone and weather updates.

Chief Minister K Palaniswami distributed the gadgets to seven fishermen from Chennai, Nagapattinam and Kanyakumari engaged in deep sea fishing, marking the roll out of the devices, at the Secretariat here.



The Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System constellation of eight satellites, named "NavIC", provides position, navigation and timing services over India and its neighbourhood, according to ISRO. A senior government official, when asked about the

features of the device, said that the gadgets are basically 'receivers', which emit a beep signal when alerts are received.

"The devices are the size of a soap box and are Bluetooth enabled...The alerts can be accessed by downloading the NavIC App in android

phones...The alerts will appear in Tamil," he told PTI.

"These ISRO gadgets have been distributed free of cost...There are also no recurring costs...These have to be maintained properly," he said, adding that the devices would come in handy for those going for deep sea fishing.

During cyclone Ockhi last year, several fishermen went missing and the Tamil Nadu Government faced criticism that timely updates about the storm was not communicated to them to enable them return home.

The State Government had announced in the 2018-19 budget that the gadgets would be provided to fishermen engaged in deep sea fishing. PTI

# Jammu ropeway trial to begin today

**Jammu:** The much-awaited Jammu ropeway project, aimed at boosting tourism in the State's winter Capital, will undergo trial runs from on Tuesday, officials said.

"The Jammu ropeway project is in full swing. The splicing of the main rope of Section-I (Mahamaya to Peer Kho) has been completed by an international expert. The pre-commissioning trial run of Section I will start from December 18," Managing Director (MD), J&K Cable Car Corporation, Shamim Ahmad Wani said on Monday.

Secretary, Tourism, Rigzin Samphel visited the construction site of the ropeway project at Peer Kho here Monday and reviewed the progress of the ongoing work.



He was briefed about the construction work in all the three stations and informed that landscaping work at Mahamaya and Peer Kho was underway. The MD further told him that the engineering work has been asked to complete all pending works by December 31, officials said.

The secretary said the project would go a long way in promoting tourism in Jammu region, giving a fillip to the local economy by creating jobs. The 1.66-km-long cable car project has two phases, first from Bahu Fort to Mahamaya Park and second from Mahamaya to Peer Kho over the Tawi river, with a total length of 1,118 metre, Wani said.

"The project is of great importance and is going to be the biggest tourist attraction (in Jammu) in coming days," he added.

The cable car project would provide people a high-quality tourism experience with transportation facility, sight-seeing and entertainment, the MD said.

Planned in 1995, the project was to be operated from Bahu Fort to Mubarak Mandi Complex initially. It was modified and relocated later when Mubarak Mandi and Bahu Fort were declared as protected monuments.

The Cable Car Corporation successfully conducted the trial run of the first phase of the project in April. PTI

# SP, BSP dilute chance of grand alliance 2019

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

First fielding candidates against probable ally Congress in recent Assembly polls in three central States and then being conspicuous with their absence at the oath-taking ceremonies of Congress Chief Ministers in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, regional satraps Samajwadi Party (SP) and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) have themselves weakened the possibility of a grand alliance for the 2019 general elections. Interestingly, after not-so-encouraging results in the recent Assembly polls, both the SP and the BSP tried to distance from the BJP and immediately announced support to the Congress.



becoming Prime Minister in case of a hung Parliament in 2019. Hence, instead of joining us to fight with the BJP in the recent Assembly polls, she preferred to align with another party — Janata Congress in Chhattisgarh,” said UP Congress Committee general secretary Siddharth Priya Srivastava. “Akhilesh also wants Congress to come under his party’s banner in the parliamentary poll akin to what we did in 2017 Assembly poll in UP, as he planned to project Mulayam Singh Yadav as the prime ministerial candidate. But now, by distancing themselves from the Congress in the Assembly polls in three States, both have a slice of reality to analyse,” Srivastava pointed out.

“In fact, the results of recent elections have upset both SP and BSP more in UP than the BJP as leaders of both parties had targeted Congress freely, hoping that it would be at their mercy in Uttar Pradesh. Even at a recent meeting of opposition leaders over a grand alliance in Delhi, both Mayawati and Akhilesh chose to give it a miss. Hence their absence from the oath-taking ceremonies did not come as a surprise,” the Congress leader said. Srivastava said that state functionaries and leaders of the party had conveyed to Congress chief Rahul Gandhi that like in the recent Assembly polls in Hindi heartland, the party should distance itself from both SP and BSP, even if they went for an alliance in the parliamentary polls.

# 6 killed, 147 hurt as fire breaks in Mumbai Hospital

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Six persons were killed and 147 others injured late on Monday afternoon after a major fire broke out in the State Government-run Employees State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) Kamghar Hospital at Andheri (East) in north-west Mumbai.

A majority of those injured, who have been admitted to the various hospitals in the metropolis, were patients and staffers.

Informed official sources said that the toll might go up further as some of the injured were in a critical condition.

The fire was noticed near the operation theatre of the five-storey hospital located at Marol locality of Andheri (East). Before long, the fire spread to other floors stranding more 150 people in the fire-engulfed building.

As the fire spread in the building, a few patients panicked and jumped out of the fourth floor window. They suffered fractures.

However, within minutes of the fire being reported, at least 12 fire tenders, 15 water tankers and other specialised equipment arrived on the scene to battle with the blaze. The fire brigade used ladders to bring down those trapped in the third and fourth floors of the hospital building.

Leaping flames, coupled thick cloud of smoke, made the rescue operation difficult for



Firefighters conduct rescue after a major fire broke out at ESIC Kamghar Hospital in Mumbai on Monday

PTI

the fire brigade personnel. After battling with the fire for more than three and a half hours, the fire brigade extinguished the blaze at 7.35 pm.

At around 8.30 pm, the officials at the BMC’s disaster control room pegged the number of deaths at six and those admitted to various hospitals at 147.

A majority of those rescued had suffered burn wounds. Of the injured, 19 were admitted to Cooper Hospital, Andheri (West), 39 to P Thakrey Trauma Hospital, Jogeshwari (East), 40 to Holi Spirit Hospital, Andheri (East), 44 to Seven Hills Hospital, Andheri

(East), three to Hiranandani Hospital, Powai and two to Sidhharth Hospital, Goregaon.

Initial reports said that the fire might have broken out in the hospital building with a glass façade because of an electrical short circuit. The hospital is located in the MIDC area, an industrial hub in north-west Mumbai.

Mumbai Mayor Vishwanath Mahadeshwar, who visited the mishap site along with senior civic officials, that the BMC would investigate the cause of fire and strict action would be taken against those guilty of lapses.

Meanwhile, thick clouds of

smoke emanating from the fire-hit hospital travelled quite a bit, reducing the visibility in the area and leading to peak-hour traffic jams in the areas of the neighbourhood.

The metropolis has witnessed nearly ten fire mishaps during the current year. In the first such mishap that took place on June 1, the fire broke out in the third and fourth floor of the six-storey Scindia House at Ballard Estate in downtown south Mumbai.

Twenty four hours later, another fire broke out at a leather company in Reay Road in south-central Mumbai. No injuries were reported in the

mishap. On June 9, a massive fire broke out at Patel Chambers at Fort in south Mumbai. Two firemen were injured after a part of the building collapsed due to fire.

On June 13, a major fire that broke out in the top floors of a 34-storey building “Beaumont Towers” where B-town’s reigning actress Deepika Padukone lives, spread. However, two hours later, the fire fighters controlled the blaze and rescued 90-odd residents safely.

On August 5, a major fire swept through the Regional Transport Office (RTO) at Tardeo in south Mumbai here in the early hours of Sunday, gutting hundreds of documents, licences, furniture, computers, printers and other items. There were no casualties or injuries in the mishap.

On December 3 this year, a massive fire had ripped through the thick forests of Aarey colony that falls inside the Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP) precincts at Goregaon (East) in north-Mumbai, gutting forest area measuring nearly 4 km.

Earlier on December 29 last year, 14 persons were killed and 55 others were injured in the massive fire that ripped Mojo’s Bistro lounge, neighbouring 1Above casual dining restaurant and London Taxi Gastro pub at Trade House in the Kamala Mills compound at Lower Parel in south-central Mumbai.

# 400 affected by skin disease, medical team visits villages

Howrah (WB): Around 400 people of several villages of a block in Howrah district were affected by a skin disease suspected to have been caused by a fungus, officials said on Monday.

The state health department sent a medical team to four villages of Shyampur-I block during the day.

“The medical team was sent after we were informed that around 400 of people of the area were affected by some skin disease,” Chief Medical Officer of Health Dr Bhabani Das said.

It appears that the infection was caused by a type of fungus, Das said and assured the affected people not to panic.

She said the report of the team would be sent to the department concerned and the next course of action would be decided after examining it.

The four villages where the team visited are Malanchaberia, Kathilabar, Shibpur and Shyampur.

Health department sources said how such a large number of people have got infected is being examined.



An Indian Air Force MiG-21 fighter aircraft on static display at a theme park in Dibrugarh on Monday

PTI

# PM Modi to lay foundation stone for Thane Metro today

Housing scheme, bhumi puja also part of schedule

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

As part of a busy schedule drawn up for him during his day-long visit to Maharashtra on Tuesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lay foundation stone for upcoming first-ever Metro Corridors in Thane district. He will also launch a housing scheme of 90,000 homes and also perform “bhoomi puja” for Pune Metro Rail Phase-3.

At Kalyan in the neighbouring Thane district, Modi will lay foundation stone for the Thane-Bhiwandi-Kalyan Metro and the Dahisar-Mira-Bhayander Metro corridor projects to ease the transportation problems in the two urban pockets located in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region. He will also launch a housing scheme of 90,000 homes for the poor sections of society at the same venue, constructed under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY).

Modi will later head to Pune, where he will perform ground breaking ceremony for the Pune Metro Rail Phase 3 and address a public meeting.

Earlier in the morning, the Prime Minister would speak at the Republic Summit organised by Republic TV, a private news channel.

Subsequently, Modi will release a book entitled “Timeless Laxman” based on

the life and little known facets of the legendary cartoonist, the late R K Laxman, at Raj Bhavan. The book has been penned by his daughter-in-law, Usha Srinivas Laxman.

It may be recalled that Laxman — best known for his creation ‘The Common Man’ for his daily cartoon strip, “You

Said it “You Said It” in The Times of India which started in 1951—passed away at a Pune hospital on January 26, 2015.

Modi, who will arrive in Mumbai at 8 am on Tuesday, will wind up his day-long visit to Maharashtra after addressing a public rally at Pune late in the evening.

# Guj seeks ₹1,725 cr for drought relief from Centre

Ahmedabad: In the wake of drought in parts of Gujarat, the State Government on Monday sought financial assistance of ₹1,725 crore from the Centre to carry out various relief works in the affected regions.

The demand was put forward before a central team visiting Gujarat since the last three days to assess the water scarcity situation which has arisen due to scanty rainfall this monsoon, said Additional Chief Secretary, revenue, Pankaj Kumar.

He said the nine-member central team, comprising officials from various ministries, had visited Kutch, Morbi, Banaskantha, Patan and Surendranagar districts during the three-day tour.

The team Monday held a meeting with Chief Secretary J N Singh and other key officials of the Gujarat Government at Gandhinagar

upon the completion of their assessment tour.

Kumar told reporters the State Government’s estimates suggests that a total of ₹2,902 crore will be needed to carry out various relief works in the drought-affected regions.

“We have so far declared 3,367 villages of 51 taluka in the state as drought affected. The central team had visited five affected districts during the last three days and held a meeting with Chief Secretary today,” Kumar told reporters in Gandhinagar after the meeting.

“Our estimates suggests that we would need ₹2,902 crore in total to carry out various relief works in affected regions. Looking at the funds available with us under SDRF (State Disaster Relief Fund) and norms governing it, we would need additional ₹1,725 crore,” said Kumar.

He said the team had given a “positive response” on the demand of central assistance of ₹1,725 crore put forward by the State Government.

“This fund will be utilised in paying input subsidies to farmers, providing drinking water to people, for opening cattle camps, providing assistance to cattle shelters and to distribute fodder in affected regions,” the IAS officer said.

He said the State Government is “confident” of getting central assistance soon. Gujarat had received just 73.87 per cent of the average rainfall this monsoon.

Kutch had received just 26.51 per cent of average rainfall, while north Gujarat got 42.93 per cent, central Gujarat 66.83 per cent, Saurashtra 72.20 per cent and south Gujarat got the highest of 94.79 per cent, according to Met department figures.

# Cong should accept court verdict against Sajjan Kumar: Yogi

Guwahati: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday alleged that the Congress was involved in the 1984 anti-Sikh riots and it should accept the verdict of the Delhi High Court punishing party leader Sajjan Kumar for his role in it.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader alleged that the Congress had a history of dividing people on religious and caste lines.

“It is a known fact that the Congress was involved in 1984 riots. It should accept the (verdict of the) Constitutional institution,” Adityanath said at a press conference here.

The Delhi High Court on Monday convicted the senior Congress leader for conspiracy to commit murder in the 1984 anti-Sikh riots case and sentenced him to imprisonment for life.

On the Bulandshahr violence, the Chief Minister said all those involved in the incident would be arrested and punished as per law.

“Law is equal for all. Law will take its own course. The Government acted very swiftly in the matter. All those involved will be arrested and punished,” he said. There is no law and order problem in Uttar Pradesh and other BJP-ruled states in the country, Adityanath claimed.

Violence broke out in Bulandshahr town of UP on December 3 over alleged cattle slaughter, leaving a police inspector and a youth dead as a mob went on a rampage torching a police post and clashing with police, which had to open fire to control the situation. Adityanath also attacked the Congress for not accepting the Supreme Court’s order on the Rafale deal.

# Another milestone for HAL’s Light Utility chopper project

Bengaluru: The Hindustan Aeronautics Limited’s Light Utility Helicopter project has notched another milestone as the third prototype (PT3) made its maiden flight on December 14.

The helicopter was flown by test pilots, Wg Cdr (Retd) Anil Bhambhani and Gp Capt (Retd) M R Anand VM, the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) said in a release

here Monday. The flight was flawless and the prototype would augment development flight testing in conjunction with other two Prototypes towards Certification, it said.

Indigenously designed and developed by the state-run aviation major Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, the Light Utility Helicopter (LUH) achieved an important milestone of flying at a 6-km altitude here recently.

Based on the feedback from flight testing of PT1 and PT2, PT3 is built to the standard of deliverable configuration, the release said.

With this achievement, LUH is now close to production clearance and the unit is confident of meeting requirements of the armed forces, HAL CMD R Madhavan said.

The successful completion of the first flight of LUH’s third prototype is a quantum leap and will soon replace the aging fleet of Cheetah and Chetak helicopters, according to HAL Director (Engg and R&D) Arup Chatterjee.

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

Design Centre (RWR&DC) of HAL, it said. The first flight of LUH PT-1 was carried on September 6, 2016 and the second Prototype flew on May

22, 2017. High altitude cold weather trials of LUH are planned in January 2019, the release added.

**कार्यालय नगर विगम हल्द्वानी-काठगोदाम**  
 पत्रांक- 1870/2018  
 दिनांक- 17-12-2018  
 सर्व साधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि नगर निगम हल्द्वानी-काठगोदाम सीमान्तगत 15 स्थानों पर ट्रेफिक आईलैण्ड व 10 स्थानों पर पुलिस ट्रेफिक बुथ स्थापित किये जाने हेतु इच्छुक निविदादाताओं से टू विड सिस्टम के माध्यम से मोहर बन्द निविदाये आमंत्रित की जाती है। उक्त ट्रेफिक आईलैण्ड व ट्रेफिक बुथ की स्थलों सूची शर्तों / शरायतों किसी भी कार्य दिवस में दिनांक 18.12.2018 से 31.12.2018 को सांय 05.00 बजे तक निविदा फार्म शुल्क ₹ 5000/- + 18% जीएसटी जमा कर प्राप्त किये जा सकते हैं। जिन्हें दिनांक 02.01.2019 को अपराह्न 02.00 बजे तक निविदा बॉक्स में डाला जा सकता है। उसके पश्चात प्राप्त निविदा पर विचार नहीं किया जायेगा। जिन्हें अपरिहार्य कारणों को छोड़कर उक्त तिथि 02.01.2019 को ही अपराह्न 03.00 बजे विज्ञापन नियमावली के अनुसार ऑनटन समिति के समक्ष खोला जायेगा। निविदा के सम्बन्ध में जानकारी नगर निगम की वेबसाईट [www.nagarnigamhaldwani.in](http://www.nagarnigamhaldwani.in) से भी प्राप्त की जा सकती है।  
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The Executive Engineer (E), Division-I, CCW, AIR, 8th Floor Soochna Bhawan, New Delhi invites on behalf of President of India, online item rate/ bids for following work:-

(i) NIT NO. 81/2018-19/EE(E)-I/CCW-AIR/Delhi. Name of work: - Maintenance of Cultural Center at Sirifort Auditorium, New Delhi during 2018-19 (SH : Operation of 16/35 mm Film/Video Projection equipments etc.) (i) Estimated cost Rs. 828676/-, (ii) Earnest Money Rs.16574/- Period of completion: - 12 months, Last date & Time of submission of bid 3.00 P.M on 26/12/18.

(ii) NTT NO. 82/2018-19/EE(E)-I/CCW-AIR/Delhi. Name of Work: Maintenance of Sound System at Sirifort Auditorium, New Delhi. (SH : Operation of Sound System in Audi-I/H/III/IV) (i) Estimated cost of Rs.1157166/-, (ii) Earnest Money Rs.23143/- Period of completion: - 12 months, Last date & Time of submission of bid 3.00 P.M on 26/12/18.

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Note: - The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the website: - [www.tenderwizard.con/AIR](http://www.tenderwizard.con/AIR).

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# Lyon, Hazlewood leave India in agony



Virat Kohli reacts after getting caught at slip by Usman Khwaja off Nathan Lyon during the fourth day

**MOST WICKETS IN AWAY TESTS IN A CALENDAR YEAR FOR INDIA**

Bowler	Year	M	Wkts	Best
Mohammed Shami	2018	10	42	6-56
Anil Kumble	2006	9	41	6-78
Erapalli Prasanna	1968	6	39	6-94
Jasprit Bumrah	2018	8	39	5-54
Ishant Sharma	2011	9	38	6-55

FAISEL FEATURES

Australian players congratulate Nathan Lyon, centre, after he dismissed Indian skipper Virat Kohli on the fourth day of second Test at Optus Stadium in Perth

PTI ■ PERTH

Australia were on course for a series-levelling win in the second Test after another below-par batting performance from India undid the good work done by their bowlers on day four on Monday.

Chasing 287 on a testing surface, India were 112 for five at stumps with skipper Virat Kohli's (17) dismissal in the 20th over of the second innings dealing a massive blow to the away team's hopes.

The last specialist pair of Hanuma Vihari (24) and Rishabh Pant (9) were in the middle when stumps were drawn and they will have to bat well in the first session on day five for India to have any chance of scoring the remaining 175 runs.

The ordinary batting effort came after a sensational performance from pacer Mohammad Shami, who took a career best six for 56 in Australia's second innings to bring India back into the contest.

Shami removed the set Usman Khawaja (72) and Tim Paine (37) to trigger a batting collapse that saw Australia being all out for 243 after the duo batted out the entire morning session.

At tea, India were reeling at 15 for two

**INDIA'S SUCCESSFUL RUN-CHASE IN AWAY TEST**

Score	Overs	Opponent	Venue	Season
406-4	147	West Indies	Port of Spain	1975-76
264-3	78.4	Sri Lanka	Kandy	2001
258-5	68.3	Sri Lanka	Colombo	2010
233-6	72.4	Australia	Adelaide	2003-04
200-5	74.4	New Zealand	Dunedin	1967-68

.....

**INDIA'S HIGHEST FOURTH INNINGS SCORES IN 2018**

Score	Overs	Opponent	Venue	Target
345	94.3	England	The Oval	464
184	69.4	England	Southampton	245
162	54.2	England	Birmingham	194
151	50.2	South Africa	Centurion	287
135	42.4	South Africa	Cape Town	208

\*\* India lost all five Tests

FAISEL FEATURES

bowled going for a drive as India were reduced to 55-4.

Ajinkya Rahane (30) came out playing his shots and took on the bowling with two fours as well as a six. He put on 43 runs for the fifth wicket with Vihari as India started thinking of at least taking the fight into day five.

But it was not to be, as Rahane hit a drive straight to point off Josh Hazlewood (2-24) and India plunged to 98-5.

Earlier before tea, KL Rahul (0) played another indecisive stroke and was bowled off Starc on the fourth ball of the second innings. The bigger moment came when Hazlewood had Cheteshwar Pujara (4) caught behind off a faint edge in the fourth over to leave India leaning on Kohli once again.

This was after a fiery spell from Shami brought India back into the game. Post lunch, Australia collapsed in a heap as they lost five wickets for 15 runs in the space of eight overs.

Shami was the wrecker-in-chief, taking 4-26 after lunch, as his express pace combined with short stuff bamboozled the Australian lower order.

Skipper Paine was the first go, unable to negotiate sharp bounce and gloving to Kohli at second slip.

Fit-to-bat Aaron Finch (25) came out to bat next, but lasted only one ball, clipping

## Kohli, Paine resume verbal duel

PTI ■ PERTH

Warring captains Virat Kohli and Tim Paine on Monday resumed their verbal duel, forcing on-field umpire Chris Gaffaney to warn both the players on the fourth morning of the second Test between India and Australia.

During the 71st over bowled by Jasprit Bumrah, the respective captains were seen exchanging words after Kohli decided to field close to the non-striker and Gaffaney had to step in.

"You're the one that lost it yesterday. Why are you trying to be cool today?" Paine told Kohli.

"That's enough, that's enough," Gaffaney interrupted.

"Come on, play the game. You guys are the captains. Tim, you're the captain." Paine replied: "We're just having a conversation. There's no swearing ... Keep your cool Virat."

Kohli said something which couldn't be picked up by the microphones.

A couple of balls later, the warring duo almost came close to chest bumping when the India skipper walked in front of Paine while he was completing a run.

Kohli later appeared to plead his case to square-leg umpire Kumar Dharmasena as Paine and Usman Khawaja continued to extend Australia's second-innings lead.

"I reckon it's a sign Kohli is starting to lose it," former Test bowler Damien Fleming said on SEN radio.

India commentator Sanjay Manjrekar wasn't too pleased with Kohli's behaviour but former Australian skipper Ricky Ponting and Michael Clarke said they had no issue with the verbal exchange between the two captains and that no line has been crossed so far.

Tensions had flared-up towards the end of day three with Kohli and Paine exchanging verbal volleys as the game headed for a nail-biting finish.

## 'Verbal duel was in good spirits'



PTI ■ PERTH

The onfield verbal duel between rival captains Virat Kohli and Tim Paine has been one of the talking points of the second Test but Australia pacer Josh Hazlewood Monday played it down, saying it was done in good spirits.

"I think it was all good fun, it's quite competitive out there as you know and there's going to be words from time to time but it was all in good spirits," Hazlewood said.

"I don't think we read too much into it, we go about our work as we see fit and the Indians can do what they like. We control what we control and our behaviour is what we control. We'll worry about that and let everything else take care of itself."

It worked out well for Australia in the end as Kohli was dismissed for 17 in the second innings as India crashed to 55-4 in their chase. But, Hazlewood said Australia was not targeting a single batsman.

"No definitely not. I probably see (Cheteshwar) Pujara as the big wicket as far as when I'm bowling, the glue that holds them together I think. He's batted the most balls this series and scored nearly the most runs.

"I see Pujara as a big wicket and Ajinkya Rahane as well. So the Nos 3, 4, 5 as the key wickets and we see it a bit unstable in the other parts of the order. Certainly not all the focus is on Virat Kohli," he said.

Australia were on course for a series-levelling win after reducing India to 112-5 at stumps on day four, but Hazlewood said there were still some work to do for them for another home victory.

"I didn't go to the UAE, so it feels a bit of a long time between wins, but there's still a lot of work to do tomorrow. Anytime I'm playing in Australia we feel pretty confident, especially the bowlers feel very confident in getting 20 wickets and a result," he said.

"Last year, we got there four times out of five, so we are feeling pretty confident. It's just putting that into practice more often than not this summer," he added.

## Shaw ruled out of Test series

PTI ■ PERTH

Injured Prithvi Shaw was on Monday ruled out of the entire Test series against Australia with the BCCI replacing the young opener with Mayank Agarwal.

Shaw had suffered a left ankle injury while attempting a catch in a practice game against Cricket Australia XI.

The 19 year old from Mumbai had scored 66 in that game in Sydney.

"The All-India Senior Selection Committee has named Mayank Agarwal as his replacement," said a BCCI release.

With KL Rahul failing terribly in two Tests, the team management may hand Test debut to 27-year-old Agrawal, who plays for Karnataka.

Rahul scored 2 and 44 in Adelaide but managed 2 and 0 in Perth, where India are staring at a

defeat on the final day.

Agarwal who has played 46 first class games, scored 25 and 53 for his Ranji side against Gujarat in his last match.

The selectors have also added all-rounder Hardik Pandya to India's squad for the third and fourth Test to be played in Melbourne and Sydney respectively.

The third Test is scheduled to begin in Melbourne from December 26.

### INDIA'S SQUAD

Virat Kohli (captain), M Vijay, KL Rahul, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane (vice-captain), Hanuma Vihari, Rohit Sharma, Rishabh Pant (wicket-keeper), Parthiv Patel, R Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohammed Shami, Ishant Sharma, Umesh Yadav, Jasprit Bumrah, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Hardik Pandya and Mayank Agarwal.



Mumbai's Shivam Dube plays a shot against Baroda

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Former champions Mumbai claimed three points against Baroda after their four-day Elite Group A game ended in a tame draw at the Wankhede Stadium on Monday.

The only interest left when play commenced was whether Baroda, who conceded a 29-run lead on Sunday, could skittle out the hosts and 41-time champions cheaply in the second innings and give themselves enough time to force an outright victory.

But that was not to be as Mumbai, who resumed at 20 for two, lost the wicket of captain Siddhesh Lad very early before the remaining batsmen ensured that Baroda did not come back into the game.

Although the other first innings centurion other than Lad, Shreyas Iyer (30), too, departed before lunch, the lower middle order held fort and took Mumbai to 307 for seven, an overall lead of 336, before declaring the innings closed.

Play was then called off with Baroda

## 'There should have been a spinner'

PTI ■ PERTH

Pacer Mohammed Shami on Monday said India missed a trick in not playing a full-time spinner on a pitch where Australia tweeker Nathan Lyon has already bagged seven wickets.

"The team management makes these decisions. We can't do anything about it. We had one spinner who didn't bowl badly. (But) If you ask me, I feel there should have been a spinner, but these things depend on your management," said Shami.

"After such a long time we have an Indian pace attack where all the bowlers are fast and are bowling good lines and lengths. Four years ago we weren't even this experienced. You must have seen the difference in our accuracy from four years ago."

India lead the four-match series 1-0 after their 31-run win in the opening Test at Adelaide.



Mohd Shami holds up the ball after claiming 5 wickets in Australia's second innings

"It helps a lot to have a good bowler at the other end, who has the same mentality as you and is keeping things tight."

down leg side and caught behind. Shami was on a hat trick for the second consecutive Test, but missed out.

An over later though, using the second new ball, he got rid of Khawaja with another sharp rising delivery to pick his fourth five-wicket haul in Test cricket.

Eight balls later Jasprit Bumrah (3-39) got rid of Pat Cummins (1), bowled off a delivery keeping too low.

Lyon (5) hit out and took Australia past 200, but Shami knocked him over in similar fashion to the rest as he picked his best figures in Test cricket.

The last wicket pairing of Mitchell Starc (14) and Josh Hazlewood (17 not out) frustrated the Indian team though, and added 36 golden runs for the 10th wicket, taking the lead past 280. In the morning session, Australia reached 190-4 at lunch.

# MUMBAI, PUNJAB GRAB 3 POINTS

PTI ■ MUMBAI

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Play was then called off with Baroda

not commencing their second innings.

In the Mumbai second essay, Shubham Ranjane (64 in 105 balls) Eknath Kerkar (56 not out in 115 balls) and Shivam Dube, who struck a brisk 76 in 60 balls studded with 7 sixes and three fours, got the major portion of the runs.

Baroda got one point from the drawn encounter.

Meanwhile, at Nashik, Saurashtra defeated hosts Maharashtra by 5 wickets. For Saurashtra, slow-left arm orthodox bowlers Dharmendrasinh Jadeja grabbed seven wickets in the second innings as he wreaked havoc on the Maharashtra batsmen.

While chasing, Saurashtra lost half their side, but eventually romped home.

At the Karnail Singh stadium in New Delhi, Vidarbha hammered Railways by 118 runs with Aditya Sarvate taking six wickets to bowl out Railways for 124 in their second essay.

While Karnataka took three points as their game ended in a tame draw against Gujarat on the basis of the first innings

lead at Surat.

### PUNJAB-TN MATCH ENDS DRAW

MOHALI: Punjab gained three points as Tamil Nadu held firm for a draw on the final day of the Elite Group 'B' match.

Faced with a massive deficit of 264 runs, the visitors saw skipper Baba Indrajith (93), Dinesh Karthik (74) and Vijay Shankar (51 not out) get among the runs to defy the Punjab bowlers and finish the day at 383 for 6.

The result meant Tamil Nadu, now on 12 points, is almost out of contention for a berth in the knockout phase.

Punjab also has the same number of points, but has played one game less.

Five teams from Group 'A' and 'B' put together will advance to the quarterfinals, based on the number of points accrued.

On a track that was easier to bat as the game wore on, the Tamil Nadu batsmen made sure the home side did not get the opening they were seeking in the quest for a win and also six points.

In other Group 'B' matches, Himachal

Pradesh outclassed Andhra Pradesh by an innings and three runs in Atmar to gain seven points while the Bengal-Hyderabad encounter ended in a draw.

### TRIPURA TROUNCE GOA

AGARTALA: Tripura hammered Goa by 10 wickets in their Elite Group C game.

Tripura were in command from the first day and it took them less than an over to chase the 8-run target on the final day and add seven points to their kitty.

Following on Goa batsmen, barring Suyash Prabhudessai (65), faltered against Harmeet Singh (3-46) and M B Mura Singh (3-55).

Goa began from their overnight score of 113/3 but Prabhudessai ran out of partners and could not take the side to challenging total.

The target was easily overhauled by Tripura.

Meanwhile, at the Palam ground in the national capital, Services grabbed 7 points as they overcame Assam by 10 wickets.

For Services, pacer Divesh Pathania (5-56) picked his second five-wicket haul of the match and ended the game with a 10-wick-

et haul.

Chasing 72 for an outright win, Services openers Nakul Verma (39 not out) and Navneet Singh (31 not out) took the side home with ease in 18.1 overs.

And at Lucknow, Jharkhand took three points after their match against Uttar Pradesh ended in a draw.

### NAGALAND SALVAGE DRAW

JORHAT: Pacer Ishwar Chaudhary grabbed a six-wicket haul as Sikkim thrashed Mizoram by 105 runs in their Plate Group fixture.

In Dehradun, Nagaland's Arbar Kazi produced a strong rearguard fightback with 157 not out in an unbroken 137-run seventh wicket partnership with Nitesh Lohchab (44 not out) to salvage a draw against group leaders Uttarakhand.

This was Uttarakhand's first draw after five successive wins as they had to settle for three points on basis of their first innings lead.

Needing two wickets to seal the win on the final day, Sikkim bundled out Mizoram for 236 in 74.5 overs to seal their third win with two sessions to spare.

# Messi hat-trick restores Barca's lead

AFP ■ MADRID

Lionel Messi continued his sublime form by netting his 31st La Liga hat-trick as Barcelona thrashed Levante 5-0 to regain their three-point lead at the top of the table.

The 31-year-old Argentinian arrived in Valencia having scored two free-kicks in last weekend's derby thumping of Espanyol. He took his goals tally for the season to 20 after a virtuoso display, while also teeing up Luis Suarez's 35th-minute opener and Gerard Pique's late fifth.

Barca were under pressure after Atletico Madrid and second-placed Sevilla had both moved level on points with the Catalan giants.

But after resting his key stars for their final Champions League group-stage match against Tottenham in midweek, coach Ernesto Valverde saw his refreshed side cruise to a third straight league win without conceding a goal.

"At the beginning it was difficult, they squeezed us and had a chance that hit the woodwork," said Valverde on Sunday.

Levante started the game brightly and visiting goalkeeper Marc-Andre ter Stegen was forced into an early save by Ghanaian Emmanuel Boateng.

But Barca did not take long to start moving through the gears, with Messi curling wide from long range before testing Oier Olazabal in the Levante goal with a free-kick.

Just seconds after Boateng hammered a left-footed strike against the crossbar, the reigning Spanish champions broke the deadlock as Messi jinked through a mesmerised home defence and picked out Suarez who volleyed home.

But Levante, who had ended Barcelona's dreams of going through last season's La Liga campaign unbeaten with a remarkable 5-4 victory in the penultimate game, came close to a quick response as Jose Luis Morales fired over.



The match was all but ended as a contest when Messi bore down on goal two minutes before half-time and drilled low into the net.

"I'm happy to have won here, because last year we came and they put five goals past us having gone the whole season unbeaten, so we knew about the danger of Levante and it was a match we had marked out," added Valverde.

He wasted little time after the restart to add his second in the 47th minute, sweeping home Jordi Alba's clever cutback, before completing his treble

with a simple tap-in from Arturo Vidal's square pass on the hour mark. Messi has scored five goals in two league games since finishing only fifth in the voting for the Ballon d'Or earlier this month.

A bad evening for Levante worsened with 14 minutes to play, as left-back Erick Cabaco was sent off for a reckless lunge on Ousmane Dembele. Centre-back Pique added further gloss to the scoreline in the 88th minute, rampaging forward to collect Messi's pass, before keeping his cool and rolling the ball home.

# Liverpool draw Bayern as Utd face PSG in CL last 16

AFP ■ NYON

Liverpool will take on fellow five-time winners Bayern Munich in the last 16 of the Champions League, while Jose Mourinho's struggling Manchester United face French giants Paris Saint-Germain.

Holder Real Madrid were paired with Ajax in Monday's draw in Nyon as the Spaniards attempt to lift the trophy for the fifth time in six seasons, while Lionel Messi and Barcelona will play Lyon.

Both Liverpool and Bayern have a rich tradition in the competition, each winning it five times and Liverpool were beaten finalists last season.

Liverpool are the current form side of the two and sit top of the Premier League while Bayern, under new coach Niko Kovac, have been far short of their own high standards in the Bundesliga this season.

"That's the team of the hour, the league leaders in England, they are playing really good football, very physical, really stepping it up. We are looking forward to it," Bayern sporting director Hasan Salihamidzic said of the tie with Liverpool.

"A tough cookie, but that's something to look forward to as a player."

## RONALDO AWAITS

Pep Guardiola's Manchester City take on German side Schalke 04 while Atletico Madrid, beaten finalists in 2014 and 2016, come up against Cristiano Ronaldo and Italian heavyweights Juventus.

"A very difficult match, with few goals," Juve vice-president Pavel Nedved predicted.

"No doubt Cristiano is the man of the Champions League, he has always shown that, with goals and victories. Our team is very strong and we can be calm and confident."

Bundesliga leaders Borussia Dortmund will meet Tottenham Hotspur for the second season in a row, having faced each other in last year's group stage, while Roma meet two-time former champions Porto.

"We've already met them (Tottenham) twice. A strong opponent,



Manchester United's David De Gea, centre, follows the ball during the English Premier League match between Liverpool and Manchester United at Anfield AP



**Holder Real Madrid were paired with Ajax in Monday's draw in Nyon as the Spaniards attempt to lift the trophy for the fifth time in six seasons**



## UCL R16 FIXTURES

### 12 February & 6 March

Manchester United (ENG) v Paris Saint-Germain (FRA)

Roma (ITA) v Porto (POR)

### 13 February & 5 March

Tottenham Hotspur (ENG) v Borussia Dortmund (GER)

Ajax (NED) v Real Madrid (ESP)

### 19 February & 13 March

Lyon (FRA) v Barcelona (ESP)

Liverpool (ENG) v Bayern München (GER)

### 20 February & 12 March

Schalke (GER) v Manchester City (ENG)

Atletico Madrid (ESP) v Juventus (ITA)

(All kick-offs 1:30 am IST)

the chances are at 50-50. The team has top players. We are also strong, it will be interesting," Dortmund CEO Hans-Joachim Watzke told Sky.

Meanwhile, United go into a first ever meeting with PSG trailing Premier League leaders Liverpool by 19 points following Sunday's 3-1 defeat at Anfield, and face a formidable task against a side featuring Neymar and Kylian Mbappe — the world's two most expensive players.

Lyon coach Bruno Genesio says his team can draw on their group stage displays against City — a 2-1 win and 2-2 draw — ahead of their clash with five-time European champions Barca.

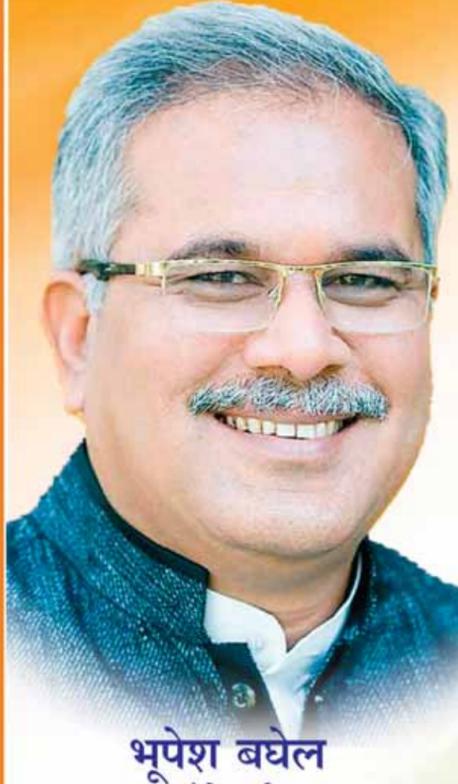
"We'll need to pull off two big performances, in the first leg and in the return, but we can do it. We did it against City," said Genesio.

"It's tough. They are a team that Lyon has already played against but never beaten. Barca are more experienced and stronger but over two matches anything is possible," Gerard Houllier, who holds an advisory role at the French club, told RMC Sport.

Teams that finished in second place in the group stage will host the first legs on February 12/13 and 19/20 with the return matches scheduled for March 5/6 and 12/13.



छत्तीसगढ़ महतारी के महान सपूत  
परम् पूज्य गुरु बाबा घासीदास जी को  
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भूपेश बघेल  
मुख्यमंत्री, छत्तीसगढ़




सत्य, अहिंसा, दया, करुणा और  
सामाजिक समरसता के संदेश वाहक,  
सम्पूर्ण मानव समाज के पथ प्रदर्शक  
गुरु बाबा घासीदास जी की जयंती  
(18 दिसम्बर 2018) के पावन अवसर पर  
प्रदेशवासियों को हार्दिक बधाई और शुभकामनाएँ...

छत्तीसगढ़ महतारी, आ.ओ.नं. 895, 10