

OPINION 8

SHADOW OF TERROR
LOOMS LARGE

MONEY 10

RBI NET SELLS \$18.66 BN OF
DOLLARS BETWEEN APR-SEP

SPORT 16

ENGLAND BEAT SRI LANKA
IN 2ND TEST, SEAL SERIES

BHUBANESWAR, MONDAY NOVEMBER 19, 2018; PAGES 16 ₹3

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I NEVER HAD
A CAREER:
SHEKHAR
13 VIVACITY

Terror revisits Amritsar

3 die, 20 injured in grenade attack on Nirankaris, Punjab Police thinks it is terrorist act; 2 arrested

MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH

In a reminder to dark days of militancy in Punjab, three people were killed while over a dozen were injured in a grenade attack during a religious congregation at Rana Sansi in Amritsar district at a time when the State was on high alert after terror inputs since Thursday.

The Punjab Police has described it as a "terrorist act" and is probing all "possible angles". By the evening, the police have arrested two suspects from Bathinda, and seized live cartridges from them.

Meanwhile, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) has decided to investigate the incident that took place at Nirankari Bhawan in Adliwal village. The NIA has registered a case into the incident and its team, comprising senior officers, left from Chandigarh in the evening, and was expected to reach Raja Sansi late at night to further

- ◆ Two youth, aged between 25 and 30, forcibly entered the Nirankari Bhawan and lobbed the grenade amidst the crowd when the congregation at Rana Sansi in Amritsar district was on
- ◆ Punjab Police has described it as a "terrorist act"
- ◆ The Police have launched a massive search operation to nab the suspects and also sealed Punjab's border with Rajasthan

investigate the matter.

The blast came at a time when the police have sounded high alert across Punjab, especially in Amritsar after the terrorist-outfit Ansar Ghazwatul Hind (AGH) chief Zakir Musa was reportedly spotted in the holy city along with a few other men on Friday.

Security was beefed up across the State since Thursday after four persons snatched an SUV at gunpoint near Madhopur in Pathankot district last week, followed by an intelligence input claiming that a group of six to seven Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) terrorists were reportedly in the State, possibly in Ferozepur area.

Sunday's blast attack at Nirankaris — considered to be a subsidiary of Sikhism but following their own living Guru and religious text — harked back about four decades back. In 1978, 13 Sikhs and three Nirankaris were killed in Amritsar following a violent clash between the two groups — an incident considered to be the starting of the Sikh militancy in Punjab.

As per initial inputs, two youth, aged between 25 and 30, with their faces covered, forcibly entered the Nirankari Bhawan and lobbed the grenade amidst the crowd when the congregation was on.

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Waiting relatives of a victim after two men on a motorcycle reportedly threw a grenade at the Nirankari Bhawan during a religious congregation, in Adliwal village near Amritsar, on Sunday

MHA prepares list of Rohingya sympathisers

Ex-diplomat, top lawyers, Amnesty International, India figure on list

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Following report by intelligence agencies, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has prepared a list of several suspected organisations and individuals, who are backing and providing assistance to Rohingya immigrants.

The organisations mentioned in the list include Working Group on Alternative Strategies, Crown Newsing, Community Mobilisation, Choton Das of Bondi Mukti Committee, Kolkatta, Md Saleel of Kerala Muslim Culture Centre and Amnesty International, India. The list also named a former Ambassador, top lawyers, civil society members and a professor of a renowned university.

The document accessed by *The Pioneer* also gives state-



wise data of Rohingya immigrants. "There are 1,234 illegal Rohingya immigrants in the national Capital. Of them 163 are untraceable. Demographic details of 894 have been captured", the document said.

As per the document, there are 6,523 illegal Rohingyas in Jammu and Kashmir. Of them, 6,461 are in Jammu and 62 in Kashmir. There are 264 Rohingyas in Uttar Pradesh, 26 in Assam, 102 in Tamil Nadu, 60 in Karnataka, 16 in Kerala, and one in Maharashtra.

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PM to inaugurate ₹6,400 cr KMP e-way in G'gram today

Modi to flag off Escorts Mujesar-Ballabgarh section of Delhi Metro's Violet Line, lay foundation stone of Vishwakarma Skill University

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

After a delay of nine years, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate much awaited ₹6,400 crore Kundli-Manesar-Palwal (KMP), also known as Western Peripheral Expressway (WPE), at Sultanpur village Gurugram on November 19.

Also, Modi will inaugurate the 3.2 km-long Escorts Mujesar-Ballabgarh section of Delhi Metro's Violet Line and lay foundation stone of Vishwakarma Skill University, Dudhola Palwal. Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, along with his Cabinet Ministers, will also be present on the occasion.



The Expressway will not only ease burden of heavy traffic using Delhi as transit point but also provide high-speed link between northern Haryana and southern districts.

It will facilitate uninterrupted high-speed link for traffic, especially commercial traffic, from Haryana to the

neighbouring States.

The expressway will act as a Delhi bypass for traffic coming from north of Delhi on NH-1 and going to south of Delhi on NH2 and to the west along NH-8.

Once the KMP Expressway is fully operational, vehicles going from North India to the Western and Southern parts of the country would be able to do so without entering into Delhi.

According to officials, ₹6,400 crore had been spent on the expressway project and 3,846 acre was acquired at a cost of ₹2,788 crore. The design speed of the expressway is 120 kmph for light vehicles and 100 kmph for heavy ones.

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Fadnavis Govt OK's quota for Marathas

Accepts Maharashtra State Backward Class Commission suggestions

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Having accepted the recommendations made by the Maharashtra State Backward Class Commission (MSBCC) on the socio-economic status of the Marathas, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Sunday announced that his Government would grant reservations to Marathas in jobs and education under a new Socio-Economic Backward Class (SEBC) category.

Talking to mediapersons here on the eve of the start of the Winter Session of Maharashtra Legislature, Fadnavis said, "We have accepted the recommendations made by the MSBCC. We have decided to accord reservations to the Maratha community under a new SEBC category. The reservations to be granted to



Marathas will be independent of the existing reservations for the OBC category."

The Chief Minister said the State Government had constituted a Cabinet Subcommittee to take statutory steps to implement its decision.

Fadnavis said the MSBCC had made three recommendations in its submission to the Maharashtra Government on November 15. "The MSBCC has recommended that Marathas be given reserva-

tions on the basis their socio-economic backwardness under extraordinary situations. As per the guidelines of the Supreme Court (which has pegged the cap on reservations at 50 per cent), we have an extraordinary situation on hand. Based on the commission's recommendations, we have decided to create a new SEBC category under which we intend to accord reservations to Marathas without affecting the reservations already given under the OBC category," the Chief Minister said.

Replying to a question, the Chief Minister said there is no need for the State Government to seek the permission of the Central Backward Class Commission to grant reservations to Marathas in jobs and education.

Official sources said the Maharashtra Government would introduce a Bill in the

Winter Session of the State Legislature to create SEBC category and accord 16 per cent reservations to Maratha community in addition to the existing 52 per cent reservations in the State. When the law is enacted, the reservations will go up to 68 per cent in Maharashtra.

According to sources, the Maharashtra Government is contemplating to take the route adopted by the Tamil Nadu Government under late Chief Minister Jayalalitha, which achieved its objective of increasing reservations to 69 per cent by passing the Tamil Nadu Act of 1994 and adding the 1994 Act to the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution.

Article 31B of the Constitution stipulates that the legislations in the Ninth Schedule cannot be challenged in courts.

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CAPSULE

- JAWAN MARTYRED IN NAXAL BLAST; 2 HURT**
Raipur: A jawan of the District Reserve Guard was killed and two others were injured in an blast triggered by Naxals in Chhattisgarh's Sukma district.
- CAMPAGNING FOR C'GARH PH-II POLLS CONCLUDES**
Raipur: Campaigning for the second and final phase of the Assembly polls in Chhattisgarh concluded on Sunday.
- CBI OFFICER MOVES SC OVER REPATRIATION**
New Delhi: Amid ongoing feud inside the CBI, another officer has moved the SC challenging his repatriation to Intelligence Bureau, terming it "unjustified" and "malafide".
- 2-YEAR-OLD GIRL KIDNAPPED, RAPED IN DELHI; 1 HELD**
New Delhi: A two-year-old girl was allegedly kidnapped and raped and was left near the Old Delhi Railway Station, police said on Sunday. The accused, a drug addict, has been arrested.

14 killed as bus falls into gorge in Uttarkashi



Officials undertake rescue operation, rush injured to hospital

Fourteen passengers died and 14 were injured when the bus in which they were travelling fell into a deep gorge near Janakichatti in Uttarkashi district at about 12:30 pm on Sunday. According to the Uttarkashi district emergency operation centre, the accident took place on the Naugaon-Damta-Vikasnagar Road in Badkot tehsil involving a private bus bearing registration number UK 07 PA 1127. The bus fell off the road down about 250 metres into the Yamuna riverbed.

The District Magistrate, Superintendent of Police and other officials reached the site with six ambulances and doctors to undertake the rescue operation. Fourteen people were reported dead on the spot.

Of the 14 injured, six are in serious condition and were airlifted by helicopter. Three were admitted in AIIMS Rishikesh and three were admitted in Jolly Grant hospital. The remaining eight injured were transported by ambulance to Dehradun. In other accident which took place in Pithoragarh district three people died and two were injured when their car fell into 500-metre deep ravine in the afternoon. The accident took place at Gyarah Devi. One of the two injured was taken to Sushila Tiwari hospital in Haldwani while the other injured person was taken to the military hospital in Pithoragarh.

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IN KALINGANAGAR

Chopped palms found near Sahid Stambh

PNS ■ JAJPUR

Tension prevailed at Ambagadia village under the Kalinganagar police station in Jajpur district on Sunday after ten chopped palms were found at a field near the Sahid Stambh (Martyrs' Pillar).

The palms are of the tribals, who died in the police firing on January 2, 2006, while protesting against land acquisition for the Tata Steel project.

The palms had been chemically preserved and kept in ten plastic jars at the Veer Bhoomi Club near the field. It was suspected that some miscreants broke the lock of the club on Saturday night, pilfered the palms and later scattered the palms near the Sahid Stambh.

Bisthapan Birodhi Manch secretary Rabintra Jaraka filed an FIR in the Kalinganagar police station and alleged that some persons entered the club by breaking the main door on Saturday night and scattered the palms. Police are investigating the case, said Kalinga Nagar police station IIC Rajendra Narayan Patnaik.

Notably, the doctors of the Government hospital in Jajpur had chopped off the palms of ten deceased from the bodies to



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establish their identities through fingerprints and DNA test. In 2007, leaders of the Bisthapan Birodhi Manch received the chopped palms from the hospital authorities and preserved them in the club in Ambagadia village near the Sahid Stambh.

CM stops tree felling for beer factory

Orders probe by RDC

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

After the district administration felled hundreds of trees for a proposed beer factory at Balarampur in Dhenkanal district, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Sunday ordered immediate stoppage of tree cutting.

As per a notification issued by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO), the Central Division RDC has been asked to investigate into the matter.

The irate villagers, protesting against the cutting of trees for the beer bottling plant,

had a faceoff with police on Saturday.

Environmentalist Praffula Samantara, who reached Balarampur and held discussions with the aggrieved locals, demanded that the State Government compensate the community that has protected the forests for generations.

However, the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) termed the Chief Minister's order to put a stop to tree felling as an afterthought following a backlash from different quarters.

The direction for the RDC probe by the Chief Minister has no meaning since there is visu-

The Congress and the BJP termed the Chief Minister's order to put a stop to tree felling as an afterthought following a backlash from different quarters

al proof of the damage. Instead of the RDC, he could have ordered a police inquiry. It seems that the Chief Minister has passed the order under pressure," said Leader of Opposition in then State Assembly Narasingha Mishra (Congress).

BJP MLA Pradeep Purohit said the Government's decision

for an RDC probe is of no use as the damage has already been done.

"It seems some Ministers and bureaucrats are operating without the knowledge of the Chief Minister. The RDC probe into the incident is of no use as the damage has already been done with the felling of hundreds of trees. The order is only to pacify the people," he said.

However, BJD spokesperson Pratap Keshari Deb said the opposition parties' charges are ridiculous. The Chief Minister has ordered for a probe into the incident. Those who are found guilty would be punished, he said.

HC BENCH ROW

S'pur lawyers' 2-day Mahabandh from Nov 29

Offices to be closed from today; solution expected soon: DM

NIMAI CHARFAN SAHU ■ SAMBALPUR

The lawyers of Sambalpur gave an ultimatum to the State Government to fulfil their demand for a High Court Bench failing which they will close the entire offices of State, including of Central Government by holding a Mahabandh for two days on November 29 and 30. Meanwhile, the agitators will close all offices from November 19.

"In fact, we expected a suitable reply from both the State and Central Governments in this regard but in vain. Hence, we are compelled to go ahead with the earlier programme," said Sambalpur

District Bar Association president Bijitendriya Pradhan.

Today in an important meeting of the Central Action Committee (CAC) of the lawyers and members of various socio-cultural organisations of the district, it was decided to intensify the agitation.

The leaders of all political parties including all religion heads from temples, churches, mosques and Gurudwaras also took part in the meeting to express their solidarity.

"Since the demand is genuine and there is a necessity for a HC Bench, we extend our unconditional support to the CAC," said religious heads. "When all the State and Central Government offices will remain closed, the

entire essential services will be exempted from it," informed Pradeep Kumar Bahidar, a senior member of the CAC.

But Sambalpur Collector Samarth Verma said: "The people were suffering a lot due to the agitation of the lawyers. The proposed bandh from November 19 will aggravate the situation further. Hence, we are in continuous touch with the CM office and the State Government. A suitable solution is expected within three to four days."

The Collector further informed that massive police arrangements will be made everywhere and near all offices to ensure peaceful bandh and curb any untoward situation anywhere.

Tech can help tap State's natural resources: Min

Environment Congress held

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A two-day 20th Science and Environment Congress began here on Saturday, jointly organised by the Orissa Environmental Society (OES) and the National Institute of Science Education and Research (NISER).

Speaking at the inauguration function, School and Mass Education, Science and Technology Minister Badri Narayan Patra told that science and technology can play a great role for proper utilisation of natural resources for faster growth of Odisha. He also called upon all science institutions for focusing on research to solve various social problems of the State besides tackling the natural disasters.



Ravenshaw University VC Prof Ishan Kumar Patra attending as guest of honour underscored the need for more researches on areas like nanotechnology, IT and biotechnology.

NISER Director Prof Sudhakar Panda while presiding over the function said that science education should be made more attractive and effective in nation building exercise.

OES president Dr Sundar Narayan Patra delivered the

welcome address. Convener Dr Jayakrushna Panigrahi introduced the guests.

Four scientists such as Prof Rabindranath Nayak, Prof Sudarshan Nanda, Prof Mahendra Kumar Mohanty and NISER Director Prof Panda were felicitated on the occasion.

The two-day meet was joined by over 500 scientists, researchers, teachers and students from the State and outside.

Stage set for BMC annual national music fest

SHYAMHARI CHAKRA ■ BHUBANESWAR

The stage is set for the much-awaited three-day annual national music festival of the city-based premiere cultural forum Bhubaneswar Music Circle (BMC) at then RabindraMandap commencing on Monday.

The inaugural evening would kick off with sitar recital by Odisha's own Rabi Shankar Pradhan, one of the very few classical instrumentalists of the State to be known at the national level. It would be followed by Hindustani vocal recital by Vidushi Subhra Guha of Agra gharana who is currently based in Kolkata with the prestigious ITC Sangeet Research Academy.

The second evening would commence with Hindustani vocal rendition by Delhi-based journalist and vocalist Priya Kanungo, a disciple of the renowned brothers Pandit



Raajan-Sajan Mishra followed by Carnatic violin recital by Pandit Kaivalyakumar, an exponent of Kirana gharana, who serves as a guru at the Gangubai Hangal Gurukul at Hubli in Karnataka. The festival has received patronage from corporate giants like ONGC, Nalco, Tata Steel, OMC and SAIL.

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Medal of the University of Madras.

The final evening of the festival would feature Odisha's Odishi vocalist Bharati Jena, a faculty member of the city-based Utkal Sangeet Mahavidyalaya followed by a Hindustani vocal recital by Pandit Kaivalyakumar, an exponent of Kirana gharana, who serves as a guru at the Gangubai Hangal Gurukul at Hubli in Karnataka.

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Harassment charge: Actress takes u-turn

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Bengali actress Elsha Ghosh, who had accused Odia movie director Dilip Panda of misbehaviour and mental harassment, has now made a u-turn on the issue and claimed that it was a misunderstanding between her and the director.

"In the heat of the moment, I thought I was misbehaved by him, but that doesn't mean that it was any sort of casting couch or anything like #MeToo allegations," said Elsha.

However, the actress admitted that she was mentally tortured.

On the other hand, Panda clarified that the actress was scolded for not focussing on her work but she termed it as mental torture.

"The actress has realised her mistake. It is not easy to complete shoot of a movie in 45 days. If an actor is not performing and is being scolded for that, can we term it as men-



tal torture?" questioned Panda.

The matter had come to light after a video of the actress screaming and alleging the director of mentally harassing her went viral on social media.

The incident had occurred during the audio release of upcoming Odia movie 'Tu Mo Suna Chadhe' in a hotel in the city on Wednesday night.

AYUSH docs threaten to take to streets

Demand early regularisation

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The AYUSH Doctors' Association on Sunday threatened that it would take to the streets if the State Government doesn't regularise their services at the earliest.

"AYUSH doctors have been providing health services in place of Allopathic doctors for the last 11 years. In 2016, the Health and Family Welfare Department had decided to create 1,485 posts to regularise AYUSH doctors.

"However, the proposal has not been approved by the Finance Department yet. Now, the doctors, who had been appointed on the basis of marks in 2007 and 2008, have crossed maximum age limits to appear for OPSC exams. Hence, the Government should regularise

es all these doctors soon on different ways," demanded association president Dr Jyoti Ranjan Gahan and RBSK Doctor Association president Dr Sushil Mohapara in a statement.

They suggested that the AYUSH doctors should be appointed either through OPSC Concurrence or by relaxing marks and age limits for OPSC tests or by simplifying process under the Validation Act.

They too demanded that the system of regularisation after six years in job, as adopted in case of Government doctors, be applied for AYUSH doctors soon.

The associations held a meeting here and resolved to resort to an intense agitation if the demands are not met soon. Among others, Dr Prabhakar Das, Dr Subrat Mohapata and Dr Subrat Panda attended, among others.

'Repatriate unused land from firms'

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The CPI(M) has demanded that the State Government should take steps for repatriation of the land handed over to the companies which have not used them for establishment of their units.

Citing that according to the Land Acquisition Act 2013, the companies have to return the land if they fail to use it for setting up their units within five years of acquisition, the party alleged that thousands of acres of land are under the possession of these companies in the State.

The State unit of CPI(M) in its meeting here resolved to submit a memorandum to the State Government in this regard. Besides, it will demand distribution of land to the urban landless inhabitants and MSP of Rs 2,930 per quintal of paddy as has been approved in the Assembly.

Child marriage rate 21.3% in State



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Poverty, lack of education, cultural practices, and insecurity fuel and sustain the practice are among the many reasons behind child marriage.

In Odisha, about 21.3 per cent of girls are getting married before the legal age of marriage (18 years) as per the NFHS-4 data, 2016. The situation is quite threatening as it poses a serious threat to the future generation as well.

Keeping this in view, the ActionAid in collaboration with the Girls Not Bride, organised a consultation here on Saturday.

Former Chairperson of

Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights Kasturi Mohapatra said civil society organisations' intervention is highly essential to develop a proper convergence to end child marriage.

Among others, Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights Chairperson Sandhyabati Pradhan and Member Harihar Nayak, State Commission for Women Member Snehanjali Mohanty and ActionAid regional manager Sasmita Nanda and Girls Not Bride members Shripa Jha and Divya Mukunda spoke on the theory of 'Change on Child Marriage'.

GGP Colony cries for bus service

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

This is a repeated then plea for reintroduction of the City Bus service at GGP Colony in Bhubaneswar.

Presently, no bus is plying in this area, where the other means of transport are very poor. This is the area where common people and school and college going children could benefit once the City Buses start plying. One should not say that lack of commuters is the reason for the scarce bus service in this area. I request the authorities of the recently-introduced 'Mo Bus' service to look into the matter immediately.

K Ravi, E-237, GGP Colony, Bhubaneswar-751025, Mob: 9437616497

KISS branch to open in Kolkata

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A branch of the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) is set to start in Kolkata with the initiative of 'Help Us Help Them', a reputed city-based NGO, in association with KISS Bhubaneswar. The groundbreaking ceremony for the new branch was held on Sunday.

KISS Kolkata would start functioning from the coming academic session from a five-acre land near IIM Joka. In the first phase, 1000 poor children would get education free of cost. Help Us Help Them head Mukti Gupta was impressed with the KISS model during her recent visit to the institute.

She received encouragement from KIIT and KISS founder Dr Achyuta Samanta towards her work for poor and under privilege children.

During last six months, Gupta organised two fund raising programmes to establish the KISS branch in Kolkata. She apprised donors on the work and activities of Dr Samanta in his presence.

She collected Rs 15 crore from one corporate house in the first phase and Rs 10 crore from another corporate house in the second phase. The Rotary Club played a major role in this funding.

Various States of India have been showing interest to open KISS branches. Dr Samanta is continuously trying to open KISS branches in all districts of Odisha, various States and different countries as well.



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'BJD Govt focusing on party organisation'

Democratic system ruined in State: Niranjana

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The BJD Government is now trying to upkeep its 'decaying' party base and, thus, ruining the democratic system in the State, alleged Pradesh Congress Committee president Niranjana Patanik in a statement on Sunday.

The BJD Government is now focusing more on party organisation rather than the welfare of common people, he said.

The BJD appointed

Lopamudra Buxipatra as Chairperson of the State Commission for Women. But before she completed her 3-year tenure, the Government withdrew her and made her working president of the Biju Mahila Janata Dal. Likewise, Minati Behera, who was Chairperson of State Disable Commission, has now been made State president of the Biju Mahila Janata Dal. State Buildings and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Board Chairperson Subash Singh's tenure ended around seven months back, but the post is yet to be filled. All these posts are now lying vacant, he pointed out in support of his allegation.

Patanik further alleged that

the Government is not at all sincere regarding Lokpal appointment, despite the Supreme Court's repeated reminders. This is a clear violation of constitutional system, he remarked.

He too criticized the Government saying around half of the 71 thousand Anganwadi Centers have no own buildings and they are running either in rented houses or in temple premises or in community halls. The Government has also shut down a number of primary schools on plea of lack of minimum attendance. This shows the keenness and sincerity of the State Government in developing child education system, ridiculed the PCC chief.

Month-long 'Art Trail' kicks off at Old Town

Artworks by artists from across globe being showcased

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Bhubaneswar Art Trail 2018 (BAT) was inaugurated by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik at the Old Town area here on Sunday.

Tourism Minister Ashok Chandra Panda, Sports and Youth Services Minister Chandra Sarathi Behera, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Tourism, Sports and Youth Services Vishal Kumar Dev, Vice Chairman, Bhubaneswar Development Authority Dr Krishnan Kumar, Managing Director, Odisha Mining Corporation Vineel Krishna and CMD Nalco Dr TK Chand attended as guests. Jagannath



Panda and Premjish Achari, curators of the event were also present.

The project comes as an initiative by Utsa Foundation for Contemporary Art in collaboration with Odisha Tourism, Bhubaneswar Development Authority, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation, and Bhubaneswar

Smart City Limited.

Located in a trail of 1.3 km in Old Town Bhubaneswar, the month-long Bhubaneswar Art Trail 2018 is more than just a walk in the beautiful heritage district of Bhubaneswar with amazing artworks by artists from all over the world. It also consists of several events that explore the underlying curatorial theme 'Navigation is Offline'.

Speaking on the occasion, curator Panda said, "It is not an easy task to curate a public art exhibition. When you are working on a space like Old Town which has so many layers of history manifested through architecture, monuments, walls, ponds, lakes, gardens, residential areas, etc. it also becomes a responsibility. Our challenge was that how better could we represent and respond to this space and its community. But for us the biggest advantage was that the space and the community responded to us in an equally intense way."

"The way this Art Trail is emerging now, we cannot see it as individual artistic expression. Bhubaneswar Art Trail is an expression of the Old Town and its people. This is how each

community-based art project should evolve. It should be committed to excellent art making but it should also be dedicated to the possibilities of inspiring a vision for the community. That is why we are not limiting the Trail to an exhibition," he added.

Achari said, "Apart from the art exhibition we have a range of diverse programmes lined up for you. Some of them include a one-day colloquium titled Propositions which will feature renowned curators, art historians, pedagogues, etc., a two-day film screening and a film poster exhibition on Gandhian values in collaboration with NFAI, an art workshop for children specially designed by Art1st Foundation, talks by various writers, filmmakers, historians and various cultural programmes."

Day for road mishap victims organised

Silent rally taken out

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Sankha Dhvani Rasta Suraksha Samiti observed the 23rd World Day of Remembrance for road accident victims here on Sunday.

A condolence meeting was held with silence prayer for those who lost their lives in road accidents. 108 Ambulance members were covered under Biju Gadi Chalak Surakhya Yojana covering Rs 2 lakh accident risk and medical care. Large numbers of Bhart Scout and Guide students were present.



sent.

A silent rally was flagged off by Additional Secretary Niranjana Sahoo from Ram Mandir to Master Canteen.

Industrialist Bimal Mishra, scribe Ashok Panda, PPL safety in-charge Sachitra Rout, Er Debabrata Panigrahi, lawyer KN Das, MVI Majhi, Prajapati Iswariya Mahavidyalaya, Unit -9 centre head Sister Geeta among others were present.

IMFA on-duty mine worker injured

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

After its prolonged labour unrest in its manufacturing plant at Rayagada and chromite mine in Sukinda, the Indian Metals and Ferro Alloys Limited (IMFA) is again in news for a wrong reason.

On Sunday morning, a worker of the company's Mahagiri Mines was seriously injured while carrying out housekeeping activities at the surface. In course of cleaning certain equipment, a mechan-

ical part fell on the worker's leg resulting in a fracture to the leg. The worker, yet to be officially identified, was shifted to a hospital.

Commenting on the incident, IMFA Mines Business Unit head Sanjeev Das tried to downplay the seriousness of the incident saying that the worker's injury was not "life threatening".

At the same time, he stated, "We will conduct an inquiry (into the incident) and take necessary steps."

Meet on disaster mgt held at DAV P'put

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The ODRAF Bhubaneswar unit led by ODRAF Trainer P Padhy conducted an awareness programme on disaster management at the DAV Public School, Pokhariput premises here recently and demonstrated various first-aid techniques and rescue operations to the students and staffs.

The team highlighted the importance of preparedness for disaster during school hours and explained how mock drill helps a community to deal with a disaster in a very prompt, spontaneous and coordinated manner with minimum casualty.

BMC seizes 71 kg polythene; ₹15,000 fine collected

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) enforcement teams on Sunday conducted surprise raids on shops and seized 71 kg of polythene/plastic and collected a total fine of ₹15,200.

With this, the BMC has seized around 250 kg of polythene/plastic since the polythene use ban order by the State Government on October 2.

A squad led by Joint Commissioner Bimalendu Ray conducted raids on the Forum Mart in Satyanagar, Bhawan



Mall in Saheed Nagar and other places in the southeast zone from where 60 kg of polythene/plastic were seized and ₹6,000 collected as fine.

Similarly, the north zone enforcement team led by Deputy Commissioners Subhansu Mishra and Pramod Kumar Prusty conducted raids on the Pal Heights, City

Pharmacy, Pantaloan (Patia), Subway, Angan Heritage and Big Bazaar (Patia) and collected fine of ₹9,200, besides seizing 6 kg polythene.

Southwest zone team led by Zonal Deputy Commissioner Lalendu Sahoo conducted raids on Big Bazaar and V2 at Krishna Plaza near the Iskon Temple, The World near Khandagiri and Sashtri Nagar and Priya Darshini Market near CRP Square. They seized around 5 kg of polythene.

Nine shop owners in Bapuji Nagar were fined Rs 250 each for not keeping dustbins near their shops.

Notification for 12 new ports issued by Govt

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR
The State Government has issued notification for setting up 12 new ports. MoUs have been signed with different organisations for this and land is being acquired for the purpose, said Transport Minister Narsingha Charan Sahu in reply to a question by MLA Dilip Ray in the State Assembly on Saturday.

Presently, three ports are functioning at Paradip, Dhamra and Gopalpur. In 1991, the Government had issued notification to set up a port at Bahabalapur in Baleswar district.

Similarly in 1996, a notification was issued for another eight ports. They are Astaranga and Bali Harchandi in Puri district, Inchudi, Subarnarekha and Chandipur in Baleswar dis-

trict, Bahuda in Ganjam district and Chudamani in Bhradak district, said Sahu.

Besides, a notification was issued in 2000 for a port at Jatadhari Muhan in Jagatsinghpur and in 2009 notification was issued for a port at Talsari in Baleswar district. In 2017, a notification was issued for a riverine port at Mahakalapada block in Kendrapada district, said the Minister.

Though notification was issued 17 years back for Bahabalapur port, the construction work has not made any headway. Similarly, in 1996 out of the notification which issued for eight ports, a MoU has been signed in 2008 with an organisation for a port at Subarnarekha and 700 acre of land has been acquired.

Even though the

Government had signed an MoU with the Aditya Birla Group for the port at Chudamani, later the company withdrew from the project. An MoU has been signed with the Navyug Engineering for the port at Astaranga in 2010. While the land acquisition process is on for the project, an agitation is continuing opposing the project. The expansion works for the Dhamra and Gopalpur Ports are being carried out.

After the proposed ports become functional, import and exports would increase; and due to the business activities employment opportunities would be created. The Government should complete the ports within a limited time-frame to expedite developmental activities, demanded Ray.

Youth kills 3 of family in Kendrapada

Kendrapada: A youth allegedly murdered three members of his family at Madhusudanpur village under the Patkura police limits in Kendrapada district late on Saturday night.

Bikram Das, the accused, went absconding after the incident but was apprehended by police on Sunday afternoon. The deceased were Bikram's grandfather Dhruva Das, grandmother Saraswati Das and aunt Pratima Das. According to reports, Bikram returned home on Saturday night in an inebriated state and thrashed his wife after an argument between them. He also attacked his father and mother when they opposed his act.

When the deceased trio intervened in the matter, Bikram assaulted them with a sharp weapon killing Dhruva and Saraswati on the spot.

Pratima sustained grievous injuries in the attack and succumbed on the way to the SCB Medical College Hospital in Cuttack. **PNS**



Brahmapur murder: Man, paramour held

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR
A 48-year-old salesman and his paramour have been arrested by police for the alleged murder of the former's wife at Military Line under the Town police station here on September 9.

Rabindra Behera, had allegedly killed his 45-year-old wife Papina. Rabindra and Papina were married for 24 years and have three sons, said ASP Santanu Dash at a Press meet.

Differences between the couple started due to financial crisis a few years ago. In the meanwhile, Rabindra developed a relationship with Bhanu Dakua (48), a resident of Hillpatna area.

In July, 2017 Rabindra, who worked as a salesman at a cloth shop in the city, left for Hyderabad for better employment. He had left behind his father Gopal Behera, Papina and elder son Rahul at their Military Lane house.

On September 6, 2017 the accused threatened Papina with dire consequences over phone.

Three days after he talked to his wife,



Rabindra returned home and assaulted Papina with a knife.

As Rahul was not at home, Gopal tried to resist the attack. By the time, neighbours reached the house, the accused fled the spot.

A complaint was later filed by Rahul with the police based on which a case of murder was registered.

Police on Friday received information that Rabindra and Bhanu were spotted at Chapan Chowk in Puri.

A team of Town police immediately left for Puri and arrested them. During interrogation, Rabindra confessed to his crime.

Both the accused were forwarded to court on Saturday, said the ASP.

K'put farmer ends life over crop loss

Koraput: A farmer reportedly committed suicide over crop loss in Maliguda village under the Potangi police station in the district on Sunday.

The deceased farmer was identified as Loknath Pangti.

Sources said Pangti consumed pesticides in his farmland and returned home and told his wife about it.

His family members rushed him to the Patangi Community Health Centre but he died while undergoing treatment.

Unable to bear the mental pressure due to crop loss and debt burden, Pangti consumed poison, alleged family members. Besides, Pangti's wife has lodged a complaint in the connection. On Saturday, a sharecropper Gouranga Charan Kap of Napang village allegedly committed suicide in Kendrapada district due to crop loss caused by the recent Titli cyclone. **PNS**

INBRIEF

FISH MERCHANT COMMITS SUICIDE IN JSPUR
Jagatsinghpur: A 38-year-old fish merchant Baidanath Behera of Jaibada village here was found hanging in residence on Friday. Behera originally hailed from Teramanpur village in the Kujang area and was residing a rented house in Jaibada village along with family. Neighbours seeing the deceased's house locked from informed police.

PARADIP SCRIBES' BODY OBSERVES PRESS DAY
Paradip: The Paradip Press Media (PPM) observed the National Press Day on Friday holding a meeting at the Press Club presided over by PPM advisor Chittaranjan Swain. Paradip Municipality Chairman Basanta Biswal, journalist Sudhir Ranjan Dash and President awardee former teacher Manoranjan Das attended as guests and criticised the attacks on working journalists in and outside the State. They spoke on the difficulties of reporters while collecting the news from fields.

WEIGHTLIFTING MEET KICKS OFF IN B'PUR
Brahmapur: A two-day-long Odisha Weightlifting Championship organised by the Ganjam Weightlifting and Wrestling Association kicked off here in the presence of association president Chittaranjan Swain. Arjuna awardee Katulu Ravi Kumar, police officer Debarata Chakra, association State secretary Narayan Sahu, advisor and senior journalist Rabi Rath, State VP Kumud Chandra Sahu, secretary Gagarin Nayak, Laxmipriya Sahu, Manoranjan Mahapatra, block Chairman Santosh Kumar Padhy, Sangita Swain and Pranakrushna Patnaik attended as guests.

355 N'NAGAR SARASWATI +2 STUDENTS GET LAPTOPS
Brahmapur: As many as 355 Plus Two pass Commerce and Science students of the Saraswati Sishu Vidya Mandir, Nilakantha Nagar, highest in the State, were given laptops under the Biju Yuva Sashaktikaran Yojana for 2018-19. School Principal S Mohan Rao, Umadhav Mohanty, managing committee president Dr Srikanta Mohapatra, VP Balakrusna Choudhury, secretary Sudarsana Padhy, joint secretary Mamata Panigrahy, treasurer B Gajapati Rao, members Pranati Samal, Bhima Sethi, Narayan Panda, Purna Chandra Panda, Nurasingha Choudhury, Hari Krunsa Padhi, Rabindra Nath Jena and Dharmaraj Sahu congratulated the teachers and students.

'UDAYABATA' CELEBRATES CHILDREN'S DAY
Jajpur Road: The magazine 'Udayabata' celebrated Children's Day here recently under chairmanship of Dusmant Rout. Trade union leader Chandramani Samal, former Dharmasala block Chairman Kisan Panda, Rahas Bihari Pandit, Bidyutprava Ray, Surendra Sahu, Basant Patra, scribe Biswaranjan Pattanayak, Susant Kar, Upendra Mohanty, Nirranjan Ghadai attended as guests.

Sundargarh girl cheated, ditched

Also cheated of ₹7L by accused

PNS ■ SUNDARGARH

A girl alleged to have been made pregnant after being lured on promise of marriage and cheated of ₹7 lakh by a youth in Sundargarh district.

Police after registering a case have conducted medical examination of the victim and recorded her statement.

The victim a 26-year-old tribal Christian girl and a resident of Shankara under Town police station in Sundargarh district alleged that Barun Bhoi(28) of Hemgiri area lured her by lying that he was working in OSAP, Koraput.

Later, he kept physical relationship with the girl.

The girl during the year 2018 became pregnant and on insisting marriage, Barun avoided her on one plea or the other. Barun allegedly had also taken from her around Rs 7 lakh by fraud.

When she came know that Barun had cheated her, she told her to return the money but the latter too started avoiding her and did not receive her call.

Finding no other alternative, she went to the house of Barun about a month ago and told her parents to accept her as the wife of Barun and also demanded that her ₹7 lakh be returned to her.

She was allegedly beaten by family members of Barun following which miscarriage of her pregnancy occurred. The victim girl recently lodged complaint in the Town police station.

Shop lock smashed; cash stolen in Joda

PNS ■ CHAMPUBA



On Saturday night, miscreants broke open the locks of a back shutter of a shop of Tata Sponge Employees Consumers' Cooperative Society at Bilapada under the Joda Police Station limits and burgled cash of Rs 50,000.

Sources revealed that the co-operative shop is managed by three co-partners and two salesmen closed it at about 10 pm. Ramesh Kumar Sahu, one of the co-partners, had left for his residence after keeping the cash in a drawer and closing the shutter of the shop as usual.

However, on Sunday morning at about 9 am, when he opened the shop and cash counter, he found that the cash was missing. On checking he found that the lock of back side door was open.

He immediately informed to the security staff watching in front of the shop besides that of the nearby police beat.

Beat in-charge Lalit Kumar Das who came for inquiry found that the thieves had entered into shop from the back side by breaking the shutter.

The thieves reportedly had left the broken lock and shovels including other materials which had been used to break the lock and shutter.

Now the security staff who stood guard in the area are under scanner.

Sources informed that on the fateful night, besides the patrolling staff, four security guards were on duty at the entry point of Tata Sponge colony where the co-operative store is located.

Admn gears up for Panchuka, Bada Osa in Dhableswar

DINESH DAS ■ ATHAGARH

The famous Bada Osa and Panchuka (last five days of holy month of Kartik) fair of Lord Dhableswar near Mancheswar village of Athagarh block would be observed with much pomp and gaiety this year.

A preparatory meeting was held recently in the temple premises, presided over by Cuttack DM Arvind Agarwal in presence of all line department staffers, members of servitor society of the temple and mediapersons. The meeting declared that this year Panchuka would be observed from November 19 to 23 and Bada Osa of the Lord would be performed on November 21 at the shrine.

In the dawn of November 22, the famous Gaja Bhoga and Tarana (liquid cake made of rice powder, sugar and required spices) Prasad of the Lord will be distributed among the devotees.

The Lord will be decorated in Badasinghara Beshna on the day of Bada Osa and will be given darshan to the devotees. As lakhs of devotees throng the shrine during Panchuka, the administration has taken certain precautionary measures to make the fair hurdle free.

Last year over five lakh devotees had thronged the shrine during Panchuka and this year the administration expects more than the number of the last year. As the temple is situated in an island in river Mahanadi, the devotees can reach the shrine either in waterways from Bidanasi side of Cuttack or through country's longest suspension bridge con-



The meeting declared that this year Panchuka would be observed from November 19 to 23 and Bada Osa of the Lord would be performed on November 21 at the shrine

nected from Mancheswar village to the shrine. But this year the administration has decided to stop boat service from the Bidanasi side. So the service will be available from the Mancheswar only.

The administration has decided Rs 20 as freight charge of boats to and fro for every passerby through waterway to reach the shrine and Rs 2 for passing the suspension bridge. Small country boats would not be allowed at any cost in the ferry ghats. Life jackets to passersby through boats will be mandatory. Fire brigade staff and ODRAF teams would be deployed at the ferry ghat to assist the boatmen in their work to avoid any untoward incidents. At least 56 sections of police force will be deployed for smooth conduct of the fair, said SP (Rural) Madhab Chandra Sahoo.

The Dhableswar Seva Sanstha will organise Bhajana programmes in every evening of Panchuka in the shrine. Temporary first aid centres and information centres will be opened. Besides, uninterrupted power supply with generator facility, safe drinking water, sanitation of the shrine would be ensured.

Approach roads to the shrine would be repaired by the Works department ahead of the fair. Several NGOs and NSS and Red Cross volunteers have given consent to assist in the law and order of the fair.

DM Agarwal inaugurated a website on the Lord, www.dhableswar.org, from which all information can be gleaned.

NOV 19 WORLD TOILET DAY

98% sewerage not treated in Odisha

31% urban population in State defecate in open



MAYARANI PRAHARAJ

Toilets save lives, because human waste spreads killer diseases. The World Toilet Day is about inspiring action to tackle the global sanitation crisis. Today, 4.5 billion people live without safely managed sanitation and 892 million people still practice open defecation. The impact of exposure to human faeces on this scale has a devastating impact upon public health, living conditions, nutrition, education and economic productivity across the world. Sustainable Development

Goals 6 (SDG) aims to ensure that everyone has a safe toilet and that no one practices open defecation by 2030. Failure to achieve the goal risks the entire 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

According to report by Odisha Water Supply and Sewerage Board, out of the 60 lakh people staying in 23 urban local bodies, 31 per cent approximately are defecating in open and among people using toilets, only 49 per cent households have septic tanks. Besides, only 2 per cent sewerage is treated in the State and 98 per cent either percolates to ground water or adjoining water bodies through surface drains without treatment.

The 2011 Census stated that an overwhelming 49.6 per cent of the State's households do not have any kind bathing facility and about 1.7 lakh households (48.33 per cent) or 8.5 lakh people of the slum defecate in the open. The impacts of unsafe sanitation conditions and behaviour are immense that adversely affect the urban poor, women and children.

Odisha has an urban sanitation strategy that envisages the development of citywide sanitation plans and integration of all aspects of sanitation in an effective way with special emphasis on slums.

In 2011, the Government of Odisha notified an Urban Sanitation



Strategy, with the goal of transforming urban Odisha into community-driven, totally sanitised, safe, healthy, and livable cities and towns, and outcomes in line with the National Urban Sanitation Policy (NUSP), 2008.

The practice of constructing septic tanks and connecting it to open drains is rampant. With the growing number of toilets now being constructed and a lack of available urban land, sludge disposal is a major issue of concern. In Bhubaneswar in many areas sewerage water either seeps into ground or flows into storm water drains to be discharged into rivers and drains. In most of the unauthorised slums, people practice open defecation. This is due to inadequate provisions for sanitation. Very few people



depend on community toilets.

The Odisha Water Supply and Sewerage Board (OWSSB), which is entrusted with executing sewerage treatment plants (STPs) across the State, came up with an ambitious project - Integrated Sewerage System for Bhubaneswar City (ISSBC). The sewerage system of Bhubaneswar envisages laying of 412 km underground gravity sewer for collection of sewage of each household and establishment throughout the city in uncovered area, replacement and renovation of all existing old sewers, construction of main, intermediate and lift pumping stations, construction of sewage treatment plants and construction of low cost sanitation units in the city area. The new sewerage system has been planned by dividing the city into six sewer-

age districts. The project will provide good and effective sewerage services to the urban population.

The project will ensure proper treatment of generated sewage in the city area and the overall sanitation condition of the city will be improved.

2018 Theme: When Nature Calls campaign is based on the following narrative: When nature calls, we need a toilet. But, billions of people don't have one. This means human faeces, on a massive scale, are not being captured or treated - contaminating the water and soil that sustain human life. We are turning our environment into an open sewer. We must build toilets and sanitation systems that work in harmony with ecosystems.

Weak sanitation has significant

health costs and untreated sewage from cities is the single biggest source of water resource pollution in India. This indicates both the scale of the challenge ahead of the Indian cities and the huge costs incurred from not addressing them. As per census 2011, 53.1 per cent of urban population had no access to toilet and 69.3 per cent of rural households and 18.4 per cent of urban households do not have access to latrine. India's sanitation crisis is an urgent priority as 53 per cent of Indian households had no toilet in 2011.

On October 2, 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Clean India Mission (Swachh Bharat Abhiyan) to achieve an Open Defecation Free (ODF) India by 2019 and aims to build about 100 million toilets across India. The objectives of the mission are to promote a clean India through several initiatives that have been divided into urban and rural work-streams.

The rural component called Swachh Bharat (Gramin), strives to achieve Open Defecation Free (ODF) status through emphasis upon behavior change and flexible delivery mechanisms that take into account local cultures, practices, sensibilities and demands. It also seeks to address solid and liquid waste management. Swachh Bharat (Gramin) is administered by the

Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation.

The urban component called Swachh Bharat (Urban) is focused on building individual toilets, community toilets and solid waste management. Swachh Bharat (Urban) is administered through the Ministry of Urban Development. This programme aims at (i) elimination of open defecation; (ii) eradication of manual scavenging; (iii) modern and scientific municipal solid waste management; (iv) to affect behavioral change regarding healthy sanitation practices; (v) generate awareness about sanitation and its linkage with public health etc.

Discharge from insanitary latrines, sewage flowing in drains, effluent from septic tanks and rampant open defecation are polluting the environment and having adverse health impacts to all of us. Looking at the smart approach in city planning it is imperative for all urban settlements to provide nature friendly sanitation for all. Safe collection, transport and treatment of sewage are necessary. There is a need to check the open discharge of raw sewage into drains and river to protect rural and urban ecosystem.

(Dr Praharaj teaches at Department of Architecture, College of Engineering and Technology, Bhubaneswar)

Month-long K'put tribal fest 'Parab' ends

SCINTILLATING PERFORMANCES ON VALEDICTORY DAY

DR MITRA GETS 'SABARI SAMMAN'

PNS ■ KORAPUT

The month-long State level tribal festival 'Parab 2018' came to an end at Koraput town on Sunday. Addressing the closing ceremony, MP Jhina Hikaka said the festival of indigenous people is a true reflection of its very soul. Collector K Sudarshan Chakravarty said Parab is a perfect platform to share the culture and to spread a message of harmony, integrity and brotherhood among all and the administration has tried its best to promote the hidden talents of each individual.

Chakravarty also said Parab is not only for the district but also for the bordering area of Andhra Pradesh and Chhatisgarh. He also thanked all those who are directly or indirectly involved to make the annual fest celebration a success.

On the closing day, Dr Malbika Mitra, Kathak exponent, stole the hearts of the audience, while tribal folk dance held the audience spellbound. Besides, Odissi and Punjabi folk artists also gave scintillating performances. Dr Malbika Mitra was felicitated with 'Sabari Samman' by the Collector and SP Koraput.

Meanwhile, Pallishree Mela organised on the sidelines of the festival registered good business during the three days. More than 300 stalls were set up by the Koraput District Supply and Marketing Society (DSMS) and ORMAS.

Artist Parbati Majhi said, "We are grateful to the administration for giving us such a great platform for showing our hidden talents and performing



in the Parab is a year-long dream for all of us."

Among others, DIG BSF Iswar chandra panigrahi, SP Kanwar Vishal Singh,

Commandant SOG Ashish Singh, PD Mohammed Akthar, EO TS Diwaker, ADM Deven Pradhan, ED Nalco Dilip Mohanty, ED HAL Debasis

Dev, ASP Sagarika Nath were present.

The Pallishree Mela will be open till November 20, the organisers said.

XSoS holds XUB sustainability summit

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Xavier School of Sustainability (XSoS) of the Xavier University, Bhubaneswar (XUB) organised the fourth edition of XUB Sustainability Summit on "Mainstreaming Sustainability: Role of Education and Reporting" here on Saturday.

XUB registrar EA Augustine, XSoS dean Dr S Peppin, Mahindra Chief Sustainability Officer Anirban Ghosh, Wipro VP PS Narayan, Vishal Bhavsar of Aditya Birla, Gaurav Sarup of Vedanta, Debanjan Bandhopadhyay, Saunak Saha, Richa Pant, Kiran, Gyanesh Pathak, Pratyush Panda, Christu Das and Pradeep Mehta attended as guests. Augustine in his address said, "Sustainability lies not only in the way we define it but also practice it" and Dr Peppin highlighted the importance of



sustainability education and global reporting initiative that are being developed around 17 sustainable development goals.

Later panel discussion on "Careers in Sustainability" moderated by PS Narayan, "Mainstreaming Sustainability Education" moderated by Prof Amar KJR Nayak emphasised on the critical role on education for sustainable development.

Pallavi Atre, with an experience of over twelve years in the field of sustainability, introduced the importance of corporate reporting for sustainable development goals and emphasised on the mission and vision of the global reporting initiative and its focus on mainstreaming sustainability and transparency alongside rapid economic growth.

DSBM holds mgmt event 'Genesis 2K18'



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The DAV School of Business Management (DSBM) organised DSBM Genesis 2K18, a national management event, where young contestants from various higher secondary schools and institutions participated in business quiz, Ad Mad Show, paper presentation and Moot Court.

The objective of the event was to provide an ideal platform

for students to ignite, ideate and develop business skills as well as demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

Prof PK Hota, HOD, Department of Commerce, Utkal University, chief guest, laid importance on human intelligence over artificial intelligence. DSBM president Madan Mohan Panda motivated the budding talents to work hard with commitment and dedication. DAV Unit-8 Principal

Ipsita Das spoke on organisational and communication skills to build confidence. DSBM Principal Dr DN Mishra observed that there is a mismatch of expectations of required market skill and academic skill.

Prof Santosh Kumar Tripathy, Director (CDC), Utkal University, chief guest at the valedictory session, congratulated the winners.

DAV Public School, Unit-8 emerged as the champions whereas DAV Public School, CDA Cuttack bagged the runners-up trophy for business quiz. In paper presentation, DAV Public School, Rourkela clinched the winner's trophy whereas DAV Public School, Chandrasekharpur bagged the 1st runners-up trophy and DAV Unit-8, bagged the 2nd runners-up trophy.

The winner of Ad-Mad Show was DAV, Kansbahal; DAV Unit-8 stood 1st runners-up followed by DAV\ Rourkela as the 2nd runners-up. In the Moot Court, the winners were DAV CDA, Cuttack. DAV Unit-8 and DAV Pokhariput secured first, second and third positions, respectively.

Odia worker's body brought from S Arabia

Baijayant had sought Ambassador's help

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The dead body of Narendra Palai, a resident of Gopinath Prasad under Khordha district's Banpur block who died in a road accident in Saudi Arabia on October 20, arrived in the city airport late on Saturday night by the efforts of former Kendrapada MP Baijayant Panda.

Earlier, Panda had requested in a letter to Ambassador of India in Saudi Arabia Ahmad Javed to bring back Palei's body to India soon.

A representative team of Panda paid tributes to Palei at the airport. Then, the body was handed over to the family.

"Death of Odia people outside the State is rising day by day. Odia people are being forced to go outside to earn their living as they are not getting jobs in the State. Odia workers should get jobs in their respective regions," said Panda in a statement.



'Genuine news strengthens democracy'

NJWA holds Press Day

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Fact-based news helps build a society and strengthens Democracy and, thus, media reporters should understand this very essence and file genuine reports only.

Noted speakers viewed this at the National Press Day celebrated by the National Journalists' Welfare Association (NJWA) here on November 16. Odisha High Court Justice Bishwanath Rath and Chit

Fund Commission Chairman Justice Madan Mohan Das graced as guests in the meeting presided over by 'Samaja' editor Bapapada Tripathy. 'Prajatantra' editor and MP Bhartruhari Mahtab was conferred with

the 'Utkal Sambadika Ratna' award and six newspaper editors of outside the State were felicitated with the 'Rashtriya Gourab Samman'. As many as 22 senior journalists were given pensions on the occasion.

Senior journalist Arun Panda presided over a seminar titled 'Digital age challenges towards moral values.'

Among others, Development Commissioner R Balkrishnan, MP Prasanna Patsani, SC and ST Development Minister Ramesh Majhi and journalists like Rajaram Satpathy and Lok Sevak Mandal lifetime member Dr Pravash Chandra Acharya spoke.



Apeejay School celebrates Children's Day

PNS ★ BHUBANESWAR

The Apeejay School Bhubaneswar celebrated the Children's Day with more than three hundred and fifty tiny-tots with many activities.

Chief guest OUAT Vice-Chancellor Dr Surendranath Paspalapak attended the programme paying homage to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and spoke about the significance of the day and the role of the children play in their life and school. Principal Shashmita Tripathy briefed about the efforts the school in bringing advancement in different spheres.



On the occasion prizes for academic excellence, all-rounder, best effort, art and craft, computer science and encouragement were given away to the children followed by cultural programme.

Besides, Science, Social Science, English and Hindi exhibits explained their structures to the visitors.

Painting meet on energy conservation

Over 6L students participate

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The NTPC organised a State-level painting competition on Energy Conservation in Odisha in two categories here recently in which 50 students were selected from over six lakhs students from 22 districts in the School-level painting competition.

OPEPA Director Bhubender Singh Punia, NTPC Regional Executive Director (Eastern Region II) MP Sinha, GM (OS) BB Tripathi, GM (HR) Sebastian Joseph, OPEPA



Deputy Director Manas Ranjan Samal and Energy Conservation Chief Engineer Santosh Das attended as guests and distributed prizes. The national-level painting

competition will be held on December 12 in New Delhi and the award ceremony will be held on December 14, which is also celebrated as the National Energy Conservation Day.

PM to inaugurate...

From Page 1

The length of the Kundli to Manesar stretch is over 83 km. The stretch would have 14 major/minor bridges, 56 underpass/agricultural vehicular underpasses, seven inter-sections and seven toll plazas.

The width of the median at the stretch has been kept at 8 km. Similarly, the Manesar-Palwal stretch is over 52 km long. The expressway also has eight small and six large bridges, four railway over-bridges and 34 underpasses and 64 pedestrian crossings.

Officials said two rows of shrubs would be planted in the median. Apart from this, tress like neem, arjun, keekar, kanail, peepal and sheesham would be planted near the extreme end of two rows on each side. In June 2012, in a multi parties meeting attended by Haryana, Delhi, the Centre and the developers in which a revised deadline of May 2013 was fixed. However, due to delay in

construction, Haryana State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (HSIIDC) decided to penalize the company in April 2012 after which the dispute went to the court and the project was stalled. Later on, the lenders led by the IDBI Bank served the concessionaire KMP Expressway with a substitution notice due to its continued defaults in the performance of its financial and other obligations. Subsequently, then Haryana Government decided to terminate it contract and pay lenders of Rs 1,300crore as termination fee.

In 2014, the project was revived. Following that the 53 km stretch between Manesar and Palwal was opened in April 2016. It was inaugurated by Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways of India, Nitin Gadkari, and was opened for the public in April 2016. The original deadline for this project conceived by former Prime Minister late Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 2002 was

July 2009 but missed several deadlines due to various reasons including land acquisition hurdles.

Along with the Eastern Peripheral Expressway (EPW), the KMP expressway is expected to divert more than 50,000 heavy vehicles away from Delhi. The six-lane expressway will have parking lots, refilling stations, police stations, a trauma centre, helipad, refreshment centres, and recreational facilities.

The WPE was first proposed in 2003 along with Delhi EPE. It was envisioned as a Build Operate Transfer project to construct a 135.6 km four lane expressway from Kundli Sonipat to Palwal near Faridabad.

The Haryana Government has approved the development of five cities on 50,000 hectare each side of the Western Peripheral Expressway which would cover eight districts — Sonipat, Jhajjar, Gurugram, Faridabad, Rewari, Rohtak, Mewat and Palwal.

Terror revisits...

From Page 1

"Out of 250 people who were present in the religious congregation, three died, and 15-20 were injured," said the State IG (Border) Surinder Pal Singh Parmar. All victims were sect followers from nearby villages who had gathered for the Sunday weekly religious meeting. SP Harpal Singh said that earlier, religious congregation used to be held at a house in Lopoke village which were stopped by Satkar committee - a radical Sikh organisation. The State's all top police officials, including the State police chief Suresh Arora along with DGP Law and Order and Intelligence, rushed to the site immediately and camped there until the area is properly scanned. Dog squads have also been deployed to collect the evidence. The

Police have also launched a massive search operation to nab the suspects, with Special Weapons and Tactics team also deployed. The police had also sealed Punjab's border with Rajasthan. Stating that the attack appears to be a "terrorist act", the State DGP Suresh Arora said. "It appears to have a terror angle. Because it is against a group (of people) and it is not against any individual. There is no reason to throw a hand grenade on a group of people, so we will take it as a terrorist act. Till proven otherwise, prima facie we will take it as that."

"There was no issue with this group as such... There was no specific input on Nirankari Bhavan," he said, while adding that the security across the State has been beefed up, especially around all Nirankari buildings.

Arora told The Pioneer that it was too early to say if it is a

joint action by Kashmiri and Sikh militants. He also maintained that it was too early to compare it with the 1978 situation when the Nirankaris were targeted. Condemning the incident and appealing the people to maintain peace, Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh announced a compensation of Rs 5 lakh each to the kin of deceased. He also directed the civic hospital to provide free treatment to those injured in the attack. Soon after the attack, Capt Amarinder chaired a high-level meeting to review the law and order situation in the State.

Meanwhile, Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh also spoke to Capt Amarinder during his "strong action" against those responsible for the grenade attack. Calling the Sunday attack a "reprehensible act of violence", the Union Minister expressed deep anguish over the death of innocents.

14 killed as...

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Meanwhile, Governor Baby Rani Maurya, Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat, Vidhan Sabha Speaker Premchand Agrawal, BJP State president Ajay Bhatt and Pradesh Congress Committee president Pritam Singh expressed grief over the casualties.

The Chief Minister directed a magisterial inquiry into the Uttarkashi accident. Asking officials concerned to facilitate immediate medical treatment of the injured, the Chief Minister also directed that the seriously injured be airlifted by helicopter to Dehradun. He also told the Uttarkashi District Magistrate to make ex gratia payments to the families of those killed as well as to those injured.

Fadnavis Govt OK's quota for...

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However, in 2007, the Supreme Court in IR Coelho vs State of Tamil Nadu ruled that even those laws which are placed in the Ninth Schedule are subject to judicial review if the laws violate the basic structure of the Constitution. Interestingly enough, a petition challenging the Tamil Nadu Reservation policy is expected to come up for hearing before the Supreme Court later this month.

Given that all the political parties, including the Opposition Congress and the NCP, are in favour of according reservations to Marathas,

there will be absolutely no difficulty for the Devendra Fadnavis Government in ensuring the enactment of a law granting reservations to Marathas. However, it remains to be seen if the new law will pass the scrutiny of the Supreme Court in the event of a challenge of the State Government's reservation policy in the Supreme Court. Currently Maharashtra has 52 per cent reservations cap in jobs and educational institutions. Of the total 52 per cent reservations, SCs and ST communities account for 13 and 7 per cent, respectively, while OBCs have 19 per cent reservations.

MHA prepares...

From Page 1

According to the document, five Rohingyaas from Kerala have left their base for Hyderabad. In Tamil Nadu, 94 have secured United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) card. The details of Rohingya immigrants in West Bengal are not available.

Sources said that the State Governments have been directed to keep a close watch on the illegal Rohingya immigrants. "These illegal Rohingya immigrants are required to be deported back to Myanmar post nationality verification through the Ministry of External Affairs. Due to free floating nature of these illegal immigrants, the process of nationality verification and deportation may be affected. Therefore a vigil on their movement is required", said an offi-

cial on the condition of anonymity. The Home Ministry has asked all State Governments to identify them strictly as per the Myanmar verification form. The MHA also advised the States to capture Rohingya immigrants' personal particulars in the new bilingual nationality verification form and got signed by such illegal immigrants and their guardians.

Recently, the intelligence agencies submitted fresh reports to the Home Ministry suggesting there has been mass movement of Rohingya refugees from India's north-eastern States to the south, especially Kerala and Hyderabad. Last month as many as 44 FIRs - 42 in Balapur, 2 in Kanchanbag - related to illegal Indian identity proofs sourced by Rohingya immigrants have been registered by the Telangana Police.

Cong a private limited company: Shah

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a fierce attack on the Congress, BJP president Amit Shah on Sunday described it as "private limited company" of the Nehru-Gandhi family. Soon after Prime Minister Narendra Modi at an election rally in Chhattisgarh dared the Congress to appoint a head from outside the family. Shah issued a statement saying the Congress had become more of a family enterprise aimed at dynastic service than a political party aimed at public service, and that no person outside the family had any say over it. Taking a dig at the Congress leaders, including P Chidambaram who had named

several party presidents hailing from outside the Gandhi family, he said Modi's challenge had ruffled several feathers with "many courtiers going out of the way to prove their loyalty". At a poll rally in Chhattisgarh on Friday, Modi had said if the Congress appointed someone not from the Gandhi family as its president for at least five years, then he would believe that Jawaharlal Nehru had indeed put in place a truly democratic system in the Opposition party. The Prime Minister repeated his words at another poll rally in the State on Sunday. "The Prime Minister is right. The Congress (Indira) since its inception in 1978 has been led by four members of one family for

most of the years, thus making it more of a family enterprise aimed at dynastic service rather than a political party aimed at public service," Shah said. "The Congress is Nehru-Gandhi family's private limited company over which nobody outside the family has any right," he added. Shah was referring to the split in the Congress in 1978 following its loss in the 1977 parliamentary polls, with the Indira Gandhi-led faction recognised as the Congress(I). As she returned to power in 1980, her faction was later recognised by the Election Commission (EC) as the real Congress. Two Congress chiefs, who were not from the Nehru-

Gandhi family, were treated in the "most shabby" manner possible in the recent past, Shah alleged. While PV Narasimha Rao's body, after his demise, was never allowed inside the Congress office, Sitaram Kesri, a towering leader, was "roughed up by goons loyal to we know who", he added. Modi, at a rally in Chhattisgarh on Sunday, also alleged that Kesri was not allowed to complete his term as the Congress chief and was forced to make way for Sonia Gandhi. The BJP chief cited the examples of several "non-family" Congress presidents to back his claim. "Going further back in time, the likes of Babu Jagjivan

Ram, S Nijalingappa, K Kamaraj were humiliated by one family, Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy, though senior, was not allowed to be president by one family. U N Dhebar was asked to step aside as Congress president for Mrs. Indira Gandhi," he said. Shah claimed that Acharya Kripalani, a stalwart who worked closely with Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, was "humiliated" by the Congress leadership through the 1950s and 1960s. "His crime — he moved the first motion of no-confidence against the Nehru Government," he said. Following Modi's challenge, Chidambaram had hit back by listing out the names of Congress presidents from outside the Nehru-Gandhi family.

Union Minister defends Govt for failing to bring AYUSH under PMJAY

In touch with health Min and Niti Ayog to resolve the issue, says AYUSH Minister

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Union AYUSH Minister Shripad Naik on Sunday sought to defend his Government for failing to bring the alternative medicine system in the ambit of the world's largest national medical insurance scheme under the Ayushman Bharat — Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna (PMJAY) launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently, saying nitty-gritty's were being discussed. He said, "My Ministry is in touch with the Union Health Ministry and Niti Aayog to ensure that the medical insurance cover is given to the patients seeking alternate medical system AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy). We hope this will happen soon," said the Minister on the sidelines of an event held here to mark the first Naturopathy Day. Surprisingly, while the Government has been patting its back for promoting holistic alternative healthcare like never before, the PMJAY scheme which was launched with much fanfare by Prime Minister Narendra Modi a few months ago does not provide insurance coverage to the alternative medicine system AYUSH.

Earlier, after inaugurating the first Naturopathy Day Programme, Naik said his Ministry is introducing several schemes to expand the naturopathy treatment which is cost effective and side-effect-free system. Work on building natural clinics is already in progress in Pune, Goa, Delhi, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh, the Minister said as he pointed out that the health challenges including rising non-communicable diseases we are facing today is because we have forgotten our traditional system of medicine. Jaiprakash Aggarwal of International Naturopathy Organisation, which had organised the event in collaboration with the Ministry, explained that all the treatments given under Naturopathy are based on Pancha Mahabhootas theory and elimination of morbid matter is the best remedy in all disease conditions. The Chairman of the Surya Foundation also favoured taking the system to each and every household. Naturopathy experts such as Dr Yogesh Gupta and Shailu Gupta, both from Delhi-based Ojas Nature Cure and Yoga Centre called for regulation and standardisation of the sector which is gaining popularity not only amongst Indians but foreigners too owing to its several benefits. Dr Navdeep Joshi, naturotherapist from Navyoga Kendra, Delhi too agreed saying, that people are now accepting the efficacy of these sciences as panacea for psychosomatic ailments and lifestyle disorders.

Cong calls BJP misogynist over Khattar's rape remarks

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Accusing the BJP leadership of being "misogynist", the Congress on Sunday demanded an apology from Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar for reportedly claiming that most rape cases were "fake" and took place among people who knew each other well. "Misogyny has become a buzzword for BJP leadership. Humiliating India's women has become a characteristic style of BJP leaders. The Talibani thought process of the BJP leadership particularly Khattar has been exposed," Congress spokesperson Randeep Singh Surjewala said. After courting controversy over his remarks on rape incidents, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Sunday clarified that his statement had been twisted and asserted there should not be any politics on the issue. "(My) statement has been twisted. I had said which is on record and I will again state it that during investigation in such cases, it was revealed that about 80 per cent of incidents took place between known...But there is a need to bring



awareness in the society. There should not be any politics on this issue," Khattar said. On the other hand, Surjewala blamed the Bharatiya Janata Party for Haryana becoming a crime hub and rising incidents of crimes against women, particularly rape and molestation. Asking Khattar to apologise for his derogatory remarks, Surjewala also demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi breaks his silence on BJP leaders often making sexist remarks. Addressing a rally in Kalka town of Panchkula district, Khattar on Friday reportedly said that 80-90 per cent of the rape and molestation incidents took place amongst people who knew each other well. "They roam around together for some time and if one day they get into some quarrel, they file an FIR claiming that they have been raped." In the run-up to the 2014 Lok Sabha polls, Khattar had made another sexist remark asking women to "run around naked if they wanted freedom". He also came under fire from Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal who indicted his Haryana counterpart for "justifying rape".

Govt wants to capture RBI reserves, alleges PC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Board meeting, Congress leader P Chidambaram on Sunday alleged that the Central Government was determined to "capture" the central bank to gain control over its ₹9 lakh crore reserves. In a series of tweets, the former Finance Minister also claimed that the Government and the RBI were heading towards a "confrontation" in the Monday's board meeting of the bank. "Government is determined to 'capture' RBI in order to gain control over the reserves. The other so-called disagreements are only a smokescreen (sic)," he said on Twitter. Chidambaram said, "Nowhere in the world is the central bank a board-managed company. To suggest that private business persons will direct the Governor is a preposterous idea." "November 19 will be a day of reckoning for central bank independence and the Indian economy," he tweeted. The RBI has a massive ₹9.59 lakh crore reserves and the Government, if reports are to be believed, wants the central bank to part with a third of that fund — an issue which along with easing of

norms for weak banks and raising liquidity has brought the two at loggerheads in the recent weeks. The Government on November 9 had said it was discussing an "appropriate" size of capital reserves that the central bank must maintain but denied seeking a massive capital transfer from the RBI. Economic Affairs Secretary Subhash Chandra Garg had also clarified that the Government wasn't in any dire needs of funds and that there was no proposal to ask the RBI to transfer ₹3.6 lakh crore. "There is no proposal to ask RBI to transfer ₹3.6 or ₹1 lakh crore, as speculated," he had said. "The Government's FD (fiscal deficit) in FY 2013-14 was 5.1 per cent. From 2014-15 onwards, the Government has succeeded in bringing it down substantially. We will end the FY 2018-19 with FD of 3.3 per cent. The Government has actually foregone ₹70,000 crore of budgeted market borrowing this year." Garg said the only proposal "under discussion is to fix appropriate economic capital framework of RBI". Economic capital framework refers to the risk capital required by the central bank while taking into account different risks.



Jammu & Kashmir Governor Satya Pal Malik with Prof Amitabh Mattoo during the launch of the book "Empowering Youth of Jammu & Kashmir" at a function in New Delhi on Sunday. PTI



Senior TDP leader Syed Yousuf Ali joins Congress in presence of AICC Secretary Md Saleem in Hyderabad on Sunday. PTI

Govt to hold integration week from Nov 25

New Delhi: The National Integration Week will be observed across the country beginning November 25 with an aim to foster and reinforce the spirit of communal harmony. The Government will organise meetings and seminars during the 'Qaumi Ekta Week' (National Integration Week) to emphasise on themes of secularism, anti-communalism and non-violence. Besides, November 20 will be observed as "Welfare of Minorities Day" when fraternal processions will be taken out in riot-prone towns, according to an official release. November 21 will be observed as "Linguistic Harmony Day" when special literary functions and 'Kavi Sammelans' will be organised to enable people of each region to appreciate the linguistic heritage of other parts of India. The release said November

22 will be observed as "Weaker Sections Day". Meetings and rallies will be organised to highlight programmes under various Governments which help SCs/STs and weaker sections with particular emphasis on the distribution of surplus land to landless labourers. November 23 will be observed as "Cultural Unity Day" and cultural functions will be organised to present the Indian tradition of unity in diversity and for promoting cultural conservation and integration, it said. November 24 will be observed as "Women's Day" when role of women in Indian society and in development of nation-building will be highlighted. November 25 will be observed as "Conservation Day" when several meetings and functions will be organised to emphasise the growing need for awareness and action to conserve the environment. PTI

Raj: Ex-Cong MLA joins BJP after son denied ticket

Jaipur: Former Congress MLA Mamta Sharma on Sunday joined the ruling BJP in Rajasthan after her son was denied a ticket by the Congress in the upcoming State Assembly polls. Sharma met Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje here and announced her joining the party. "I had demanded a ticket for my son from the Congress, but he was denied the same despite the fact that he has done so much work for the party. I was hurt at the party's style of functioning and therefore, decided to join the BJP," she told reporters after meeting Raje. The former Congress MLA said the Chief Minister has promised her a ticket from Pipalda constituency of Kota. PTI

34 judges appointed to six HCs: Law Min

New Delhi: A total of 34 judges have been appointed to six High Courts in the country, with Allahabad getting 28, according to the Law Minister. Despite fresh appointments made on Saturday, the 24 high courts of the country face a combined shortage of over 430 judges. The total approved strength is 1,079. While 28 judges were appointed to the Allahabad High Court, the Gauhati High Court got two new faces. Delhi, Meghalaya, Orissa and Madras High Court got one judge each, separate notifications issued by the Ministry said. Out of the 34 judges appointed, 17 were lawyers and the rest were judicial officers. The collegium of the Allahabad High Court had recommended 33 names

OUT OF THE 34 JUDGES APPOINTED, 17 WERE LAWYERS AND THE REST WERE JUDICIAL OFFICERS



for judgements. But the Supreme Court collegium found 17 names fit for the job. Out of these 17, the Government notified the appointment of 15 and returned two to collegium for reconsideration. PTI

'Swachhh Bharat' a benchmark for other countries to follow: WHO

New Delhi: India's 'Swachhh Bharat' campaign is a good example of how countries can make safe sanitation services accessible to all, the World Health Organisation (WHO) said on Sunday. Under the 'Swaachhh Bharat' programme, household sanitation coverage increased at a rate of 13 per cent annually between 2016 and 2018, WHO said. Everyone should have access to safe sanitation facilities including hygienic toilets that are connected to quality sewage systems, WHO said, adding that for many people in its South-East Asia region, as across the world, access to these services remains a problem. WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh said 900 million people region-wide lack basic sanitation and more than 500 million practise open defecation. Singh said in recent years, member States have made significant progress and region-wide urban coverage of basic sanitation is now close to 70 per cent. In a majority of countries, rural coverage

exceeds 50 per cent and the share of the region's population practising open defecation has been reduced from more than 50 per cent to less than 30 per cent, while several member States have achieved more than 90 per cent coverage of basic sanitation services. These advances are to be commended and they must also be built on, she said, adding that the return on every dollar invested in safe sanitation is estimated to be nearly six times increased productivity and fewer premature deaths. "All people everywhere should have access to safe sanitation services, including hygienic toilets that are connected to quality sewage systems. "For many people across the WHO South-East Asia Region, as across the world, access to these services nevertheless remains a problem, with 900 million region-wide lacking basic sanitation, and more than 500 million practising open defecation," Singh said. "This leads to increased human-feces contact and transmission of a range of diseases, from cholera to typhoid and

hepatitis A and E to tapeworm," she said on the eve of World Toilet Day. WHO's South-East Asia Region comprises Bangladesh, Bhutan, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Indonesia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Timor-Leste. As outlined in WHO's recently launched Guidelines on Sanitation and Health, there are several ways member states can sustain their many gains, accelerate progress and make safe sanitation services accessible to all, she said. "First, health authorities should work across sectors to ensure all communities have access to toilets that adequately contain excreta. Of key importance is targeting communities in hard-to-reach areas, as well as those living informally in cities or urban zones. "India's Swachhh Bharat campaign is a good example of how this can be done to rapid effect and on a large scale, with household sanitation coverage increasing at a rate of 13 per cent annually between 2016 and 2018," Singh said. PTI

'Joint planning among Army, Navy, IAF key to win any war in shortest possible time'

New Delhi: Chief of Air Staff BS Dhanoa has strongly pitched for institutionalised structure for joint planning among the Indian Air Force, Navy and Army so that the country wins any war in future in the "shortest possible" time. The IAF chief said all the three services will have to adopt a coherent approach to effectively deal with all possible security threats facing the country, asserting that his force strongly stands for "jointness". "No single service can win the war solely on its own inherent organic capabilities given the variety of threats which nations are capable of inflicting upon each other," he said. "Thus, it is imperative that the three services promote joint planning and exploit the strengths of sister services to help win a war in the shortest possible time. India by itself is one theatre," he told PTI in an interview. There have been deliberations within the government and the three forces on whether India should go for integrated theatre commands where all

the manpower and assets of the three services will be under the command of one officer. The US as well as several western countries follow this model. There were voices within the defence establishment who were in favour of setting up at least two theatre commands - one in western sector for dealing with Pakistan and other in eastern sector for dealing with any eventuality along the frontier with China. Official sources said government is already seriously considering setting up of a Defence Cyber Agency, a Defence Space Agency and a Special Operations Division comprising the assets of the three services. Giving a serious consideration to joint planning among the three forces, the government, in April formed a Defence Planning Committee (DPC) headed by National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval to prepare a national security strategy with a focus on ensuring convergence among the Army, the IAF and the Navy. PTI

Mizoram BJP chief alleges CM Thanhawla wanted to join BJP

Congress calls it 'joke'

Aizawl: Amid rising election campaign heat in Mizoram, the State's BJP unit chief V Hulna has claimed that Chief Minister Lal Thanhawla of Congress wanted to join the saffron party along with some other party MLAs before the poll process started, a claim dismissed by the ruling party leaders as a "joke". The Mizoram BJP president also claimed that most of the elected Congress MLAs will join his party after the poll results for the State are out on December 11. The elections are scheduled to be held on November 28 for 40 Assembly seats of the State, where the Congress has been in power since 2008. The BJP has never won an assembly election in this small hill state with a population of just about 10 lakh people, including nearly 7.68 lakh voters, but it is seen by the saffron

party as the "final frontier" in the North-East as it is in power in all other states of the region — either by winning polls or joining ruling alliances. The BJP president Amit Shah recently declared that Mizoram, a Christian-majority state, will celebrate Christmas this December under the BJP rule. "Lal Thanhawla himself, before this election, and his followers contacted the central leadership (of BJP) to merge the whole Congress in the state, just like the Arunachal Pradesh. They were in contact with them," Hluna told PTI. "They did not contact me, they contacted our leaders in Delhi. From them, I learnt that Lal Thanhawla was willing to join BJP," he added. In September 2016, the Congress lost its government in Arunachal Pradesh when 43 of its MLAs led by Chief Minister Pema Khandu defected wholesale and merged with the People's Party of Arunachal, just two months after it had regained power fol-

lowing the Supreme Court's judgement. A senior leader of the principal opposition party in Mizoram, Mizo National Front (MNF), also made similar allegations against the chief minister and said that the deal fell through as the Congress leader's "demands" were rejected by the BJP's central leaders. Thanhawla, a nine-time MLA, could not be contacted for his reactions despite repeated attempts, but a senior minister of his Cabinet termed the allegations as the "funniest jokes ever known". On condition of anonymity, an MNF leader, who is also contesting the Mizoram Assembly elections from a constituency in the capital city, claimed that Thanhawla had contacted a senior central leader of the BJP and had sought the Chief Minister's post for his daughter and the Governor's post for himself in return of joining the BJP with party MLAs. "But these demands were rejected outright," he said. PTI

NRC DISPUTE

Mamata to carry fight to BJP's Assam camp

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Striking the iron while it is hot, Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has decided to take the battle to the saffron camp in Assam. Agenda: Continued struggle against alleged "biased implementation" of National Register for Citizens in that State "pushing lakhs of Bengalis on the verge of denationalisation" and recent killings in Tinsukia district.



Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

The Chief Minister has decided to launch a "sustained and intensified campaign" in that State leading the battle personally. Her Assam campaign is likely to commence in the month of January after the January 16 grand rally at Brigade Parade Ground in Kolkata where the TMC chief has invited all the anti-BJP outfits.

TMC-led protests against the "discriminatory implementation of NRC" and killing of Bengali people in Assam, has already found support in that State.

According to sources the Chief Minister has formed a 16-member committee which will lead the campaign against attacks on the minorities, mainly the Bengalis in Assam and the allegedly discrimina-

tory NRC regime.

Seasoned Trinamool Congress Firhad Hakim has been asked to coordinate the movement in Assam. Hakim a Bengal Minister is likely to call upon the Muslim leaders too to join Banerjee's campaign. "Our campaign in Assam is not directed against any particular community but against the Government's initiative to drive out the minorities including the Bengalis, Biharis, UP wallas and Muslims. This cannot be tolerated and a sustained movement has to be built up in that State. The TMC will lead the movement there," Banerjee is known to have told her party delegates who had recently come from Assam.

Following the Chief Minister's directives TMC leadership in Assam has started taking measures to build up a movement in Barak Valley and

Brahmaputra Valley, sources said. "We will go to the people with the message that the TMC is by the side of all the tormented people in Assam."

The Assam unit of the party is planning to hold Mamata Banerjee's rallies at Goalpara, Dhubri, Barpeta, Nalbari, Kamrup (rural), sources said adding the first such rally could be organized at Khanapara in Guwahati.

TMC's Assam ambitions is further underscored by its decision to contest the panchayat elections in that State. The party is likely to field candidates from at least 9-10 districts where the Bengalis have sizeable population.

"The TMC has good prospects in Assam. We want to good in that State. We have been able to find some base their too. But the gains can further be cemented if our leader Mamata Banerjee addresses a few rallies in that State," an Assam TMC leader has said.

Meanwhile, Telugu Desam Party chief and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu is likely to meet his Bengal counterpart on Monday noon, sources said adding he is likely to invite Banerjee to the all-party meeting in Delhi.

3.5L submit proof for inclusion in NRC

Guwahati: About 3.5 lakh people, out of the total 40 lakh, who were excluded in the draft National Register of Citizens (NRC), have claimed that they are Indian nationals, two months after the window opens for claims and objections in the Supreme Court-monitored exercise, sources said Sunday.

Besides, less than 100 applications have been received by the authorities challenging the inclusion of the names of suspected illegal immigrants in the NRC, a list of Assam's residents.

So far, about 3.5 lakh people have submitted applications for inclusion of their names in the NRC and they have submitted relevant documents claiming that they are Indian citizens, a source privy to the development said.

The issue of low turnout in the claims and objections period was also discussed at Saturday's high-level meeting in New Delhi attended by Home Minister Rajnath Singh, BJP president Amit Shah, Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, Union Home Secretary Rajiv Gauba, Director of Intelligence Bureau Rajiv Jain, among others.

The Supreme Court has also finalised a set of standard operating procedure (SOP) for disposal of claims and objections in the update of the NRC.

The draft NRC was published on July 30 and included the names of 2.9 crore people out of the total applications of 3.29 crore. There has been a huge controversy over exclusion of 40 lakh people from the draft NRC.

Following a directive of the Supreme Court, the process of filing claims and objections to the draft NRC began on September 25 and it will come to an end on December 15.

Initially, the apex court had allowed the claimants to rely on any of the 10 documents -- land documents, permanent residential certificate issued from outside the state, passport, Life Insurance Corporation of India policy, any licence or certificate issued by any government authority.

Document showing service or employment under the Government or public sector undertaking, bank or post office accounts, birth certificates issued by a competent authority, educational certificate issued by boards or universities and records or processes pertaining to court provided they are part of processing in a judicial or revenue court.

However, on November 1, the court allowed five additional documents to reply upon for inclusion of names in the NRC. The additional papers are -- 1951 NRC, electoral roll up to March 24, 1971, citizenship certificate, refugee registration certificate and ration card. **PTI**

CYCLONE GAJA

Toll rises to 45, Opposition alleges poor relief work

IAN S ■ CHENNAI

The death toll due to the severe cyclone Gaja that devastated several districts in Tamil Nadu two days ago has risen to 45 and it damaged 1,17,624 houses, Chief Minister K Palaniswami said on Sunday.

Opposition leaders have criticised what they say was the Government's apathy in reaching out relief materials like food, drinking water and other materials to the cyclone affected areas.

In Pudukottai district, people complained about not getting relief materials and protested on the roads. They also set fire to five government vehicles.

Speaking to reporters at Salem, about 350 km from here, Palaniswami said 45 persons have died in the cyclone and the loss of livestock was put at 735.

He added that 88,102 hectare of crop and 39,938 electricity poles were damaged in the cyclone.

The central government has been asked to depute a team from the National Disaster Management to assess the destruction.

To a query about dropping relief materials by helicopters, Palaniswami said removal of trees from the roads would be



A view of the damage caused by cyclone Gaja, after it hit Velankanni, in Nagapattinam district of Tamil Nadu **PTI**

completed fully on Sunday. Palaniswami said he would visit the affected areas on Monday.

DMK President M.K. Stalin in a letter to the party cadres wondered whether Palaniswami's heart was made of iron as he appeared to be more interested with inaugurating projects rather than visiting the cyclone battered areas.

Stalin, who toured the areas, accused the government of failing to provide sufficient food, clothing and drinking water for the people at the relief centres.

He said had only the gov-

ernment carried out the dredging of canals and other water bodies, much of the damage could have been averted and several trees could have been saved.

Stalin said coconut trees in about 7,000 hectares in several districts have been damaged.

PMK founder S. Ramadoss said it was a shame that the AIADMK government was not providing even food for the cyclone affected people.

He said that various districts in the Cauvery delta region like Thanjavur, Nagapattinam and Thiruvavur had been severely affected.

Tourist facilities to boost eco-tourism in VTR: Nitish

Patna: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has said a slew of facilities inaugurated by the State Government in Valmiki Nagar of Bihar's West Champaran district would promote eco-tourism in the area.

The Water Resources department has transferred 200 acres to Environment, Forest and Climate Change Department for developing eco-tourism in Valmiki Nagar Tiger Reserve (VTR), the Chief Minister said on Sunday.

There should be a convention centre here in Valmiki Nagar where people can hold programmes and also enjoy the natural beauty of the place, Kumar said.

He said he has plans to hold a cabinet meeting here, the timing for which would be decided later. The Chief Minister told reporters that a lot has been done for the development of tourism in Valmiki Nagar area such as constructing cottages which are running at full capacity throughout the year and can be booked online.

With the promotion of eco-tourism at VTR, people will become more aware about the forest and the issue of environment, he said. About 45,000 tourists had visited the VTR till mid-November in 2018 itself, Kumar said.

"I hope that the number of

tourists will cross over one lakh after the development of eco tourism in the area," the chief minister said.

"People have an attraction for VTR as it is a unique place which is surrounded by mountain on one end, while river Gandak is flowing on the other side with the greenery of jungle.

"There can not be any other better place than VTR. There is huge potential for eco tourism in Valmiki Nagar for which the state government is working hard to promote it," the Chief Minister said.

Various options of eco-tourism, including jungle safari and trekking, are already available at VTR. Eco-huts have been inaugurated in the area and old watch towers have been given a facelift.

The total number of tigers stood at eight in VTR when he took over the reins of the State for the first time in November 2005 and at present, the number of tigers has increased to more than 35. Stating that the green cover area of Bihar was nine per cent after its division, Kumar said it has increased to 15 per cent with the Government's massive plantation drive during which 22.50 crore saplings were planted.

"We have set a target of 17 per cent of green cover in the State," he added. **PTI**

Sushil Modi should speak up on Srijan scam, says Kushwaha

PTI ■ PATNA

Rashtriya Lok Samata Party chief Upendra Kushwaha made a sharp attack on Sunday apparently against BJP leader Sushil Kumar Modi by calling him a "pichhlaggu" (camp follower) of Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.

Without naming Modi, Kushwaha in a series of tweets said some people are "publicity hungry, opportunist and pro-power by nature". He described Modi as a "loudspeaker" and "blood-sucking mosquito" which spreads diseases around it.

Kushwaha's remarks could deepen the differences within the National Democratic Alliance, which is struggling to find a seat-sharing arrangement for the 2019 general election. The RLSP chief has said the number of seats offered to his party was "not respectable" and the matter should be resolved by November 30.

On Saturday, shortly after Kushwaha set the deadline, Modi in a tweet responded to him, saying the NDA will "not be browbeaten" and seats will be allotted based on "ground realities".

The JD(U) and the BJP last month announced they will contest equal number of seats, but did not say what their share would be.

Ram Vilas Paswan's Lok Janshakti Party, the fourth partner in the alliance, has said it expects to contest a "respectable



Sushil Kumar Modi.



Upendra Kushwaha.

number" of seats in the state. During the 2014 election, the RLSP, which Kushwaha formed in 2013 after breaking out from the JD(U), contested and won three seats. The LJP contested seven seats then. Bihar has 40 Lok Sabha seats.

"There are people who are 'rajnitik pichhlaggu' (camp follower in politics). Such people are publicity hungry, opportunist and pro-power by nature. The utility of such people are merely confined to work as loudspeaker for alliance partner or its leader. Such people thrive in the party by sucking blood and spreading malaria and dengue in their own party," Kushwaha tweeted in Hindi.

By "loudspeaker", the RLSP chief apparently referred to Modi's denial that Chief Minister Kumar called him "neech" (lowly person).

During a programme on November 4 when Kumar was asked about the seat-sharing

issue with Kushwaha, he had said, "Itna neech baat ko nahi le jaiye" (do not take the debate to such a low level). The RLSP chief construed that the chief minister called him a lowly person.

Also on Sunday, Kushwaha asked Deputy Chief Minister Modi to say "something" on the Srijan scam as Prime Minister Narendra Modi has sought to provide a corruption-free Government. In another tweet, he said, "You have rightly said that our PM Sri @narendramodiji made every effort to provide corruption-free Government. Please say something on Srijan scam too."

Srijan scam, detected last year, is being probed by the CBI. The government funds worth about Rs 1,000 crore were allegedly transferred to the accounts of Srijan Mahila Vikash Samiti, Bhagalpur.

Kushwaha recently met RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav and Sharad Yadav.

Operation to attach ex-Min Manju Verma's properties ends

PTI ■ BEGUSARAI

The Bihar Police on Sunday concluded its two-day operation to attach properties of former State Minister Manju Verma, who's evading arrest in an Arms Act case filed by the CBI while probing the Muzaffarpur shelter home scandal.

The exercise to attach Verma's property in Arjuntola village on Sunday was led by Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) Suryadeo Kumar. Police attached 16 articles on Sunday, while 109 articles were seized on Saturday, the SDPO said.

Armed with a court order, a police team led by Superintendent of Police Awakash Kumar had initiated the process of attaching Verma's property in Arjuntola village here on Saturday.

Police had handed over a list of the seized articles to Verma's brother-in-law, Hemant Verma, on Saturday. "The operation to attach the property of Manju Verma in the Arjuntola area ended on Sunday," the SDPO said.

Police had removed the grill, doors, door frames of a house belonging to her while carrying out the attachment

process on Saturday. All articles inside the house were seized during the two-day operation- initiated under sections 82 and 83 of the Criminal Procedure Code.

Verma had stepped down as the minister for social welfare in August, following reports that her husband, Chandrashekhar Verma, had close links with Brajesh Thakur, the prime accused in the Muzaffarpur shelter home scandal.

Over 30 girls were allegedly raped at the shelter home. A few days later, the CBI raided Verma's Patna residence besides her in-laws' home in Arjuntola village from where a cache of ammunition was seized. A case was then registered against her.

She moved an application for anticipatory bail before a Begusarai court which was turned down and a similar plea was rejected by the Patna High Court. Her husband surrendered before a Begusarai court on October 29.

The Supreme Court had on November 12 rapped the Bihar Police for failing to arrest the former minister and directed the DGP to appear before it in person on November 27 if she was not nabbed by then.

Goa Government non-functional, Parrikar being self-centred: Velingkar

IAN S ■ PANAJI

The Goa Government has virtually become non-functional and Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar is being self-centred in not letting go of the top post despite suffering from pancreatic cancer, former State RSS chief Subhash Velingkar said on Sunday.

"People are being taken for granted. Had this happened in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, people would have stripped the politicians naked and taken them on a procession," Velingkar, who formally entered politics by joining Goa Suraksha Manch near here, he said.

Velingkar has served as the state RSS chief for more than two decades and is considered responsible for the political grooming of the State BJP's top leaders, including Manohar Parrikar, Union Minister of State for AYUSH Shripad Naik, and former Chief Minister Laxmikant Parsekar.

Velingkar also said that the State was heading for a mid-term poll along with the Lok Sabha elections next year because the Government was already beset with infighting

He was, however, sacked from the RSS in 2016, after he took on Parrikar, accusing the latter of going back on the principles of both the Sangh as well as the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Velingkar accused Parrikar of being self-centered in allowing his administration to "virtually shut down" on account of his illness, while holding on to more than two dozen portfolios.

"The Government is functioning in a way no Government ought to function at all. The CM is taking treatment. He does not have the courage to come and face the people. The Opposition has been demanding that they want to meet the CM, but he has not been able to meet them. Therefore, the departments and portfolios are not getting any justice," Velingkar said.

Velingkar also said that the State was heading for a mid-term poll along with the Lok Sabha elections next year because the Government was already beset with infighting due to Parrikar's inability to attend to office and take decisions.

This State of indecision would lead to the disintegration of the coalition of BJP, Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party, Goa Forward and four independent MLAs, he said. "Along with the Congress, the BJP too will be demolished in the next elections and Goa will see the rise of a new leadership," Velingkar said.

Kargil coldest in J&K at minus 9 degree C



IAN S ■ SRINAGAR

Kargil town was the coldest in Jammu and Kashmir at minus 9 degree Celsius on Sunday while the minimum temperature across the region was around the freezing point, the weather office said.

According to a Met Department official, the minimum temperatures in Leh, Gulmarg, Pahalgam and

Srinagar were minus 5.1 degrees, minus 4.5, minus 1.1 and 1.6, respectively.

"Dry weather conditions were likely to continue in Jammu and Kashmir during the next four days," the official said.

In the Jammu region, Jammu city recorded 11.1 degrees Celsius, Katra 10.4. Batote 6.3, Bannihal 4.0 and Bhandarwah 2.8 as the night's lowest temperatures.

BRO personnel brave adverse weather conditions to lay first glaciated road in Ladakh

Srinagar: Braving extremely adverse weather conditions, the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), under Project Himank, is carving out the world's first glaciated motorable road.

"The BRO is laying the motorable roads by cutting the world's highest glaciers which are here in eastern Ladakh in Jammu and Kashmir," an official of the BRO said.

Being constructed at an altitude of over 17,800 feet, the road from Sasoma to Saser La will be a vital link paved in a region which is mostly cut-off during the severe winter months.

Saser La, also known as Saser Pass, is a high mountain pass which lies in the Karakoram range. It is located on the ancient summer caravan route from Leh in Ladakh to Yarkand in the Tarim Basin.

"As the temperature in the region falls to minus 50 degrees Celsius during winter and hovers around 12 degrees Celsius

during peak summer, work in such condition is a herculean task.

"Besides, the biting cold and bone chilling winds, there are dangers of unseen crevasses and avalanches. Further, the glaciers shift constantly when the snow melts, adding to the difficulty in construction," he said.

The months when construction works can be taken up are few, forcing officials to be ready with plans and strategies in advance to achieve targets.

"The short working period needs to be utilised to the maximum, thus requiring effective management of manpower and resources. Planning of work starts four to five months prior to the working season," he said.

The official said meticulous planning and hard work of the BRO officers has been extremely essential for the successful completion of the tasks. **PTI**



Congress leader and former Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot being welcomed on his arrival at the airport in Jodhpur on Sunday **PTI**

CRPF jawan killed in terrorist attack in J&K

PTI ■ SRINAGAR

A CRPF Jawan was killed in a militant attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district on Sunday, police said.

Militants lobbed a grenade and fired on a CRPF camp in Kakapora area of the district in south Kashmir Sunday evening, a police official said, adding the attack was successfully repulsed by the security forces.

However, in the attack, a CRPF jawan identified as Head Constable Chandrika Prasad sustained injuries, the official said. Prasad was shifted to a nearby hospital where he succumbed to injuries.

The official said as the militants were trying to flee the area after the attack, security forces immediately cordoned off the area and initiated searches.

"Consequently, exchange of fire between security forces and terrorists took place till the last report was received," he said, adding further details were awaited.

2 terrorists killed in encounter in Shopian

PTI ■ SRINAGAR

Two terrorists belonging to the Al-Badar outfit were Sunday killed in an encounter with security forces in Shopian district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said.

Based on a credible input about the presence of militants, a cordon and search operation was launched by security forces at the crack of dawn in Rebban area of Zainapora in the south Kashmir district, a police spokesman said.

He said as the search operation was going on, the search party was fired upon by the hiding militants.

The fire was retaliated leading to an encounter in

which two militants were killed, the spokesman said.

He said the slain ultras have been identified as Nawaz Ahmad Wagay, a resident of Rebban Zainapora and Yawar Wani, a resident of Batnour Litter Pulwama.

"They were affiliated with proscribed terror outfit Al-Badar. Both the killed terrorists were involved in a series of terror attacks on security establishments and many other civilian atrocities in the area," the spokesman said.

Arms and ammunition were recovered from the site of encounter.

No collateral damage took place during the encounter, he said.

SABARIMALA ROW

BJP observes protests, block traffic

PTI ■ SANNIDHANM (KERALA)

A calm atmosphere at the Lord Ayyappa shrine in Sabarimala marked the second day of the two month-long annual pilgrimage season, even as the rest of Kerala witnessed protests against the arrest of BJP

General Secretary K Surendran while on his way to the temple. Travancore Devaswom Board, which manages the shrine, will file a petition in the Supreme Court Monday seeking more time to implement the court's Sept 28 verdict allowing women of all ages to offer worship at the shrine, board president A Padmakumar said.

So far, no women in the 10-50 age group has sought police protection to trek the holy hills, though over 500 odd young women have made online bookings for darshan. Facing flak over inadequate facilities and severe restrictions for devotees at the

temple complex, Padmakumar also said no unnecessary curbs would be there and the "small issues" being faced now should be seen as "starting troubles".

Briefing reporters at Thiruvananthapuram after a meeting with DGP Loknath Behara and M V Jayarajan, the Private Secretary to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, he said the devotees would be allowed to perform the "Neyyabhishekam" ritual from 03.15 AM to 1230 PM daily.

"The police, board or government will not take any step causing hardships to the pilgrims", but police would take action against those coming to Sabarimala with an intention to protest, he said.

More parking facilities and bio-toilets will be provided at Nilackal and Pamba, he said.

Meanwhile, the State Human Rights Commission observed there was gross violation of human rights of the devotees and directed authori-

ties to ensure all necessary basic facilities for them and sought a report within two weeks.

The temple had opened Friday evening for the 64-day annual pilgrimage season as the stand-off continued over entry of menstrual age women into the shrine.

So far, more pilgrims have arrived from other states than from within Kerala. On the second day of the Malayalam month 'Vrischikom', the pilgrims offered prayers at the shrine early Sunday.

Though the devotees were relieved to get more time for 'darshan' due to less crowd, many were unhappy at not being allowed to spend more time at the "sannidhanam" (the main temple complex).

Meanwhile, BJP workers blocked traffic on the national highways for over an hour across the state protesting against the arrest and remand of Surendran. In vatakara, a KSRTC bus was stoned, police said.

Surendran, who was taken into preventive custody as he tried to proceed to the Lord Ayappa temple, was Sunday produced before a magistrate and remanded to 14-day judicial custody after he was charged with non-bailable offences.

Condemning the manner in which Surendran was arrested, Union Minister Alphonso Kannamtham said it was "despicable" and described the police action as "condemnable".

"There is need to take a path of consensus on matters relating to Sabarimala, he said in a Facebook post.

Implementing things which were against people's interest had no place in democracy, he said adding the people's verdict was for five years not life long, he said. CPI(M) state secretary Kodiyeri Balakrishnan alleged the BJP's "agenda" was to create violence.

The Congress, which deputed a three-member del-

egation to Sabarimala, accused the CPI(M)-led state government of creating a 'terror-like atmosphere' in the name of security of the hill shrine.

The delegation comprising former state ministers Thiruvanchoor Radhakrishnan, Adoor Prakash and V S Sivakumar took stock of the situation in the temple complex. Prakash slammed the state government and the board for not making required facilities for devotees at Sabarimala.

Spearheading a campaign against the Kerala government over the Sabarimala issue, BJP state unit chief P S Sreedharan Pillai alleged the state government was making the Ayappa shrine "a centre of dispute to destroy its uniqueness".

Condemning the police action against "peacefully agitating" devotees, he said BJP will extend all possible assistance to the protesters to protect the hill shrine from the "hidden agenda of atheists".

MAHA WINTER SESSION

After quota for Marathas, what about Muslims, Dhangars ? asks Oppn

Roots for ₹50 k per hectare compensation for drought-hit farmers...calls BJP-led Govt 'thug of Maharashtra'

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Opposition Congress and NCP on Sunday set an aggressive tone for the winter session of the Maharashtra Legislature beginning here on Monday, by rooting for reservations to Muslims, Dhangars, Lingayats and other socio-economic backward communities along the lines of Marathas and a compensation of Rs 50,000 per hectare to drought-affected farmers in the state.

On a day when chief minister Devendra Fadnavis announced that his government would grant reservations to Marathas in jobs and education under a new Socio-Economic Backward Class (SEBC) category, the Opposition parties gave foretaste of their belligerent mood by boycotting the customary tea hosted by Fadnavis on the eve of the winter session of the State Legislature.

Addressing a news conference after a joint meeting of the group leaders of various Opposition parties held a day ahead of the start of the winter session of the State Legislature, leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly Radhakrishna Vikhe-Patil dubbed the BJP-Shiv Sena government in the state as the "Thug of Maharashtra" which had failed to fulfil all its promises during the last four years of its rule.

"The chief minister has asked the Maratha community to prepare themselves for celebrations on December 1 (over grant of reservations). While we are for the state government according reservations, what about the reservations for Muslims, Dhangars, Lingayats and other socio-economic backward communities?" Vikhe-Patil asked.



BJP and Shiv Sena Ministers during the tea party, hosted by Maharashtra Chief Minister on the eve of winter session in Mumbai on Sunday

Charging that the Maharashtra government had put pressure on the Maharashtra State Backward Class Commission (MSBCC) to come out with its report on granting reservations to Maratha community, Vikhe-Patil said: "We would like the state government to clarify as to how it would accord reservations to Marathas without disturbing the existing reservations to other communities. We want the state government to table the MSBCC's report on the first day of the winter session of the State Legislature tomorrow."

Vikhe-Patil accused the Devendra Fadnavis government of having gone back on its promise of according reservations to Dhangar community. "A study report submitted to the State government by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) on socio-economic status of the Dhangar community is gathering dust," he said.

Slamming the state government for its failure to remedy the drought situation in the state, Vikhe-Patil said: "Though the state government declared drought in many parts of the state, it has not come relief measures or financial assistance for the affected farmers. We demand that the farmers be given 50,000 per hectare of compensation and horticulturists be given Rs 1 lakh per hectare. In addition, the state

government should waive 100 per cent crop loans taken by farmers during Kharif season".

Leader of the Opposition in the State Legislative Council Dhananjay Munde of the NCP, who addressed the news conference with Vikhe-Patil, also demanded a compensation of Rs 50,000 per hectare to the drought-affected farmers. Munde came down heavily on the ruling Shiv Sena for raising the Ram Mandir issue at this stage. "Through an announcement by Shiv Sena president Uddhav Thackeray that he would go to Ayodhya on November 25 to press for the construction of Ram Mandir, the Sena is running away from its responsibility of being the ruling party. What was holding the Shiv Sena from constructing Ram Mandir during the last four years?" Munde asked.

Charging Fadnavis and Uddhav Thackeray as "Thugs of Maharashtra", Munde said: "Fadnavis and Uddhav Thackeray have cheated the people of Maharashtra during the last four years. They deserve to be named as Thugs of Maharashtra".

Munde also hit out at the chief minister for its failure to act against the 16 ministers in his Cabinet facing allegations of corruption. "We will not rest till the state government does not act against these 16 ministers," he said.

CPM leader's son, daughter-in-law attacked; one held

PTI ■ KOZHIKODE

A worker of a right-wing Hindu outfit has been arrested in connection with the alleged attack on a CPM leader's son and his journalist daughter-in-law during a shutdown called by the outfits in Kerala on Saturday, police said.

Julius Nikithas and wife Saniyo Manomi, working with a leading Malayalam news channel, were attacked at Kuttiady as they were going to a hospital in a car to visit a patient.

Police Sunday said that a worker of a right wing outfit has been arrested in connection with the attack and a search was on to nab nine others.

Nikithas, son of party district secretary P Mohanan, suffered head injuries and Manomi was also injured.

The couple have been admitted to the government medical college hospital here.

The CPM had alleged that they were attacked by activists belonging to the Sangh Parivar. Right-wing Hindu outfits had observed a dawn-to-dusk har-

The CPM had alleged that they were attacked by activists belonging to the Sangh Parivar

tal in Kerala Saturday in protest against the "preventive detention" of Hindu Aikya Vedi state president P Sasikala, who was on a pilgrimage to the Sabarimala Lord Ayyappa temple.

Sasikala was taken into preventive custody Saturday after she allegedly defied directions not to spend the night near the temple complex.

Police had decided not to allow devotees enter the temple premises when it was closed for the night.

Sasikala, who was on a fast at the Ranni police station, protesting her detention, was later produced before the sub-divisional magistrate, who is also the Thiruvalla Revenue Divisional officer (RDO), and granted bail.

KJ Alphons to visit shrine

Thiruvananthapuram: Union Minister of IT K.J. Alphons will on Monday visit the temple town of Sabarimala to study the facilities meant for the pilgrims.

Alphons told IANS that he will reach the Pamba base camp at 9 a.m.

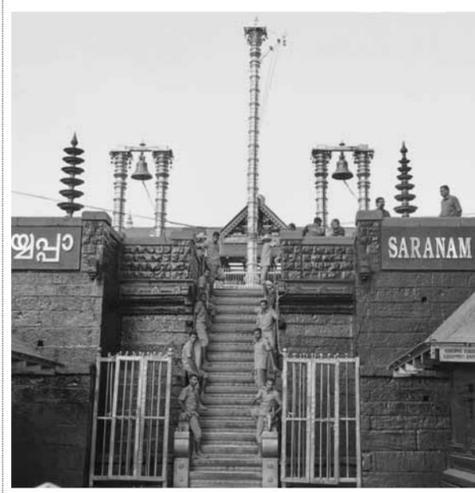
"I had visited the temple town two months back and found out that it was in a pretty bad shape due to the floods. I had suggested that a lot of things had to be done to make

it fit for a smooth pilgrimage," he said.

He said he had come to know that the facilities were not up to the mark.

The bureaucrat-turned-politician's visit comes at a time when the Kerala unit of the BJP observed Sunday as a protest day by blocking highways across the state following the arrest and remand of its senior leader K. Surendran.

IANS



Police personnel stand guard at the 18 sacred steps of the Lord Ayyappa temple on the 2nd day of Malayalam month of 'Vrischikom' in Sabarimala on Sunday

Kerala Govt destroying Ayyappa temple's uniqueness: Pillai

Kochi: Spearheading a campaign against the Kerala government over the Sabarimala issue, BJP state unit chief P S Sreedharan Pillai Sunday alleged that the CPI(M)-led dispensation was making the Lord Ayappa shrine "a centre of dispute to destroy its uniqueness".

Condemning the police action against "peacefully agitating" devotees, he said the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will extend all possible assistance to the protesters to protect the hill shrine from the "hidden agenda of atheists".

Pillai said the BJP and Sangh Parivar will expand the ongoing agitation against the state government's "hasty move" to implement the Supreme Court verdict, permitting entry of women of all age groups into the temple, to other parts of the country.

"What is going in Kerala (over Sabarimala) is a fight between devotees and atheists," he told PTI.

"BJP workers will continue to join the devotees' protest if any woman in the menstrual age group tries to enter the temple. The devotees have so far succeeded in preventing such women from breaking the custom," he said. PTI



A tourist family takes selfies under the Chinar trees at a garden, during autumn in Srinagar on Sunday

Poor, downtrodden getting their share, says Maurya

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya said that the poor and the downtrodden were getting their share in the Bharatiya Janata Party government because it was implementing the pro-people policies of the Narendra Modi government in letter and spirit.

"India has progressed in true sense in the last four-and-a-half years. The country had suffered because of the partisan policies of the previous government. Their policies were so lopsided that the chasm between the poor and the rich increased. It was BJP which tried to bridge that chasm," Maurya said while speaking at Loktantra Senani Aabhaar Sammelan held here on Sunday.

The loktantra senanis are leaders who were jailed during the Emergency.

Maurya said the Congress had ruled the country for the maximum time after Independence but it had not shown respect for leaders other than the Gandhi family.

"Everyone knows what happened to Sardar Patel and Subhas Chandra Bose. Even leaders like Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Sharad Pawar and Raj Narayan were looked down upon by the Congress government. It is only Narendra Modi who broke the barriers of political lines and gave respect which was due to the leaders," the Deputy Chief Minister said. "The world now knows



MAURYA SAID THE CONGRESS HAD RULED THE COUNTRY FOR THE MAXIMUM TIME AFTER INDEPENDENCE BUT IT HAD NOT SHOWN RESPECT FOR LEADERS OTHER THAN THE GANDHI FAMILY

about Sardar Patel and the Statue of Unity. This is the true respect the BJP government has given to the leaders," he added.

Maurya said, in Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath was giving respect to the leaders of various political parties.

He said the Congress stooped low when it arrested a leader like Jayprakash Narayan during Emergency. "Then people like you revolted against the then government and courted arrest. It is history that all jails across the country were full but there was no ebb in your enthusiasm," he said.

"Leaders have taken lessons from your sacrifice and have not stepped into the shoes of dictator," he added. BJP MLC Yashwant Singh also addressed the loktantra senanis.

Akhilesh threatens to sever ties with Cong

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

After Bahujan Samaj Party, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Sunday struck a blow to the prospects of a 'mahagathbandhan' (grand alliance) of opposition parties for the 2019 Lok Sabha polls by launching a fierce attack on Congress, hinting that if the grand old party restricted the success of samajwadis, the SP would break the friendship.

Akhilesh Yadav on Sunday campaigned in Madhya Pradesh.

"I want to tell the Congress that when they will be the weakest, the Samajwadi Party will be their dearest friend. But the Congress leaders don't want 'cycle' to succeed. Hence,

we have decided that if you try to stop the 'cycle', we will take your hands off the cycle and give the control to some other party," Yadav said at a rally at Damoh in Madhya Pradesh.

Bharatiya Janata Party and Congress are two sides of the same coin. Both the parties are responsible for the loot of public sector banks by big business and industrial houses. These two parties are behind the Rafale scam — first the Congress played the tricks and now the BJP is exploiting it for its narrow political gains," Akhilesh charged.

Cycle is the political symbol of Samajwadi Party.

Akhilesh dropped strong hints that his party may not ally with the Congress in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, saying



this would deal a huge blow to the Rahul Gandhi-led party as they had been rallying for a grand coalition to stop the BJP juggernaut in the country.

Apparently miffed with the Congress for refusing to share seats with SP and BSP in

Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan, Akhilesh had on Saturday attacked the Congress while campaigning in Chhattisgarh. He had accused the grand old party of scuttling Samajwadi Party's prospects in the poll-bound state.

Hinting that SP might not enter into a tie-up with Congress for the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, Yadav said, "Humne bhi tay kar liya hai ki cycle ko rokoge to apka haath handle se hata diya jayega... Control aur kisi ke haath chala jayega (We have decided we will remove your hands from the cycle handle if you try to stop the cycle and the control will go in the hand of someone else)."

Without directly taking the name of any political party, the SP chief used their symbols (hand of the Congress and cycle of SP) to hint at the growing rift between the two parties.

Yadav's statement came during a rally in Durg in Madhya Pradesh while campaigning for SP and its alliance

partner Gondwana Gantantra Party.

The former Chief Minister had earlier also slammed the Congress for wasting time in "calculations" in the poll-bound states of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. "When the alliance did not happen, we went with GGP.. It is difficult to understand what the Congress is calculating and trying to do, but one thing becomes obvious... they want to stop SP from surging ahead," he had said.

Akhilesh said that there was no difference in the policies of the BJP and Congress. His anti-Congress statements come barely 20 months after the two parties entered into an alliance for UP assembly elections in March 2017.

Whose wings clipped?

The CBI may be a caged parrot but the step taken by Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal is certainly dramatic



The question is why did Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu suddenly revoke the 'General Consent' that all Indian States offer the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)? And this, a few weeks after the Telugu Desam supremo ordered the Andhra Pradesh Police not to give protection to either Enforcement Directorate or Income Tax Department officials during raids. While Naidu's move also resulted in West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee following suit and that State, too, withdrawing its General Consent to the CBI under the Delhi Special Police

Establishment Act, one wonders what purpose this will serve. Even at the height of the vilification campaign by the Centre against certain State leaders in the past, such a move has never been initiated. There is certainly a risk for the political capital accumulated by both leaders in taking this step because while the public at large might be sympathetic to the view that the CBI is an extension of the Central Government, the fact that no State Government has taken such a step in the past will be used by the BJP to imply that regional leaders have something to hide. On the other hand, reports of the ruling dispensation in Delhi allegedly using the CBI to try and 'fix' regional leaders also must be factored in.

Additionally, in the case of Andhra Pradesh, was this decision taken after several raids recently exposed the financial underbelly of the political world in that State? Considering the ruling TDP is under pressure from both the YSR Congress and the BJP, Naidu tried to gain first-mover advantage by switching sides from Narendra Modi to Rahul Gandhi virtually overnight. Essentially, this was because the Central Government did not extend the financial support it had reportedly promised for Naidu's new dream capital, Amravati. While there is no doubt that the Modi Government has spent money foolishly on some vanity projects, Naidu's posh plans for Amravati were never going to be funded in the main by the Union of India even if he was part of the NDA. Naidu twiggled and left. Mamata Banerjee, meanwhile, while looking as strong as ever on the ground and confident of increasing its Lok Sabha seats tally even further in 2019, is facing an aggressive BJP looking to win a few more seats in the forthcoming General Election. With the Congress and Communists virtually disappearing from the political landscape of West Bengal, this two-way battle was always going to be one of raids and arrests which the Trinamool leader seems to have moved to prevent. Who said politics in India was fair?

With the CBI itself in disarray on the BJP's watch and the two top officers of the agency fighting each other publicly, Naidu and Banerjee have gambled that by the time the CBI can regain its wits and mount a legal challenge to the decision it will become a fait accompli. However, it must be kept in mind that individuals always have legal remedies available to them if they feel they are being wrongfully prosecuted by the CBI. Yet, if the decision by two of the strongest State leaders in India today is such as they have taken, it implies a complete breakdown of trust in the Centre. The Supreme Court, which is dipping its hands into all manner of issues, is likely to come into play sooner rather than later. In the interim, it would help immensely if the CBI itself managed to get its act together and the Centre dispelled the suspicions of the States by reaching out and assuring them that the probe agency's neutrality would be maintained. As it is, all other police forces in India are highly politicised; if the CBI too heads that way as it certainly seems to be, other Opposition-ruled States may soon follow Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal. At the end of the day, though, if India has any pretence of being a robust, rule of law state, it needs police reforms desperately, starting with the CBI.

Justice at last

The two senior-most surviving leaders of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia get their just desserts



The term Year Zero, applied to the takeover of Cambodia in April 1975 by the Khmer Rouge as the followers of the Communist Party of Kampuchea were known, is an analogy to Year One of the French Revolutionary Calendar. During the French Revolution, after the abolition of the monarchy, the National Convention instituted a new calendar and declared the beginning of the Year 1. The Khmer Rouge takeover of Phnom Penh was rapidly followed by a series of loony 'revolutionary de-industrialisation' policies resulting in a death toll in the millions. On Friday, in 'Year 43', going by their demented, psychotic calendar, the two most senior surviving leaders of Cambodia's brutal Khmer Rouge regime were found guilty of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in a historic ruling by an international tribunal officially called the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC).

Nuon Chea, former Brother Number 2 (to Pol Pot's Brother Number 1) and Khieu Samphan, the former head of state, have been sentenced to life in prison. They become the first Khmer Rouge leaders to be held to account by an international court for a campaign of genocide against the Vietnamese and Cham minorities in Cambodia in the 1970s. The Khmer Rouge takeover was achieved by promising an agrarian utopia which was sought to be brought to fruition by forcibly emptying the cities to establish vast rural communes; this so-called radicalism which had its admirers in India too resulted in what has been termed as "auto-genocide." Starvation, overwork and execution all contributed to this crime against humanity. The ECCC convictions covered the atrocities at Khmer Rouge established work camps where murder, deportation, enslavement, torture persecution on political, religious and racial grounds, enforced disappearances, forced marriages and rapes were common.

There has been some commentary that in practical terms a life sentence for Nuon Chea, 92, and Khieu Samphan, 87, and both in very poor health, doesn't mean much. But the symbolism of the verdicts cannot be underestimated. For crimes of the nature and magnitude perpetrated by the Khmer Rouge need to be called out if humanity itself is to be protected. The sense of closure the verdicts have brought to the Cambodian people, especially those from the Cham minority, many of whom were in the makeshift court inside the prison complex where the two were being held, is real. Equally, the message being sent out is loud and clear — whatever the ideological motivations, evil is evil. There are lessons to be learnt for all those who believe power still flows from the barrel of a gun.

Shadow of terror looms large

Every Sikh can decide for himself or herself whether s/he wants to follow in the footsteps of great Gurus and be inspired by their message and life or walk on the path laid by the British



BALBIR PUNJ

The news from Punjab is ominous. Media reports quoting intelligence sources and a string of terror related incidents that have hit the State in the recent past indicate the possibility of a revival of Pakistan sponsored violence in the border state. Delhi police is also on alert after inputs stated that a group of six-seven Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) terrorists are reportedly in Punjab, possibly in Ferozpur area and are planning to move towards Delhi.

Meanwhile, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) says a common link has been found to all the recent six killings of Hindu leaders in Punjab. The anti-terror probe agency has revealed that these killings were part of a larger conspiracy hatched by Pakistan's intelligence agency, Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), to foment communal trouble and in turn revive Khalistani movement in the State.

Interrogation of the Jalandhar blast accused has established that a nexus of Kashmiri and Khalistani militant organisations is trying to revive militancy in Punjab on the directions of Pakistan's ISI. Intelligence agencies fear that Khalistani militants are getting consignments of illegal weapons, including AK 56, magazines, pistols and RDX from Pakistan as the same cannot be sourced from Jammu.

Whatsoever is happening today in the border state, is a mere repeat of all that shook the country in 1980s, resulting in unfortunate 'Operation Blue Star' by the Indian Army at the sacred Golden Temple in Amritsar, subsequent dastardly assassination of the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi at the hands of her Sikh body guards, followed by the horrible killings of innocent Sikhs in Delhi and several other parts of the country.

The hands of the ISI were obvious in creating this bloody mess, which posed a serious threat to the unity and integrity of the country. But how did a section of Sikh community (known for its valour and patriotism) get so alienated from the Indian mainstream that it became a willing partner in ISI's plans to dismember India? This unfortunate chain of events has its origins in British stratagem of "divide and rule", employed by them to perpetuate their control over India in the wake of the first war of Independence by Indians in 1857. The wily colonial masters underlined six fault lines in Indian society, did the necessary academic exercise to back their divisive plans and worked simultaneously on all of them.

The easiest to work on was the Hindu-Muslim fault line. The two communities have mostly been at war against each other for over 600 years. Their alliance during 1857 uprising was nascent and limited. The British wisely picked up Syed Ahmad Khan (please see my column of October 23, 2017



and October 22, 2018 in this paper) to carry forward their divisive agenda among the Muslim of the sub-continent.

The British obviously found it impossible to get someone in the patriotic community of Sikhs to play the treacherous role that Sir Syed was happily doing among the Muslims. So, they found someone from within their ranks. He was one Max Arthur Macauliffe, born on September 10, 1841, in Newcastle West, Ireland. He got into the coveted Imperial Civil Service (ICS) in 1862 and was quickly posted to Punjab in 1864.

Macauliffe soon converted to Sikhism and with the help of Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha, undertook the task of translating Sikh scriptures, including the holy *Guru Granth Sahib*. In 1897, Bhai wrote a pamphlet "Hum Hindu Nahi", the very basis of the present day Khalistan movement, which has since largely been hijacked by the ISI and Islamic zealots.

A white man converting to Sikh faith, was a major development in Punjab. His high profile in the British colonial set up naturally gave Macauliffe, now a 'devoted' Sikh, an esteemed position in the Sikh community. He undoubtedly pioneered the exercise of creating a divide between Hindus and Sikhs.

In an introduction to Macauliffe's celebrated work, "The Sikhs, Their Religion, Gurus, Sacred, Writings and Authors", noted historian and author, Sardar Khushwant Singh wrote: "It has been suggested that the British Government of the day had sinister motives in commissioning Macauliffe to under-

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THE NEO-SIKHS DOMINATE THE PUBLIC DISCOURSE AND POLITICAL LIFE OF PUNJAB. NO WONDER PAKISTAN MAKES USE OF THIS GAP IN OUR POLITY. THIS UNFORTUNATE CHAIN OF EVENTS HAS ITS ORIGINS IN BRITISH STRATAGEM OF DIVIDE AND RULE
 ”

take this work. That Sikhs were fast relapsing back into the Hindu fold was recorded by Lord Dalhousie soon after he annexed the Sikh Kingdom. He and other British administrators felt that it would serve their interests better if the Khalsa Sikhs were encouraged to retain their distinct and separate identity.”

The technique adopted by both, Sir Syed and Macauliffe, to achieve their dubious objective had lot in common. Both invoked 'divine' injunctions to alienate the targeted community from the main stream and convert it into an ally of the British masters. Here is a sample from Macauliffe's work (*The Sikhs, Vol 1*).

"One day, as Guru Teg Bahadur was in the top story of his prison, the Emperor Aurangzeb thought he saw him looking towards the south in the direction of the Imperial zenana. He was sent for the next day, and charged with this grave breach of Oriental etiquette and propriety." The Guru replied, "Emperor Aurangzeb, I was on the top story of my prison. But I was not looking at thy private apartments or at thy queens. I was looking in the director of the Europeans who are coming from beyond the seas to tear down thy pardas and destroy thine empire."

The follow-up of action on the divisive and motivated "academic" exercise by the colonial power was calibrated and swift. On May 1, 1905, the then manager of Golden Temple issued orders banning the practice of worshipping of Hindu deities on the banks of the holy tank by Brahmins. The statues of Hindu

Gods and Goddesses were thrown out. Those who spear-headed this divisive agenda termed themselves as "Tat Khalsa" or the "neo Sikhs". The trend of eviction of Hindu practices and symbols from the Golden Temple was subsequently followed in rest of Gurudwaras of Punjab.

The population of Sikhs, according to 1901 Census, was a little over a million. Prior to 1911 Census, the Census Commissioner of Punjab issued special instructive to the enumerators, to try to record Sikhs, separately from the Hindus. The result was that the number of Sikhs in the State moved up by 300 times, over three million, in just a decade.

In the British Indian Army, a separate Khalsa regiment was created wherein the soldier were required to observe all the five kakars, so as to underline the distinction between the Khalsa and other followers of Sikh Gurus.

In the following decades, (even after Independence) this divisive mindset and practices have continued unabated. The neo-Sikhs, completely different from the ones who follow the Gurus in letter and spirit, dominate the public discourse and political life of Punjab. No wonder Pakistan makes use of this gap in our polity.

Every Sikh can decide for himself/herself — whether s/he wants to follow in the footsteps of great Gurus and be inspired by their message and life, or, walk on the path laid by the British.

(The writer is a political commentator and a former BJP Rajya Sabha MP)

SOUNDBITE

We have two Chhattisgarhs — one of the rich and another of the masses, poor and the marginalised.



Congress president —Rahul Gandhi

History has shown that in confrontation, whether in the form of a cold war, a hot war or a trade war, will produce no winners.



Chinese President —Xi Jinping

I came from a long line of women who felt invisible for years. Courage is just fear said with prayers.



Actor —Viola Davis

The BJP is a puppet for the rich. They (rich) have a key, which they turn and make them (BJP) bend to their will.



Congress leader —Navjot Singh Sidhu

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Passenger's safety

Sir — A senior pilot of a Delhi-London Air India flight was found in an inebriated state before takeoff. He failed the pre-flight breath analysis test for alcohol for the second time. The passengers were stranded in the airport because of the delay.

The pilots, for all practical purposes, are not expected to consume spirits 12 hours before commanding a passenger aircraft. After his present folly, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation was quick to bar him from entering the cockpit for three years. Alcohol limits are a lot stricter in India than some countries abroad.

Around 58 Air India pilots were apprehended for reporting drunk to duty in the last decade. Alcohol can cause giddiness, agitation, delirium, lack of coordination and clouding of consciousness — not a single symptom is safe for the pilot or the passengers. An eagle's eye should be kept on the chronic alcoholics. Random checks should be in order.

Ganapathi Bhat Akola

Sabarimala row refuses to die down

Surprisingly, both BJP and Congress are on same page with regard to opposition on lifting the ban on entry of women in the age group of 10-50 to the Sabarimala temple. However, it is welcome that the sworn enemies have come together in espousing the cause of devotees rather than backing the Supreme Court judgment which has created ruckus. "We will implement the SC order. The Government is with the devotees. We don't have an agenda. There is no politics in this issue", says Kerala Chief Minister, Pinarayi Vijayan.

The Chief Minister had mooted the idea of designating a separate date for women to enter the temple. This idea was quite in contrast to the popular feeling of devotees against the entry of women of menstrual age. This idea also contradicted his statement that he was with the devotees. The Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB) is expected to borrow more time to enforce the Supreme Court order. If the apex court makes a climb-



down on its September 28 judgment, it becomes an object of ridicule among the people that the apex court has succumbed to the pressure tactics of devotees. If it does not review its judgment to pave way for restoration of law and order with the BJP and Congress having locked horns with the Government, destruction of life and public property is imminent.

KV Seetharamaiah Hassan

Offensive remark

Sir — Congress leader Shashi Tharoor's latest remark crediting Jawaharlal Nehru for creating democratic institutions that enabled a 'chaiwala' to become the Prime Minister of the country is not only laughable but absurd as well.

Narendra Modi is the consti-

tutionally elected Prime Minister of the country. The Constitution is the creation of the Constituent Assembly and institutions are creation of the institutions, least of Nehru.

Tharoor should have gone through the history of his party. In 1946, in the process of nominations for the post of the president of Congress and thereby the first Prime Minister of India, 12

out of 15 Pradesh Congress Committees, the only legal bodies having power to nominate and elect president of the party as per the party constitution then, nominated Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. The remaining three did not nominate Nehru or anyone else. Despite that, Gandhi managed Nehru's nomination by a few members of the Working Committee and Patel withdrew

his nomination in favour of Nehru. Thus, Nehru was elected as the Congress president by Gandhi's choice. Initially, as first Prime Minister of India, Nehru was neither the choice of the Congressmen nor elected by the people of the country.

MC Joshi Lucknow

World peace

Sir — November 17 was the International Day of Peace. When interest of one person or group clashes with that of the others, there is a possibility of violence. If a grave situation is not dealt in a calm manner and people immediately resort to violence, it may have serious repercussions and it may even wipe out the entire mankind. "An eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind," said Mahatma Gandhi, who also said "the day the power of love overrules the love of power, the world will know peace."

TS Karthik Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Inclusive education for whole of India

No school has the right to deny high quality education to a child simply because s/he has a disability



UMA TULI

SUDHANSH MALHOTRA

As per the Census 2011, out of over 120 crore people, 2.2 per cent in India are disabled. In absolute terms, this implies that over 2.68 crore people live with one form of disability or another. It is significant to note that of these, 66 lakh are children in the age group 5-19 years. These numbers are most likely much higher — it is generally accepted that surveys all over the world grossly undercount the actual number of disabled people. The World Report on Disability jointly produced by the World Health Organisation and the World Bank in 2011 estimated that about 15 per cent of the global population live with disability. Whatever the actual number of the disabled, they constitute a significant resource that can and should contribute to the social, economic and political life of the nation. Children — with or without disabilities have the right to a quality education — no matter what special needs they may have. Education is the prime tool that equips a child to meet the challenges of life. Children with disabilities need this even more to supplement their different talents. Indeed, disability need not be an impediment to achievement.

Inclusive education is a model of education in which children with disabilities spend all or most of their time in school with children without special needs. Fully inclusive schools do not separate 'general education' and 'special education' programmes. Such schools are structured so that all students learn and grow together. Disability exacerbates existing vulnerabilities arising from social and economic inequities such as poverty and gender, lack of access to services, social stigma and so on. Universal access to inclusive education has the potential to shift society towards a more just and equitable future.

Inclusive education allows children with disabilities to develop friendships with peers and feel less isolated. Children who are placed in standard classroom environment generally have higher self-esteem than children who are isolated in special needs programmes. Policy-makers and civil society need to recognise that no school has the right to deny high quality education to children and families who want the best for their child simply because s/he has a disability. A common misconception that needs to be dispelled is that the presence of disabled children in classrooms impedes the learning of non-special needs children. In fact, children without disabilities in inclusive schools get an opportunity to receive their own education in a non-discriminatory environment and develop a more accepting and wholesome perspective.

Although much progress has been made in the education sector, India faces immense challenges in addressing educational needs of children with disabilities. In the age group five to 19 years, 28 per cent disabled girls have never attended an educational institution. The figure for boys at 26 per cent is only marginally better. Only 16 per cent of the disabled male population and nine per cent of the disabled female population has matric/secondary education. Not surprisingly, only nine per cent of males and three per cent of females with disability are graduates.

A mission approach is needed to make the provisions for inclusive education in the Right to Education Act 2009 and Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 universally available in all educational institutions — public as well as private. Educational institutions in the private and NGO sector have made a beginning in introducing inclusive education. However, most of these schools are in urban settings. The need of the hour is to learn from these pioneering efforts to make inclusive education a reality in public sector institutions at scale. As the country strengthens the education sector further, the universalisation of inclusive education in the public and private sectors must become a foundational principle of the nation's education sector.

The Amar Jyoti Charitable Trust, New Delhi — a pioneer in the field of inclusive education in collaboration with the Asian Centre for Inclusive Education, Dhaka — is organising the 5th International Conference on Inclusive Education (ICIE) from November 28-30, 2018 in New Delhi. Over 300 participants from developing as well as developed countries are expected to attend the conference. Persons with disabilities, students, parents, educationists, academics, policy-maker, et al. will utilise the platform for sharing new initiatives. They will also exchange international trends and good practices, discuss policy-making strategies with different stakeholders and strengthen networking of national and international institutions that provide and promote inclusive education.

(Uma Tuli is founder & Managing Secretary, Amar Jyoti Charitable Trust. Sudhansh Malhotra is Former Regional Adviser — Child Health & Development, WHO, South East Asia)

THE BJP AND THE CENTRE ARE USING CBI TO DESTABILISE THE GOVERNMENT. I DON'T GIVE CONSENT TO INVESTIGATE ANY CASE IN THE STATE.

—ANDHRA PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER N CHANDRABABU

POINT COUNTERPOINT



THERE'S NO SOVEREIGNTY OF ANY STATE IN THE MATTER OF CORRUPTION. ONLY THOSE WHO HAVE A LOT TO HIDE TAKE THE STEP OF NOT LETTING THE CBI INTO THE STATE.

—FINANCE MINISTER ARUN JAITLEY

Don't undermine national heroes

There is a trend in contemporary political debates to abuse Gandhi and Nehru by distorting historical facts to secure facile victories on public platforms and television debates



PRASHANT TEWARI

If any person chose to think of me, then I should like them to say: "This was the man with all his mind and heart, loved India and the Indian people. And they in turn, were indulgent to him and gave of their love most abundantly and extravagantly."

—Jawaharlal Nehru

India is an ancient civilisation privileged to witness a rare cultural synthesis and fusion. To know India, one has to travel across the country to understand the unity in diversity. Yet in an era of hate and distrust, the national icons are targeted for an immediate political polarisation. It is a shame that figures like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Abdul Kalam Azad are disgraced in public debate without valid reasons. It is a fashion in contemporary political debates to abuse Gandhi and Nehru by distorting historical facts to secure facile victories on public platforms and television debates.

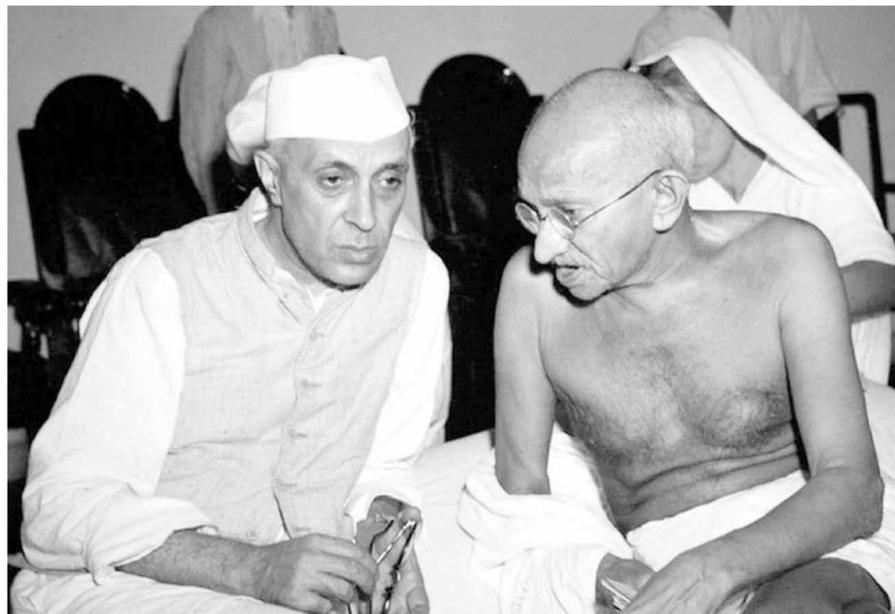
Likewise, the other side targets the right-wing leadership of Syama Prasad Mookherjee, Deendayal Upadhyaya, KB Hedgewar without realising that all of them have contributed their respective best to attain the freedom for our country. We are doing a great disservice to our great nation by disgracing our national heroes either way. The nation that doesn't worship its heroes leads to a path of utter disaster.

Jawaharlal Nehru was one among the few freedom fighters of India who sacrificed his life for the cause of the motherland. He was one of the fortunate leaders who brought the independence struggle to a successful termination. Among Gandhi's great lieutenants in the struggle for freedom, no doubt, Nehru had a prominent place. Jawaharlal Nehru, as one of the most distinguished leaders of Third World solidarity, reached out to the rest of the colonised world and forged a joint front against colonialism and reinvented imperialism.

Nehru was born on November 14, 1889 in an affluent family of Allahabad. His father Motilal Nehru followed his education with extreme passion. Young Nehru was sent to Harrow school, and then to Cambridge University in England to obtain a degree in natural sciences. After spending two years at the Inner Temple, London, he qualified as a barrister. During his stay in London, he studied subjects like literature, politics, economics and history. He got attracted to the ideas of liberalism, socialism and nationalism. He was, by temperament and experience, a cosmopolitan. His frequent visits to Europe, his deep familiarity with the past and his understanding of the contemporary ideologies of the day, from liberalism to Fabian socialism, to communist internationalism, had convinced him that the future of India was incomplete without the liberation of other colonies.

History fascinated Nehru. It gave him an insightful command over the past, a keen and immediate sense of the present and a rare foresight to think and plan for the future of all. Nehru was a historian of repute; he felt that many historical writings were uncritical descriptions of events and people. He was equally drawn to science and firmly believed that scientific

“ YOUNG JAWAHARLAL NEHRU HAD THE OPTION OF LEADING A COMFORTABLE LIFE BY INHERITING THE FLOURISHING LEGAL PRACTICE OF HIS FATHER BUT HE OPTED FOR THE JOURNEY OF THE FREEDOM STRUGGLE WHICH EVENTUALLY MARKED HIS ENTRY INTO INDIAN POLITICS ”



temper and scientific approach to problems would liberate India from economic misery and social injustice. Indeed amazing was his intellectual blend in science and history, idealism and realism, literature and politics, the revolution of Marx and the non-violence of Gandhi, all of which were integrated in his unique personality. As Norman Cousins observed Nehru "was not one man but a procession of men."

After completing his education in England, Nehru came back to India in 1912 and joined the Allahabad High Court Bar. Young Jawaharlal Nehru had the option of leading a comfortable life by inheriting the flourishing legal practice of his father but he opted for the journey of the freedom struggle, which eventually marked his entry into Indian politics. Indian National Congress already had a split due to the conflict between the moderates and the extremists. The Congress was yet to have a mass base. With the "divide and rule" policy of the British Government, the Muslim League was already formed. He met Gandhiji in the Lucknow session of the National Congress in December 1916 and was tremendously influenced by his towering personality.

Nehru was shocked with the Jallianwala Bagh massacre of April 1919; the event changed the life forever. When the non-cooperation movement was launched in December 1920, he participated in it and was arrested for his active role in the *satyagraha*. In 1923, he was appointed as the General Secretary of the Congress. As the official delegate of the Indian National Congress in 1927, he participated in the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities in Brussels. Nehru utilised this opportunity to impress upon other countries about India's non-violent struggle against the imperial British Government and became

the global ambassador of peace. In 1928, the Congress rejected co-operation with the Simon Commission and Nehru participated in the *hartals* in protest of the Commission along with Subhas Chandra Bose and Srinivas Iyenger. Nehru put forward the demand that complete independence should be the goal of the Congress Party as opposed to the idea of Dominion status. He became the president of the Indian National Congress in Lahore and the historic independence resolution was passed on the midnight of December 31, 1929. He was re-elected as president of the National Congress in 1936, 1937 and 1946. Nehru participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement at Allahabad and was imprisoned till January 1931.

Nehru severely opposed the "Communal Award" of the British Government, which provided separate electorate to Sikhs, Muslims, Europeans and other oppressed classes. When Gandhiji started his fast till death against the communal award, it created a deep impression on Nehru. The Government of India Act 1935 was far away from the demands of the Congress. Nehru termed it as "a charter of slavery and oppression." Yet the Congress decided to participate in the election, which was announced as the provision of the Act. Under Nehru's leadership, the Congress secured absolute majority in six provinces and formed coalition Governments in two others out of the total 11 provinces and it established Nehru's leadership in the entire country.

With the failure of the Cripps Mission, Mahatma Gandhi urged for the right of self-determination to India. Gandhiji was determined to start *satyagraha*. The Quit India Resolution was moved by him and on August 8, 1942, at the Bombay session of the Congress, it was adopted. He

was arrested and imprisoned for three years. After the war when Nehru was released, he became a leading figure of the Congress in various negotiations with the British Government. Being invited by Lord Wavell to form the Government, he headed the first Indian (interim) Government of India. In the same year, elections to the Constituent Assembly was also held. Lord Mountbatten was deputed as the Viceroy of India and completed the transfer of power. Despite the opposition of Gandhi, Nehru and other Congress leaders, India was partitioned under the "two nation" theory of Jinnah.

On August 15, 1947, a free India was born. Nehru was elected as the first Prime Minister of independent India. He was the first Indian Prime Minister to hoist the National Flag and make his iconic speech "Tryst with Destiny" from the ramparts of the Lal Quila (Red Fort). The time had come to implement his ideas and build a healthy nation. Nehru's stint as Prime Minister of India is characterised by his secular and liberal approach. He carried out his vision to carry the young India towards the road of technological and scientific excellence with great zeal. He implemented a number of socio-economic reforms and paved the way for rapid industrialisation.

Nehru continued to be the Prime Minister of independent India till his death on May 27, 1964. He was the chief framer of domestic and international policies during his term as Prime Minister (1947-1964). It was under Nehru's supervision that India launched its first Five-Year Plan in 1951. He had laid the foundation of democracy, secularism, planning and socialism.

(To be continued in these columns on Tuesday. The writer is Editor-in-Chief, Opinion Express Group)

From denial to confession

As the plot thickens in the Khashoggi tapes affair, except for Trudeau, Western leaders keep dithering over the journalist's killing. The question, however, remains: What exactly can they do about Mohammed bin Salman's crime?



GWYNNE DYER

How odd! Turkish President, Recep Tayyip Erdogan sends an audio recording of the murder of journalist, Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi Arabian consulate in Istanbul to the Governments of all Turkey's major NATO allies, and the only one that gets it is Canada. What happened to the copies that President Erdogan sent to the United States, France, the United Kingdom and Germany? Lost in the mail-room, no doubt, or maybe just lying unopened on somebody's desk. Or perhaps the Turks just didn't put enough stamps on the packages.

"We gave them the tapes," said Erdogan on November 10. "They've also listened to the conversation, they know it." But still not a word out of

Washington or London acknowledging that they have heard the recordings, and French Foreign Minister, Jean-Yves Le Drian denied that France had received a copy. When asked if that meant Erdogan was lying, Le Drian replied: "It means that he has a political game to play in these circumstances." Like most Western politicians and diplomats, he is desperate to avoid calling out Saudi Arabia's de facto ruler, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, as a murderer. The French has a highly profitable commercial relationship with the oil-rich kingdom, mostly selling it arms, and they don't want to acknowledge the evidence on the recording (which may directly implicate the Crown Prince) because it could jeopardise that trade.

Erdogan was furious when the French foreign minister issued his denial, and his communications director insisted that a representative of French intelligence had listened to the recording as long ago as 24 October. But it was all just "he said/she said" stuff until Canadian Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, blew the game wide



open on Monday. Yes, Trudeau said, Canadian intelligence has the recording, and he is well-aware of what is on it. In fact, Canadian intelligence agencies have been working very closely with Turkey on the murder investigation, and Canada is "in discussions with our like-minded allies as to the next steps with regard Saudi Arabia."

Why did Trudeau come clean? One popular theory is the nothing-left-to-lose hypothesis. Last August, the tempestuous Crown Prince killed all future trade deals with Canada, pulled thousands of Saudi Arabian foreign

students out of Canadian universities, and generally showered curses on the country after Canadian officials called for the release of detained Saudi campaigners for civil rights and women's rights.

Canada's bridges to Saudi Arabia have already been burned, and according to this theory, Trudeau felt free to say the truth. But he's not really free: Canada still has a \$13 billion contract to build armoured vehicles for Saudi Arabia that the Saudis might cancel, and this is a real contract, not one of Trump's fantasy arms sales. Maybe

Trudeau is just braver than the others, but his purpose is clear. He waited more than three weeks after getting the recording for the "like-minded allies" to agree to a joint policy towards the murderous prince — nobody believes Khashoggi could have been killed without Mohammed bin Salman's consent — and then he spilled the beans. Of course, all the major NATO Governments have the recordings. They have had them for at least three weeks. They were just dithering over what to do about them, and Trudeau decided it was time to give them a push. Good for him, but what exactly can they do about Mohammed bin Salman's crime?

It almost certainly was Mohammed bin Salman, who ordered the killing. Since his elderly father, King Salman, gave him free rein to run the country less than three years ago, he has become a one-man regime. Nothing happens without his approval, least of the murder of a high-profile critic in a foreign country by a 15-strong Saudi hit squad, including several members of his personal

security team. No Western leader (except perhaps Donald Trump) will be seen in public with Mohammed bin Salman any more; foreign investment in Saudi Arabia this year is the lowest in several decades, and the price of oil is falling again. So, he has to go if it's still possible for anybody in Saudi Arabia to remove him from power. But that's the big question. The Saudi royal family is no longer a tight and united body that can just decide Mohammed bin Salman has to go and make it stick. It's a sprawling array of people, many of whom scarcely know each other, and without the agreement of King Salman, any smaller group within the family that organised a coup against the Crown Prince, would almost certainly fail.

So, he may go on for while despite the disaster of his military intervention in Yemen, his pointless, fruitless blockade of Qatar and even this ugly murder. He wouldn't be the only killer in power. But the bloom is definitely off this particular rose.

(The writer is an independent journalist)



TECH GIANT FAILS TO LOOK INTO DARK CORNERS

Facebook needs to own up to its many failings by establishing specific ethical practices to regain users' trust. The company needs to be honest and direct about how all personal data is used and sold. Security ought to be tighter. News feeds have to be valuable to users, not just advertisers. (Chicago Tribune editorial)

CAG to report performance audit of GST soon

In current fiscal, GST collections stood at ₹1.03 lakh cr

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India is conducting performance audit of GST and is likely to finalise its report soon.

The performance audit report on implementation of Goods and Services Tax (GST) could be tabled in Parliament as early as in the forthcoming Winter session beginning December 11, according to sources.

The CAG is auditing the functioning of the new indirect tax regime since its implementation on July 1, 2017.

The audit aspect would include registration, refund, input tax credit, transition credit mechanism, ease of payment of taxes and the impact on the economic activity, the sources told.

The CAG team has already visited the GST Commissionerates in major states to get clarity on the functioning of the new indirect tax system and its effi-



ciency and effectiveness, the sources said.

As part of the performance audit, the CAG looks at programmes, systems and activities to check if they are in accordance with the principles of economy and whether there is any scope for further improvement.

The performance audit will not take into account revenue collections. Its focus would primarily be on the implementation aspect of GST, which has subsumed 17 local taxes.

Tagged as the biggest tax reform since Independence, GST has faced some teething problems in the initial months

of its implementation with the GST Network unable to take load of last minute monthly return filing rush.

Also, there were hiccups with respect to refunds to be claimed by exporters as well as excessive transitional credit claims.

The monthly average revenue collection from GST in the previous fiscal (July 2017-March 2018) was ₹89,885 crore. In current fiscal, the collections stood at ₹1.03 lakh crore in April, ₹94,016 crore in May, ₹95,610 crore in June, ₹96,483 crore in July, ₹93,960 crore in August, ₹94,442 crore in September and ₹1 lakh crore in October.

RBI net sells \$18.66 bn of dollars between Apr-Sep

In FY17, RBI had bought \$12.351 billion of the US dollars on a net basis

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) net sold \$18.662 billion of the greenback in the spot market, during the first seven months of the current financial year, according to RBI data.

In the same period last year, RBI was a net purchaser of the greenback, as it had bought \$16.301 billion.

In September, 2018, RBI sold \$31 million of the US currency in the spot market on a net basis, as per the latest RBI data.

In the reporting month, the central bank purchased USD 1.012 billion, while selling \$1.043 billion in the spot market.

In August, and July, it had sold \$2.323 billion and 1.87 billion, respectively, on a net

basis. The apex bank said that In April, May and June, it had, on net basis, sold \$2.483 billion, \$5.767 billion and \$6.184 billion of the US currency, respectively.

In September 2017, RBI had net bought \$1.259 billion of dollar, after it purchased \$3.788 billion and \$2.529 billion in the spot market.

RBI maintains that its intervention in the foreign exchange market is to curb volatility in the rupee and not to target a level of the domestic currency.

The central bank has been very active in the past few months in the spot market to save the rupee which got battered against the US dollar.

The domestic currency fell to a historic low of ₹74.1 against the dollar in October.

In FY18, the apex bank had net purchased \$33.689 billion of US dollars from the spot market. It had bought \$52.068 billion from the spot market, while selling \$18.379 billion.

In FY17, RBI had bought \$12.351 billion of the US dollars on a net basis.

In the forward dollar market, the outstanding net forward sales at the end of September was \$1.358 billion, compared with a purchase of \$5.730 billion in August, according to RBI data.

RBI board to meet today, likely to reach common ground on key issues

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The ongoing rift with the Government is set to play out at the RBI's crucial board meeting Monday, with the Finance on Ministry nominees and some independent directors expected to take on Governor Urjit Patel and his team over issues ranging from MSME credit to the central bank's reserves, though both sides are in favour of reaching a common ground.

While there have been reports and demands from some quarters for the Governor to step down, sources said Patel is unlikely to yield under pressure and will rather mount a strong defence of the central bank's policies regarding stringent NPA recognition norms as well as measures taken to ease credit supply to MSMEs.

Patel and his four deputies, who all are members of the RBI's 18-member central board, will present a united front, while a few independent directors too are expected to support the central bank's mission to clean up bank balance sheets, sources said.

The central board, headed by the RBI Governor, is expected to discuss issues mentioned in the agenda circulated to the board members in advance.

Off-agenda items can also be raised in the meeting, with the chair's permission.

The RBI's central board currently has 18 members, though the provision is that it can go up to 21.

The members include Governor Urjit Patel and his

four deputies as 'full-time official directors', while the rest 13 have been nominated by the government, including two Finance Ministry officials -- Economic Affairs Secretary and Financial Services Secretary.

Sources said the government and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) are looking to reach at an agreeable solution with respect to relaxation of the Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework and easing of lending norms for the MSME sector.

If not in this board meeting, the issue of relaxation of PCA framework would reach a resolution in the next few weeks, they added.

As a result of the relaxation, some banks may come out of the PCA framework by the end of this fiscal.

Of the 21 State-owned banks, 11 are under the PCA framework, which imposes lending and other restrictions on weak lenders.

These are Allahabad Bank, United Bank of India, Corporation Bank, IDBI Bank, UCO Bank, Bank of India, Central Bank of India, Indian Overseas Bank, Oriental Bank of Commerce, Dena Bank and Bank of Maharashtra.

The PCA framework kicks in when banks breach any of the three key regulatory trigger points -- namely capital to risk weighted assets ratio, net non-performing assets (NPA) and return on assets (RoA).

Globally, PCA kicks in only when banks slip on a single parameter of capital ade-

quacy ratio, and the government is in favour of this practice being adopted for the domestic banking sector as well.

The RBI is also expected to consider a special dispensation for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) which have been facing liquidity issues.

The government feels that the MSME sector -- which employs about 12 crore people and plays a critical role in the economy -- needs some support after being impacted by demonetisation and implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

However, the central bank has been averse to the government's demand as it considers the sectors to be vulnerable.

Meanwhile, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on Saturday said that growth must not be throttled by limiting credit availability and liquidity.

It is necessary that the growth process does not suffer due to the cleaning up of the banking system from the "collectively committed sins" during 2008-14 when the regulatory mechanisms also overlooked high debt accumulation, he said.

Amid growing tensions with the central bank, the Finance Ministry had sought discussions under the never-used-before Section 7 of the RBI Act which empowers the government to issue directions to the RBI Governor.

BSE to part ways with S&P Dow Jones; plans to develop its own indices

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Asia's oldest bourse BSE has decided to snap ties with S&P Dow Jones, which manages and operates benchmark Sensex, and plans to develop indices through its own in-house development team, exchange's officials said.

The two entities had announced a joint venture -- Asia Index -- in 2013 to provide an array of indices enabling global and domestic investors to participate in South Asia's vibrant economies.

The deal with BSE came after the expiry of the licensing arrangement between India Index Services & Products (IISL), a joint venture of NSE and S&P-owned Crisil.

The exchange officials said that BSE will not renew its agreement with S&P Dow Jones Indices LLC which expires on December 31, 2018 and it is looking to develop indices through its own team.

"Basically, we had done this tie-up five years back, but the joint venture could not do much in terms of expanding in the foreign jurisdiction, the usage of the indexes and all," BSE Managing Director and Chief Executive Ashish Kumar



Chauhan told investors in a conference call.

"And that is why we have decided to not renew it, but overall the impact on profits or on the revenues will be minuscule," he added.

Rival bourse National Stock Exchange's indices are managed and operated by NSE Indices, an arm of NSE.

S&P Dow Jones Indices LLC, a subsidiary of The McGraw-Hill Companies, is the world's largest global resource for index-based concepts, data and research.

BSE is Asia's oldest stock exchange and home to the iconic Sensex index -- a leading indicator of Indian equity market performance.

Petrol price cut by 20 paise

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Petrol price Sunday was cut by 20 paise a litre and diesel by 18 paise, the 29th straight daily reduction in rates that has wiped away all of the massive price increase in petrol witnessed in two months since mid-August that had triggered a political uproar.

Petrol price in Delhi was cut to ₹76.71 a litre from ₹76.91 on Saturday, according to a price notification issued by state-owned fuel retailers.

Diesel is being now sold at ₹71.56 per litre as compared to ₹71.74 on Saturday.

With this, the reduction in rates in the last one month totals ₹7.29 per litre for petrol and ₹3.89 a litre for diesel.

Rates have been on the decline since October 18. This has wiped out all of the price hike on petrol in two months beginning August 16 and more than half on diesel.

The reduction in diesel rates has been slower due to moderate fall in its benchmark international prices, according to oil company price notifications.

Petrol price had touched a record high of ₹84 per litre in Delhi and ₹91.34 in Mumbai on October 4. Diesel on that day had peaked to an all-time high of ₹75.45 a litre in Delhi



and ₹80.10 in Mumbai.

Prices had started to climb from August 16. Petrol in Delhi was priced at ₹77.14 per litre and in Mumbai it cost ₹84.58 on August 15. Diesel on that day was priced at ₹68.72 per litre in Delhi and at ₹72.96 in Mumbai.

Petrol in Mumbai Sunday cost ₹82.28 per litre and diesel was priced at ₹74.97.

Between August 16 and October 4, petrol price was hiked by ₹6.86 per litre and diesel by ₹6.73.

On that day, the Government decided to cut excise duty on petrol and diesel

by ₹1.50 per litre each and asked state-owned fuel retailers to subsidise prices by another ₹1 a litre by reducing their margins. Many states including Maharashtra matched that with a reduction in local sales tax or VAT.

Subsequent to this, the petrol price came down to ₹81.50 per litre in Delhi and diesel to ₹72.95 a litre on October 5. In Mumbai rates fell to ₹86.97 per litre for petrol and ₹77.45 in case of diesel.

As the international oil prices continued to rise, price of petrol and diesel in Delhi increased to ₹82.83 and ₹75.69

on October 17. In Mumbai, rates touched ₹88.29 a litre for petrol and ₹79.35 for diesel.

But since then, international oil prices have been falling and rupee has also appreciated, resulting in decline in retail rates.

Industry source said as per the assessment, the retail prices of petrol and diesel may reign easy in the next few days.

The retail selling price of petrol and diesel is dependent on the international prices of benchmark fuel and the rupee-US dollar exchange rate. This is because a large proportion of country's requirement is met through imports.

BSNL vows swift action on BharatNet concerns

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Drawing flak from the telecom department over gaps in maintenance of BharatNet infrastructure, BSNL has promised to take action against erring officers, but asserted that its maintenance responsibility pertains to only the optical fibre portion, sources said.

The telecom PSU has also sounded out Department of Telecom (DoT) about ₹617 crore of dues pending from Bharat Broadband Network Ltd (BBNL), as operation and maintenance payment for BharatNet project.

When contacted, BSNL Chairman and Managing Director Anupam Shrivastava refused to comment on the matter.

But sources aware of the matter said the company has written to DoT pointing out that while the onus of preventive and corrective maintenance of the optical fibre portion connecting gram panchayats is with BSNL, the responsibility of remaining network elements lay with other agencies.

Responding to concerns raised by the Telecom Secretary on BharatNet project, BSNL has also suggested that mechanism be worked out at the earliest that allocates faults pertaining to only the optical fibre

portion, to the telecom corporation.

BSNL has claimed that BBNL has not taken steps to put in place such a mechanism despite the state-owned telecom service provider repeatedly insisting on the same.

Earlier this month, the telecom department reportedly pulled up BSNL and BBNL over underutilisation of BharatNet infrastructure as well as deficiencies in maintenance of the project that seeks to connect 2.5 lakh gram panchayats through high-speed broadband by March 2019.

Absence of a mechanism to segregate the faults in the network makes it difficult to initiate action against officials, as some of the problems may turn out to be beyond their area of responsibility, BSNL has said.

In the same breath, BSNL has assured DoT that it will take disciplinary action against the officials lacking in discharge of duties. Sources said BSNL CMD has also instructed Director (enterprise) to look into the outstanding issues in streamlining operations and maintenance of BharatNet.

BSNL has also pointed out that states would need to take equal responsibility of ensuring utilisation of the massive rural broadband infrastructure that is being put in place.

Vice-President launches Krea University

VIKAS KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Vice President Venkaiah Naidu on Sunday launched Krea University in New Delhi. Based in Sri City (near Chennai), the University offers BA (Hons) & BSc (Hons) degrees in a host of disciplines ranging from economics to computer science. The University has opened its admissions process for the first cohort of undergraduate students who commence classes in August 2019. The newly inaugurated university is backed by some of the best academics in the world and the top industrialists in India.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Guest Vice President of India, M Venkaiah Naidu said, "Happy to know that the core of this University's philosophy lies in a pioneering paradigm of Interwoven Learning, weaving together



thought and action. Institutions like the Krea University, with sights set firmly on the achievement of brilliance and distinction at the global platform, will doubtless serve us in good stead in our quest for fast track progress and all round development".

Wishing Krea University all success. I hope that it will inspire many such universities to invigorate our thinking and lay building blocks of a new paradigm that sets us on the path to becoming a world leader in higher learning, the

celebrated 'Vishwaguru' yet again.

Krea University claims to bring a fundamentally different approach to higher education -- Interwoven Learning -- which brings together thought with action, arts with sciences, and the learnings of the past with preparedness for the future. In a world where employees are expected to re-skill themselves six times over the span of their career, Krea aims to produce graduates who remain resilient, agile and impactful.

NTPC invites EoI to build fly ash-based roads at its plants

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

NTPC has invited expression of interest (EoI) for construction of fly ash-based geopolymer concrete roads at its plants to demonstrate use of this technology, a company official said.

"NTPC has invited players to construct fly ash-based geopolymer concrete roads. About 1,100 tonne of fly ash is used per km of geopolymer road," the official told PTI.

Earlier, the company has successfully completed similar project at Dadri station as per Indian Roads Congress (IRC) specifications & accreditation. Moreover, 1.2-km double lane stretch are being constructed at Ramagundam and Farakka stations. These projects are being developed by NETA, the R&D wing of NTPC.

NETA has also developed geopolymer concrete spun /hume pipes, tetra pods, tiles and is working on other

applications as well.

Geopolymer concrete, an eco-friendly construction material, is a 100 per cent replacement of cement and has a great potential as a binder as it sets to a material and gains strength more rapidly than Portland cement.

Geopolymer concrete has emerged as an important engineering material in recent times because of its utility in developing ecologically sound and sustainable construction materials.

Concrete demand is expected to grow to 18 billion tonne per year globally by 2050. Portland cement is not only energy intensive but also responsible for large scale emission of CO₂, the official added.

During 2017-18, 32.23 million tonne of ash, which is 53.45 per cent of the ash generated, was utilised for various productive purposes by the company.

Govt should stick to fiscal deficit target, continue reforms: Panagariya

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre should stick to the fiscal deficit target for 2018-19 and continue with the reforms undertaken during the over four years of the Narendra Modi-led Government, former Niti Aayog Vice Chairman Arvind Panagariya said Sunday.

The present Government, Panagariya said, has made a huge progress in implementing reforms including some difficult structural ones such as the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) that previous Governments had difficulty in introducing.

"Government should not shift its goal posts as far as fiscal deficit target is concerned. Fiscal consolidation has been a key achievement of the government and it has played a central role in macroeconomic stability that has characterised the economy during the last four years," the eminent economist told.

The Government aims to strictly maintain 3.3 per cent fiscal deficit target for 2018-19

fiscal.

The NDA government came to power in May 2014 and the next general elections will be held before May 15, 2019.

"At this stage any reforms that require legislative change such as the Higher Education Commission Bill will have to wait till the elections.

But reforms that can be done through changes in rules and regulations can still progress. Lateral entry into civil service is one such reform. Privatisation of listed PSUs and closure of sick PSUs are other such reforms," Panagariya noted.

What matters most is the top leadership, he said, adding that if the top leadership believes in reforms, you can count on their implementation.

Panagariya, who is currently a professor of Indian Political Economy at Columbia University pointed out that in the last four years, growth has averaged 7.3 per cent compared with 5.9 per cent during the last two years under the UPA.

The former Niti Aayog

vice chairman also opined that under the previous UPA Government, Congress President Sonia Gandhi effectively led the government and she had no interest in implementing structural reforms.

Replying to a query on government's move to raise import duties on a host of products with an aim to contain current account deficit (CAD), Panagariya said, "Sadly, bureaucrats in the Department of Revenue and Ministry of Commerce have not understood the importance of openness to trade. If they had, they would also be better able to explain it to politicians they serve."

Stating that "we have forgotten the lessons of our own experience and returned to the road we had left many years ago," he said "let us hope we will soon do course correction".

Recently, the government Wednesday raised import duties on 19 items, including jet fuel and air conditioners, as it looks to check the widening current account deficit resulting from high crude oil prices.

Scheme	NAV	1Yr %
Tata Digital India Fund-Reg(G)	13.97	33.24
ICICI Pru Technology Fund(G)	56.7	28.02
SBI Technology Opp Fund-Reg(G)	60.69	26.2
Aditya Birla SL Digital India Fund(G)	50.17	23.94
ICICI Pru US Bluechip Equity Fund(G)	26.81	22.36
Franklin India Technology Fund(G)	152.84	19.46
Aditya Birla SL Intl. Equity Fund-A(G)	20.78	18.16
Reliance US Equity Opp Fund(G)	14.2	17.51
Franklin India Feeder - Franklin U.S. Opportunities Fund(G)	28.61	15.67
DSP US Flexible Equity Fund-Reg(G)	24.59	14.97
Reliance Pharma Fund(G)	153.16	14.74
Kotak US Equity Fund(G)	16.32	12.61
DHFL Pramerica Global Equity Opp Fund(G)	16.94	12.56
Sundaram World Brand Fund-Sr II-Reg(G)	14.25	10.57
Sundaram World Brand Fund-Sr III-Reg(G)	14.41	10.53
ICICI Pru Global Stable Equity Fund(G)	15.01	10.12
ICICI Pru FMCG Fund(G)	228.48	8.24
Tata Index Fund-Sensex Plan(G)	87.1	7.92
HDFC Index Fund-Sensex(G)	313.49	7.91
Reliance Index Fund - Sensex Plan(G)	17.47	7.42
Aditya Birla SL Global Real Estate Fund(G)	18.8	7.02
Axis Bluechip Fund(G)	26.11	7.01
SBI Banking & Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	15.85	6.94
DSP World Agriculture Fund-Reg(G)	16.55	6.7
Tata India Pharma & Healthcare Fund-Reg(G)	8.89	6.23
ICICI Pru Growth Fund-2(DP)	11.33	6.19
Canara Rob Equity Tax Saver Fund-Reg(G)	60.21	5.87
IDFC Nifty Fund-Reg(G)	22	5.85
HDFC Index Fund-NIFTY 50 Plan(G)	96.75	5.7
UTI Nifty Index Fund-Reg(G)	69.35	5.66
Tata Index Fund-Nifty Plan(G)	64.31	5.49
Aditya Birla SL CEF-Global Agri-Reg(G)	24.01	5.47
UTI Equity Fund-Reg(G)	131.25	5.35
DSP Global Allocation Fund-Reg(G)	12.09	5.32
SBI Nifty Index Fund-Reg(G)	91.5	5.19
Canara Rob Bluechip Equity Fund-Reg(G)	23.08	5.1
Reliance Index Fund - Nifty Plan(G)	17.86	4.87
ICICI Pru LT Equity Fund (Tax Saving)(G)	356.52	4.74
ICICI Pru Nifty Index Fund(G)	102.88	4.73
Axis Long Term Equity Fund(G)	41.42	4.71
Reliance Japan Equity Fund(G)	12.55	4.71
Kotak India EQ Contra Fund(G)	48.93	4.57
Franklin India Index Fund-NSE Nifty(G)	84.53	4.49
Aditya Birla SL Index Fund(G)	104.7	4.42
ICICI Pru Business Cycle Fund-2(G)	14.21	4.33
ICICI Pru Multicap Fund(G)	279.71	4.18
Tata India Consumer Fund-Reg(G)	17.23	4.17
DSP World Mining Fund-Reg(G)	7.93	4.17
DSP World Energy Fund-Reg(G)	13.05	4.08
IDBI Nifty Index Fund(G)	19.68	4.07
Axis Midcap Fund(G)	33.86	3.83
Mirae Asset Great Consumer Fund-Reg(G)	32.73	3.82
Invesco India Feeder - Invesco Global Equity Income Fund(G)	12.55	3.74
Canara Rob Equity Diver Fund-Reg(G)	123.72	3.64
UTI MNC Fund-Reg(G)	193.75	3.6
Sundaram Select Focus(G)	165.22	3.51
Sundaram Large and Mid Cap Fund(G)	32.51	3.31
Edelweiss Large Cap Fund(G)	32.95	3.29
DHFL Pramerica Large Cap Fund-2-Reg(G)	11.77	3.22
Axis Focused 25 Fund(G)	25.7	3.13
SBI Magnum Equity ESG Fund-Reg(G)	96.64	2.99
Canara Rob Consumer Trends Fund-Reg(G)	36.15	2.76
JM Large Cap Fund(G)	64.62	2.58
Parag Parikh Long Term Equity Fund-Reg(G)	23.15	2.55
Reliance Large Cap Fund(G)	32.87	2.53
SBI Consumption Opp Fund-Reg(G)	112.33	2.26
UTI Mastershare-Reg(G)	114.66	2.2
ICICI Pru Focused Equity Fund(G)	29.17	2.1
Invesco India Contra Fund(G)	45.27	2.05
Mirae Asset India Equity Fund-Reg(G)	47.37	2.05

ICICI Pru Bluechip Fund(G)	40.18	1.93
UTI Dividend Yield Fund-Reg(G)	62.29	1.77
ICICI Pru Growth Fund-1(DP)	10.6	1.53
Mirae Asset Tax Saver Fund-Reg(G)	16.38	1.49
Invesco India Tax Plan(G)	47.94	1.33
Aditya Birla SL India GenNext Fund(G)	77.45	1.24
Invesco India Growth Fund-Reg(G)	31.9	1.14
UTI Healthcare Fund-Reg(G)	84.97	1.05
L&T India Large Cap Fund-Reg(G)	25.36	1.04
SBI Focused Equity Fund-Reg(G)	127.5	0.91
Invesco India Feeder - Invesco Pan European Equity Fund-Reg(G)	10.71	0.88
HDFC Top 100 Fund(G)	461.16	0.88
Invesco India Largecap Fund(G)	26.28	0.77
ICICI Pru Value Fund-5(G)	14.93	0.74
ICICI Pru Value Discovery Fund(G)	141.87	0.67
ICICI Pru Value Fund-8(D)	10.23	0.57
Aditya Birla SL Global Commodities Fund(G)	12.32	0.42
Kotak Standard Multicap Fund(G)	32.52	0.33
ICICI Pru India Recovery Fund-4(G)	16.6	0.3
UTI India LifeStyle Fund-Reg(G)	24.92	0.19
Reliance Capital Builder Fund-II-B(G)	12.35	0.18
Reliance Multi Cap Fund(G)	92.91	0.12
UTI Value Opp Fund-Reg(G)	57.27	0.1
Sundaram LT Tax Adv Fund-Sr I-Reg(G)	13.06	0.01
HDFC Small Cap Fund-Reg(G)	41.92	-0.02
L&T Equity Fund-Reg(G)	79.15	-0.12
Sundaram LT Tax Adv Fund-Sr II-Reg(G)	14.06	-0.2
Sundaram Value Fund-II-Reg(G)	15.37	-0.3
IDBI Diversified Equity Fund(G)	20.4	-0.34
Principal Focused Multicap Fund(G)	60.23	-0.38
Edelweiss Large & Mid Cap Fund-Reg(G)	29.19	-0.58
Aditya Birla SL MNC Fund(G)	720.62	-0.58
Edelweiss Multi-Cap Fund-Reg(G)	13.62	-0.58
Principal Dividend Yield Fund(G)	51.4	-0.62
Motilal Oswal Focused 25 Fund-Reg(G)	20.2	-0.81
Reliance Close Ended Equity Fund-II-A(G)	17.16	-0.85
Tata Large & Mid Cap Fund(G)	189.21	-0.92
Kotak Bluechip Fund(G)	214.97	-0.97
DSP Top 100 Equity Fund-Reg(G)	192.07	-1.03
Mirae Asset Emerging Bluechip-Reg(G)	49.01	-1.28
Aditya Birla SL Tax Relief '96(G)	29.99	-1.28
IDFC Large Cap Fund-Reg(G)	30.25	-1.34
Aditya Birla SL Frontline Equity Fund(G)	211.86	-1.37
Aditya Birla SL Equity Fund(G)	692.88	-1.38
Reliance Banking Fund(G)	256.05	-1.41
Franklin India Taxshield(G)	537.66	-1.42
ICICI Pru Value Fund-15(G)	10.31	-1.43
BNP Paribas Large Cap Fund(G)	81.28	-1.48
Baroda Pioneer Banking & Fin Serv Fund(G)	20.4	-1.59
SBI BlueChip Fund-Reg(G)	36.72	-1.63
IDBI Equity Advantage Fund-Reg(G)	25.82	-1.64
Invesco India Midcap Fund(G)	46.73	-1.68
SBI Large & Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	208.09	-1.72
Aditya Birla SL Intl. Equity Fund-B(G)	17.73	-1.77
Reliance Quant Fund(G)	23.81	-1.78
Franklin India Bluechip Fund(G)	443.56	-1.82
Baroda Pioneer Large Cap Fund(G)	13.44	-1.83
Tata Ethical Fund(G)	152.47	-1.87
HDFC Capital Builder	279.57	-1.93

Value Fund(G)	622.07	-1.97
HDFC Equity Fund(G)	69.36	-2.03
Principal Nifty 100 Equal Weight Fund(G)	53.36	-2.06
L&T Tax Advt Fund-Reg(G)	11.95	-2.11
Edelweiss Emerging Markets Opp Eq. Offshore Fund-Reg(G)	122.02	-2.11
SBI Healthcare Opp Fund-Reg(G)	202.33	-2.17
Tata Large Cap Fund(G)	21.46	-2.19
DSP Focus Fund-Reg(G)	563.3	-2.29
Franklin India Equity Fund(G)	40.67	-2.31
ICICI Pru R.I.G.H.T Fund(G)	50.7	-2.42
Invesco India Financial Services Fund(G)	14.96	-2.5
SBI Equity Opp Fund-Sr I-Reg(G)	40.48	-2.5
Kotak Tax Saver Scheme(G)	55.48	-2.59
Aditya Birla SL Focused Equity Fund(G)	153.74	-2.6
DHFL Pramerica Large Cap Fund(G)	16.17	-2.62
Motilal Oswal Long Term Equity Fund-Reg(G)	13.17	-2.66
DHFL Pramerica Euro Equity Fund(G)	55.45	-2.74
ICICI Pru Exports & Services Fund(G)	16.6	-2.92
Tata India Tax Savings Fund-Reg(G)	27.73	-3.03
Principal Global Opportunities Fund(G)	15.63	-3.05
JM Tax Gain Fund(G)	43.11	-3.16
IDFC Core Equity Fund-Reg(G)	13.31	-3.2
DHFL Pramerica LT Equity Fund-Reg(G)	22.74	-3.21
Reliance Close Ended Equity Fund-Reg(G)	11.18	-7.14
IDFC Focused Equity Fund-Reg(G)	35.49	-7.18
Kotak Global Emerging Mkt Fund(G)	14.87	-7.27
IDBI Nifty Junior Index Fund(G)	20.64	-7.37
UTI Banking and Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	89.68	-7.46
Aditya Birla SL Mfg. Equity Fund-Reg(G)	13.15	-7.46
Sundaram Diversified Equity(G)	94.62	-7.5
HDFC TaxSaver(G)	495.04	-7.51
DSP Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	50.89	-7.52
SBI Tax advantage Fund-II(G)	33.32	-7.53
Tata Mid Cap Growth Fund(G)	126.82	-7.54
Invesco India Multicap Fund(G)	45.44	-7.68
Reliance Growth Fund(G)	1039.03	-8.08
ICICI Pru Dividend Yield Equity Fund(G)	16.27	-8.13
Kotak Emerging Equity Scheme(G)	36.06	-8.15
Franklin Build India Fund(G)	38.87	-8.2
IDFC Sterling Value Fund-Reg(G)	49.89	-8.22
UTI LT Adv Fund-III(G)	13.28	-8.55
ICICI Pru Value Fund-4(G)	20.47	-8.82
JM Value Fund(G)	29.55	-8.86
Reliance Focused Equity Fund(G)	43.46	-8.89
L&T Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	130.81	-8.94
L&T Emerging Businesses Fund-Reg(G)	24.33	-8.94
Edelweiss Mid Cap Fund-Reg(G)	25.16	-9
HDFC Mid-Cap Opportunities Fund(G)	51.57	-9.07
HDFC Focused 30 Fund(G)	73.74	-9.16
ICICI Pru Value Fund-1(D)	10.46	-9.29
DSP Natural Res & New Energy Fund-Reg(G)	32.04	-9.51
Templeton India Value Fund(G)	241.2	-9.79
Motilal Oswal Midcap 30 Fund-Reg(G)	23.35	-9.83
ICICI Pru Infrastructure Fund(G)	48.57	-10.11
BNP Paribas Multi Cap Fund(G)	43.77	-10.2
UTI Mid Cap Fund-Reg(G)	98.38	-10.24
DHFL Pramerica Midcap Opp Fund-Reg(G)	17.56	-10.32
Franklin Asian Equity Fund(G)	19.92	-10.44
Sundaram Select Micro Cap-Series IV-Reg(G)	28.5	-10.48
Invesco India Infrastructure Fund(G)	16.13	-10.54
SBI Small Cap Fund-Reg(G)	49.29	-10.57
IDBI Midcap Fund(G)	10.48	-10.58
Sundaram Select Micro Cap-Series I-Reg(G)	30.7	-10.66
Aditya Birla SL Equity Advantage Fund(G)	384.89	-10.68
Sundaram Select Micro Cap-Series III-Reg(G)	29.97	-10.72
SBI Contra Fund-Reg(G)	104.13	-10.74
Sundaram Select Micro Cap-Series II-Reg(G)	30.53	-10.77
Sundaram Select Small Cap Series-IV-Reg(G)	13.08	-10.8
IDBI Small Cap Fund(G)	9.21	-11.01
Baroda Pioneer Mid-cap Fund(G)	8.54	-11.23
Tata Infrastructure Fund(G)	52.03	-11.28

ICICI Pru Growth Fund-3(DP)	9.97	-5.29
Reliance Close Ended Equity Fund-B(G)	22.83	-5.3
Aditya Birla SL Banking & Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	26.08	-5.34
Principal Multi Cap Growth Fund(G)	136.78	-5.42
UTI Core Equity Fund-Reg(G)	59.72	-5.49
SBI Magnum TaxGain'93-Reg(G)	135.95	-5.55
Franklin India Prima Fund(G)	897.05	-5.66
Edelweiss Long Term Equity Fund (Tax Savings)-Reg(G)	43.39	-5.78
SBI LT Advantage Fund-IV-Reg(G)	12.19	-5.86
Principal Tax Savings Fund	200.26	-5.89
Franklin India Focused Equity Fund(G)	37.8	-5.9
DSP Equity Opportunities Fund-Reg(G)	205.84	-5.92
ICICI Pru Value Fund-9(G)	11.6	-6.15
Sundaram Fin Serv Opp Fund(G)	36.96	-6.2
BNP Paribas Long Term Equity Fund(G)	35.16	-6.32
Sundaram Rural and Consumption Fund(G)	39.49	-6.35
Principal Personal Tax saver Fund	188.23	-6.42
ICICI Pru Midcap Fund(G)	92.18	-6.55
Principal Emerging Bluechip Fund(G)	99.6	-6.58
ICICI Pru Nifty Next 50 Index Fund(G)	24.24	-6.6
Franklin India Opportunities Fund(G)	68.81	-6.7
Reliance Small Cap Fund(G)	39.72	-6.84
L&T India Value Fund-Reg(G)	34.39	-6.99
L&T Large and Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	45.45	-7.09
ICICI Pru Value Fund-10(G)	11.18	-7.14
IDFC Focused Equity Fund-Reg(G)	35.49	-7.18
Kotak Global Emerging Mkt Fund(G)	14.87	-7.27
IDBI Nifty Junior Index Fund(G)	20.64	-7.37
UTI Banking and Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	89.68	-7.46
Aditya Birla SL Mfg. Equity Fund-Reg(G)	13.15	-7.46
Sundaram Diversified Equity(G)	94.62	-7.5
HDFC TaxSaver(G)	495.04	-7.51
DSP Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	50.89	-7.52
SBI Tax advantage Fund-II(G)	33.32	-7.53
Tata Mid Cap Growth Fund(G)	126.82	-7.54
Invesco India Multicap Fund(G)	45.44	-7.68
Reliance Growth Fund(G)	1039.03	-8.08
ICICI Pru Dividend Yield Equity Fund(G)	16.27	-8.13
Kotak Emerging Equity Scheme(G)	36.06	-8.15
Franklin Build India Fund(G)	38.87	-8.2
IDFC Sterling Value Fund-Reg(G)	49.89	-8.22
UTI LT Adv Fund-III(G)	13.28	-8.55
ICICI Pru Value Fund-4(G)	20.47	-8.82
JM Value Fund(G)	29.55	-8.86
Reliance Focused Equity Fund(G)	43.46	-8.89
L&T Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	130.81	-8.94
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Edelweiss Mid Cap Fund-Reg(G)	25.16	-9
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UTI Mid Cap Fund-Reg(G)	98.38	-10.24
DHFL Pramerica Midcap Opp Fund-Reg(G)	17.56	-10.32
Franklin Asian Equity Fund(G)	19.92	-10.44
Sundaram Select Micro Cap-Series IV-Reg(G)	28.5	-10.48
Invesco India Infrastructure Fund(G)	16.13	-10.54
SBI Small Cap Fund-Reg(G)	49.29	-10.57
IDBI Midcap Fund(G)	10.48	-10.58
Sundaram Select Micro Cap-Series I-Reg(G)	30.7	-10.66
Aditya Birla SL Equity Advantage Fund(G)	384.89	-10.68
Sundaram Select Micro Cap-Series III-Reg(G)	29.97	-10.72
SBI Contra Fund-Reg(G)	104.13	-10.74
Sundaram Select Micro Cap-Series II-Reg(G)	30.53	-10.77
Sundaram Select Small Cap Series-IV-Reg(G)	13.08	-10.8
IDBI Small Cap Fund(G)	9.21	-11.01
Baroda Pioneer Mid-cap Fund(G)	8.54	-11.23
Tata Infrastructure Fund(G)	52.03	-11.28

Market Capitalisation

(in ₹ Crores)

16 NOV
9 NOV

TOTAL GAIN: 70867
TOTAL LOSS: -16367
GAIN
LOSS

RIL	21646	714669
TCS	-10338	706293
HDFC BANK	13385	543255
HUL	3940	365988
ITC	-1224	338233
HDFC	12192	324235
Infosys	-4805	284142
SBI	6515	259081
ICICI BANK	7521	236530
KOTAK	5668	222656
SBI Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	13.85	-11.33
L&T Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	15.9	-11.37
Aditya Birla SL Dividend Yield Fund(G)	155.2	-11.38
Sundaram Select Small Cap Series-III-Reg(G)	13.04	-11.43
Baroda Pioneer ELSS 96(G)	41.32	-11.43
Aditya Birla SL Midcap Fund(G)	279.28	-11.63
UTI Focussed Equity Fund-I(G)	12.59	-11.64
Franklin India Smaller Cos Fund(G)	51.78	-11.71
Kotak Small Cap Fund(G)	67.74	-12.09
Tata Infrastructure Tax Saving Fund(G)	22.92	-12.14
SBI Magnum Comma Fund-Reg(G)	34.5	-12.14
Sundaram Mid Cap Fund(G)	446.3	-12.2
UTI Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	49.04	-12.27
Tata Resources & Energy Fund-Reg(G)	13.61	-12.36
UTI LT Adv Fund-V(G)	9.42	-12.42
SBI LT Advantage Fund-III-Reg(G)	12.23	-12.46
SBI Magnum MidCap Fund-Reg(G)	69.59	-12.57
L&T Business Cycle Fund-Reg(G)	14.56	-12.58
Edelweiss Gr China Equity Off-Shore Fund-Reg(G)	24.13	-12.95
DSP India T.I.G.E.R Fund-Reg(G)	84.95	-13.19
DSP World Gold Fund-Reg(G)	10.32	-13.44
Reliance Power & Infra Fund(G)	96.75	-13.47
UTI Transportation & Logistics Fund-Reg(G)	101.48	-13.68
SBI LT Advantage Fund-II-Reg(G)	12.83	-13.74
Canara Rob Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	43.1	-13.89
Kotak World Gold Fund(G)	7.48	-14.22
SBI LT Advantage Fund-I-Reg(G)	12.47	-14.33
Reliance Vision Fund(G)	513.38	-14.43
Sundaram Infra Advantage Fund(G)	29.76	-14.88
BNP Paribas Mid Cap Fund(G)	30.48	-15.48
UTI LT Adv Fund-IV(G)	10.13	-15.86
Kotak Infra & Eco Reform Fund(G)	18.68	-16.3
DSP Small Cap Fund-Reg(G)	53.19	-16.74
Sundaram LT Micro Cap Tax Adv Fund-Sr V-Reg(G)	8.59	-16.95
Reliance Tax Saver (ELSS) Fund(G)	54.4	-17.16
Aditya Birla SL Infrastructure Fund(G)	30.47	-17.65
Sundaram Select Micro Cap-Series X-Reg(G)	12.86	-18.

Toll rises to 76 in California fire

Chico (California): Northern California crews battling the country's deadliest wildfire in a century were bracing for strong winds, with gusts up to 50 miles per hour, creating the potential to erode gains they have made in containing a disaster that has killed at least 76 and levelled a town.

Even as hundreds of searchers sift through the rubble in the town of Paradise looking for the dead, nearly 1,300 people remain unaccounted for more than a week after the fire sparked in Butte County, Sheriff Kory Honea announced Saturday night.

Authorities stressed that the long roster does not mean they believe all those people are missing.

Honea pleaded with fire evacuees Saturday to review the list of those reported as unreachable by family and friends and call if they are safe. Deputies have located hundreds of people to date, but the overall number keeps growing because they are adding more names, including those from the disaster's chaotic early hours, Honea said.

"It's really very important for you to take a look at the list and call us if you're on the list," he said. The remains of five more people were found Saturday, including four in the decimated town of Paradise and one in nearby Concow, bringing the number of dead to 76. Honea said among the dead was Lolene



Rios, 56, whose son Jed tearfully told KXTV in Sacramento that his mother "had endless amount of love for me".

President Donald Trump toured the area Saturday, joined by California's outgoing and incoming Governors, both Democrats who have traded sharp barbs with the Republican administration.

He also visited Southern California, where firefighters were making progress on a wildfire that tore through communities west of Los Angeles from Thousand Oaks to Malibu, killing three people.

The president pledged the full support of the federal government. Gov. Jerry Brown and Governor-elect Gavin Newsom thanked him for coming out. "We've never seen anything like this in California, we've never seen anything like this yet. It's like total devastation," Trump said as he stood amid the ruins of Paradise.

Rain was forecast for mid-week, which could help firefighters but also complicate the search for remains.

Northern California's Camp Fire has destroyed nearly 10,000 homes and torched 233 square

miles (603 square kilometres). It is 55 per cent contained.

The fire zone in Northern California is to some extent Trump country, and that enthusiasm was on display as dozens of people cheered and waved flags as his motorcade went by.

Kevin Cory, a wildfire evacuee who lost his home in Paradise, praised Trump for coming to a State that is often at odds with the White House.

"I think that California's been really horrible to him and the fights. I mean they're suing him," he said. "It's back and

forth between the State and the feds. It's not right."

But for the most part, survivors, some who had barely escaped and no longer had homes, were too busy packing up what little they had left or seeking help to pay much attention to the president's visit.

Michelle Mack Couch, 49, waited in line to get into a Federal Emergency Management Agency center in the city of Chico. She needed a walker for her elderly mother and tags for her car.

"Let's hope he gets us some help," said Couch, who voted for Trump and whose rental home burned down last week. But as far as taking time out to watch the president, she said wryly, "We don't have a TV anymore." Honea expressed hope that Trump's visit would help with recovery, saying the tour by the Republican president and California's Democratic leaders "signals a spirit of cooperation here that ultimately benefit this community and get us on a path toward recovery".

In Southern California, Trump also met briefly at an airport hangar with families and first responders touched by the shooting at the Borderline Bar & Grill in Thousand Oaks more than a week ago.

Trump called the shooting at a country music bar, which left 12 dead, "a horrible, horrible event." AP

Lankan Prez holds all-party meet to end political crisis, no breakthrough

COLOMBO: An all-party meeting called by Sri Lanka's President Maithripala Sirisena failed to make any breakthrough on Sunday to end the raging political crisis set off by his controversial decision to remove Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe last month. The crisis erupted when President Sirisena suddenly announced on October 26 that he had sacked Prime Minister Wickremesinghe and installed ex-strongman Mahinda Rajapaksa in his place.

Sirisena later dissolved Parliament, almost 20 months before its term was to end, and ordered snap election. The Supreme Court on Tuesday overturned President Sirisena's decision to dissolve Parliament and halted the preparations for snap polls on January 5.

The crisis talks came after Sri Lanka's parliament witnessed unprecedented violence as lawmakers threw furniture and chilli powder at each other. The lawmakers on Friday approved a second vote of no confidence against Rajapaksa but Sirisena refused to accept it, saying his advice was not followed.

Sirisena on Sunday called an all-party meeting which ended without making breakthrough, Wickremesinghe's United National Party (UNP)

maintained that his sacking by Sirisena was unconstitutional and illegal and he was still the Prime Minister.

"We placed our cards on the table. We told Rajapaksa that if the Speaker's rulings are wrong, they can move a motion to challenge it and get it passed. Response from President Sirisena was nil," Lakshman Kiriella, a senior UNP leader, said after talks which lasted for over 2 hours.

"We told President we have the majority. We are in a position to present the affidavits we signed," Ajith P Perera, another UNP leader said.

The JVP or the People's Liberation Front stayed away from Sunday's meeting. The party, in a letter to Sirisena, said that he was the creator of the crisis so he should end it. The party said it had no reason to attend the meeting.

Speaker Karu Jayasuriya, who on Wednesday announced there is no Prime Minister or Government following a no-confidence motion against disputed Prime Minister Rajapaksa, also boy-

cotted the meeting. Sirisena and Jayasuriya are at loggerheads ever since Jayasuriya decided to summon parliament on November 14 despite Sirisena's dissolution of the Assembly to hold fresh elections.

The chaos on Friday in Parliament forced the Speaker Jayasuriya to summon police inside the House. Jayasuriya, using a microphone, conducted the proceedings while standing on the floor of Parliament, which for the second time passed a no-confidence motion against Rajapaksa and his Government by a voice vote. Jayasuriya first offered to take the vote by name, but was unable to do so because of the commotion and opted for a voice vote. He then adjourned the house until Monday.

After the second vote against Rajapaksa, Wickremesinghe demanded that his Government be restored, but there has been no response from Sirisena yet.

Wickremesinghe's party meanwhile asked Facebook to safeguard the identity of its supporters on the social media platform, fearing information sharing with what it calls the country's "illegal" Government can lead to a crackdown against the users. PTI

APEC leaders divided after US, China spat

Port Moresby: Leaders from 21 Asia-Pacific nations failed on Sunday to bridge gaping divisions at a summit overshadowed by a war of words over the US and China as they vie for influence in the region.

For the first time in the history of the APEC grouping, leaders were unable to agree on a formal written declaration amid sharp differences over trade policy. "The leaders agreed that instead of a traditional leaders' declaration, they would leave it to the hands of PNG as the chair to issue a chair statement on behalf of all the members," said Zhang Xiaolong, a spokesman from the Chinese foreign ministry.

Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau admitted there were "different visions on particular elements with regard to trade that prevented full consensus on a communique document."

The annual gathering, held for the first time in Papua New Guinea, was overshadowed by speeches from Chinese President Xi Jinping and US Vice-President Mike Pence, which appeared to represent competing bids for regional leadership.

Pence warned smaller countries not to be seduced by China's massive Belt-and-Road infrastructure programme, which sees Beijing offer money to poorer countries for construction and development projects. The "opaque" loans come with strings attached and build up "staggering debt", Pence charged, mocking the initiative as a "constricting belt" and a "one-way road".

He urged nations instead to stick with the United States, which doesn't "drown our partners in a sea of debt" or "coerce, corrupt or compromise your

independence".

In a speech to business leaders just minutes before Pence, Xi insisted the initiative was not a "trap" and there was no "hidden agenda" amid criticism that it amounts to "chequebook diplomacy" in the region. Xi also lashed out at "America First" trade protectionism, saying it was a "short-sighted approach" that was "doomed to failure".

The feisty barbs on a gleaming white cruise ship moored in Port Moresby set the scene for a potentially fiery meeting between Xi and US President Donald Trump at the G20 summit in Argentina at the end of this month.

But Xi and Pence, who both wore shiny, red shirts provided by the Pacific island did hold talks on Saturday night at the leaders' gala dinner.

Pence told reporters on Sunday: "I spoke to President Xi twice during the course of this conference. We had a candid conversation. He told him that the US is interested in a better relationship with China "but there has to be change" in Beijing's trade policies.

With fears that a trade war between the two rivals could cripple the Pacific Rim economy, some attendees voiced concern about the growing rivalry for influence in the region.

"Business leaders do not want to speak out, but behind the scenes here, they are talking over dinner saying 'how has this happened?'" said Denis O'Brien, the billionaire chairman of Digicel. "It's a very forced situation, one country is trying to force all the other countries to change tariffs agreed over years," O'Brien told AFP. Trump and Russian President Vladimir

Putin both decided to skip the gathering, leaving the spotlight on Xi who arrived two days early to open a Chinese-funded school and road in Papua New Guinea's dirt-poor capital Port Moresby.

Xi has been the star of the show, front and centre at official photos whereas Pence has kept a lower profile, only deciding at the last minute to stay overnight in Port Moresby -- shelving original plans to fly in and out from Cairns in Australia.

As if to counter Chinese largesse, the US, Australia, New Zealand and Japan on Sunday announced a project to boost electricity capacity in Papua New Guinea.

The project aims to raise the percentage of the PNG population with access to electricity from 13 per cent to 70 per cent.

And as the US and China vie for influence in the region, the statement dangled the prospect of similar projects for countries that "support principles and values which help maintain and promote a free, open, prosperous and rules-based region."

With the official business of the summit relatively low-key, much of the focus has been on the unlikely venue of Port Moresby, which is hosting its first international event of this scale.

The city is on lockdown with hundreds of police and military patrolling the streets of the notoriously crime-ridden capital. Warships are stationed just off the coast to provide security for the leaders, and delegates and media have been housed in enormous cruise ships due to a dearth of hotel rooms. AFP

Khaleda Zia challenges 7-year sentence in graft case

DHAKA: Bangladesh's former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia on Sunday challenged the seven-year sentence handed out to her in a corruption case for embezzling millions from a charitable trust in her late husband's name, claiming that she has been convicted "illegally and unjustly".

The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) chief challenged the trial court's decision four days after receiving the full text of the verdict announced on October 29.

The 638-page decision and the 700-page appeal petition also include a petition for bail, said her lawyer Kayser Kamal after submitting the petition to the High Court on Sunday, the bdnws reported.

"The BNP chairperson has been convicted illegally and unjustly," she was quoted as saying by the daily.

"We have appealed for her sentence to be dismissed and for her release.

A High Court bench will be formed to decide on the appeal."

The trial court in its verdict in the Zia Charitable Trust graft case found the former prime minister guilty under the Prevention of Corruption Act 1947 and sentenced her to seven years in prison and fined her Tk 1 million. Zia, 73, has been in custody since February 8, when she was sentenced to five years in prison in another case related to embezzlement of funds of an orphanage named after her husband late president Ziaur Rahman.

The latest sentence, which comes ahead of general elections in December, is related to the Zia Charitable Trust.

According to the case, Zia and three others abused their



power and collected USD

The trial court in its verdict in the Zia Charitable Trust graft case found the former prime minister guilty under the Prevention of Corruption Act 1947 and sentenced her to seven years in prison and fined her Tk 1 million

375,000 for the trust from unknown sources.

The Zia Charitable Trust graft case was filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission in 2011.

The judge granted the three other suspects in the case the same sentence for abetting corrupt activity under the Penal Code.

The court order also allowed the government to seize the 70 decimals of land bought in the name of the Zia Charitable Trust. PTI

61-yr-old Indian shot dead by teenager in America

New York: A 61-year old Indian-origin man in New Jersey was shot dead by a 16-year old boy, who is facing charges in connection to the murder, prosecutors said.

Sunil Edla was shot to death Thursday evening outside his apartment in Ventnor city, Atlantic County Prosecutor Damon Tyner said in a statement.

Ventnor City Police Department was informed on the night of November 15 about the shooting. Police located Edla on the sidewalk, with gunshot wounds. Edla had succumbed to his injuries by the time the police arrived. Edla's vehicle, a 2002 Subaru Forester, was missing from the scene. The vehicle was subsequently found by Atlantic City Police Officers in a different area. After the vehicle was located by the officers, the suspect was subsequently tracked with the assistance of the Atlantic City surveillance center.

Further investigation by the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office, Ventnor City Police Department and the Atlantic City Police Department led to the identification and arrest of the sus-

pect, a juvenile male, on the morning of November 16.

Preliminary autopsy showed the cause of death to be multiple gunshot wounds and the manner of death homicide. The suspect was charged via Juvenile Complaint with murder, robbery, carjacking, unlawful possession of a handgun. He is being held at the Harborfields Juvenile Detention Center in Egg Harbor City. "I'm just speechless right now they could have just taken the car and let him go," Edla's son Morrison Edla said in a report in NBCPhiladelphia.Com.

A report in the Press of Atlantic City said Edla, a father of two and grandfather, was a 30-year resident of Atlantic County and worked in Atlantic City's hospitality industry. He was planning to travel to India to visit family. "He (Edla) was humble. He never argued. I helped him when he came to US in 1987. I was very close to him," his cousin Raj Casula said.

"Everyone was calling him and talking to him because he was leaving for India so soon," said Casula. Edla had planned a two-month trip to India to

visit his mother for her 95th birthday and celebrate Christmas with family.

Family friend Dave Nethagani said Edla was a kind man and active in the community. Edla was best known for playing piano during church services at Chelsea Community Presbyterian Church in Atlantic City.

A neighbour said the killer ambushed Edla and shot him dead right after the grandfather had brought a child into his house. Surveillance video showed the teen riding up to Edla's home. The boy dropped his bike and hid as he waited for Edla to exit the house. J u s t before 8 p.m. Thursday, family members said, Edla was leaving his home to work the overnight shift at the North Carolina Avenue

Rodeway Inn in Atlantic City. According to family, he started his car then went back in the house briefly. After walking back down the second-floor apartment stairs, he was shot on the sidewalk and left for dead. Ventnor police Chief Doug Biagi said an officer has been posted in the neighborhood "just to ease anybody's fears." PTI

Have been briefed on Khashoggi tapes but advised not to listen it: Trump

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump said on Sunday he has been fully briefed on an audio recording related to the brutal killing of the dissident Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, but was advised against listening to those "suffering" tapes.

Khashoggi, 59, who wrote for The Washington Post, was killed last month inside the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul where he had gone to collect papers related to his marriage.

Turkish investigators say they have audio recording of his killings, which it has shared with key partners including the US.

In an interview with Chris Wallace of Fox News, which was aired on Sunday, Trump for the first time acknowl-

edged that he has been briefed on the audio recording of the Khashoggi's murder.

Trump said he hasn't listened to it, as he was advised not to hear the "suffering tape", according to the news channel.

A day earlier, Trump spoke with the CIA chief on the agency's assessment of the killing of Khashoggi.

He expects a full report on it by Tuesday.

In the interview, Trump defended his policy on Saudi Arabia, saying "We have put on very heavy sanctions, massive sanctions on a large group of people from Saudi Arabia. But at the same time, we do have an ally and I want to stick with an ally that in many ways has been very good."

He also said it "takes two to tango" to resolve the conflict in Yemen, where Iranian-backed

insurgents are facing off against Saudi-backed forces, noting that "I want Saudi to stop, but I want Iran to stop also".

A day earlier he told reporters in California that (Khashoggi's murder) was a horrible thing that took place.

"It's a horrible thing that took place, the killing of a journalist...It should never have happened," Trump told reporters travelling with him to California.

Asked about the reports that the CIA had assessed involvement by the Saudi Crown Prince, the President said, "they haven't assessed anything yet. It's too early. That was a very a premature report."

"We'll be having a very full report over the next two days, probably Monday or Tuesday," the US President said.

May warns rebels removing her as leader won't make Brexit easier

PTI ■ LONDON

Defiant British Prime Minister Theresa May on Sunday warned her Conservative Party rebel MPs that overthrowing her as leader would only make negotiation process with the European Union tough over the future of Britain's relationship with the bloc after Brexit.

Britain is facing a political crisis after this week's announcement about the Withdrawal Agreement struck with the 28-member European Union. Two Cabinet ministers and several junior government members have quit the May Cabinet and some of her party MPs have submitted letters of no-confidence.

May could face a no-confidence vote if at least 15 per cent of her party lawmakers -

meaning 48 MPs - submit letters saying she has lost their support.

According to reports, the party's influential 1922 Committee is edging closer to the 48-MP mark that is needed to trigger a leadership contest.

But May vowed to fight on for what she believes is the best deal possible.

"Politics is a tough business and I've been in it for a long time," she said during a television interview on Sunday, adding that the next seven days "are going to be critical" for the future of the UK and that she will be travelling to Brussels to meet with EU leaders before an emergency European Council summit on November 25.

Asked whether Sir Graham Brady, Chair of the backbench

1922 Committee, had hit the 48-letter mark from her party MPs needed to trigger a no-confidence vote in her leadership, she replied: "As far as I know, no - it has not."

"It is not going to make the negotiations any easier and it won't change the parliamentary arithmetic," she said.

The 585-page withdrawal agreement deal between London and the EU, which was published alongside a shorter document setting out what the UK and EU's future relationship could look like, triggered resignations from the Cabinet including that of her Brexit Secretary Dominic Raab.

Writing in 'The Sunday Times', the former minister launched an attack on the British PM's handling of the negotiations and called on her to stand up to bullies in the EU.

Taliban hold talks with US envoy in Qatar

AP ■ ISLAMABAD

The Taliban have held three days of talks with US envoy Zalmay Khalilzad in the Gulf state of Qatar, where the Afghan insurgent group has a political office, a Taliban official and another individual close to the group said Sunday.

The talks are aimed at renewing the Afghan peace process and eventually winding down America's longest war.

Seventeen years after the US-led invasion that ended Taliban rule, the militants control nearly half of Afghanistan and carry out near-daily attacks on local security forces and government officials.

The two individuals said Khairullah Khairkhwah, the former Taliban governor of Herat, and Mohammed Fazl, a former Taliban military chief, attended the marathon talks.

The two individuals spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to discuss the sensitive negotiations.

US officials could not immediately be reached for comment. The State Department has refused to comment on reported talks

with the Taliban.

A third individual with knowledge of the discussions said the Taliban pressed for a postponement of next year's presidential elections and the establishment of an interim government under a neutral leadership.

Abdul Sattar Sirat, an ethnic Tajik and Islamic scholar, was suggested as a candidate to lead an interim administration.

The individual, who also spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the talks, said Khalilzad wants to reach a settlement within six months, a timescale the Taliban said was too short.

Khalilzad also proposed a cease-fire, which the Taliban rejected, the individual said, adding that there was no agreement on the release of prisoners, opening the Taliban office or lifting a Taliban travel ban.

Khairkhwah and Fazl were among five senior Taliban members released from the US prison at Guantanamo Bay in 2014 in exchange for US Sgt Bowe Bergdahl, who was captured by the Taliban after walking off his base in Afghanistan in 2009.

Trend Blazer

'I never had a career'



Internationally acclaimed Indian filmmaker **SHEKHAR KAPUR** says he never had a career and that life, for him, has always been an adventure. When asked him if "anything was left in his career" The filmmaker replied, "I never had a career. I dropped that word from my life when I was 24 and walked away from a successful 'career' as a Chartered Accountant in London. Since then life has been, is, and will always be an adventure. On this journey I've done so many things. Including making films." Kapur is known for his recurring role in the TV series *Khandan* in the mid-1980s and his directorial debut in the cult Bollywood film *Masoom* in 1983 and then *Mr. India*.

'I like trolls. I don't hate them at all because they bring a lot engagement and content to my videos, because the way they type sometime it is so funny that I end up using it. And I feel the best way to deal with



them is by not reacting because I feel the minute we react, we give them the power that they do not deserve.' —Prajakta Koli

Actress **RASIKA DUGAL**, is all set to lend her voice to audio platform Audible.in, says audio books might be her next obsession. The Audible original story is written by novelist Durjoy Dutta. It's a dystopian love story titled *The Last Boy To Fall in Love*. "As an actor, when working on a visual medium one has so many tools at ones disposal to create something. But here you only have your voice. It was an interesting challenge to have to work on that in isolation to create a sense of urgency without losing clarity," Rasika said.

'My wife is awesome'

Model **HAILEY BALDWIN** subtly confirmed her marriage to pop singer **JUSTIN BIEBER** on social media by changing her last name to Bieber. "Hailey Rhode Bieber," the daughter of Stephen Baldwin wrote. The two reportedly wed in a secret ceremony in September, just two months after Bieber proposed with a custom oval engagement ring on July 7 in the Bahamas. Also on November 15, Justin confirmed their marital status. "My wife is awesome," he captioned a photograph of the pair smiling and holding hands.

THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Mystic yogi **SADHGURU** and singer **MOHIT CHAUHAN** narrate tales from their childhood to give examples of how lives have transformed today because of storytelling. By **CHAHAK MITTAL**

How often do you see two soul-stirring beings — one through his wisdom and words, the other through his voice and music — collaborate and narrate some untold tales? When mystic and yogi Sadhguru and singer Mohit Chauhan came together on one stage at Kathakar, a storytelling festival — a rare sight, they held the audience in their thrall.

It is the contact between the storyteller and the listener that brings a story alive, especially when the audience spans across all age groups. It was much more than just telling stories when the duo held centrestage.

Surrounded by two to three large incense burners placed before the stage, the place encapsulated a spiritual vibe as the fragrance of camphor spread all around the venue. The fire invoked the setting of a temple or a pious holy ritual and the atmosphere too acquired spiritual overtones. So when the number of seats fell short, the remaining audience found space on the floor and sat cross-legged in the *padmasana* position. All eyes and ears were directed at the stage listening to the *kissey*, *kahaniyaan* and conversations between the two mystics.

Narrating his story of how he dreamt about mountains every now and then, Sadhguru's search for his dreams began when he first trekked across the hills in South and North India, including the Himalayas, but couldn't find what he was looking for. "It was only when I trekked back to the South and I reached Yelagiri hills in Coimbatore that I could



find what I had been dreaming of," said Sadhguru on the first day of festival. So what is it that he wanted to convey through the story? asked Mohit. "Stop putting logic to everything, it is all about attention," laughed Sadhguru. He pointed towards today's technology-driven world and how children are

moving away from storytelling and reading books, to just devoting themselves to gadgets which are eventually distracting them from paying attention to academics. He said, "I don't think we need to blame it on technology. Long ago, when technology was not so advanced, we lost the art of storytelling and even the process of

learning. Earlier, we read books and papers to gain knowledge. Today if they are browsing the internet for stories, what is the harm? But the problem is that they are not focussing on one story, rather multiple stories and hence do not know even one of them." But the story that Sadhguru narrated

was universal and not meant just for children. It began with his childhood when Sadhguru saw a calculator for the first time. He almost cried that despite the fact that the calculator could do a maths problem easily and quickly, his teacher tortured him in the maths class everyday. Sadhguru said, "The idea of education has destroyed a more holistic and dialectical impression of life. That was an evidence that education in the coming times would become completely meaningless. A simple gadget will be able to do the things better than somebody who calls himself an intellectual."

He continued with stories about life, human race and aspirations and the session ended with Sadhguru and Mohit's collaboration of the holy song, *Shankar Sankat Harna*.

It did not only seem like a spiritual session rather an experience worth cherishing and narrating forward.

Sadhguru also talked about a wide variety of stories from his life as a maverick child, as an adventurous teenager pursuing biking and trekking and finally, as a spiritual seeker. As a four-year-old, he decided to study the life of insects, so he would store tadpoles and different species of insects in the penicillin bottles belonging to his physician father. The other story was about his grandmother, who died at the age of 113. She was famous for her typically unfeminine uproarious laughter, "which would shake the whole street."

The podium was surrounded by stalls of books by Sadhguru, Rachna Rawat Bisht and other writers who told tales at the three-day festival that ended yesterday.

Wonder girl

Young scientist **GITANJALI RAO** talks about her creation with **ASMITA SARKAR**



She is all of 12 and is known globally as girl wonder for receiving the 2017 Discovery Education 3M Young Scientist Challenge. What catapulted Gitanjali Rao to the high table was her invention, Tethys, a low-cost technology for testing lead in water.

What inspired her to make it? "I was originally inspired by the Flint Water Crisis which I had been introduced through a STEM lab and by watching news. After I learned about Flint, a town in the US, I continued to research and follow it for the next couple of years. When I saw my parents testing for lead in our water, I immediately realised that using test strip would take quite a few tries to get accurate results and I really wanted to do something to change this not only for my parents but for the residents of Flint and places like Flint around the world," she said.

The Indian American girl has created a sensor-based device that is faster than current technologies available in the market and is cheaper.

"After my testing and developing a method for gathering data for analytics, I intend to partner with the US Environmental Protection Agency to

crowd source water quality data. The idea is to not only test local water sources but try to use the data from various sources to produce a heat map that shows the contamination levels in a region in a single view. It can also help in developing in prediction models of the spread in future. Parallely, I intend to create about 30-50 reproducible prototypes which can be used for field-testing starting with Flint," Rao said.

For developing the project, she worked with a mentor, Dr. Shafer, who helped her with her experimentation plans and made sure she wasn't immediately rushing to the next steps. "On the first Skype call, I was a bit nervous to talk to someone so knowledgeable who was an accomplished scientist, but as soon as I started talking to her, she made me very comfortable. I learnt to be diligent and persistent from her. She listened carefully when I narrated my failures to her and provided me with alternate paths to keep moving ahead. She taught me to reach out and ask for help," said the pre-teen. She added that she earlier hesitated in asking questions but having met Dr. Shafer she's learnt to reach out to college professors and high school teachers for either space to perform her tests or ask questions related to her research.

She looks up to her parents, who have encouraged her to pursue her ideas with abandon and provide the necessary resources to make them a reality but on the scientific front she looks up to not younger and newer scientists but Marie Curie. "She didn't just discover two new elements, but also performed life-threatening tests and put others before herself. That is what a true role model means to me," said she.

Her age is no benchmark to judge her intelligence as concerns like the wage gap among men and women already weigh heavily on her mind. For this too, the young problem solver has a solution. "I wrote a sample bill for the Colorado legislature, proposing that the wage gender gap be closed by giving women the opportunity to stand up and discuss their wages without repercussions from an employer. It is important to say what you believe. If your male co-worker, who is doing the same job as you, for the same amount of time, is getting a higher salary, then speaking up and talking about it is important. We normally don't do that or aren't allowed by company policies. I believe that women shouldn't be prevented to talk to their employer about their salary and share it openly with coworkers. This can help us close the wage gap once and for all," said Rao.

She has a wise head resting on her small shoulders as she understands the immediacy of the environmental disaster facing us. She has a message for young girls where she says, "I would like to let them know that each one of us can observe around us and understand the social or environmental problems — and find a way to solve them. Do not be afraid to try as failure is part of the learning process. Solving problems does not always have to be about science. If you are worried about marine pollution, create posters to bring awareness and share it. If you think your community needs more recycling bins, approach lawmakers or other influential people by writing or meeting them. There are many ways to solve problems, and technology is just one aspect," she said.

The young scientist will be in India for the 10th edition of TEDxGateway on December 2 2018 at Dome — NSCI, Worli, Mumbai.

MARY POPPINS IS BACK

The film's sequel will bring back the adventures and tales of the nanny who was loved for her magical skills

Remember the practically-perfect nanny with unique magical skills who would turn an ordinary task into a fantastic adventure?

Starring Emily Blunt, Disney's *Mary Poppins* (1964) is back as *Mary Poppins Returns*. In this new musical and sequel, Mary Poppins is back to help the next generation of the Banks family find the joy and wonder missing in their lives following a personal loss. The enigmatic nanny is joined by her friend Jack, played by Lin-Manuel Miranda, an optimistic street lamplighter who helps bring light — and life — to the streets of London.

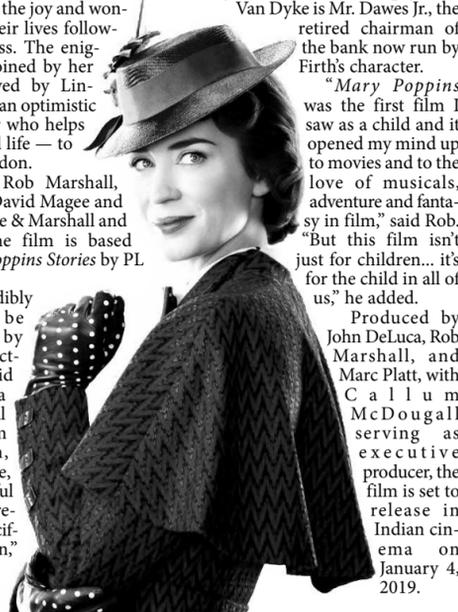
Directed by Rob Marshall, screenplay is by David Magee and the story by Magee & Marshall and John DeLuca, the film is based upon the *Mary Poppins Stories* by PL Travers.

"I was incredibly honoured to be approached by Disney about directing a sequel," said Rob. "This is a brand new original film musical from top to bottom, which is very rare, and it is a wonderful opportunity to create something specifically for the screen," he added. The film also

stars Ben Whishaw as Michael Banks, Emily Mortimer as Jane Banks, Julie Walters as the Banks' housekeeper Ellen, Pixie Davies, Nathanael Saleh and introducing Joel Dawson as the Banks' children, with Colin Firth as Fidelity Fiduciary Bank's William Weatherall Wilkins, and Meryl Streep as Mary's eccentric cousin, Topsy. Dick Van Dyke is Mr. Dawes Jr., the retired chairman of the bank now run by Firth's character.

"*Mary Poppins* was the first film I saw as a child and it opened my mind up to movies and to the love of musicals, adventure and fantasy in film," said Rob. "But this film isn't just for children... it's for the child in all of us," he added.

Produced by John DeLuca, Rob Marshall, and Marc Platt, with C A I I M McDougall serving as executive producer, the film is set to release in Indian cinema on January 4, 2019.



WEBBED



RAJMA CHAWAL Set in the chaotic, vibrant Chandni Chowk, Delhi, the show captures the relationship between a father (Rishi Kapoor) attempting to reconnect with his estranged son (Anirudh Tanwar) through social media assuming the online persona of a young woman. The film is an emotional roller-coaster, interspersing grief and the pressure of family expectations with humour, compassion and love. Starring Amyra Dastur, and Aparshakti Khurrana among others, the film is slated to release on Netflix on November 30.

THE CHRISTMAS CHRONICLES After accidentally crashing Santa's sleigh, a brother and sister pull an all-nighter to save Christmas with a savvy, straight-talking St. Nick. The show follows Kate (Darby Camp) and Teddy (Judah Lewis), two siblings whose plan is to catch Santa Claus on camera. Their efforts turn into an exciting and unexpected journey that most can only dream about. As their wild night unfolds, the two work together with Santa and his loyal Elves to save Christmas. The film, also starring Kurt Russell, releases on Netflix on November 22.



TECH TALK

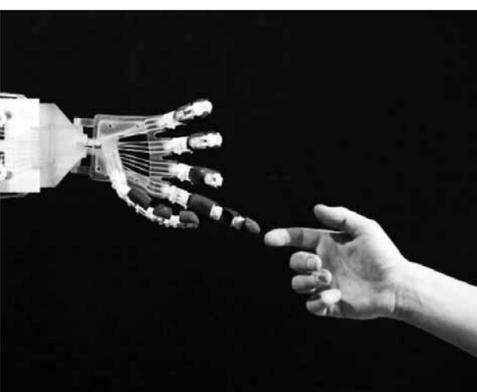
'AI is transforming lives'

Ethical Artificial Intelligence a pressing need, says UN expert

While digital solutions like Artificial Intelligence (AI) are transforming lives, these also raises concerns, ranging from security to human rights abuses, says an expert.

According to Eleonore Pauwels, Research Fellow on Emerging Cyber technologies at United Nations University (UNU), AI is transforming our lives, from reshaping our intimate and networked interactions to monitoring our bodies, moods and emotions, both in visible and invisible ways. "The all-encompassing capture and optimisation of our personal information — the quirks that help define who we are and trace the shape of our lives — will increasingly be used for various purposes without our direct knowledge or consent," Pauwels was quoted as saying to the UN News.

Thus, how to protect independent human thought in an increasingly algorithm-driven



world goes beyond the philosophical and is now an urgent and pressing dilemma, she stressed. Importantly, the evolution of AI is happening in parallel with technical advances in other fields, such as genomics, epi-

demiology and neuroscience. "That means that not only is your coffee maker sending information to cloud computers, but so are wearable sensors like Fitbits; intelligent implants inside and outside our bodies; brain-computer interfaces, and

even portable DNA sequencers," Pauwels said.

As a result, while the AI revolution presents great promise, on the other hand there is also a great peril, especially when it comes to ownership and control of our most intimate data. It is because besides analysing our shopping patterns and dating preferences, computer codes can also read our genes, cells and vital signs. The digital representation of our characteristic data could help create the world's largest precision medicine dataset or it could render everyone more vulnerable to exploitation and intrusions than ever before, Pauwels said.

"These reflections exhibit an entanglement of ethical and policy challenges that needs to be mapped, unveiled, and analysed to nurture an inclusive foresight discussion on the global governance of AI," Pauwels said.—JANS



WORKOUT FOR THE BRAIN

Forget gadgets and tech toys and instead opt for Indian board games that exercise the white and grey cells. By **ASMITA SARKAR**

Indian games have become almost extinct since social media and video games have taken over the attention spans of children. Board games like Snakes and Ladders, strategy games like Chess or even card games like Patience that helped develop a child's brain by testing memory and cognitive skills have become a novelty.

There are several reasons why the board games are making a comeback as opposed to the ones played on a screen. These are believed to be beneficial for the brain. They stimulate the hippocampus and prefrontal cortex, which are responsible for complex thought and memory formation. Board games help the brain retain and build cognitive associations well into old age too. It has been known for preventing cognitive decline, which is associated with dementia and Alzheimer's.

A good place to pick them up is an exhibition called Jack &



Jill, the wonder years festival which has multiple stalls and activities for the little ones. While there is the usual clutter of clothes and the usual toys, there were four stalls that stood apart amidst the din at the National Railway Museum where the exhibition is being held. There were of course the usual families,

WOODEN BOARDS, ANIMAL CHARACTERS AND GLASS PEBBLES WERE THE ESSENCE OF TRADITIONAL INDIAN GAMES

school children and hassled teachers who stood and sat around waiting for their chance to get on the toy trains that take you around the venue for a joy ride. Huge trains and little children waited patiently side by side for the driver to start the ride. Even while the main attraction of the museum are obviously the train models stationed everywhere but there were other treasures to be found too.

At Nazariya a design studio one couldn't help but notice several unique items. A coir tree created by artist Harikrishna Parida from Chandpur, Odisha, diaries with Gond and Patachitra art from Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal respectively. There were the mandatory jewellery and diaries made by masters of handicrafts across India. But what caught our eye were games like the Aadu Puli Aatam which in Tamil means The Lambs and Tigers.

A strategic, two-player (or

two team) leopard hunt game that is played in South India, it is meant for children above eight. One player controls three tigers and the other player up to 15 lambs/goats. The tigers 'hunt' the goats while the goats attempt to block the tigers' movements. The chequered lines across the red and yellow cloth board and the stone pieces made for an interesting way to spend an evening.

Another game called the Pallankuzhi, which apparently Sita used to play, reminded one of an African tribal game called the Mancala. The wooden board with bowls and tiny glass pebbles does not end until one player has no pebbles to continue with. The start-up also brought with them the miniature version of the Chaupad called Ashtachema and there were also small diaries decorated with Kalighat paintings and miniature Phads from Rajasthan. The studio also brought with them rare art forms like the Kaavi, from the Konkan coast which only exists in two temples in Goa currently and Bidri art from Karnataka which is made in the village of Bidar.

But not just old Indian games, more contemporary ones but indigenously developed too could be seen here. Sphero's stall one couldn't help but notice several unique items. A coir tree created by artist Harikrishna Parida from Chandpur, Odisha, diaries with Gond and Patachitra art from Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal respectively. There were the mandatory jewellery and diaries made by masters of handicrafts across India. But what caught our eye were games like the Aadu Puli Aatam which in Tamil means The Lambs and Tigers.

Photo: Pankaj Kumar

End conflicts permanently

Imbibing true spiritual knowledge imparted by the Supreme being within oneself can be the answer to all disputes forever. By **RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJJI**

Most of us dread conflicts in our life because it makes us uncomfortable and stressful. As a result, we learn to avoid, suppress or withdraw from conflict or even act as though it doesn't exist. Our present society, though advanced in some respects, is suffering deeply from many serious problems and conflicts that are social, economic, political, religious, cultural, ethnic and more.



In fact, conflicts appear at all levels of our society from the inter personal level to international level and seem to be un-ending. As a result, some people think that these are inescapable and are a part of life. However, there are others who have an undying hope and a high upsurge of enthusiasm in their mind, for they feel that conflicts can definitely be resolved and that these will end one day. They think that fighting and finishing these conflicts is a sport and winning them is equivalent to being successful in life.

Similarly all religions philosophies are based on some presumptions which themselves have not been validated by rational or practical proof. These presumptions or presuppositions are themselves in conflict with those of other religions and philosophies. So, instead of solving, they further add to the conflicts.

In fact, many religions and philosophies declare this as their very aim or goal. But one finds that in spite of all the efforts by such people over long periods of time, the final resolution of conflicts eludes us and the remedies applied are worse than the disease in many cases. There is, therefore, a compelling cause to introspect why, in spite of all the sincerity and the efforts — at least in the earliest phase of every religion, or social service institution, or political or economic school of thought — the conflicts have increased in number, become more aggravated and got badly inter-twined.

It needs to be understood that every confrontation can be ended, narrowed or reduced by appealing to a value but if that value is not accepted on good reason and faith by those systems or methodologies, the conflicts cannot be ended. For example, if a system of thought does not invariably adopt non-violence in its methods and instead is based on the belief that violence is justified to end violence and to establish peace, how can it establish an order of non-violence? People expect the state to end many conflicts but if the state is itself an instrument of coercion and violence, then how can it be the means to end them?

A deep analysis of the situation, considered from the point of systems and methods applied, would reveal that some of the factors that have brought forth the present to complex and almost irresolvable state, are: religions, philosophies, social theories, psychological concepts about human nature and more. These have in-built conflicts in their own system or schools of thought and these are not merely of academic interest but are fraught with serious consequences when applied to human conditions. Since, they have failed to resolve conflicts in their own doctrines, findings, beliefs, objectives and theories and practices, how can they resolve conflicts in the outer world?

Moreover, one important thing is that all conflicts ensue from improper or incorrect relations with one's own self and also with others. They are also due to clash of ego or self-interests. So, if these problems of ego and selfishness are not solved, how can the dispute at other levels and in other forms be resolved? The system and method, applied as solution, should be such as do not give rise to another problem, even if they solve one or some of the problems. Otherwise, it would only mean replacing existing problems with newer ones.

It is a known fact that all religions, philosophies, social, economic and political theories and psychological systems are based on a particular interpretation or understanding of history. This itself is untenable or erroneous and so these systems cannot trace and understand correctly the historical roots of the problems or conflicts. In that case, how can they eradicate conflicts? If they had understood the genesis and pathology correctly, they should have been able to resolve or reduce conflicts.

Moreover, all problems and conflicts have to be dealt with together and simultaneously, else they will remain because they are so intermingled and interconnected that many will remain if even one of them exists. It is in this context that we should understand the importance of true spiritual knowledge imparted by the Supreme Being. Such an endeavour, under Supreme's direct and indirect guidance alone can and will end all conflicts forever which in turn can and will usher in the proverbial Golden Age.



Be net safe

Here are simple ways to keep one's data protected from ransomware and phishing. By **SANJIT CHATTERJEE**



Phishing attacks, which are the primary delivery mechanisms for malware/ransomware, are on a noticeable rise and do not seem to go away anytime soon. In May 2017, the Wannacry ransomware attack infected more than 2,00,000 computers across 150 countries. Such attacks have spared no one — from hospitals to banks to big enterprises, the world has been hit hard.

With cyber security issues increasing day by day, safety concerns amongst internet users are also soaring. But worry not, we've put together seven simple cyber safety tips that will help you greatly reduce your chances of falling prey to cybercriminals.

DOES THAT EMAIL LOOK ALARMING? READ IT AGAIN

Punctuated with plenty of typos, exclamation marks, highlights and impersonal greetings such as "Dear Client/Customer" are some of the most easily spottable signs of phishing emails. One thing that you should always keep in mind is that no company or bank would ever ask for your personally iden-

tifiable information (PII) via email. This information includes your name, government identification numbers, credentials and other such details.

Targeted phishing, wherein the email sender appears to be a known friend or colleague, are sent by attackers to easily trick their targets. A thumb rule of safety here is to check the sender's email extension. Furthermore, emails that seem to be too good to be true must be deleted immediately.

TREAT FILE ATTACHMENTS WITH SUSPICION

File attachments laden with malware are commonly used in phishing attacks. Cybercriminals often rename Word documents, PDF documents and more, in such a way that they appear legitimate to the victim. Clicking and downloading malicious files can infect your system and compromise your sensitive information such as your internet banking password. It is, therefore, important to stay careful whenever you receive a file, check the sender details and if you find

anything fishy, it is best to delete it.

HAVE A SECURITY PRODUCT AND UPDATE IT REGULARLY

In order to mitigate your exposure to phishing emails, a software with anti-phishing, anti-spam and anti-malware capabilities can prove to be an indispensable tool. Such software can fight against the most complex cyber threats by scanning your system in real-time. Ensure using a reputable internet security software and keep it up-to-date.

TAKE BACK-UP

A ransomware attack locks your data and demand ransom for its release. So what could be the biggest weapon to defeat ransomware? Certainly, an active and reliable data backup strategy! Regular backup provides easy restoration and helps you start from where you left. Ensure that whatsoever backup medium you use, it is not reachable from the infected machine.

UPDATE YOUR SOFTWARE

When it is time to update software on your

computer, you must do it, no matter if it is as frequent as every other day. These updates can significantly reduce the possibility of ransomware attacks. It would be best if you enable automatic software updates on your system.

PAY ATTENTION TO SHORTENED LINKS

Cyber attackers often trick online users to click on shortened links over social media, emails and other websites. A study found that 78 per cent of people were aware of the risks associated with unknown links in emails and yet they click anyway. URL shortening services such as Bitly are used to create these links that look like legitimate ones but divert to malicious websites. It is always a good practice to hover your mouse over the web link in order to see whether it redirects to the correct URL or not.

FREE STUFF COMES AT A COST

Most of the download sites that let you to get stuff for free could cost you the other way around. Free stuff such as music files are often laced with adware, spyware and other types of malware that can cause severe damage to your data and privacy. Prefer opting for reliable sources for downloading content even if it means paying a little.

HOTSPOTS LEAVE YOU VULNERABLE

Whether it's an airport or a restaurant, free WiFi hotspots are convenient, but you can be easily attacked. Since there are several users connected to a WiFi hotspot at once, the chances of losing sensitive information are high.

It is shocking to see that the annual number of ransomware attacks worldwide from the year 2014 to 2017 is 184 million. Clearly with time, cyber-attacks are getting more and more sophisticated which makes cyber awareness vital for online users. Be aware and be safe.

(The author is the founder of a technology company.)

It's not the load that breaks you down, it's the way you carry it.
—Lou Holtz

WEIGHTLIFTING IS GOOD FOR HEART

New study suggests that weightlifting, rather than walking and cycling, can better help keep heart diseases.

The study showed that engaging in both static activities such as strength training and dynamic activities like walking and cycling was associated with 30 to 70 per cent lower rates of cardiovascular disease risk factors. But, the associations were strongest for strength training among youth than older adults. "Both strength training and aerobic activity appeared to be heart healthy, even in small amounts, at the population level," said Maia P. Smith, Assistant Professor at St. George's University in Grenada. "However, static activity appeared more beneficial than dynamic," Smith added.

Further, the researchers suggested that clinicians should counsel patients, especially the elderly, to exercise regardless of activity types as patients who did both types of physical activity fared better than patients who simply increased the level of one type of activity.

SLOW READING SPEED LINKED TO DRY EYES

People suffering from chronic dry eye disease are likely to have a slow reading rate, according to researchers.

The chronic dry eye is a common disease in which natural tears fail to adequately lubricate the eyes, thus drastically affecting its functioning. The study found that the condition can slow a person's reading speed by as much as 10 per cent and can make it difficult to read for more than an average of 30 minutes. Those with clinically significant dry eye could read fewer words per minute — 32 words per minute less — than those without the condition, who read at the same rate of 272 words per minute.

"We suspected that people with dry eye were mostly unable to sustain good reading performance because their tears cannot re-lubricate their eye surfaces fast enough," said Esen Akpek, from the Johns Hopkins Wilmer Eye Institute in US.

ARE AIR PURIFIERS HELPFUL INSIDE YOUR HOME?

Installing air purifiers in your homes may, help to some extent, combat the impact of deadly air on your respiratory and circulatory systems, but the question remains how effective they can be over time in mitigating the ill-effects of Delhi's toxic air.

While most air purifiers are able to remove airborne pollutants like mold spores, pollen, dust, bacteria and pet dander, are they really effective as the Air Quality Index (AQI) nosedives to life-threatening levels? "The air purifiers are effective but only up to a certain extent. A person would eventually have to go outside where they would be exposed to polluted air," said Rajesh Chawla, Senior Consultant, Critical Care, at Indraprastha Apollo Hospital in New Delhi.

"Air purifiers are shown to have positive effects on respiratory health as well circulatory health. As there is a saying, something is better than nothing," added Gyanendra Agarwal, Senior Consultant, Department of Pulmonology, Jaypee Hospital, Noida.

HONKING EXPOSURE CAN MAKE YOU OBESE

Are you obese or overweight? Blame long term exposure to blaring horns and other noise from road traffic, said researchers.

The study showed that a 10 decibel (dB) increase in mean noise level was associated with a 17 per cent increase in obesity. "Our analysis shows that people exposed to the highest levels of traffic noise are at greater risk of being obese," said Maria Foraster, lead researcher from the Barcelona Institute for Global Health in Spain.

It could be because noise generates stress and affects our sleep. It alters hormone levels and increases blood pressure. Moreover, among other effects, sleep disturbance deregulates glucose metabolism and alters the appetite, the researchers explained in the paper published in the journal Environment International.

GENES DECIDE YOUR CAFFEINE PREFERENCE

Are you a tea or coffee person? The answer may lie in your genetic predisposition towards bitter tastes, say researchers.

Bitterness acts as a natural warning system to protect us from harmful substances. The study, led by researchers from US-based Northwestern University, and QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute in Australia, explored reactions to three bitter substances — caffeine, quinine and propylthiouracil (PROP) — to understand how they affect people's preference for drinking tea, coffee and alcohol.

"You'd expect that people who are particularly sensitive to the bitter taste of caffeine would drink less coffee," said Marilyn Cornelis, assistant professor of preventive medicine at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. For alcohol, a higher sensitivity to the bitterness of PROP resulted in lower alcohol consumption, particularly of red wine.

'Magnificent Mary' punch into quarters

Five-time champion starts her campaign with easy win before former champion Sarita bows out

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Five-time champion M C Mary Kom punched her way into the 48kg quarterfinals while another veteran Sarita Devi made an early exit after losing a hard-fought 60kg bout in the AIBA Women's World Championships here on Sunday.

Chasing a historic sixth Gold and first medal since 2010, the 35-year-old Mary Kom registered a convincing 5-0 win over Aigerim Kessenayeva of Kazakhstan in her opening bout of the tournament.

The 36-year-old Sarita, who won a Gold in the 2006 edition when it was also held in the Capital city, lost to 2016 World Championships Silver medalist Kellie Harrington of Ireland in a split 3-2 verdict.

Sarita, who got a standing count against her opponent in the third round, later said the decision was wrong. She, however, said that she will accept the decision as she does not want another ban.

The Manipuri was handed a one year ban by the world body AIBA for refusing to accept her Bronze medal in protest during the victory ceremony at the 2014 Asian Games.

Besides Mary Kom, three other Indians — Manisha Moun (54kg), Lovlina Borgohain (69kg) and Kachari Bhagyabati (81kg) — also made it to the quarterfinals

with 5-0, 5-0 and 4-1 wins on points in their respective pre-quarterfinal bouts.

Five Indians took the field on Sunday and only Sarita lost her bout. They are now just one step away from clinching a medal.

Mary Kom began with a watchful approach in the first round but she got to her rhythm with a left-right combination on her opponent in the second round. There were no many clear punches from both sides but the Manipuri, a mother of three, was clearly the better boxer with all the five judges giving their nod.

Four judges gave 30-27 each while one awarded 29-28 in favour of the Indian.

"It was a tough fight and there was a bit of pressure as it was my first bout of the tournament. I have been handling the pressure of expectation from the people of my country for the last 16 years and I am happy to face this pressure," said the Olympic Bronze medalist.

Mary Kom next face Wu Yu of China in the quarterfinal on Tuesday.

"I think she is an intelligent boxer and fast also. I have to think about which technique I have to use," she said.

A win on Tuesday will assure Mary

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Kom of at least a Bronze medal which will be her first since 2010.

Sarita and Harrington traded a lot of punches in their lightweight pre-quarterfinal bout which was a fast and intense affair.

The veteran Indian, who also competed in the inaugural World Championships in 2001, expressed surprise when the Irishwoman was declared the winner.

"I am not happy with the decision (of the judges). The decision has gone 'ultra' (opposite), I thought I had the upperhand in all the three rounds. But what do I do, I was banned for one year after the 2014 Asian Games controversy. So, I cannot say anything now," she said after her bout.

"I don't know why these things happen to me only."

About the standing count against her in the third round, she said, "It was not a



perienced rival in a pre-quarterfinal bout in her maiden World Championships.

This was the second win of the Haryana girl against Zhalaman as she had defeated the Kazakh boxer in the Silesian Women's Boxing championship in Poland earlier this year.

In the quarterfinals, Manisha faces top seed and 2016 World Championships Silver medalist Stoyka Petrova of Bulgaria.

"For me, once I am inside the ring it does not matter whether my opponent is a world champion or a silver medalist. So, my approach will be the same in my next bout also," she said.

"Today, like on my first bout, I played from a distance but I played faster and more aggressive. It was a good bout."

Borgohain, an Asian Championships Bronze medalist last year, had a tougher fight against 2014 World Championships Gold medalist Atheyna Bylon of Panama. It was a physical and aggressive fight and both the boxers fell on the floor on more than one occasion.

The 21-year-old Assamese next faces Scott Kaye Frances of Australia in the quarterfinals on Tuesday.

For Bhagyabati, it was even tougher against a taller opponent Irina-Nicoletta Schonberger of Germany. But the Indian also turned out winner in her debut World Championships bout.

She now faces Paola Jessica Caicedo of Columbia in the quarterfinals on Tuesday.

INDIA LOSE 1-2 TO JORDAN IN FRIENDLY

PTI ■ AMMAN

The Indian football team went down 1-2 to Jordan in an international football friendly, an improved second-half performance failing to salvage a draw for the visitors here.

This was a climbdown for Stephen Constantine's men weeks after holding World Cup-winning coach Marcello Lippi's higher-ranked China to a goalless stalemate.

The 97th ranked India, though, were without their talismanic striker Sunil Chhetri, who was ruled out of the game due to an injury.

Goalkeeper cum captain Amer Shafi on

Saturday put Jordan ahead with a free goal in the 25th minute.

Thanks to the howler from India custodian Gurpreet Singh Sandhu, who failed to read the bounce of his counterpart's shot from the other end of the pitch, Jordan led 1-0 at the break.

Ehsan Haddad consolidated Jordan's position and made it 2-0 with his 58th minute strike.

Coming on as a substitute for Jackie Chand Singh, debutant Nishu Kumar pulled one back for the visitors when he found the net from a close range in the 61st minute. That was only his second touch of the game.

It's time to deliver, says Chinglensana ahead of World Cup

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

The preparations are done and it is time to deliver in the tournament that matters the most after a mediocre year, Indian hockey team vice-captain Chinglensana Singh Kangujam said on Sunday ahead of the World Cup.

The mega event begins November 28 and will conclude on December 16 at the city's Kalinga Stadium.

"The past three months in particular has been very challenging for us with the training intensifying as it's important for us to peak at the World Cup. The team is aware that this year could have been much better for us in terms of results but now is the time to do away with the bitterness of the past

performances by doing well at the prestigious event," said Chinglensana.

Playing in the midfield alongside skipper Manpreet Singh and youngsters Sumit and Nilakanta Sharma, Chinglensana exuded confidence about his team's prospects.

"Every single player has worked tremendously hard and it is time to con-

vert all that into good results. I believe the World Cup will be a battle of mental strength as much as it is going to be about fitness and team strategies.

"It is an advantage that almost everyone in the team has the experience of playing top-quality matches in the Kalinga Stadium during the Hockey India League and are aware of the atmosphere the fans

create here. "It's also a plus point to have the Junior World Cup winners who have experienced 20,000 people cheering for them during the 2016 Junior World Cup in Lucknow," added the Manipur-born player. Chinglensana, who has so far played 199 internationals, is slated to complete a milestone on the opening day of India's campaign against South Africa.

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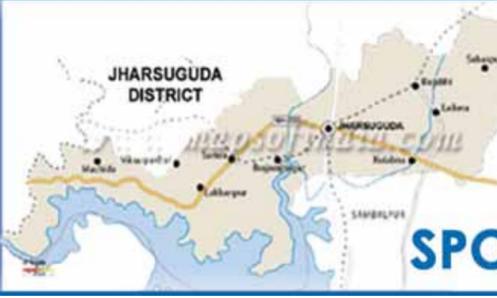
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Halted industrialisation hits J'suguda growth

- Many units shut post 2015; joblessness acute
- Raw material crunch leads to major lockouts

RAJ KUMAR SHARMA

After 2000, rapid industrialisation has strengthened the financial status of Odisha. In the industrial district of Jharsuguda, economic growth was clearly visible along with increase in the purchasing power of the general public. The situation, however, took a dramatic turn after 2015 with the lock-outs of major factories one after another grossly affecting the economic backbone of the district. The people depending upon these industries for their livelihood are passing sleepless nights to maintain their families. Unemployment problem has become a main concern now for everybody. The situation has also forced the workers to migrate to other neighbouring States for jobs. In the early 90s, the economic status of the district was influenced by the closure of two major industries like Orient Paper Mill at

Brajrajnagar and Bhaskar Spinning Mill at Jharsuguda due to globalisation and simplification policy of the Government. Such situation had left more than a thousand of workers without

The declaration by political parties to open such closed units remained as political promises and election manifestos never-to-be-fulfilled

jobs facing difficulties to maintain their livelihood. Although, people had a ray of hope to regain their lost jobs, their expectations could not be fulfilled like daydreams. The declaration by political parties to open such closed units remained as political promises and election

manifestos never-to-be-fulfilled. The closed units neither revived nor the fate of the jobless workers changed till date. Although some changes have been noticed after 2000 with the entry of big units in the district including Vedant Aluminium and Bhusan Power and Steel, the position did not improve much due to want of raw materials for these plants. Many industries like Madhav Ispat, MSP Metalicks, Concast Steel, Jay Hanuman, Ispat Udyog, Action Ispat Power and Steel, Bhatia Coal Washery, Earth Minerals, S A and M Services have closed down their units and their revival appears to be a wild goose chase at least in the near future. Decrease in coal production in Ib Valley Coal Fields of Mahanadi Coal Fields (MCL) managed mines has also given rise to problems for many thermal power projects and aluminium and steel units operating in the district. Many projects have

also not been able to achieve their full productivity. The situation has forced these units to be sold at scrap rates. Employment probabilities have also been squeezed in these units. The only ray of hope is now upon mines in Ib Valley coalfield, OPGC power projects, Vedant and Bhusan Steel etc. The job opportunities in these companies are now giving some hope to its workers to maintain their families. On the other side, business opportunities are also equally affected due to slow-down of the industries in the district. If such situation continues, the future growth of the district will be at stake. The State Government should, therefore, take necessary steps to remove the bottlenecks for these industries like shortage of raw materials and other allied problems, lest the situation should not aggravate. (The writer is Special Correspondent, The Pioneer, Jharsuguda)



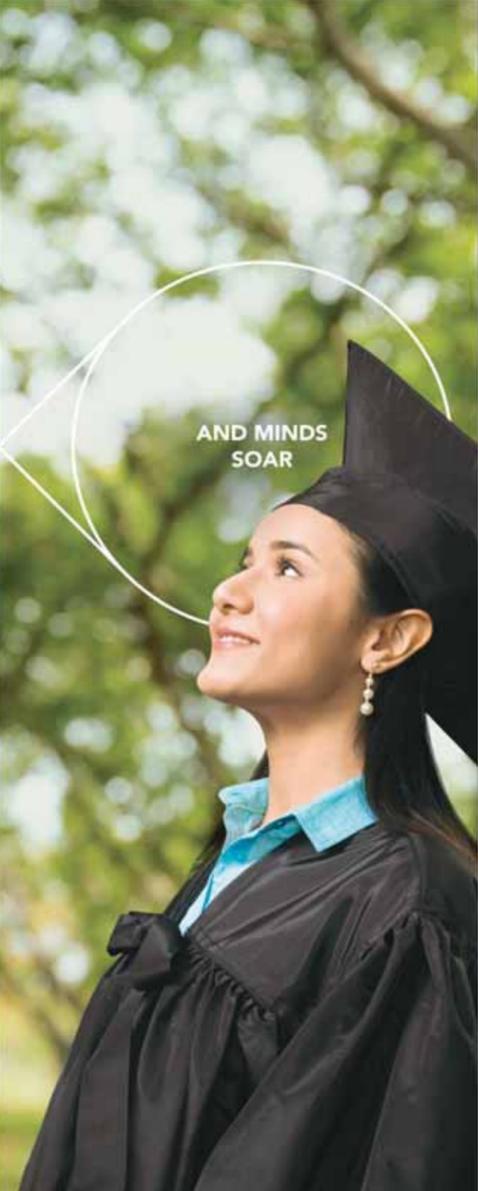
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