

**OPINION 8**  
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REDUX?

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**SPORT 15**  
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LUCKNOW, THURSDAY NOVEMBER 22, 2018; PAGES 16 ₹3



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## J&K Guv scuttles Govt formation bids

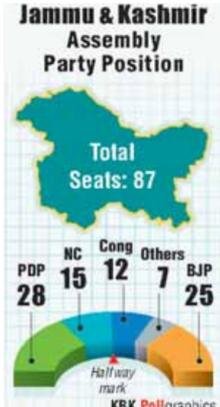
Assembly dissolved soon after PDP-NC-Cong and Lone-BJP stake claim to form Govt

KHURSHED WANI ■ SRINAGAR

In a controversial move, Jammu & Kashmir Governor Satya Pal Malik on Wednesday dissolved the Assembly and torpedoed the attempt by the People's Democratic Party (PDP), the National Conference (NC), and the Congress to form a coalition Government.

The order for dissolution of Assembly came hours after former Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti, in her capacity as the president of single largest party with 29 legislators, wrote to Malik to convey that her party would stake claim for the Government formation with the support of the NC and the Congress.

In a separate letter to the Governor, Sajjad Gani Lone of People's Conference (PC) too staked claim to form a Government. Lone, whose PC has two legislators in the Assembly, claimed that he has the support of 26 BJP legislators and 18 others, referring to possible dissenters of the PDP. "The Governor, Jammu & Kashmir, Satya Pal Malik, has passed an order in exercise of the powers conferred upon him by Clause (b) of sub-section (2) of Section 53 of the



Constitution of Jammu & Kashmir dissolving the Legislative Assembly," Governor's Principal Secretary Umang Narula said in an order. Soon after the dissolution of the Assembly, Mehbooba said, "Oddly enough our pleas fell on deaf ears. But who would have thought that the very idea of a grand coalition would give such jitters."

Mehbooba earlier took to her twitter handle saying, "Have been trying to send this letter to Raj Bhavan. Strangely

### FALL AT THE FINAL HURDLE

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The formation of PDP-NC-Congress "grand alliance" took the formal shape a day after senior PDP leader and Lok Sabha member Muzaffar Hussain Beigh hinted at formation of a "third front" comprising BJP, Lone's PC and PDP's rebel legislators.



the fax is not received. Tried to contact HE Governor on phone. Not available. Hope you see it @jandkgovernor."

"Sending the letter also by mail," Mehbooba tweeted. The dissolution of the Assembly culminated the political drama that unfolded on Wednesday afternoon after news broke that the PDP would be embracing its arch-rival NC to form a coalition Government to keep the BJP at bay and safeguard the special status of the embattled State.

Congress leader Gulam Nabi Azad confirmed in New Delhi that talks on Government formation were going on among the NC, the PDP and the Congress. Senior PDP leader and former Finance Minister Altaf Bukhari told reporters in Srinagar that around 60 legislators were supporting their move and negotiations were on to give a proper shape to the Government formation.

Bukhari said the alliance has been formed to protect the special status of Jammu & Kashmir, Article 370 and Article 35A. "We have to keep communal forces at bay. To

Keep the BJP away, we are coming together to form a Government. An alliance has been made with over 60 MLAs together of the Congress the PDP and the NC to protect our special identity. I have no details about the contours of the alliance but it is to protect the special status, 370 and 35A," he added.

Mehbooba wrote to the Governor, "Since I am presently in Srinagar, it would not be possible for me to call on you immediately and this is to keep you informed that we would be seeking your convenience shortly to stake the claim for forming a Government."

The State is under Governor's rule since June 19, a day after Mehbooba-led coalition Government was sacked following the withdrawal of support from the BJP. The Governor's rule is competing its six months on December 19, which would have necessitate implementation of President rule.

Governor Malik had already hinted that he would not allow any Government formation in the State through "backdoor dealings" and also hinted at conduct of Assembly elections. However, last week he had indicated State

Assembly, which was under suspended animation, would not be dissolved.

J&K Congress chief Ghulam Ahmed Mir said that his party would support the secular forces to form a Government. "We are ready to support secular forces. The formal meeting will take place soon regarding the formation of a Government in the State as all the three parties are reaching a consensus," Mir said.

"All secular parties have come together for the bigger interest of State and public. For saving Constitution, may it be Article 370 and 35A, we have to rise above party lines especially when eminent dangers are bigger," he said.

The formation of "grand alliance" of the PDP-NC-Congress took the formal shape a day after senior PDP leader and Lok Sabha member from north Kashmir Muzaffar Hussain Beigh hinted at formation of a "third front" comprising the BJP, Lone's PC and PDP's rebel legislators. Even as Beigh did not announce quitting the PDP, he openly criticised several decisions of the party, including the decision to boycott the municipal and panchayat polls in the State.

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## High-profile cases take hit in absence of CBI top bosses

Probe in Mallya, INX media, IRCTC bribery, Agusta deal cases halted

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

In the absence of two top CBI officers, agency Director Alok Verma and Special Director Rakesh Asthana, both benched by the Government last month, probes into several high-profile cases of the agency involving bribery and special crimes have virtually been halted. The registration of cases has also steeply declined in the last one month.

Besides Verma and Asthana, Additional Director AK Sharma has also been virtually made ineffective following the shake-up as he has been given the charge of inconsequential Multi-Disciplinary Monitoring Agency (MDMA) handling the Rajiv Gandhi murder case.

Following the Government's decision to bench Verma and Asthana, interim CBI Director Nageshwara Rao, a Joint Director rank official, transferred 13 officials posted in the headquarters to different places. This has also adversely affected the functioning of the agency.

The Supreme Court has barred Rao from taking any major policy decision in the pendency of Verma's petition challenging his forced leave.

Sources said the major concern is lack of clarity on who will represent the CBI in the UK court which is going to pronounce its order on liquor baron Vijay Mallya extradition case on December 10. Till now, a team has not been constituted to represent the case, officials said, adding a decision is likely to be taken only after the SC pronounced its verdict on November 29. A decision by the Interpol for issuing a Red Corner Notice against ₹14,000-crore PNB credit fraud case accused Mehul Choksi is also pending in the absence of proper representation by the CBI, sources said.

Officials said the case files move right from the investigation officers, mostly comprising DSPs and ASPs, to the SP, then to DIG, Joint Director, Additional Director, Special Director and the Director.



Other cases in which investigation will be affected include the IRCTC bribery case involving Lal Prasad's family, Agusta Westland case and INX media case. Other high-profile cases being probed by the agency include NRHM scam of Uttar Pradesh and Saradha scam of West Bengal. However, the Muzaffarpur shelter home case and Manipur encounter cases are progressing well as they are being monitored by the apex court. Asthana was handling the IRCTC case, Agusta Westland probe and Saradha ponzi scam case.

"In the wake of benching of Verma and Asthana by the Government and SC restraining interim Director from taking any major policy decision, case files are stuck as the officials are not able to seek legal opinion from the Law Ministry or the in-house legal wing when clarity is required," an official said.

Officials said the case files move right from the investigation officers, mostly comprising DSPs and ASPs, to the SP, then to DIG, Joint Director, Additional Director, Special Director and the Director.

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### CAPSULE

**WON'T ABANDON SAUDI OVER KHASHOGGI: TRUMP**  
Washington: US President Donald Trump has defended his decision not to hold Saudi rulers accountable in the killing of dissident journalist Jamal Khashoggi, saying maintaining strategic ties with the kingdom and keeping the global oil prices down were in the best interests of America. The US had imposed sanctions on 17 individuals of Saudi Arabia for serious human rights abuse resulting from their roles in Khashoggi murder.

**SABARIMALA: ANOTHER MINISTER HITS KERALA**  
Pamba: Hitting out at the CPI(M)-led LDF Government in Kerala on the Sabarimala issue, Union Minister Pon Radhakrishnan on Wednesday said its "masterplan" was to "harass" the devotees and not allow them to go to the temple.

**ALOK NATH BOOKED FOR VINTA NANDA'S RAPE**  
Mumbai: The Mumbai Police has registered a rape case against actor Alok Nath following writer-director Vinta Nanda's complaint that he allegedly sexually assaulted her 19 years ago during the shooting of a TV show, officials said on Wednesday.

**BCCI CEO CLEARED IN SEXUAL ASSAULT CASE**  
New Delhi: The sexual assault allegations against BCCI CEO Rahul Johri were rejected as "mischievous and fabricated" by a three-member probe panel on Wednesday but the Committee of Administrators was divided on him resuming office with Diana Edulji reiterating her demand for his resignation.

## 1 held for terror blast in Amritsar

Punjab CM says Pak ISI brains behind attack

MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH

The Amritsar blast was triggered by Pakistan's ISI-backed terrorists who planted the grenade — brought from across the border — with Pakistan Ordinance Factory mark under a tree at a gathering at Adliwal's Nirankari Bhawan on Sunday. This and much more was revealed by Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh on Wednesday following the arrest of one of the two suspects in the blast case.

Within 72 hours of the blast that took three lives and left 20 others injured, the Punjab Police solved the case by identifying the two attackers, and arresting one of them from Loharka village in Amritsar's Raja Sansi.

The attackers have been identified as Bikramjit Singh of Dhariwal village under Raja Sansi police station, who was arrested on early Wednesday morning from near Loharka village in the area, and another as Avtar Singh of Chak Mishri Khan village in Lopoke, Ajnala in Amritsar.

Declaring that the second assailant would soon be arrested, the Chief Minister minced no words to say that the attack



Punjab CM Capt. Amarinder Singh shows a picture of Amritsar grenade blast co-accused Bikramjit Singh to the media during a Press conference in Chandigarh on Wednesday. PTI

was masterminded by Pak-based Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) with the "sole aim to disturb Punjab's peace". "ISI has masterminded this attack...It is using our men as tools. The grenade has POF mark, made with know-how of Austria's Arges," said Capt Amarinder.

"Bikramjit Singh, who was the biker and attacked the gatekeeper, has been arrested by the police. We are on to the second person and it is just a question of time," said Capt Amarinder adding that he has admitted the crime and disclosed that he is working for the Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF).

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## Kushwaha set to dump NDA for Sharad for respectable seats

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI

Led by Union Minister Upendra Kushwaha, NDA partner RLSP is all set to walk out of the Modi Government and join hands with Sharad Yadav's newly outfit Loktantrik Janta Dal (LJD) next month. The Congress is in touch with the RJD in Bihar to get Kushwaha "respectable" number of seats to change side.

Sources said leaders of both the Congress and the RJD are engaged for the seat-sharing talks even as the BJP and the JD(U) indicated they will not spare more than two seats to the RLSP.

Currently the RLSP has three Members of Parliament. For past few months, Kushwaha has been sending



signals of leaving the NDA over seat-sharing issue.

Hours after BJP chief Amit Shah and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, in a joint statement last month, announced agreement on seat-sharing for the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, Upendra Kushwaha met RJD

BIHAR 2014			
NDA	UPA	RJD	04
BJP: 22		Cong: 02	
LJP: 06		NCP: 01	
RLSP: 03			
JD (U) : 02			

leader Tejashwi Yadav fuelling talks of him joining the RJD-led Mahagathbandhan in Bihar. "In Bihar, the RJD is in the driver's seat and whichever way they drive we have to ride," quipped a top Congress leader. He added that both the Congress and Kushwaha are confident that in present circumstances RJD's Tejashwi Yadav has an upper hand in Bihar in comparison to Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.

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## Half of ATMs may close down by March

Changes in regulatory landscape are making it unviable to operate ATMs, says CATMi

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Nearly 50 per cent of the Total Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) across the country may be forced to shut down by March 2019 due to "unviability" of operations owing to "recent regulatory

guidelines for ATMs hardware and software upgrades, recent mandates on cash management standards and the Cassette Swap method of loading cash".

Handing out a warning to this effect, the Confederation of ATM Industry (CATMI) said on Wednesday that of the current 2,38,000 ATMs, around 1,13,000 ATMs, including 1,00,000 off-site and more than 15,000 white label ATMs, are expected to down shutters. "The forced closure is on



account of unviability of operations brought about by recent regulatory guidelines for ATMs hardware and software upgrades, recent mandates on cash management standards

and the Cassette Swap method of loading cash," CATMI Director V Balasubramanian said.

According to a CATMI statement, a large number of ATMs in non-urban locations may be shut down due to unviability of operations. "If this happens, the financial inclusion programme would be severely impacted as millions of beneficiaries under the Government's Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) scheme, who withdraw subsi-

dies in form of cash through ATMs, may find their neighbourhood ATM shut," the CATMI spokesperson said.

The CATMI has predicted the closure of ATMs may result in long queues and chaos at ATMs. "Several hundred thousand jobs per in this industry and as per CATMI estimates, the closure of ATMs may result in considerable job losses that would be detrimental to financial services in the economy," the ATM industry body said.

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## Intruding American tourist killed by protected Sentinelese

PTI ■ PORT BLAIR/NEW DELHI

An American national was killed by members of a protected and reclusive tribe in the Andamans, possibly with arrows, when he tried to enter the North Sentinel Island, police said on Wednesday. John Allen Chau, 27, was killed by the Sentinelese Tribes on November 17, they said. "His body was most probably buried in the sands last week," SP (Headquarters) and PRO of Andaman and Nicobar Police Jatun Narwal told PTI.

"His death was caused by traditional weapons but we cannot specifically say whether he was killed by arrows or spears. The details will come out in course of detail investigation," he said. When the US Embassy

here was reached for a response, its spokesperson said, "We are aware of reports concerning a US citizen in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The welfare and safety of US citizens abroad is one of the highest priorities of the US Department of State."

"When a US citizen is missing, we work closely with local authorities as they carry out their search efforts. Due to privacy considerations, we have no further comment," the spokesperson said in the email response.

The Sentinelese people are among the tribes that survived the tsunami of 2004 without any help from the outside world. For the 2011 Census, enumerators could locate only 15 Sentinelese people — 12 men and three women.



However, their numbers could be anything between 40 and 400, according to experts.

PC Joshi, professor of Department of Anthropology

at Delhi University, said the tribe has remained completely isolated from the outside world and despite efforts of the Anthropological Society of

The Sentinelese people are among the tribes that survived the tsunami of 2004 without any help from the outside world.

For the 2011 Census, enumerators could locate only 15 Sentinelese people — 12 men and three women

India, which has tried to contact them indirectly by leaving bananas, coconuts for them, they have failed to make contact.

"We have tried but the tribe has not shown any interest. They are the most private of the tribes in the Andamans. They are aggressive and are known to attack outsiders with arrows and stones. I do not

know what made this American visit the island, but this tribe has stayed in isolation for so long that I do not blame them for what they saw as an intrusion and a threat," said the professor.

In 2006, two Indian fishermen, who had moored their boat near North Sentinel to sleep after poaching in the waters around the island, were killed when their boat broke loose and drifted onto the shore.

While the timeline leading to Chau's death is still not clear, the fishermen who took him near the island have told the police that he had visited the Andaman and Nicobar Islands five times earlier. He had expressed a desire to meet the Sentinelese Tribe, whose name is derived from that of

the island they inhabit, Sentinel, which is at a distance of 102 km from Port Blair.

Chau had hired a fishing dinghy from the Chidiyatapu area and reached close to the island on November 16, from where he travelled in his own canoe. He had made a failed attempt to reach the island on November 14 as well, they said.

His absence was first red flagged by the fishermen who took him near the island. They informed Chau's friend about his trip who in turn informed the US Consulate.

Two FIRs have been registered with Humfrignj police station under IPC sections 302 and 304 and seven fishermen who took the American to the island have been arrested, police said.

Joshi said it was a cause of concern that this island, where the Sentinelese have lived for hundreds of years with no outside contact, was recently opened for visitors.

"These people are not specimens for tourists to see. They are extremely vulnerable to diseases and any contact might lead to their extinction. We cannot expose them for a few dollars. We need to respect their choice," said Joshi.

In a major step earlier this year, the Government excluded this island and 28 others in the Union Territory from the Restricted Area Permit (RAP) regime till December 31, 2022.

The lifting of RAP meant that foreigners could be allowed to visit these islands without permission from the Government.

# BJP leaders to stay away from Dharam Sabha

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

With questions being raised over the timing of Dharma Sabha being held in Ayodhya on November 25, Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS) has decided to mask the event as non-political by asking BJP leaders not to share the dais with seers.

A senior RSS leader told *The Pioneer* in Lucknow on Wednesday that BJP leaders had been asked to stay away from the limelight. "The focus will be on saints, not elected members of the ruling party. The law-makers have been conveyed this message in a categorical term," he said.

Posters exhorting people to attend the congregation at Ayodhya and across the state also do not have pictures of BJP leaders. "The law-makers have been asked to generate resources and mobilise people for Dharma Sabha but they will sit with Ram bhakts. The main dais will have saints at prominent places," he said.

This strategy was chalked out with a design to blunt Opposition barbs of the BJP making Ram temple a political issue. The saffron brigade wants to keep the focus on

## BJP-Sena slugfest reaches UP

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The political slugfest between the BJP and Shiv Sena has now reached Uttar Pradesh with Ram temple at Ayodhya forming the fulcrum as both parties are trying to take a lead in the vexed agenda and gain political mileage.

While the BJP is trying to promote the VHP-RSS faction in supporting Dharma Sabha in Ayodhya to highlight the issue of Ram temple construction on November 25, Shiv Sena is also organising a massive programme the same day. Shiv Sena chief Udhav Thackeray will be the chief guest at that function.

The venue of Shiv Sena's programme is not yet known as the Ayodhya administration has denied permission twice. First, the Sena wanted to hold a rally at Ram Katha Park and later

at Gulab Badi in Faizabad city, about 10 kilometres from the disputed site. But authorities refused permission on the grounds of 'safety'.

Shiv Sena leader Anil Singh said that they were expecting permission any moment and that preparations were underway for a grand show when Shiv Sena would demand for an early construction of Ram temple at Ayodhya.

In the run-up, Shiv Sena has got almost all hotels/dharmshalas/lodges booked in the district.

The BJP, on the other hand, is extending all help to the VHP and RSS-sponsored Dharma Sabha. Ruling party law-makers have been asked to mobilise people and resources. The VHP has claimed that 1 lakh people will attend the programme and they have plans to have around 500 saints and seers on the stage.

saints and sadhus even as the BJP is extending all support to the VHP's function. Even the RSS, who is the brain behind the show, has taken a backseat.

As per the programme, two stages will be set up for the programme. The main and bigger stage will be for sadhus and the second one for VIPs.

On the second stage, law-makers will be accommodated. Over 500 sadhus and seers are likely to participate in the con-

gregation.

VHP spokesman Sharad Sharma said that preparations were going on in full swing.

"We are expecting around 2 lakh Ram bhakts on November 25. The initial report is very encouraging. During regular melas held in Ayodhya recently, over 14 lakh pamphlets, urging people to come to Ayodhya, were distributed. Besides, every gram sabha has been sent invitations in the form of turner-

ic rice. So we are expecting a good turnout," he said.

Sharma said that the district administration would make arrangements for the parking of over 500 buses, 1000 four-wheelers and 2000 two-wheelers. "We expect Ram bhakts to reach Ayodhya by Saturday. All local temples and mutts have opened their doors for Ram bhakts and provide free accommodation and fooding," Sharma said.



State BJP president Mahendra Nath Pandey inaugurating a meeting of BJP Schedules Caste Front on Wednesday

Pioneer

# BJP holding caste-based meetings

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

With the contours of the BSP-SP alliance becoming visible in Uttar Pradesh, the Bharatiya Janata Party has started caste-based meetings. A Dalit Sammelan was organised in Lucknow on Wednesday, aiming to send out the message

that the BJP was the true friend of the community.

State BJP president Mahendra Nath Pandey was the chief guest at the function. Party MLC Vidyasagar Sonkar and other Dalit leaders also took part in the meet. "Only the BJP can think about 'Sabka saath, sabka vikas'. BJP govern-

ments both at the Centre and UP have formulated policies that will benefit Dalits and downtrodden people of the society," Pandey said.

The BJP leader spoke about Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Ujjwala Scheme and the government's decision to provide free power connections, which

he claimed had transformed the lives of poor people. "The programme was a part of Samajik Pratinidhi Baithak organised by Anusuchit Jaati Morcha. Ten people from each district took part in this meeting and discussed government's achievement," Vidyasagar Sonkar said.

# Several injured in Mirzapur communal clash

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Repeated alerts and call for making police presence felt at public places during the ongoing festival season by DGP OP Singh has failed to cut ice with his junior colleagues. Or so it seems.

The DGP's directions were blown to smithereens when members of the two communities came to a head on the streets and fought a pitched battle for several hours before the indecisive and action-shy UP Police personnel in Mirzapur on Tuesday. The strife left several persons, including cops, with injuries. Police patrol has now been ensured to avert any recurrence and prevent violence.

As per reports, Vishwa Hindu Parishad activists took out a procession in Mirzapur on Tuesday night, exhorting Hindus to attend "Dharma Sabha" slated in Ayodhya on Sunday.

As the procession reached Mukeri Bazar near Gurhathi crossing, a staff holding a saffron flag somehow broke a tube light installed for Barawafat cel-

ebrations in the area dominated by members of the other community. This led to heated arguments and soon a police team reached there and pacified the warring groups.

Since the police took no action, hence an hour later, members of both the communities came to a head and started pelting stones and clashed with each other. Initially, remaining mute spectators, some cops tried to intervene but the mob targeted them forcing them to flee the scene. Only after senior officers rushed there and requisitioned additional force from neighbouring districts that the situation could somehow be brought under control.

SP of Mirzapur later suspended inspector of Katra Kotwali police station and two cops posted at Mukeri Bazar police outpost for the dereliction of duty.

The BJP and RSS activists sat on a protest on Tuesday night, demanding action against those involved in the incident.

Meanwhile, UP Congress on Wednesday condemned the

incident and said that communal forces were making desperate efforts to vitiate the atmosphere in the state to gain political mileage. The party claimed that clashes between two communities in Mirzapur and emergence of highly objectionable poster about Gyanvapi in Varanasi clearly pointed to the agenda of some parties that they wanted to polarise the 2019 Lok Sabha polls on religious lines.

"The communal clash in Mirzapur is nothing but a result of negligence and slackness of the police, who are dancing to the tunes of their political masters and vitiating the atmosphere in the state. It is a state-sponsored violence," asserted UPCC general secretary Vinod Mishra. Urging people to maintain peace, Mishra said that people should be vigilant about the nefarious designs of these political forces. Mishra also criticised the state government for unnecessary building up tension in Ayodhya to divert people's attention from core issues and non-performance of the Modi and Yogi governments.

# Cong to put up mega show for Rahul in UP

PREETAM SRIVASTAVA ■ LUCKNOW

Confident of a good show by party candidates in the ongoing Assembly polls in five states, Congress chief Rahul Gandhi has now planned to extensively tour Uttar Pradesh by the year-end and galvanise the party cadres and leaders for the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

Sources said that Rahul would address at least one rally in all five zones, including a grand rally in Lucknow. The Congress mandarins were reportedly busy chalking out a programme for the Congress president with the focus on regional parties — Samajwadi Party and Bahujan Samaj Party — to not underestimate them. "Even as we were seriously looking for a grand alliance for the next Parliament elections, both Akhilesh Yadav and Mayawati were regularly targeting us or our leaders to drive home the point that the Congress had lost ground in UP," quipped a senior Congress leader referring to some recent speeches of Akhilesh and Mayawati.

Preferring anonymity, the Congress leader said that both

the SP and BSP were trying to harm the Congress in the ongoing Assembly polls in Central states but the results would show that only Congress was the only party which could dislodge the BJP from the country.

"Once we prove our mettle in these ongoing polls, Rahul Gandhi will start extensive tour of UP to further impress that the Congress was as strong in this large state as it was in other states and the party could be not taken lightly," the Congress leader stressed.

The leader said that besides chalking out other programmes for Rahul like road shows, panchayats, chaupal, the party brass was planning some big rallies at least in one district of all the five zones of UP which included a grand rally in Lucknow. The leader also revealed that while announcing rallies of Rahul Gandhi in mid-December, Congress leaders would not take names either of the SP, BSP or other outfits but would highlight the motive of rallies to expose Prime Minister's role in Rafale fighter jet deal, rising prices and corruption issues.

# CPI (M) demands arrest of social activist's killers

**Lucknow (PNS):** Condemning the murder of social activist Himmat Kol for opposing illegal grabbing of forest land by Forest department in Mirzapur, state secretary of Communist Party of India (Marxist) Heera Lal Yadav demanded the immediate arrest of perpetrators and a forest ranger. Yadav also demanded that the government must stop the torture of forest-dwellers and tribals in the name of investigation.

In a statement issued in Lucknow on Wednesday, the

CPI (M) leader said that the state government was adopting suppressive measures against Kols, forest-dwellers and tribals in UP. "Their land in Allahabad, Sonbhadra, Mirzapur, Chandauli and Kushinagar are being forcibly attached by Forest department and mafia. Instead of implementing Forest Act, the mafia in cahoots with forest officials are grabbing the land of these people and are getting tribals and forest-dwellers eliminated for questioning their misdeeds," he charged.

Yadav said that Himmat Kol of Babura Raghunath Singh village in Haliya police station area of Mirzapur was killed for opposing such illegal acts.

"A case against the assailants was lodged in the local police station where the role of a forest ranger and a local MLA was suspected. But instead of initiating action and arresting the orchestrators, the police have taken to torturing innocent tribal youths. The state government should ensure justice to Kol and his family," Yadav stressed.

# Docs roughed up by MLA's aides

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Family members and supporters of BJP MLA from Tanda Sanju Devi and doctors at Mahamaya Allopathic Medical College in Sadarpur clashed with each other late on Tuesday night.

While the MLA's aides roughed up doctors and held the college principal and some doctors hostage at the gun-point, junior doctors later attacked them and torched four luxury vehicles in which the MLA's aides had come. The situation could be controlled only after senior police officers rushed there with additional force. They took complaints from both sides and registered cross cases with Aliganj police station. But so far, no action has been taken in the matter.

As per reports, the condition of Sanju Devi deteriorated on Tuesday night. Her family members later rushed her to Mahamaya Allopathic Medical College in Sadarpur. Devi's brother-in-law Ved Prakash and Shyam Babu Gupta accompanied her to the hospital.

The situation took an ugly turn when doctors treating Sanju Devi referred her to Lucknow. However, as the hospital authorities failed to provide ambulance immediately, the family members and MLA's aides first abused the staff and later held college principal Dr PK Singh and senior doctors hostage at the gun-point.

As the news spread on the college campus, junior doctors gathered there and protested. However, when the MLA's supporters tried to bully them and Shyam Babu fired several rounds to scare them away, the junior doctors went on a rampage. They clashed with the MLA's aides and later torched four luxury vehicles belonging to them. Later, senior police officers reached the spot and defused the situation.

# Son, brother gear up for Mulayam's birthday

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Party founder Mulayam Singh Yadav could find himself in a dilemma of choosing between son Akhilesh and brother Shivpal, both of whom will be celebrating his 80th birthday separately on Thursday and seek his "blessings" ahead of the Lok Sabha polls.

The uncle and nephew parted ways in 2016 after Akhilesh removed Shivpal as the SP's state president and last year, a national convention nominated the former Uttar Pradesh chief minister as party head replacing Mulayam.

Shivpal Yadav's Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party-Lohia (PSPL) has planned statewide celebrations, including events at the party's office at 6, Lal Bahadur Shastri Marg, here and Saifai, the native place of the Yadav clan, in Etawah.

The Akhilesh Yadav-led Samajwadi Party (SP), which has also planned to celebrate Mulayam's birthday across the state, will have an event at its office in the Uttar

Pradesh capital.

The PSPL has decided to celebrate his birthday as "Dharm Nirpeksha Diwas" and organise a 'dangal' (wrestling event) in Saifai as Mulayam was a wrestler once and known for his skills in the ring.

"We will be celebrating the day as Dharm Nirpeksha Diwas (secularism day) as 'netaji' (as Mulayam is fondly called) is the one who stood against communal forces with full force."

"The objective of the day will be to strengthen social amity and ideology of secularism," Shivpal's son and PSPL general secretary Aditya Yadav said.

District presidents of the party have been asked to reach out to the poor on this day and pray for the long life of 'netaji', he said.

Besides programmes like blood donation, seminars and cultural programmes to propagate the message of humanity, a 'dangal' will be held in Saifai, the PSPL leader said.

The Samajwadi Party is not far behind as it has also announced state-wide celebrations like those of previous years and asked its district officials and workers to organise events.

"The SP has asked its district and city cadre to celebrate Mulayam Singh Yadav's birthday. We have been organising his birthday earlier also.

He is not only our party's founder but also a samajwadi icon," SP spokesperson Rajendra Chaudhary said.

Though Mulayam tried to balance his relations with son and brother Shivpal, both factions have repeatedly claimed that his "blessings" were by their side. Recently, Mulayam left everyone surprised when he reached Shivpal's PSPL office here during its opening, but later drove down to the SP office and addressed party workers, asking them to "ensure the SP's success in the 2019 (Lok Sabha) polls". Shivpal has announced that the PSPL will contest on all Lok Sabha seats in Uttar Pradesh, except Mainpuri from where Mulayam is likely to contest.

Last year, Mulayam had said his son and the SP's national president Akhilesh is "a good boy and was a good chief minister".

"He is my son first, leader later. My blessings are with him before, now, and (will remain) ever after," Mulayam Singh Yadav had said, giving a clear message on his 79th birthday last year.

While the next move of Mulayam is not known and both SP and PSPL workers are confused as to who he will be standing with in the Lok Sabha polls, barely a few months away.



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## Realtor's bro, aides go on rampage over land dispute

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

The brother of a realtor and his kin, opened fire from automatic guns and even abducted his son from outside the latter's house over a land dispute in Mohanlalganj on Wednesday morning.

As per reports, Sahajram Yadav of Balsingh Kheda village of Mohanlalganj deals in property and had a sale deed with owner of Trust Infra Land Developers Anil Singh of Vipul Khand, Gomti Nagar, for a land in Parwar West in Mohanlalganj. Later, the price of the land appreciated and Yadav reneged on his promise to get it registered in Singh's name.

On Tuesday night, Yadav got a call from Singh, who warned him of dire consequences if the land was not reg-

istered in his name. Around 7 am on Wednesday, three SUVs with several youths and Singh's brother Vipin reached Yadav's house. They stormed the house and beat up Yadav and his wife Premawati. Vipin and his aides also thrashed Yadav's son Pawan and later bundled him into an SUV.

Hearing the commotion, a large number of locals converged on the spot and challenged the miscreants. To intimidate the locals, Vipin and his cronies fired several rounds in the air and later sped off. Pawan's cousin Rohit called the police and chased the miscreants, who fled towards the highway, on his bike. The miscreants sensed trouble after reaching Harikansh Garhi village in PGI police station area. They robbed Pawan of his gold chain before throwing him out on the road in Harikansh Garhi

village and sped off.

Later, cops from Mohanlalganj, PGI and Gosainganj police stations started checking vehicles and a team also reached the crime scene. Two live cartridges of a pistol and a shell of a country-made pistol were recovered from outside Yadav's house.

A case of kidnapping, loot and assault was registered against Vipin and his men and Anil Singh was also named in the case for issuing life threats to Yadav.

Initial investigation revealed that Sahajram worked as a negotiator in land deals. The land in question is located at a prominent place and its price increased manifold since both parties struck the deal several months back. Eyeing a windfall from the sale of the land, Yadav refused to register the land in Anil Singh's name.

## No headway in Old City murder case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

A day after the daring murder of a Wazirganj resident in full public view near Raja Bazaar, police failed to get any clue about the killers on Wednesday. The police blamed it on their preoccupation with security arrangements for the Eid-e-Milad procession.

ASP, West, Vikas Tripathi said a team was sent to Unnao and other neighbouring districts of Lucknow in search of Rizwan, who was named by a victim's family. "We have yet to get any clue about Rizwan," the ASP said. He added that the police were also trying to find out the bike used by the assailants.

Meanwhile, additional force was deployed in Janta Nagri locality of Wazirganj to avert trouble. On Tuesday, the autopsy report had revealed that Anas was shot twice from a close range. Doctors had

found blackening in one of the wounds and it suggested that the miscreant put the nozzle of the pistol on Anas's face and before pulling the trigger.

The incident had evoked stiff protest from locals who had thronged the Trauma Centre soon after the news spread. Anas and his friend Shariq had gone to purchase balloons for Barawafat celebrations and were returning when their bike was knocked by that of the miscreants. As Anas confronted the miscreants, a brawl ensued during which the pillion-rider with his face covered opened fire at Anas. The police conducted a massive checking drive at different crossings and places in the locality to track down the miscreants, but to no avail. The police had a dialogue with clerics and influential persons who were supporting the agitators and cited their preoccupation with the procession.



Juloos-e-Mohammedi taken out from Shahmina Shah mazaar near King George's Medical University in Lucknow on the occasion of Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi on Wednesday

Pioneer

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Shredded chicken immersed in black bean sauce, spring rolls stuffed with zucchini and chicken marinated in chinking vinegar. It's dragon food with a difference.

For all those who have developed a palate for Chinese food that spells out the regular dishes of chilli chicken and chowmein, chef Subhash Jana is determined to bring in a game changer with his new menu at the Lukjin restaurant. He said they would be serving dishes from China's Sichuan region.

Jana said it was important for him to present flavours which were new and never been experienced by the gourmets of Lucknow before.

The inclination is already there among the city folks who are aspiring to explore something new in the current times. The menu which we have carved includes dishes which have already been a rage," he

## Chinese food with a difference!



added. Admire the regular din of the kitchen with sizzling woks sending out tongues of fire in the air when dipped under the cool water, several cooks headed by Jana and chef Sun from Hyatt (Chennai) churn out a range of exotic dishes. The chef said that they had selected Sichuan because

Cantonese would have been a bland experience for the guests.

The spread looks quaint and delicate with colours of red and brown prominent in the background and a garnishing which is aesthetic with vegetables shredded in extra fine strips. The asparagus water chestnut in snow peas chilli

garlic sauce has crunchy waterchestnuts giving a transparent glassy look, the shredded chicken dish looks succulent and the honey chilli fish has crispy fish fingers piled in an attractive heap that will be both sweet and salty.

While the giving the essence of the key spices that

lend tantalising aroma, the chef said: "They are Sichuan pepper, star anise, chilli pepper, garlic, mushrooms, Chinese cabbage, water chestnuts, beet roots and lotus stems".

The chef's recommendation is 'Kung Pao Chicken Chinese Vinegar Cashewnut' in the main course which, he said, was prepared by marinating the chicken in a special kind of vinegar. "This chinking vinegar is a special Chinese variety. The chicken is deep-fried and tossed with cashewnuts. One can also opt for prawns cooked in a special XO sauce," he said.

Incidentally, the chef said they would not be serving the regular food. On being asked what if the client wanted to have a regular Chinese dish, Jana said he would request them to try something closer to the common dish. "It is important to try something new and I am ready to take the risk of introducing new flavours to the gourmets," he added.

## Man found hanging

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A 55-year-old welder was found hanging from a mango tree in an orchard in Kakori on Tuesday night. The police claimed that the man ended his life but failed to assign a reason behind the suicide. Villagers and kin of the victim apprehended foul play and demanded a threadbare probe.

Pappu of Dighiya village of Kakori left his house on Tuesday evening without informing the family. After not finding Pappu in his room, his son Sanjay went out to search him on Wednesday morning and found his body hanging from a mango tree in an orchard owned by Kishan. What surprised Sanjay was that his father was found

hanging by an electric wire tied around his neck. He later informed his family and locals, who were shocked too. Later, on the information of villagers, a police team reached the scene. Later, the police said that Pappu ended his life but he failed to give any reason behind the suicide. He said that the team could not talk to the family and so the exact reason could not be known. "The case has been assigned to S-I Amrendra Pratap Singh and the body sent for autopsy," a police spokesman said. The villagers doubted the police claim that Pappu had ended his life. "We were awake till late at night and did not see him going towards the orchard where he was found hanging," some locals living close to the orchard said.

## Tandon to get lifetime achievement award

Lucknow (PNS): Lucknow University will celebrate its Foundation Day on November 25 and confer the lifetime achievement award on Bihar Governor Lalji Tandon, Congress leader Ammar Rizvi and Justice HN Tilhari. Three lifetime achievement awards and seven distinguished alumni awards will also be given away on the occasion. The media incharge Lucknow University NK Pandey said that the Lifetime Achievements Award will be conferred upon Lalji Tandon, Governor of Bihar.

Tandon has held several portfolios in the state while Rizvi has also served in various capacities. Justice Tilhari has served at the Allahabad High Court from 1992 to 2001. The distinguished alumni awards will be given away to Dr Deepak Kumar Agarwal, Mudit Kumar Singh, Rajeshwar Tewari, Pankaj Bhadouria, Rajesh Kumar Singh, Bula Ganguly and Sunil Pradhan.

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# Preparations for Lucknow Mahotsav in fast lane

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Preparations for Lucknow Mahotsav have paced up as the annual cultural extravaganza is all set to kick off on November 25. Mahotsav Samiti secretary RP Yadav said that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath would inaugurate the festival.

He said the progress of the preparations was satisfactory and the pending works would be completed shortly. The main cultural pandal has been constructed and swings & rides installed. "There will be a total of 800-900 stalls coming up at the venue and the work in this direction is underway. Lucknow Municipal Corporation is checking the pipe lines and sewer lines," he said, adding that mobile toilets would also be stationed at the venue. Yadav said the main gate would be constructed from the side where public enters the Mahotsav venue in Bangla Bazaar. "The gate will have domes on the upper portion while the other entry will have regular gates," he said.

All the food stalls have been rented out and they will be serving Rajasthani, Gujarati and Punjabi delicacies along with other popular items.

District administration officials said there would be a separate carpet zone so that people did not face any problem while moving around the Mahotsav ground. "There are



Preparations in full swing at Smriti Upvan on Wednesday

Pioneer

some car dealers who will showcase their vehicles at the auto zone," they said.

As many as 50 city buses will be plying from 8 am to 10 pm from Alambagh, Charbagh and Polytechnic crossing to the Mahotsav venue.

About the security arrangement, the officials said there would be five fire brigades sta-

tioned in five zones of the Mahotsav grounds to deal with any emergency situation.

There will be e-rickshaws at the Mahotsav ground for the convenience of the differently abled on days when the crowd is less.

There will be separate cultural programmes at the Atal Gram where another stage has

been set up. The Atal Gram will see participation from the sister states of Uttar Pradesh. Efforts will be made to see that transactions are cashless and stall owners have the machines for the purpose. Some of the events will include wrestling, vintage car rally, boat racing, Natya Mahotsav and Yuva Mahotsav.

# Australian university students to attend workshop at LU

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

It will be the first time that students from abroad will be visiting Lucknow University to attend a workshop at the Wildlife Institute, ONGC Centre. A group of 20 students from various streams and four senior academics will arrive at Lucknow from Western Sydney University on November 26.

Coordinator, Wildlife Institute, Amita Kannaujia said the programme was being organised under the Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development initiative.

She said a two-week course had been developed by Centre for Environment Education (CEE) in association with Western Sydney University and Lucknow University.

"Being partners under Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development initiative, these institutions joined hand to conduct a sustainability exchange programme for students of both the universities. Institute for Wildlife Sciences is the nodal department for the programme. The course will be on from November 27 to December 7 at ONGC building of LU," she added. Project coordinator, CEE, Preeti Kannaujia said the module had been divided into two parts. "First part will take place at Lucknow with 40 students

from LU while the second part will include visits to protected areas like Suhelwa and Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary for a tryst with rural life and indigenous communities," she said. The programme will be inaugurated by LU Vice-Chancellor SP Singh on November 27. Global Handprint Day will also be observed to raise awareness about increasing handprint for environment and sustainability.

This interdisciplinary course aims at introducing learners to sustainability concerns in the context of development in India with a special focus on northern India. The objective of the course is to interpret perspective on sustainability along ecological and social dimensions and use the same to examine critical themes of importance to India, like population, water, health and climate change in view of sustainable development goals. The course will help in examining how to take sustainability action — as individuals, communities and larger collectives, and across all scales, from the local to the global.

The course will cover aspects of water and health issues in urban and rural scenarios in view of achieving sustainability. The participants will interact with local as well as international experts in the field to get first-hand experience through field visits.

## CITYBRIEFS



'Apradhi', the second novel authored by Kapil Isapuri, released by litterateur Ganga Prasad Vimal in Delhi

### NATURE CAMP

Centre for Environment Education (CEE), under its Earthian-Paryavaran Mitra programme, is conducting a biocultural nature camp at Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary from November 20 to 22. "This is being done as its continuous engagement programme with winner schools felicitated in 2017. Five teams from Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh are taking part in the programme," project coordinator, CEE Preeti Kannaujia said. The school from Lucknow is Purva Madhyamik Vidyalaya (Itaunja, BKT). Other schools are from remote locations such as Durg (Raipur), Ajmer, Farrukhabad and Jalaun. Jitendra Patel and Amar Khare are travelling with the teams.

### CULTURAL EVENING

A charitable cultural evening, 'A Tribute to Legendary Hemant Kumar', will be organised at Ravindralaya on November 24 by the 100-year-old Boys' Anglo-Bengali Inter

College. Lecturer of Chemistry at the college Manisha Singh and president Tanmay Banerjee said the highlights of the evening dedicated Hemant Kumar, were the famous singers of Kolkata Sagnik Sen, Anubha Banerjee and their troupe.

### AYURVEDA MELA

Vivekananda Polyclinic and Institute of Medical Sciences is organising Ayurveda Swasthya Mela in front of AYUSH department from November 24 to 26. The programme will be inaugurated by minister Brajesh Pathak while former UP DGP AL Banerjee will be the guest of honour. The highlights will be free OPD consultation by specialised panel of doctors, free distribution of Ayurvedic medicines, 50% discount on Panchkarma procedures, exhibition-cum-awareness regarding medicinal plants and subsidised sale of medicinal plants and exhibition & subsidised sale of AYUSH products by reputed companies.

## CRIMELINE

### EX-IG REVOLVER STOLEN

Unidentified miscreants stole the licenced revolver of a retired Inspector General of Police in Gomti Nagar. The retired officer has doubted the role of his servant. Former IG AK Singh of Ballia lives in Vijay Khand, Gomti Nagar. In his complaint, he stated that he had kept the revolver inside a drawer in his bed. "On November 16, I was leaving for Ballia for some work when I checked the revolver to carry it during the travel. But I found it missing and my wife had no knowledge about the same. Other than us, our domestic help Sushil Rajbhar was in the know of the place where I used to keep the revolver. Sushil may have stolen the revolver," he said. SHO, Gomti Nagar, Triloki Singh said Sushil used to work in houses in the locality. "Sushil is presently working in other houses and we have summoned him," he said, adding that a case of theft had been registered in this connection.

### BAG STOLEN

A bag containing a licenced revolver, Rs 70,000 in cash, laptop and some documents from a car parked outside a diagnostic centre in PGI police area on Wednesday. Complainant Manoj Kumar Singh of Hardoi is a businessman and deals in IT sector. He was returning from Rae Bareilly. When he reached near SGPGI, he slowed

down the car due to rush on the road. "Two bike-borne youths came close to my car and one of them tapped at the window. When I opened the window, he told me oil was leaking from my car. I stopped the car near a diagnostic centre to check the same, but found nothing of that sort. When I came back, my bag was missing," he told the police.

### FRAUD

A realtor of Gomti Nagar was accused of defrauding a woman of Rs 3.5 lakh in the name of selling her a land in Krishna Nagar. Police have registered a case of criminal breach of trust and forgery against the realtor and his staff. Parul Verma of Vipul Khand told the Krishna Nagar police that she was contacted by the staff of Dream Infra Venture for a land in Dream Residency in Krishna Nagar two-and-a-half years ago. "I later met company owner Samir Sheikh for the deal and deposited Rs 4.8 lakh as advance sum for the deal. But even after doing several rounds to the office, I did not get the plot. Samir and his staff kept making promises but refused to give me the land. He also misbehaved me when I insisted for refund," she alleged. "The project is being developed in Sarojini Nagar and the realtor's office is located in Krishna Nagar. Investigations are on," the police said.

# LDA upgrades online system

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Lucknow Development Authority on Wednesday has upgraded its existing online system and it became operation from Wednesday afternoon. Now, all the work related to mutation, registration of property allotment, conversion of leased land into free-hold one, issuance of duplicate documents and official orders and status of refund will have to be done online.

Tenders will also be floated online and bidding will be done through a software. No one, including contractors, will be required to visit the LDA headquarters or other zonal offices

for the same. Earlier, only monthly installments, other financial transactions and registration of properties were done online. LDA Vice-Chairman PN Singh said the purpose of the major change was to keep touts at bay as they would often misguide them and extract money by issuing fake documents.

He said the working efficiency would be streamlined in the absence of crowd which used to assemble at the LDA headquarters. Singh has appointed nodal officers and assigned them responsibilities. Officer on special duty (OSD) Rajesh Shukla will be monitoring the mutation work

while the task related to registration for allotment of properties has been given to nazul officer Sanjay Pandey. Deputy secretary DM Katiyar will be looking after the work related to conversion of land while joint secretary MN Mishra will be issuing duplicate documents and orders. The work related to refund will be looked after by OSD Rajendra Kumar while accounts officer MK Agrawal will be giving status of money required to be deposited for properties. LDA secretary MP Singh said the new system had been introduced for improving efficiency and ensuring people's convenience.

# Threatened not to release film on Ayodhya: Rizvi

Lucknow: Shia Waqf Board chairman Syed Waseem Rizvi alleged on Wednesday that he was threatened by a person not to release his film on Ayodhya 'Ram Janmbhoomi'. Rizvi released the trailer of the film, which chronicles the events during the Ram temple movement since October 30, 1990, when Uttar Pradesh police had opened fire on kar sevaks moving towards Ayodhya, on November 19.

"I have received a call from

one Torab Niazi threatening me not to release the movie. I will formally registered my complaint with police tomorrow," Rizvi told reporters.

Rizvi, who is also a strong votary of Ram temple in Ayodhya, is writer and producer of the film directed by Sanoj Misra and has also acted in it. Releasing the trailer, Rizvi had said that some "mised supporters of Babar" were out to spoil the atmosphere of the country in the name of disputed structure erected by Mir Baqi at the

behest of Babar by indulging in blood bath. "The film starts from the incidents during October 30 to November 2, 1990, when unarmed kar sevaks were fired at and the changed atmosphere has been depicted through a story with the main protagonist dying with the dream of Ram temple in his eyes," he had said, adding that no particular community has been targeted in the film. The film is scheduled to be released in the end of December this year. **PTI**

# Illegal structures to be razed in Gomti Nagar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

More unauthorised structures in Gomti Nagar will be pulled down in a fresh anti-encroachment drive. Twenty-one shop-keepers were served notices and given three weeks' time to demolish the structures. The notice period has already expired.

The enforcement wing had razed the showroom of a prominent automobile company in Vibhuti Khand on November 17. The notice was served on its owner on

October 28. Incharge of the enforcement wing AP Singh said the showroom was demolished after the owner did not raze it. The reason why the showroom was demolished was that it was running from a place meant exclusively for residential purposes.

A three-storey complex near Patrakarpuram is likely to be the next target. It houses two banquet halls and a restaurant. Residents' Welfare Association (RWA) has already launched a vigorous campaign against the owner to shift to

some other place. RWA accused its management for dumping the garbage in the backyard, leading to unhygienic conditions. Though Singh did not comment on the demolition, he said the complex was located in a residential area. The district administration has assured the LDA administration adequate security to the anti-encroachment squad during the fresh campaign commencing next week. LDA Vice-Chairman PN Singh will decide which unauthorised structure is to be demolished.



Artists performing at a cultural evening under Uttarakhand Mahotsav on Wednesday

Pioneer



The presidents, prime ministers, law ministers, chief justices, judges, legal luminaries and other dignitaries from 71 countries that participated in the 19th International Conference of Chief Justices of the World, organised by City Montessori School, went out for the city tour on Wednesday and viewed the historical monuments. They experienced the Ganga-Jamuni tehzeeb of Lucknow and were overwhelmed with the beauty of the monuments.

# Property dealer held for fraud

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The Dhoomanganj police arrested a property dealer, who was once a close aide of former MP Atique Ahmed, for alleged land fraud. The accused and his accomplices had transferred a land belonging to a person by producing another woman as the owner's mother at the registrar's office.

As per reports, Mohammad Qamar, a resident of Katulha village, had lodged two FIRs at Colonelganj and Dhoomanganj police stations, alleging that Ashraf, Harun and Shebu had transferred the ownership of several acres of land which was in his mother's name. The accused produced another woman posing as his mother at the registrar's office and transferred the ownership of the property in his name. Dhoomanganj inspector Sandeep Mishra said that around 14 cases, mostly of land-related frauds, were pending against Ashraf. Two other accused Harun and Shebu had also been arrested while the woman who posed as the complainant's mother was earlier arrested by the Colonelganj police, Misra added.

Meanwhile, relatives of the woman, Maina Bua, who was arrested for posing as the com-



plainant's mother claimed that the accused had misled her. They lured her on pretext of providing widow pension to her and took her thumb impression on the property-related documents instead.

### FIR LODGED

Yugmata (36), daughter of yoga guru Yogi Satyam, director of Kriyayoga Ashram and Research Centre, lodged an FIR against her father at the Colonelganj police station, under sections 376, 323, 504, 506, 392 and 511 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) on Wednesday. In the FIR, Yugmata alleged that her father held her captive and criminally assaulted her. She further alleged that her father took her to Delhi and Lucknow and tortured her mentally and physi-

cally. Besides her, other women who were staying in the ashram were also victims of physical and mental harassment.

On November 20, she reached the Jhansi police station and lodged a complaint. When the Jhansi police refused to register a case, she reached the Colonelganj police station and narrated her ordeal to the officers. On the basis of her complaint, the Colonelganj police registered a case on Wednesday.

As per reports, the victim left the ashram on an Indigo car and reached a nursing home. From here she went on a Maruti car with Ashish Singh, an inmate of the ashram. On being asked the coordinator of the ashram, Gyanmata Radha Satyam, refuted the allegations levelled against Yogi Satyam by Yugmata and said that she had left the ashram on an Indigo car in the evening. She said some people were jealous of Yogi Satyam and had an eye on the funds and property of the ashram. She said that Yogi Satyam's daughter had fallen into the trap of the evil designs of her opponents and had taken this uncalculated step to defame her father. It may be mentioned here that repeated efforts made to contact Yogi Satyam ended in vain.

# 3 killed after portion of concrete gate falls on tractor-trolley

Lucknow: Three labourers were killed and as many injured when a portion of a concrete gate fell on their tractor-trolley in Sakatpur village in Unnao, police said on Wednesday. The tractor-trolley, overloaded with straw, got stuck in the gate near Radha Krishna Shiv Prasad Das Inter College Tuesday night following which a portion of it fell on the vehicle when the driver applied force to move ahead.

Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Ashthbhuja Prasad Singh said. Two labourers died on the spot and another one succumbed when he was taken to a Trauma Centre, the ASP said, adding that the injured have been admitted to a district hospital. The deceased were identified as Roshan (50), Sarvesh (30) and Ajay Vishkarma (20), the ASP said. Meanwhile, in Badaun, two people were killed and four others injured in a collision between two trucks on Moradabad-Farrukhabad road on Wednesday morning. The accident occurred between Vankota and Sohi villages, a police official said, adding that



the identity of the deceased was being ascertained. The four injured were admitted to the district hospital where two of them were stated to be in a serious condition, he added. Further details are awaited. Besides, one person was killed and seven others injured when two buses collided on Lucknow-Gorakhpur highway due to dense fog, police said on Wednesday. The mishap occurred at around 2 am in the Khorbar area in Gorakhpur due to dense fog. A bus hit the rear side of another, the police said. Most of the passengers were sleeping at the time of the accident. Villagers rushed to the accident spot after hearing a loud noise and informed police. Police rushed the injured people to a hospital and sent the body of a driver of one of the buses for autopsy. **PTI**

COMMUNAL APPEAL FOR VOTES

# BJP wants EC to crack whip on Kamal Nath

Also questions, why Nath was removed as Punjab Cong in-charge?

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



of conduct by the Congress MP Chief.

Fuelled by the poll season adrenaline, the BJP on Wednesday attacked Congress Madhya Pradesh chief Kamal Nath for pandering to the Muslims and charged his party with working against the victims of 1984 Sikh riots while also pointing out that Nath was removed as Punjab-in-charge following the anti-Sikh killings. The BJP demanded the EC to take legal action against Nath.

Making Nath its target in the poll-bound State, where voting is due on November 28, BJP referred to a video figuring him on social media wherein he is purportedly saying that it would be a huge loss if the Congress does not get 90 per cent of Muslim votes.

A BJP delegation, led by Union Minister and senior BJP leader Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, visited election commission and sought suitable penal action against Nath for inciting communal and religious feelings by appealing to a particular religious community. The party also drew EC's attention to the alleged violation of code

In the clip, the nine-time Lok Sabha MP from Chhindwara is reportedly urging a gathering of Muslim clerics to account for each and every Muslim vote in the State. He asks them to conduct a postmortem on why only 60 per cent Muslims turn up to polling booths. The veracity of the clip is yet to be confirmed by independent viewers.

"In the Muslim booths, what is the percentage of voting that has taken place? If 50 to 60 per cent of voting has taken place, why was it just 60 per cent? Why wasn't it 90 per cent? It is important to do a postmortem of the previous elections. If you want we will

## THE NINE-TIME LOK SABHA MEMBER FROM CHHINDWARA IS REPORTEDLY URGING A GATHERING OF MUSLIM CLERICS TO ACCOUNT FOR EACH AND EVERY MUSLIM VOTE IN THE STATE

get it done to 80 to 90 per cent. If we don't get 90 per cent vote share of the Muslim community today, then it will be a big loss for us," Nath can reportedly be heard saying.

In the clip he is seen telling the members in the gathering to 'identify' Muslim booths and target the voters there. "You know which is a Muslim booth. In that booth, what was the percentage of voting that took place? If 60 per cent voting has taken place there, there would be a reason

behind it," Nath says.

BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra hit out at Congress for practicing 'divide and rule' politics brazenly. He also went on to say that Nath's fresh comments are an extrapolation of Congress president's comment where he allegedly asserted that Congress is a party of Muslims. Patra also implied that the Congress was undermining the votes of backward class and tribals.

In another video, circulated in social media earlier, Nath was purportedly commenting on the so-called divisive politics of the BJP and asking the Muslim voters to bear with it until polling concludes.

On Wednesday, the BJP also charged the Congress with denying justice to the 1984 Sikh victims and also simultaneously targeted Nath saying he was removed as Congress in-charge for the Punjab Assembly polls following protests by Sikhs.

A day after a Delhi court awarded death sentence to an accused and life imprisonment to another in a 1984 anti-Sikh riots case, senior BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad said the

probe carried out by a Special Investigation Team (SIT) set up by the Narendra Modi Government led to the sentencing.

"We (BJP) are very satisfied," the Union Minister told reporters about his party's stand on the verdict and added that people needed to be told that the Congress had, during its rule, tried to ensure that the Sikh riot victims did not get justice.

The Opposition party did it to save its own people, Prasad alleged.

Targeting Nath, who has been accused by some Sikh bodies of having links to the riots, Prasad noted that the Congress had removed him as its in-charge for the Punjab polls last year following protests by people. The Congress should answer as to why was Nath removed, he said.

Nath had in the past rejected the charges against him and said he had no links with the 1984 anti-Sikhs riots, following the assassination of then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards.

# PM mocking DeMo-hit farmers, says Rahul

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Continuing his daily attack on the Modi Government, Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday claimed that demonetisation had "destroyed" the lives of farmers and accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of making "fun" of their plight during his poll campaigns.

Taking to Twitter, he cited a media report that claimed the agriculture ministry has admitted that demonetisation has hit the farmers hard. The Ministry, however, rejected the claims.

"Noteban has destroyed the lives of farmers. Now they do not even have enough money to buy seeds and fertilizer," Rahul tweeted in Hindi.

"But, Modi ji is making fun of our farmers' plight. Now his Agriculture Ministry has also said that farmers were badly affected due to demonetisation decision," he said on Twitter referring to Modi's campaigns in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh.

On Saturday, the Congress chief tagged on Twitter a video of the prime minister's speech during the poll campaign in Chhattisgarh, where he alleged that people were hiding their black money under beds and in



wheat stocks in their homes before the note ban.

He had also asked if absconders like Vijay Mallya, Nirav Modi and Mehul Choksi, who have allegedly committed bank frauds, have ever sown wheat.

"Have you seen Mallya, Mehul bhai and Nirav Modi sow wheat. Modiji, don't insult the farmers. You first indulged in a scam by collecting farmers money by noteban and handed it over to your suit-boot friends.

"Now you are saying that farmers' money was black money. India will not tolerate this insult of farmers," he had tweeted.

Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley has defended demonetisation, saying it was a "highly ethical" move and not merely a political one.

Jaitley also said hard data showed an increase in tax base, greater formalisation of the economy and India retaining the fastest growing economy tag for the fifth year in a row.

INSHORT

### FRENCH NAVY RESCUES 12 DROWNING INDIANS



New Delhi: Twelve Indians were rescued from a sinking vessel in the Persian Gulf by a French Navy ship on Tuesday, the French embassy said in a statement here. Those rescued were crew members of the Durban Queen bearing a Saint Kitts and Nevis flag. Despite some minor injuries, they are safe and in good health, it said.

### EU UNVEILS STRATEGY PAPER TO BOOST TIES

New Delhi: The European Union on Wednesday unveiled a 'strategy paper' outlining the broad contours to significantly scale up ties with India in a plethora of areas like investment, infrastructure, defence, security and counter-terrorism, and proposed a military-to-military cooperation in the Indian Ocean.

### ASIA ENVIRONMENT AWARD GOES TO WILDLIFE BUREAU

New Delhi: The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has been selected among the winners of the Asia Environment Enforcement Awards for its work in combating trans-boundary environmental crime, Union Environment Minister Harsh Vardhan said on Wednesday.

## DGBR Singh reviews work on critical border roads

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Director General Border Roads (DGBR) Lt. Gen. Harpal Singh on Thursday reviewed the progress of works on operationally critical roads in the Area of Responsibility of Project Arunank in Arunachal Pradesh.

Singh also called on the Governor and Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh and apprised them about the status of road works in the State.

During the review on Wednesday and Thursday, the DGBR inspected Road TCC-Taksing and TCC-Bidak.

The officer also inspected the ongoing road construction work and took stock of quality of Bailey bridges on various nullahs and rivers for fair weather connectivity to Taksing and Bidak.

# HRD Ministry launches innovation cell for research

This will encourage, inspire and nurture young students, says Min

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With an aim to promote new ideas for innovation in all higher education institutions (HEIs) across the country, HRD Ministry on Wednesday established an innovation cell at the All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE). HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar said the new cell will be a significant step in institutionalising innovation and developing a scientific temperament in the country.

"The purpose of formation of network of Institution's Innovation Councils (IICs) is to encourage, inspire and nurture young students by exposing them to new ideas and process-



HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar launching the IIC through video-conferencing on Wednesday. Pioneer photo

es resulting in innovative activities in their formative years," Javadekar said.

"More than 1,000 HEIs have already formed IICs in their campuses and enrolled for the IIC network managed by MHRD's innovation cell to promote innovation through multitudinous modes leading to an innovation promotion eco-sys-

tem in their campuses," he said.

Javadekar said varieties are the main research centers of developed countries and because of their research they are at the top in global innovation ranking. "Now Indian universities are also setting up research centers through the IIC programme and we are expecting good rank in global innovation ranking in next two to three years through this initiative," he added.

The Minister said that the educational advancement in higher education can only be achieved by encouraging best practices in innovation and advance research and Innovation Cell has undertaken many initiatives in this direction such as implementing programs like Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievement (ARIIA), Smart India Hackathon (SIH)- 2019, etc.

# 76.35% voting in C'garh polls lower than 2013 elections

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Releasing the final voting figures, the Election Commission on Wednesday said that Chhattisgarh recorded 76.35 per cent voter turnout in the two-phase polls to the 90-member State Assembly, which is slightly lower as compared to the last elections. The second phase of polling, held on Tuesday in 72 Assembly seats, recorded 76.34 per cent voter turnout, the EC said.

In the first phase, the poll percentage was 76.39. The overall voter turnout of both the phases comes out to 76.35 per cent, it said.

A total of 38 seats out of 90 recorded above 80 per cent voter turnout, which the EC said, is a record for Chhattisgarh. In the 2013 assembly polls, the voting percentage was 75.93 per cent and 77.72 per cent in the two phases respectively. The overall voter turnout was 77.40 per cent.

The voters turnout dipped by 1.05 per cent as compared



to 2013, according to data from the EC. As many as 13 cases of people boycotting polls over a variety of reasons including jobs, road construction and removal of encroachments were recorded.

The EC also said that at the 19,336 polling stations in the second phase of polls, a total of 25,640 ballot units, 19,336 control units and 19,336 paper trail machines were used.

Only 47 ballot units, 37 control units and 131 paper trail machines needed replacement during the polls. Given sufficient reserves available, these replacements were han-

dled swiftly by local polling personnel, the EC said.

Voters aged above 100 exercised their voting rights in Balodabazar and Lundra. These included a 113-year-old woman in Chirmiri and a 100-year-old couple in Jashpur, the poll panel said.

In phase 2, rural areas recorded a high turnout (by two to seven percentage points) compared to urban areas. In 23 assembly seats, women voters outnumbered men. The largest gap between men and women voters was 3.54 per cent in Bharatpur Sonhat seat in Koriya.

The Kurud seat recorded 88.99 per cent turnout, the highest in the state. Raipur (North), the commission said, recorded the lowest turnout of 60.3 per cent.

### 11-member team to review poll preparedness in T

A 11-member team headed by Chief Election Commissioner Om Prakash Rawat would be visiting Telangana for two days beginning Thursday to review the poll preparedness. During the visit, the team would hold a meeting with Chief Secretary S K Joshi, Director General of Police Mahendar Reddy, district electoral officers, superintendents of police and others, the official said. Election Commissioners Sunil Arora and Ashok Lavasa would also be coming here as part of the team. The State is going to poll on December 7.



Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu at the NASI SCOPIUS Young Scientist Awards-2018 in New Delhi on Wednesday. PIB

# Sealing: SC order on contempt proceedings against Tiwari today

New Delhi: The Supreme Court is scheduled to pronounce on Thursday its order on contempt proceedings against Delhi BJP chief and Lok Sabha MP Manoj Tiwari for allegedly breaking the seal of a premises here.

The property was sealed by the East Delhi Municipal Corporation (EDMC).

A bench headed by Justice Madan B Lokur had on October 30 reserved its order after hearing arguments in the matter during which Tiwari had accused the court-mandated monitoring committee on sealing of "terrorising" people of Delhi.

The panel, however, had

claimed that he was trying to make the court a "political battleground".

An FIR was also lodged against Tiwari by the EDMC for allegedly breaking the seal of the premises in Gokalpuri area in north-east Delhi on September 16.

The apex court had on September 19 issued contempt notice against Tiwari, a Member of Parliament (MP) from the north-east Delhi constituency, after taking note of a report filed by the monitoring committee which had alleged that the BJP leader had broken the seal of the premises.

Tiwari had claimed before

the top court that monitoring committee has exceeded its jurisdiction and conducted sealing drive in unauthorised colonies here that were protected under the law.

Senior counsel Vikas Singh, appearing for the BJP leader, had claimed before the bench that "monitoring committee want to terrorise the people of Delhi. This is only for publicity".

Countering his arguments, advocate A D N Rao, appearing for the committee, had said the panel does not need any "publicity" and its members were "only performing their jobs entrusted to them by the Supreme Court".

# 400 paramilitary personnel killed due to firing from Pak in last 3 yrs: Officials



New Delhi: Nearly 400 paramilitary personnel were killed due to firing from across the Indo-Pak border, and terrorist and insurgency violence in the country in the last three years, officials said on Wednesday.

The highest number of personnel killed in action were from the Border Security Force (BSF).

The force lost 167 personnel between 2015 and 2017, and a majority of them were killed while guarding the highly sensitive border.

The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has lost 103 personnel in the last three years, mostly while fighting Naxals and militancy in Jammu & Kashmir, a Home Ministry official said.

While the BSF lost 62 personnel in action in 2015, 58 in 2016 and 47 in 2017, the CRPF lost nine personnel in action in 2015, 42 in 2016 and 52 in 2017.

As many as 48 personnel of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) were killed in action in the last three years of whom 16 were killed in 2015, 15 in 2016 and

17 in 2017, the official said. The SSB guards the Indo-Bhutan and Indo-Nepal border. The troops of the force is also deployed in internal security duties.

A total of 40 personnel belonging to the Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), which guards the Sino-Indian border, were killed in action between 2015 and 2017. Among them, 15 personnel were killed in 2015, 10 in 2016 and 15 in 2017.

Altogether 35 personnel of the Assam Rifles, which guards the Indo-Myanmar border and fights militants in the northeast, were killed in action in the last three years.

Eighteen personnel of the Assam Rifles were killed in 2015, nine in 2016 and eight in 2017.

The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) has lost two personnel in action in the last three years — one each in 2016 and 2017. There were no casualties in 2015 from the CISF, which guards, airports, nuclear installations, metro services and other sensitive locations, another official said. PTI

## Age is just a number for Barmer BJP MP

Barmer (R'than): The age of the Barmer BJP MP, who is contesting the Rajasthan Assembly election, has remained constant at 73.

As per the details mentioned by Sonaram Choudhary in the affidavits for the 2014 Lok Sabha and the upcoming Assembly election, he has mentioned his age at 73. The affidavits are available on the election department's website.

Sonaram had contested the 2008 Assembly election from Baytu seat, in which he had mentioned his age as 65. In the 2013 state election, his age, as per the affidavits, was 72. Sonaram could not be contacted for his comments as he was busy in campaigning in his Barmer Assembly constituency. PTI

# India to host 50th Union World Conference on Lung Health in 2019

New Delhi: The 50th Union World Conference on Lung Health will be held in Hyderabad next year, a global organisation working in this field announced on Wednesday.

The conference 'Ending the Emergency: Science, Leadership, Action' which will be held from October 30 to November 2 next year, the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease said.

It will focus on what is needed to ensure commitments become action and targets are met, the organisation also called The Union said. Tuberculosis (TB), a preventable and curable disease, now kills more people than HIV/AIDS and is the world's largest infectious disease, it said.

India has the highest TB burden in the world with one in four people ill with tuberculosis globally residing in the country, Prabodh Bhambal, Deputy Executive Director at The Union, said.

The scale of the TB global health emergency was acknowledged by the United Nations (UN) and it held the inaugural High-Level Meeting on Tuberculosis in New York in September.

The meeting culminated in a political declaration signed by world leaders committed to ending tuberculosis by 2030. The Indian government has committed to eliminate TB in India by 2025.

"It's time to end the global TB emergency and that will mean holding governments accountable to the Political

Declaration they signed at the UN meeting," José Luis Castro, Executive Director at The Union, said.

"In Hyderabad we need to be seeing signs that we are seeing real leadership that is translating into both investment in diagnostic tools, new drugs and a vaccine and action on the ground," he said.

The 50th Union World Conference is expected to be attended by around 6,000 researchers, policy makers, health practitioners, political leaders, and UN and community representatives.

The latest research into prevention, cure and vaccines will be presented at the conference.

The Union has its South-East Asia Office in Delhi employing and implements the

Call to Action for a TB-Free India with support from the USAID's Challenge TB project.

The Union's Project Axshya, launched in 2010, engages all sectors to strengthen TB care and control in 128 districts across 14 states, Bhambal said.

Financed by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and partnering with local organisations across India, since 2015, Axshya has reached over 48 million people, identified and tested 643,000 people and placed 70,000 TB patients on treatment and prevented countless cases of infection, he said.

The conference's theme resonates with TB, but it will also raises awareness on all threats to lung health, includ-

ing air pollution and tobacco abuse, The Union said.

Dr Vedant Kabra, Head of the Department of Surgical Oncology, Manipal Hospitals Groups, said an estimated seven million people across the globe die each year from exposure to ambient and household air pollution according to the WHO.

India accounts for 1.6 million deaths annually, he said.

On an average, Indian citizens are exposed to PM2.5 concentrations between 15 and 32 times the air quality guidelines set forth by the WHO.

Dr Raj Kumar, Director, Vallabhbhai Patel Chest Institute, Delhi, emphasised that implementing stricter emissions standards in India could save hundreds of thousands of lives each year. PTI

# Mamata to induct new Mayor for Kolkata

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

In a major development, the ruling Trinamool Congress is known to have taken procedural initiatives to amend the civic laws in order to induct a "seasoned, senior, able and experienced" person as the new Mayor of Kolkata, sources said.

The new development comes after sitting Mayor Sovan Chatterjee was asked to quit his Mayoral chair by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. The Mayor — a key aid of Banerjee for past 30 years — who was also doubling up as Fire and Housing Minister suddenly resigned on Tuesday after being reprimanded by Banerjee for lack of performance.

According to inside sources, the Chief Minister is planning to induct either

Firhad Hakim or Arup Biswas two of her trusted ministerial colleagues in Chatterjee's place.

As the present law does not for an outsider — who is not a councillor — to be appointed as Mayor the State Government is likely to table a new law in State Assembly that will make provisions for non-councillor to be inducted on the post. "Much like the parliamentary law the amended law will provide for the new person to be elected within six months of one's appointment on the post," a Trinamool Congress MLA said.

Chatterjee who conceded that he had been asked to tender his resignation by the Chief Minister however did not resign on Wednesday.

"I have been asked to resign by the Chief Minister. Though I have not resigned

today I will do so at an appropriate moment," he said, adding he "still respect Didi as my mother."

Growing differences between the Mayor and the Chief Minister earlier saw him losing a key organisational post of South 24 Parganas district party president.

The Chief Minister had told him several times about paying more attention to his work and cut down on the time he was spending with a woman who was not his wife. The Mayor, who does not live in his house for close to a year now, has also filed for divorce.

According to sources the Chief Minister had been angry with the Mayor as reports of his extra-marital affairs was bringing the party to disrepute, sources said.

# BJP, Congress make space for defectors in Rajasthan

PTI ■ JAIPUR

Former Union Minister Jaswant Singh's son Manvendra Singh is not the only leader to have switched loyalties in Rajasthan ahead of the December 7 Assembly polls.

Between them, the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have fielded 11 candidates who have changed sides.

Voices of dissent are now being heard within both parties over "sidelined" leaders crossing over to get a chance to contest. Manvendra Singh quit the BJP, citing the treatment handed out to his father who was denied a party ticket in the 2014 Lok Sabha election.

He is now contesting for the Congress against Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje from her stronghold Jhalrapatan.

The ruling BJP alone has fielded seven defectors, including six from the Congress and one from the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP). BJP nominees Mahesh Pratap Singh from Nathdwarra, Ram Kishor Saini from Bandikui, Mamta Sharma from Pipalda, Kalpa Singh from Ladpura, Rajendra Bhamu from Jhunjhuna and Ashok Sharma from Rajkhera crossed over from the Congress



to the saffron side.

Abhinesh Mehrishi defected from the BSP and will contest for the Ratangarh seat, now held by BJP minister Rajkumar Rinwa. Congress president Rahul Gandhi, who said in August he will make sure that party workers have their say and no "parachute candidate" gets nominated, also seems to have changed his mind.

His party has given tickets to at least four defectors. Rajasthan State Congress president Sachin Pilot said the decisions were taken by the party high command on a case-by-case basis.

Those who managed to get a Congress ticket just days, or even hours, after leaving the BJP include Harish Meena, Habib-ur-Rehman, Manvendra Singh and Sona Devi Bawri.

Dausa MP Harish Meena quit the BJP a day before the Congress released its first list and has been fielded by the party from Deoli-Uniara.

BJP MLA from Nagaur, Habib-ur-Rehman, also quit the BJP a day before the list was



BJP president Amit Shah greets his supporters during a roadshow, in Bikaner, on Wednesday

# BJP committed to building Ram temple in Ayodhya: Shah

PTI ■ JAIPUR

BJP president Amit Shah on Wednesday reiterated that his party was committed to building a Ram temple in Ayodhya and it would not change its stand.

He also exuded confidence of forming next government at the Centre in 2019 with a majority higher than that of the present one despite the Congress' bid to forge a grand alliance. Shah made the remarks while interacting with youths at

a function here. He targeted the Congress and asked youths and party workers to ensure BJP's victory in the State for its unhindered progress.

"The BJP is committed to building the Ram temple in Ayodhya," Shah said, adding there was no question of diluting or changing the party's stand. The BJP president, however, said the matter was in the Supreme Court and the party wanted a 'nyayik samadhan' (judicial resolution) of the dispute.

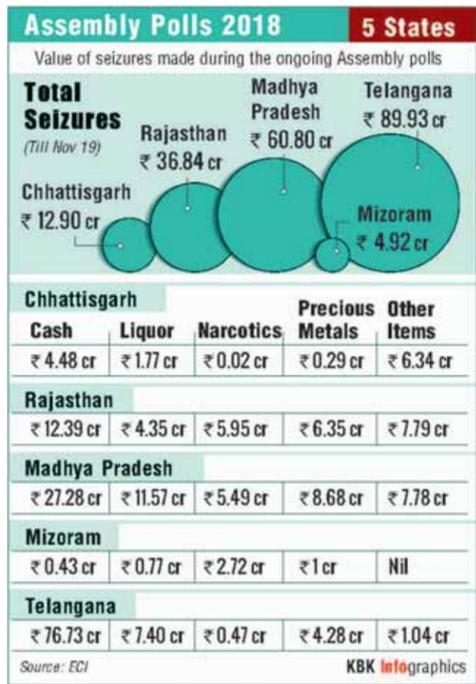
# Kerala's Cong MP passes away

Thiruvananthapuram/Kochi: Senior Congress leader MI Shanavas died on early Wednesday at a private hospital in Chennai, Tamil Nadu after a prolonged illness. He was 67. The Member of Parliament, who represented the Wayanad constituency twice — 2009, 2014, in the Lok Sabha, breathed his last around 1 am. He had undergone a liver transplant on November 2.

His mortal remains were brought to Kochi in the afternoon and kept for public homage. The funeral will be held on Thursday at Kochi.

Congress president Rahul Gandhi described Shanavas as a "much loved and respected member" of the Congress family. In a tweet, he said "With

the passing of Shri M.I. Shanavas, two term Lok Sabha MP from Wayanad, Kerala, the Congress family has lost a much loved and respected member. My thoughts & prayers are with his family & friends in this time of grief." Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan along with senior congress leader and former Chief Minister Oommen Chandy and Opposition Leader Ramesh Chennithala condoled the death. Former Defence Minister, AK Antony, KPCC President, Mullappally Ramachandran, Chennithala and former KPCC president VM Sudheeran, were among the hundreds of party workers and leaders who paid homage as the body was brought to the State.



# Bru refugees to vote in Mizoram's Mamit: Official



Aizawl: The Election Commission (EC) has decided to hold polling for Bru refugees in Mizoram's Mamit district, even as the leaders of the tribal community maintained that they fear for their safety in their home State.

The place of voting for 11,232 Bru voters, who are residing in neighbouring Tripura, has been a bone of contention, leading to the replace-

ment of the then chief electoral officer, SB Shashank, less than two weeks ahead of the election to the 40-member House.

Shashank had been accused of facilitating voting by Bru voters in the relief camps of Tripura.

"We have been informed by the Election Commission that the polling for the Brus must be arranged at Kanhmun village inside Mizoram territo-

ry. We have started our preparations for that," an official in the CEO office said.

Kanhmun is an interstate border village between Mizoram and Tripura. A written order to this effect is likely to be received by Mizoram CEO Ashish Kundra in a day or two, the official said.

"In the last three years, there was no revision of electoral rolls. This time we did it.

The Bru refugees are registered in nine Assembly seats and will place different voting machines accordingly at the special booth in the village," he said.

Kundra had on Tuesday visited Naisingpara — the largest Bru camp in Tripura — to meet the refugees and inform them about the EC's decision.

An election official, who accompanied the CEO to Tripura, said the Bru leaders claimed that the voter turnout from the community might be zero if the EC did not change its decision to hold polling in Kanhmun.

"Kundra tried explaining to them that the decision was taken by the Election Commission, but the Bru refugees said they fear for their lives in Mizoram. They also cited various reasons, including bad-road condition, to justify their demand for polling-booth arrangement in the relief camps," he added.

The six camps of the Bru refugees are located between 2-

10 km from the interstate border between Tripura and Mizoram. The highest number of Brus has been registered in Mamit district, which has Hachhek, Dampa and Mamit seats, with 14 per cent of the total voters being refugees.

It is followed by Kolasib district, with 3.5 per cent of its total voters being Brus. The district has Tuirial, Kolasib and Serlui Assembly seats. In Lunglei district, less than one

per cent of the total voters are Bru refugees.

Earlier this month, the EC had removed Shashank as the state chief electoral officer, accepting the demands of civil society groups, NGOs, student organisations and political parties. The agitators organised dharnas in front of the CEO's office against Shashank's reported move to facilitate voting by Bru voters in the relief camps of Tripura.



National People's Party (NPP) president and Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma during an election rally in support of party candidates ahead of Mizoram Assembly elections, at Vairengte in Kolasib, on Wednesday

# Me Too: Alok Nath booked for rape

## Law catches up with on-screen 'sanskari babu' 19 years after he violated a lady television writer-producer

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

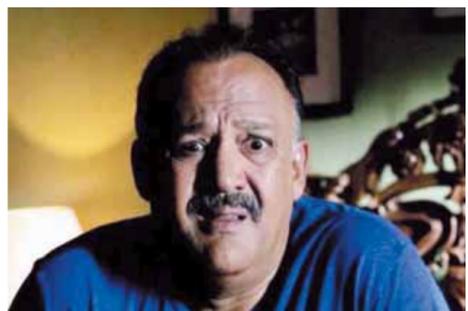
Nearly six weeks after television writer-producer Vinta Nanda went to town accusing him of sexually violating her 19 years ago, veteran actor Alok Nath — known his on-screen "Sanskari Babuji" image — was on Wednesday booked for alleged rape and unnatural sex on the basis of a complaint lodged against him by Nanda.

Acting on a formal complaint lodged by Nanda against the veteran actor on October 17, the Oshiwara police station registered an FIR against 62-year-old Alok Nath under sections 376 (rape) and 377 (unnatural sex) of Indian Penal Code (IPC).

Confirming the development, a senior police officer investigating the case said: "Alok Nath has been booked for rape under sections 376 and 377 of IPC."

After writing a long, heart-wrenching Facebook post on October 8 alleging that Alok Nath had sexually violated her 19 years ago, Nanda had lodged a complaint with the Oshiwara police station on October 17. In her complaint, Nanda had alleged that she had raped by the actor after spiking her drink. "The victim's statement was recorded formally by police on Tuesday evening," Nanda's lawyer Dhruvi Kapadia said.

Expressing her satisfaction over the development, Nanda said in a statement: "The moment I penned the truth on



Facebook on 8th October 2018, it felt like I had released myself from the prison of fear. Today, I am glad the FIR has been finally lodged. I trust the Mumbai Police."

"I know that when things have finally come this far, justice will prevail. I have full faith and confidence in the country's judiciary," Nanda added.

It may be recalled that in her lengthy Facebook post that she wrote on October 8 amid a series of allegations of sexual harassment made by prominent women as part of a "Me Too" movement unleashed in the social media, Nanda did not actually name Alok Nath but said that "the predator in question here is the actor par excellence who is known as the most #Sanskari (Cultured) person in the film and television industry."

Nanda, who subsequently confirmed that it was Alok Nath whom she had referred to

in her post, had stated: "I have waited for this moment to come for 19 years...He was an alcoholic, shameless and obnoxious but he was also the television star of that decade, so not only was he forgiven for all his bad behaviour, many of the guys would also egg him on to be his worst". She had also alleged that the actor even harassed the show's lead actress who was not interested in him.

Recalling the events that followed after she had left a party at Alok Nath's house at 2 am 19 years ago, Nanda wrote: "I started to walk home on the empty streets... Midway I was accosted by this man who was driving his own car and he asked me to sit in it and said he would drop me home. I trusted him and sat in his car.

"I have faint memory after that. I can remember more liquor being poured into my mouth and I remember being violated endlessly. When I

woke up the next afternoon, I was in pain. I hadn't just been raped, I was taken to my own house and had been brutalised.

"I couldn't get up for my bed. I told some of my friends but everybody advised me to forget about it and move on," she wrote and went onto narrate some more unpleasant experiences with Alok Nath subsequently.

On his part, actor Alok Nath initially dismissed Nanda's charge against him as "absurd" as he "made her what she is". "Kuch to log kahenge (People will say something). Neither I am denying this nor do I agree with it. (It rape) must have happened, but someone else would have done it. Well, I do not want to talk much about it. As for the matter, if it has come out, it will be stretched," Alok Nath had told ABP News.

However, a week after Nanda wrote a Facebook post accused him of raping her under sedation, Alok Nath filed a civil suit against writer-director Vinta Nanda in a city suburban court here in connection with her rape accusations against him and demanded an apology and compensation of Re 1 as damages from him.

In another application filed separately before the Andheri Metropolitan Magistrate Alok Nath and his wife Ashu sought a direction to the suburban Amboli police station to take cognisance of the letter sent by them seeking defamation proceedings against Nanda.

# Amit Shah among main conspirators of Sohrabuddin encounter: CIO

Mumbai: BJP chief Amit Shah and three IPS officers were the main conspirators behind the alleged fake encounters of Sohrabuddin Shaikh and Tulsiram Prajapati, the chief investigation officer (CIO) of the case claimed in a CBI court here on Wednesday.

CIO Sandeep Tamgade, who deposed during the ongoing trial, however, conceded that that his claim was not supported by any documentary evidence in the charge sheet filed by him.

"From the investigation done by us, we found the principal conspirators were Amit Shah, DG Vanzara (former

Deputy Inspector-General Gujarat Police), Rajkumar Pandian (SP, Intelligence Bureau) and MN Dinesh (IPS officer, Rajasthan Police)," Tamgade said.

All four have been discharged by the trial court in the case. Tamgade claimed he was not naming Shah and others without evidence, but admitted that the claim was not supported by any documentary evidence in the supplementary chargesheet filed in the case, he said.

Tamgade, then Superintendent of Police (CBI), had prepared a supplementary chargesheet in the

Sohrabuddin case and the main chargesheet in the Tulsiram case. Both cases are being tried together before special CBI judge SJ Sharma here.

To a question by the defence lawyer, Tamgade said he also had evidence to conclude that Sohrabuddin Shaikh and his partner Prajapati were "used" by Amit Shah, then Minister of State for Home in Gujarat, for firing at the office of an Ahmedabad-based builder.

He had interrogated Shah, marble trader from Rajasthan Vimal Patni, and Rajasthan minister Gulabchandra Kataria in the case, he said.



Muslims take out a rally on Milad-un-Nabi to commemorate the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad, in Ahmedabad on Wednesday

# BJP: Will continue our battle till Kumaraswamy Govt is brought down

Bengaluru: Declaring the beginning of its battle against the Congress-JD(S) coalition Government in Karnataka, the BJP on Wednesday said it would continue the fight till the HD Kumaraswamy-led administration is brought down and people get justice.

Attacking Kumaraswamy on farmers' issues, the state BJP chief and former Chief Minister BS Yeddyurappa claimed that the Congress too was regretting its decision to support him, just to keep BJP out of power.

"You speak about BJP that has 104 MLAs, lightly, from December 10 Assembly session will begin in Belagavi. As a responsible opposition, it's our duty to keep before people your political drama and the developmental work you have done so far," Yeddyurappa said.

Addressing a protest meeting here, he said the BJP would organise a "huge" agitation by gathering over one lakh farmers, at Belagavi.

"For the last five months we kept quiet, with an intention to give time to the new Chief Minister, but now after six months- people are not ready to tolerate any more. We have given you enough time," Yeddyurappa said.

Alleging that the Kumaraswamy Government has failed on several fronts, he said "our fight has begun from today...Until we bring you down from power and send you home. Unless over 6.5 crore people of this State get justice, our fight will continue." PTI

# It's Centre Vs State in Sabarimala

## Union Minister insulted by Kerala Police

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The Sabarimala Temple issue has become a Centre vs Kerala Government tussle by Wednesday as Pon Radhakrishnan, Union Minister of State for Finance, Surface Transport and Shipping disclosing at the shrine that a superintendent of police humiliated him while he was on his way to the shrine.

"I was told by the SP at Nilackel on Wednesday morning that I cannot go to Pamba by car and he asked me to go by the KSRTC bus. When I asked him politely, the SP raised his voice and shouted at me. Can this officer question the Kerala ministers like the way he shouted at me?" Pon Radhakrishnan told reporters after worshipping at the holy shrine.

The high-handed behaviour of Yatheesh Chandra, SP, was telecast live by news channels much to the embarrassment of the Kerala Police. By afternoon, the Kerala Government was in for more trouble as the High Court slammed it over the propriety of deputing officers with shady past at a holy place.

Radhakrishnan who reached Nilackel on Wednesday morning to offer prayers at the Ayyappa Temple was stopped by Yatheesh Chandra, superintendent of police from proceeding to the shrine in his personal car. "You cannot go to Pamba by car. You are allowed to travel only by the KSRTC bus, Minister," the SP told the Minister who listened to him with amusement.

When the Minister asked Chandra, why private vehicles were not allowed beyond Nilackel, 22-km away from Pamba, the latter said there were chances of landslides and



Union Minister of State for Shipping Pon Radhakrishnan at the entry point to the Lord Ayyappa shrine on Wednesday



Policemen help devotee climb up the steps at the Lord Ayyappa shrine on Wednesday

hence no private vehicles were allowed. Undeterred by the restrictions, the Minister opted to travel by a KSRTC bus while the BJP leader AN Radhakrishnan who accompanied him said that the police officer could have showed some basic courtesy to the Union Minister.

"The SP told me that private vehicles are not allowed beyond Nilackel as part of a Master Plan the Kerala Government has prepared for Sabarimala. But it is clear that the Master Plan by the Kerala Government is to keep the devotees away from the temple," said Pon Radhakrishnan while speaking to reporters at Sannidhanam.

The Minister said he has

been a regular pilgrim to Sabarimala since the age of five and has never experienced in the past this kind of hostility by the authorities. "The intention of the authorities is to make life difficult for the devotees. The principal them of Lord Ayyappa himself is unity and integration. But the police force in Sabarimala is working to destroy and demolish these unifying factors," said the Minister who added that he was like any other devotees and does not require any privileges which other devotees are not entitled to.

The Minister also decried the slapping of Section 144 at a place of worship like Sabarimala.

"See the empty places all

over this shrine. This is the proof of public resentment over the Master Plan devised by the Kerala Government to keep Sabarimala inaccessible for devotees," said Pon Radhakrishnan.

Meanwhile, the Kerala High Court on Wednesday expressed its disgust and disappointment over the behaviour of police towards the devotees. "How come officers with criminal records have been deputed at a place like Sabarimala? The Inspector General Vijay Sachare and the SY Yatheesh Chandra have tainted career behind them. While Sachare is an accused in a custodial death case, Chandra figures in a case of assaulting women and children. Why

have you deputed such officers at Sabarimala where people require services of benevolent officers and men?" asked Justices Ramachandra Menon and Anil Kumar who continued hearing petitions filed by devotees against alleged police cruelty.

TP Senkumar, former State Police Chief, who was eased out of office by the CPM Government lambasted the police and the Kerala Government over the unfortunate developments at Sabarimala.

"There are good officers and men in the police force who are well trained in crowd management. But the personnel posted at Sabarimala are of dubious nature. This is what we get when officers who are familiar with looking after the children and grandchildren of ministers are posted as police chides," Senkumar said.

### BJP leader, 71 others granted bail

**Pathnamthitta:** A court here on Wednesday granted conditional bail to 72 people, including BJP general secretary K Surendran, who were arrested in connection with the Sabarimala temple row.

Surendran along with two others had been arrested on November 18 from Nilackal as he tried to proceed to the Lord Ayyappa Temple despite being advised by police personnel against visiting Sabarimala due to law and order issues.

The 69 others were arrested after they held a *nama japam* (chanting Lord Ayyappa mantras) inside the shrine complex late on Sunday, defying prohibitory orders. **IANS**

### BJP slams demand for Parrikar's resignation, says Nehru too was ill in his last years in office

**Panaji:** The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Wednesday slammed the Congress for demanding Goa Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar's resignation, saying that India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru too was ill in his last years in office.

"Our late Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in the last three years of his tenure, was ill. He was suffering from paralysis and could not function as a Prime Minister ought to. At that time, our leaders, including Atal Bihari Vajpayee, or the Jan Sangh did not take out a morcha to his house and demand his resignation, as we saw in Goa," State BJP president Vinay Tendulkar said at a Press conference in Panaji. The Congress on Tuesday organised a march to Parrikar's private residence, demanding that he resign as Chief Minister within 48 hours. Parrikar is suffering from advanced pancreatic



cancer, and has not been seen in public for several months now. When Nationalist Congress Party leader Sharad Pawar was serving as Agriculture Minister in the erstwhile Congress-led United Progressive Alliance government, neither the Congress nor the BJP demanded his resignation, despite the fact that the Maharashtra politician was abroad for cancer treatment.

"Sharad Pawar was suffering from cancer and was being treated abroad, but the BJP did not make it an issue and the Congress did not drop him from the Union Cabinet either," Tendulkar said. Parrikar is suffering from advanced pancreatic cancer and has been in and out of hospitals in Goa, Mumbai, New York and Delhi for nearly nine months. He returned from New Delhi's AIIMS on October 14 and has not moved out of his private residence for any official event since. Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party chief Deepak Dhavalikar also joined the opposition chorus demanding that the Chief Minister give up the chair immediately. **IANS**

### MUZAFFARPUR SEX SCANDAL

## Court remands two Brajesh Thakur aides in 5-day CBI custody

PTI ■ MUZAFFARPUR

Two close aides of Brajesh Thakur, the prime accused in the Muzaffarpur shelter home case in which the girl inmates of the home were sexually abused, were remanded in a five-day CBI custody by a court here on Wednesday.

The special court hearing cases filed under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act passed the order, declining the Central Bureau of Investigation's (CBI) request for a seven-day custody of Madhu and Ashwani Kumar — who allegedly posed as a doctor — and posted the matter to November 26 for further hearing.

Madhu, who was grilled by the police on Tuesday afternoon, was arrested on Wednesday morning and made to undergo medical tests at the Sadar hospital, before being produced before the court, along with Ashwani, who was

arrested the previous night.

Madhu, who handled many businesses of Thakur, had told reporters on Tuesday that she was not hiding but did not appear before the probe agency as she was never named as an accused nor was a warrant issued against her.

She had also claimed that she knew nothing about the goings on at the Balika Grih (shelter home for girls), was "pry to no secrets" and refuted the media reports that she used to liaison with influential people to promote Thakur's NGOs, newspapers and other businesses.

Kumar, who was arrested from his in-laws place in Fatehpur village under the Kurhani police station in the district, did not have any medical background.

He learnt how to administer injections while sitting in the clinic of his father, a doctor, at Kurhani, about 30 km from Muzaffarpur town.

## Ro-Ro ferry vessel stuck mid-sea, towed to safety by tugboats

**Ahmedabad:** The Ro-Ro ferry vessel, which started transporting people and vehicles between Ghogha in Saurashtra and Dahej in south Gujarat last month, came to a standstill mid-sea due to engine trouble on Wednesday afternoon, officials said.



The vessel, which was carrying over 400 passengers and over 100 vehicles at the time of the incident, was safely towed to Ghogha port by tugboats, a Government official said.

"The Korean-made ship called 'Voyage Symphony' remained stationed in the Gulf of Cambay for around one hour before it was towed to Ghogha port by tugboats," said chairman-managing director of Indigo Seaways Pvt Ltd (ISPL), Chetan Contractor.

ISPL, a Surat-based ferry

operator, and the Gujarat Maritime Board (GMB) had entered into an agreement to run the Roll On-Roll Off (Ro-Ro) ferry service on the Public Private Partnership (PPP) model. This ferry service is also called as Ro-Pax (Roll On-Roll Off Passenger), as the ship carries both vehicles as well as passengers.

"While coming to Ghogha from Dahej, the captain of the ship noticed that the engine got overheated. For the safety of the passengers, the captain had

decided to stop the engine when the ship was around 3 nautical miles (5.5 km) away from Ghogha port," contractor said.

"The ship remained stationed in the sea for around one hour. Then it was towed to the Ghogha port by tugboats, which were sent from the port. Our technicians are now carrying out an inspection of the engine to find out the cause of the problem," he added.

According to a senior official of the GMB, the ship was carrying 461 passengers and 114 vehicles. "We have been told by the operator that the engine of the ship got overheated. Along with the company, the GMB will also carry out an inspection of the ship before giving a green signal to resume the operations," a senior GMB official said. **PTI**

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

### 1 HELD FOR...

The HG 84 grenade, commonly used by Pakistan against our Army in Kashmir, was used in the attack. This type of grenade is filled with small pellets and is very destructive and has effective range of 30 meter radius. While Bikramjit is just 26-year-old, Avtar is 32, and "both were not trained. They did what they have been told to do. They were the first timers".

At the same time, Chief Minister ruled out any religious motivation behind the attack, while described Amritsar attack on Nirankari Bhawan as "purely terrorist act". "There was no communal business in this. It was purely a terrorist act. These people were easy targets...They just wanted to disturb Punjab's peace. After seeing that previous attack on RSS leaders could not do anything in the State, they are now going in for large scale killings," he said. Rubbing the rumours regarding the arrest of the second accused by the evening, DGP Suresh Arora told The Pioneer that efforts are being made to apprehend him. He said that the preliminary investigations and CCTV footage of the incident had led to the arrest of Bikramjit.

"Bikram was riding a motorbike (TVS PB-18 M-7032) at the time of his arrest. Bikram's black Bajaj Pulsar motorcycle (PB-02-BF9488), which he has used in the attack, has also been recovered," said Arora. During interrogation, Bikramjit has disclosed that Avtar Singh called him up late on the night of November 3, and asked him to be ready for an assignment the next morning. "Around 4.30 am that day, Avtar reached Bikram's house and both set off on Bikram's Bajaj Pulsar motorcycle to retrieve the hand grenade from an Orchard located at a distance of about one km on Majitha-Hariyan link road. They retrieved the HE 84 hand grenade, which had been buried in a half feet deep pit under a Shisham tree," told Arora. Before committing the crime, they carried out the reeve of Nirankari Satsang Bhawan on November 13 morning, when no one was present at the premises. "They especially checked out the locations of CCTV cameras enroute, the layout plan of the

Bhawan and the distance from the main gate on the boundary wall of the Bhawan to the Satsang Bhawan building," said Arora. The State police chief informed that Bikramjit has further disclosed that as decided on November 16, Bikram reached Avtar's house at Chak Mishri Khan village at about 9 am, when they removed the number plate of the motor-cycle. "They started for Adiwali village at about 9.30 am and covered their faces on the way, near village Manawala. They waited in the area for the crowd to congregate at the Satsang Bhawan. Both of them were armed with pistols at that time," said Arora. Bikram has further revealed that while Avtar successfully slinked into the Satsang Bhawan complex through the open gate, along with the sangat which had just reached there, he himself managed to subdue and take control, at gunpoint, of the two sewadars who had been deployed at the two gateposts of the Satsang Bhawan complex. After hurling the grenade, both of them fled on Bikram's moped and reached Avtar's village around 12 noon, where Avtar took back the pistol from Bikram. After changing his cloths and appearance, Bikram drove back to his village on his black Bajaj Pulsar motorcycle. According to Bikramjit, Avtar Singh was in touch with "one Happy" in Pakistan, who had got the hand grenade dumped near the Orchard near Majitha through some of his other associate(s). Bikram has revealed that the geo-location details as well as pictures of the dump location were sent to Avtar on his mobile to facilitate the retrieval of the hand grenade. Harmeet Singh Happy, known as PhD, had earlier come to notice for supply of a hand-grenade (Arges Type HG-84) of the same specifications to Patiala lad Shabnamdeep Singh, a self-styled chief of Khalistan Gaddar Force (KGF), who was arrested by Punjab Police (Patiala) on October 31.

huge losses during and post demonetisation as cash supply was impacted and remained inconsistent for months," Balasubramanian said. He said the situation had further deteriorated now due to the additional compliance requirements that call for a huge cost outlay. "The service providers do not have the financial means to meet such massive costs and may be forced to shut down these ATMs, unless banks step in to bear the load of the additional cost of compliances. Revenues from providing ATMs as a service are not growing at all due to very low ATM interchange and ever-increasing costs".

The CATMI, which is a registered non-profit trade association formed by ATM industry leaders to foster the growth of the industry, estimates an additional outlay of about Rs 3,500 crore - only for complying with the new cash logistics and cassette swap method. These compliance costs may also see the 15,000-plus white label ATMs going out of business. "The ATM industry in India has reached a tipping point, and unless ATM deployers are compensated by banks for making these investments, there is likely to be a scenario where contracts are surrendered, leading to large-scale closure of ATMs," Balasubramanian added.

**J&K GUV...**  
Beigh is one of the founding leaders of the PDP who briefly headed the party and rose in ranks to the level of becoming Deputy Chief Minister of the State in 2006. Observers say that after the dissolution of the Assembly, the State politics would take a dramatic turn and new permutations and combinations would emerge. Earlier, former BJP leader and Deputy Chief Minister Kavinder Gupta stirred major row by alleging that the PDP, the NC and the Congress were coming together "on the directions from Pakistan". "They boycotted municipal/panchayat polls on the directions of Pakistan and now they are coming together to form a Government in the State on their directions too," Gupta told reporters in Jammu. In the past these Kashmir-based parties have treated Jammu as "second grade" entity and now we will not allow them to

take people of Jammu region for a ride, he added. This decision of forming a Government, he alleged, was taken in a meeting held in Dubai.

**KUSHWAHA SET...**  
Nitish had won the State elections as part of Mahagathbandhan in which Lalu Yadav's RJD bagged more seats than him. Sources said Sharad Yadav who broke away with Nitish Kumar is keen to contest Lok Sabha and for that he needs a platform and hence he is likely to merge his outfit with RLSP very soon. Yadav enjoys the confidence of Congress as well as RJD because he quit his parent party on difference of ideology on the decision of Nitish to break away with Lalu and again join hands with BJP. The relation between Nitish Kumar and Kushwaha has reached a point of no return with both leaders making caustic comments about each other. A fortnight ago, RLSP workers were beaten up by the police in Patna for protesting against Nitish Kumar for taking objectionable jibe at Kushwaha.

**HIGH-PROFILE...**  
During the course of investigation, the files are also sent to a parallel rank officer of the prosecution wing headed by Director of Prosecution. Even registration of cases has also taken a hit after the unprecedented action against Verma and Asthana. As many as 47 cases were registered during the period between September 23 and October 23, the date on which Verma and Asthana were sent on forced leave and restrained from taking any supervisory duty in the CBI. But during the period between October 24 and November 21, only 25 cases were registered, officials said, adding the paper work in many cases was completed before the extraordinary action against Verma and Asthana. The registration of cases will further decline as Rao is unlikely to take any decision with regard to registration of cases. "It is fairly difficult to file chargesheets in the absence of legal opinion and clarity of decision making even in cases in which the probes have been completed as three top officials are missing in the CBI's hierarchy," a senior official added.

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**DEMAND NOTICE**

Under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation And Reconstruction of Financial Assets And Enforcement Of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 3 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The undersigned is the Authorised Officer of Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Ltd.(DHFL) under Securitisation And Reconstruction Of Financial Assets And Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (the said Act). In exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, the Authorised Officer has issued Demand Notices under section 13(2) of the said Act, calling upon the following Borrower(s) (the "said Borrower(s)"), to repay the amounts mentioned in the respective Demand Notice(s) issued to them that are also given below. In connection with above, Notice is hereby given, once again, to the said Borrower(s) to pay to DHFL, within 60 days from the publication of this Notice, the amounts indicated herein below, together with further interest as detailed in the said Demand Notice(s), from the date(s) mentioned below till the date of payment and/or realization, payable under the loan agreement read with other documents/writings, if any, executed by the said Borrower(s). As security for due repayment of the loan, the following assets have been mortgaged to DHFL by the said Borrower(s) respectively.

Name of the Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)	Demand Notice Date and Amount With NPA date	Description of secured asset (immovable property)
(LC No. 0000319 of Varanasi Branch) Manoj Sriwastav (Borrower) Karishma Rani Sriwastav (Co Borrower 1) Ajay Kumar (Guarantor 1)	24/10/2018/ ₹ 1754517/- (Seventeen lakh Fifty Four Thousand Five Hundred Seventy Seven) NPA (01-09-2018)	Arazi No. 315, Mauza Dhanpalpur, Pargana Kaswar Sarkari, Tehsil Rajatalab, Nawarasi-221103
(LC No. 00003218 of Varanasi Branch) Anand Swaroop Gupta (Borrower) Reeta Gupta (Co Borrower 1)	24/10/2018/ ₹ 1529286/- (Fifteen lakh Twenty Nine Thousand Two Hundred Eighty Six) NPA (01-07-2018)	Gata No 827, House No.233ga, Paliya Purab, Pargana And Teh. Musafirkhana, Amethi, Sultanpur-227405
(LC No. 00003283 of Varanasi Branch) Jitendra Kumar (Borrower) Sumitra Devi (Co Borrower 1)	24/10/2018/ ₹ 2210750/- (Twenty Two lakh Ten Thousand Seven Hundred Fifty) NPA (01-08-2018)	Gata No. 417, Village Jaitpur, Pargana And Tehsil, Raebareli, Raebareli-229001
(LC No. 00004054 of Varanasi Branch) Amit Kumar Jaiswal (Borrower) Sadhana Jaiswal (Co Borrower 1)	24/10/2018/ ₹ 4472394/- (Forty Four lakh Seventy Two Thousand Three Hundred Ninety Four) NPA (01-04-2018)	Arazi No. 137 Mauza Akhri Pargana Kaswar Raja, Varanasi-221010
(LC No. 00000649 of Haldwani Branch) Deepak Srivastava (Borrower) Satish Chandra (Co Borrower 1)	24/10/2018/ ₹ 1434328/- (Fourteen lakh Thirty Four Thousand Three Hundred Twenty Eight) NPA (01-06-2018)	Pvt. Plot No 34-a, Part Of Khasra No 266 Biharmann Nagla, Behind Dainik Jagran, Bareilly-243001
(LC No. 00000749 of Haldwani Branch) Sushil Kumar (Borrower) Sangita (Co Borrower 1)	24/10/2018/ ₹ 2967676/- (Twenty Nine lakh Sixty Seven Thousand Six Hundred Seventy Six) NPA (01-05-2018)	Pvt Plot No. A-32, part of Khasra No.131 Tirupati Garden, dineshpur Road, udrapur Jainagar, tehsil-bajpur, us Naga, Rudrapur, Nainital-263152
(LC No. 00001503 of Haldwani Branch) Bharat Singh Rawat (Borrower) Rekha Rawat (Co Borrower 1)	24/10/2018/ ₹ 1787589 /-(Seventeen lakh Eighty Seven Thousand Five Hundred Eighty Nine) NPA (01-06-2018)	Part Of Khasra No 662 Maajri Maafi, Parwa Doon, Dehradun-248001
(LC No. 00001671 of Haldwani Branch) Rajesh Kumar Singh (Borrower) Geeta (Co Borrower 1)	24/10/2018/ ₹ 1257821/- (Twelve lakh Fifty Seven Thousand Eight Hundred Twenty One) NPA (01-09-2018)	Part Of Khasra No 821 Mi Biharmann Nagla, Bareilly-243001
(LC No. 00002018 of Haldwani Branch) Shaheel Babu (Borrower) Najiya Bi Shaheel Babu (Co Borrower 1)	24/10/2018/ ₹ 2627713/- (Twenty Six lakh Twenty Seven Thousand Seven Hundred Thirteen) NPA (01-08-2018)	House No 32, Part Of Khasra No 285 Kichha Road, Lalpur, Rudrapur, Udhman singhnagar-263153
(LC No. 00002197 of Haldwani Branch) Sohan Lal (Borrower) Jamuna Devi (Co Borrower 1)	24/10/2018/ ₹ 631577/- (Six lakh Thirty One Thousand Five Hundred Seventy Seven) NPA (01-08-2018)	Plot No 29 Village Ahmad Nagar, Shadi Nagar Tehsil Sadar, Rampur-244901
(LC No. 00002515 of Haldwani Branch) Ruchi Sharma (Borrower) Krishnaveer Mishra (Co Borrower 1)	24/10/2018/ ₹ 1391144/- (Thirteen lakh Ninety One Thousand One Hundred Forty Four) NPA (01-07-2018)	H.no. 2/759 Sambhal Gate Yojna No. 1, Chandausi, Moradabad-244302
(LC No. 00002529 of Haldwani Branch) Rakesh Saxena (Borrower) Neeraj Saxena (Co Borrower 1)	24/10/2018/ ₹ 700164/- (Seven lakh One Hundred Sixty Four) NPA (01-02-2018)	Part Of Khasra No. 206 Min Biharmann Nagla, Bareilly-243001
(LC No. 00002661 of Haldwani Branch) Vijay Kumar (Borrower) Renu (Co Borrower 1)	24/10/2018/ ₹ 1716220/- (Seventeen lakh Sixteen Thousand Two Hundred Twenty) NPA (01-08-2018)	Part Of Khasra No 301 Village Kanja Dasspur, Bareilly-243001
(LC No. 00002700 of Haldwani Branch) Sharik Ansari (Borrower) Mohamad Furqan (Co Borrower 1)	24/10/2018/ ₹ 2015287/- (Twenty lakh Fifteen Thousand Two Hundred Eighty Seven) NPA (01-06-2018)	Part Of Khasra No 166 Parwana Nagar Biharmann Nagla, Bareilly-243001
(LC No. 00003064 of Haldwani Branch) Moinuzzama (Borrower) Rabiya (Co Borrower 1)	24/10/2018/ ₹ 2098834/- (Twenty lakh Ninety Eight Thousand Eight Hundred Thirty Four) NPA (01-05-2018)	Part Of Khasra No. 366/2 Plot No. 23, Moh. Waris Nagar Pajaya Chandausi, Sambhal, Moradabad-244302

If the said Borrowers shall fail to make payment to DHFL as aforesaid, DHFL shall proceed against the above secured assets under Section 13(4) of the Act and the applicable Rules, entirely at the risks of the said Borrowers as to the costs and consequences. The said Borrowers are prohibited under the Act from transferring the aforesaid assets, whether by way of sale, lease or otherwise without the prior written consent of DHFL. Any person who contravenes or abets contravention of the provisions of the said Act or Rules made there under, shall be liable for imprisonment and/or penalty as provided under the Act.

Date: 22-Nov-2018  
Place: Uttar Pradesh

Sd/-  
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Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Limited

## A dignified exit

Sushma Swaraj chooses to assess her political future on her own terms



**G**race under pressure. This one value sets apart veteran BJP leader Sushma Swaraj, who has bowed out of the electoral race of 2019 knowing full well that it is better to let go of things not meant to be. Her health may have given her the pretext but she has realised she would rather step back as a protégé of the old guard helmed by Vajpayee-Advani than risk being benched into a retirement home called *margdarshak mandal* by BJP 2.0. In that sense, she has shown some

spark of her old fiery and determined self, going out on her own terms rather than compromising her core beliefs in a system that has its own revamped priorities, starred hierarchies and a strait-jacketed agenda. It is well-known that she was ill at ease in the Modi-Shah party with all her mentors forced into hibernation. She was among the second-rung leaders that BJP rightly has a culture of grooming but didn't have the Sangh's monolithic endorsement which it reserved for Narendra Modi. Yet she survived and re-calibrated her loyalties to her one-time peer and newly anointed leader. But it was a stifling tenure. Though she was the only woman Foreign Minister after Indira Gandhi, she was seldom allowed operating space, the bulk of foreign policy being conducted by the PMO. Still Swaraj pushed the envelope, adding a personal touch to resolving people's procedural problems and holding her own in forum discussions like ASEAN. In fact, Prime Minister Modi even acknowledged her publicly in his assessment of ministerial records. She equally made her presence felt on social media, the new tool of interface, and became a pro in social media diplomacy, helping in cases that users put up for her intervention and attention, something that led *The Washington Post* to term her the "supermom" of diplomacy. But when she transferred an official for refusing passports to an inter-faith couple, she came into direct confrontation with hardliner trolls, some of whom followed the present leadership and were seen as having their tacit endorsement. With hardly any peer support or defence, that episode highlighted the ideological gap between two generations of the BJP and how she was too different to negotiate a DNA switch. An old BJP leadership, operating in a different contextual dynamic, could afford to be more omnithetic and share the spotlight democratically. The new leadership, coming as it does on the back of a consolidated verdict, a re-activated cadre base and a distinctly RSS-dominated agenda, will predictably go by what it succeeded with in the first place, a presidential style of operations and one that is aspirational and robust. With Swaraj's departure, the new leaders are expected to reassert this credo more volubly.

Nevertheless, Swaraj will be remembered within the party and even across party lines as a seasoned parliamentarian with many firsts to her credit. And perhaps it was her versatility and magnetic appeal that necessitated her inclusion in the Modi Cabinet, as one who needed to be neutralised rather than be allowed to be free-spirited given her facility with media projection. Besides, among a male-dominated leadership of the BJP, she broke through as the party's first female Chief Minister, Union Cabinet Minister, general secretary and even spokesperson. And that needed acknowledgment. She was perhaps one of BJP's most proactive I&B ministers, ushering in industry status for film producers and propagating community radio. A passionate and arresting orator, she had Parliament in thrall with her speeches, particularly as the Leader of the Opposition from 2009 to 2014. She famously vowed to shave off her head if Congress supremo Sonia Gandhi was made Prime Minister and took on her creditably from the Bellary Lok Sabha seat. The Lower House will surely miss that fire and brimstone. But Swaraj is a master of reinvention and it would be foolhardy to write her off.

## Storm in a Tweecup

Should the Twitter head honcho have held up a poster that says 'Smash Brahmanical Patriarchy'? Perhaps not. But...



**T**he India visit of Jack Dorsey, chief executive and co-founder of social networking site Twitter, has been compared to the disastrous visit of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to our country earlier this year. That might be stretching it but there is no doubt that Dorsey, who posed holding a poster that urged us all to apropos of nothing in particular 'Smash Brahmanical Patriarchy', could have avoided controversy. But some of the hysteria that has followed is downright silly and lacks understanding of Indian social history.

Hilariously, an 'editor' went as far as to call him anti-India and a retired Indian Police Service officer suggested that the tweet and picture qualified as evidence fit for a case of sedition to be filed against Dorsey. Frankly, at the risk of offending more people, let us not get so worked up about it. Should Jack Dorsey have posed with the poster? Maybe not. Is the poster offensive? While many and not only from the Brahmin community do find it offensive, and the creator of the poster herself has admitted she meant the slogan as a pejorative, the fact that India still suffers from caste-based patriarchy — along with many other causes — is difficult to deny even by those offended by the poster. Looking at the posts and anger that has followed, however, is like staring down a dark hole of ignorance. Anytime anyone advocates the application of Section 295A of the Indian Penal Code, it must be done very carefully. This newspaper has argued in the past that this section of the IPC is an anachronism that has no place in a modern society and is so vaguely defined that the authorities are liable to misuse it for imagined wrongs. This is exactly what has happened to Abhijit Iyer-Mitra in Odisha where slighted Odia pride has meant that he has spent two weeks in jail on dodgy grounds.

The irony of the situation is that it is Twitter itself that gives a voice to the easily offended, allowing them to be perpetually offended at some silly thing or another. In fact, one could argue that Twitter, in particular, and Facebook and other social networks in general, have led to the extinction of common sense. Indians should take heed from two people that Jack Dorsey met while in New Delhi, Narendra Modi and Rahul Gandhi. No matter what your politics, the vitriol that these two men catch on a daily basis on Twitter is mind-boggling; yet, they do not lash out as they have both developed a thick skin. This is not to excuse the tremendous violence, virulence and abuse that users, particularly women, face on Twitter on a daily basis which the service has been in largely ineffective in curbing. That needs to change. But screaming and shouting blue murder over a poster in a picture, even if provocative, is a waste of time and energy.

**CPM Politburo member**  
—S Ramachandran Pillai



**India's Permanent Representative to the UN**  
—Syed Akbaruddin



**Actor**  
—Madhuri Dixit



**Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman**  
—Geng Shuang



## Doklam redux?

Is China's building of a large number of 'model' villages on the Tibetan side of the Indian border preparation for another stand-off? It's time to discuss this issue with Thimphu



CLAUDE ARPI

**T**he 40th anniversary of "China's reform and opening up" is being celebrated across the country this year as the Chinese propaganda affirms: "Over the past 40 years, the country has transformed itself from a largely agricultural nation into the second largest economy in the world."

One of the most remembered events took place in 1978, when 18 farmers in Xiaogang village in Anhui Province signed a secret agreement to divide collectively-owned farmland into individual pieces and drop the collectivisation of the Great Leap Forward (GLF), which between 1958 and 1960, resulted in some 40 million casualties; in Xiaogang itself, 67 villagers out of 120 had died of starvation between 1958 and 1960.

Forty years later, the name Xiaogang is being used for a different project, which should worry India: The building of a large number of 'model' villages in Tibet, along the border with India.

On October 19, *China Tibet News* reported that since the beginning of 2018, Tsonga County, north of Arunachal Pradesh's Tawang district, has been "vigorously promoting the construction of border 'Xiaogang' villages" (the literal meaning of 'Xiaogang' is 'moderately well-off').

Tsonga County alone has invested 519 million yuan (\$74 million) in the construction projects of nine border villages, benefiting 1,961 people from 617 households. More than 40 per cent of the project has been completed and an investment of 2.2 billion yuan (\$314 million) has already been spent.

In May, *China Tibet News* said that Lepo, the first village in Tibet, north of the border in Khenzimane (Tawang district) boasted a rich vegetation and clear waters: "With impressive natural scenery and unique ethnic customs, Magmang ecological civilisation village is also situated in Lepo Valley, Tsonga County. ...The construction of Magmang ecological civilisation demonstration village began on March of 2014 and was completed on December." On January of 2015, the village was inaugurated and a year later, Magmang was awarded "China's beautiful leisure village" by the Ministry of Agriculture. China has 26 national key tourist attractions; the Lepo Valley, close to the Thagla ridge, which saw the first clashes between India and China in October 1962, is one of them.

The new tourist scheme, 'Slowing down the speed of tour, enjoying the sea of azaleas in Lepo Valley', prolonged the peak season, explained the Chinese authorities.

Dekyi Tsomo, a 27-year-old villager of Magmang, told the website: "Previously,



houses in the village looked fairly run-down, and all roads leading to the village are muddy. Nowadays, the houses we live in are comfortable and big, with underfloor heating and hot water supply. This kind of house costs more than 400,000 yuan. We only pay 120,000 yuan, the rest is paid by the Government. ...we all feel grateful." Incidentally, on March 30, 1959, the Dalai Lama spent his last night in Tibet in Magmang, he was on his way to India. The next day, he crossed the border at Khenzimane. He would certainly not recognise the hamlet.

To understand the mushrooming of Xiaogang villages, one should remember the words of the Emperor Xi Jinping, who said: "Govern the nation by governing the borders, govern the borders by first stabilising Tibet, Ensure social harmony and stability in Tibet and strengthen the development of border regions."

The villages are officially linked to two themes: 'Poverty alleviation' and 'defence of the borders'. The local populations are said to be the "Guardians of the Sacred Land and Builders of Happy Homes".

Senior Communist leaders regularly visit the new villages; whether in the Lohit sector, north of the McMahon Line, where a memorial for the Chinese soldiers, who died in the Walong sector during the 1962 War, has been erected for 'nationalist' tourism; in Metok, near Arunachal's Upper Siang dis-

**“THE VILLAGES ARE OFFICIALLY LINKED TO TWO THEMES: 'POVERTY ALLEVIATION' AND 'DEFENCE OF THE BORDERS'. THE LOCAL POPULATIONS ARE SAID TO BE THE 'GUARDIANS OF THE SACRED LAND AND BUILDERS OF HAPPY HOMES'”**

trict or in Yume, north of Takshing in Upper Subansari; all these areas have their model villages, like in Lepo.

During the last few years, Beijing has concentrated on the development of the south-eastern prefectures of Nyingchi and Lhoka, bordering Arunachal Pradesh. But now, while the work on the railway line between Lhasa and Nyingchi continues at a quick pace, the development has started shifting westwards, in areas bordering Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh.

Beijing wants to duplicate in Ngari what has been done in Nyingchi and Lhoka areas; first and foremost, improving infrastructure of the border and creating Xiaogang villages. Among the three new airports to be soon constructed in Tibet, Purang is located in Ngari prefecture of Western Tibet (one is near Lhunthe in Lhoka and the last one, near the Nepal border). The construction should begin in 2019 and it will be functional in 2021.

The objective of these airports is to strengthen the border's communications with surrounding areas. Let us not forget that airports and highways on the plateau legally have a dual use (civilian and military).

There is another aspect to the communist party's policy on the Indian borders: Recalcitrant Tibetans are relocated to places further away from the 'sensitive' Indian borders.

An article recently appeared in the French edition of *China Tibet Online*, titled: 'Relocation of the villagers of Lhodrak: mission over.'

It affirmed: "After a first wave of successful relocation on October 15, a second wave is now over." Lhodrak is the legendary birthplace of Marpa, the great saint who visited India several times and translated the Buddhist scriptures in the 11th century. It is located north of the Bhutanese border.

"The villagers' relocation project represents the completion of a scheme which is part of the strategy of the CPP's Central Committee for strengthening the border. It is also a good example to illustrate that the party carries the people in its heart, it provides a housing solution to families in need, and a strengthening of the masses on the borders for defence," said the article.

Tibetans in traditional costumes, probably provided for the photo op, are seen on the accompanying pictures. Some of the Xiaogang villages are located north of Bhutan, near the eastern trijunction between India, China and Bhutan, an area which is disputed.

Could it be in preparation of another Doklam? There is, however, a difference with the western trijunction (Doklam). India has no military presence in the area. The time has perhaps come to discuss this issue seriously with Thimphu.

(The writer is an expert on India-China relations and an author)

### SOUNDBITE

They (RSS) are behaving like the Taliban and Khalistani terrorists. Why are they trying to create trouble in Sabarimala?

We cannot afford to delay the reform of the body charged with the maintenance of international peace and security.

I watch a lot of VFX-rich, adventure films with my sons and have always wanted to lend my voice to such mysterious characters.

Under the strategic guidance of the two leaders, China-India relations have maintained sound momentum of growth.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### End quotas

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Quota question" (November 20). Instead of indulging in quota politics, the Government must work for the overall development of the people and the country's economy, and for the weaker sections, it must aim to provide better opportunities so that they can rise and prosper.

Reservations are but a reminder to the people that they are weak and cannot rise in life without any support. The Supreme Court, too, had made it clear that reservation is not in the public's interest. In fact, reservations lead to more chaos than delivering on the so-called benefits to the intended people. It is in the country's interest to abolish reservations of all kinds.

**Mahesh Kapsi**  
Via email

#### National icons

Sir — This refers to the article, "Don't undermine national heroes" (November 19) and "Maker of modern India" (November 20) by Prashant

#### RBI must tread cautiously

This refers to the editorial, "An armistice" (November 21). Looking at the present feud between the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Central Government, I am reminded of the Asian Currency crisis of 1997. While the Thai Baht broke its peg with the US dollar, signalling the Asian financial crisis, this led to a full-blown crisis in Thailand, Indonesia and eventually the much larger Korean economy. Domestic financial institutions failed and foreign exchange sources dried up. While almost all the Asian currencies went for a toss, the Indian rupee withstood the onslaught and stayed strong, thanks to the disciplined and stricter policies followed by the then RBI stalwarts, ably supported by the highly knowledgeable financial wizards who were heading the Government.



It is laudable that the present regulators of the RBI have also withstood the pressure mounted on them by the present Government to dilute regulations and support the Government in their attempt to please certain sections of the people, keeping the ensuing Lok Sabha election in mind. The RBI should not yield to relax norms to release loans to MSMEs under the so-called 'loan in 59 minutes' announcement or restructure huge NPAs to bail out defaulters whose aim is only to cheat the banks. Bankers should also come forward to deny such '59 minute loans'. Surely if loans are given in such a hurry, without following norms, it would result in a new chunk of NPAs and later, bankers will be held responsible.

**Tharcus S Fernando**  
Chennai

#### Security lapse

Tewari. India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, was undoubtedly one of the greatest national heroes whose indefatigable struggle under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi won the country its Independence. The gratitude we owe to our national heroes can never be adequately acknowledged in words.

**Azhar Ali**  
Via web

Sir — This refers to the report, "Man throws chilli powder at Kejriwal, arrested" (November 21). Throwing chilli powder in Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's eyes in a highly secured building of Delhi Secretariat is a matter of serious security lapse. Security persons,

who provide security to people who fall under Z-security cover, have a duty to take perfect care of the person.

It is unfortunate that a spokesperson of the ruling party at the Centre, without knowing about the security norms, gave an irresponsible political statement, terming the unfortunate incident as a pre-scripted drama. The Delhi Police and Union Home

Ministry must investigate the matter in a politically unbiased manner and ensure perfect security to the Delhi Chief Minister, even though he may be asked to follow certain norms set for persons under Z-security cover.

**Madhu Agrawal**  
Delhi

#### Autonomy for CBI

Sir — It is disturbing that the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) stands accused of being used by the Centre to implicate opponents to scuttle dissenting voices. Over-politicisation of institutions is bound to deal a blow to the federal structure.

Such developments can be prevented when a policy, envisaging absolute autonomy to the CBI, is put in place. Its impartiality would be manifested only when it carries out raids also against leaders associated with the ruling party since it can't be presumed that they are all incorruptible.

**Humyra Tarafdar**  
Kolkata

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

**FIRST COLUMN**

## From poverty to prosperity

While the Government has launched various welfare programmes for the poor, there is something it can do for the middle-income population too



RAJEEV AHUJA

A poor marginal farmer, Kishan, living in a remote Indian village was barely able to subsist. He cultivated cereals and seasonal vegetables on a small piece of land that he owned, and at times worked as a wage-labourer for the so-called 'affluent' farmers in the neighbouring village. His wife would often lend a helping hand in tending the field. His two school-going daughters, too, would regularly partake in the household chorus when not studying. To an urban dweller, Kishan may appear to be living a life of content, but that wasn't the case for him and his family. For them, life had become a daily grind. The same was true of many other families in his village. A slender margin separated calmness from turbulence in their lives, for Mother Nature could easily wreck havoc in their apparently calm lives.

But life started to change for Kishan — as it did for other households of his village — after the Modi Government came to power. Not only does his village now have electricity, but almost every household has a bank account and an LPG facility for cooking. Propagation of scientific agricultural practices has helped these farmers to not only switch over to higher value crops, but also to produce marketable surplus. They are now less dependent on rain. Their crops enjoy protection from other hazards too under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana. Encouraged by a local NGO, Kishan's wife has started a small enterprise to supplement her family income. She joined hands with a few other women folks to start their own handicraft manufacturing unit, availing loan under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana.

Nobody had expected their life to take such a sudden turn for the better. Talk to any villager and s/he will acknowledge that there has been a perceptible change in public services too. Quality of rations in the fair price shop improved; school teachers are more dedicated now; students enjoy playing newly-introduced sports — badminton and volley ball; a doctor now regularly sits in the nearest primary health centre. Every resident of the village now has a unique identification (Aadhaar) card needed to avail benefits under various Government programmes.

Kishan's family is hopeful that one day they will be living in a *pucca* house, as promised by the Village Pradhan under the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Awas Yojana. Also, Kishan is thrilled to have received a letter signed by none other than Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself, assuring him and his family of free hospital treatment of upto five lakh rupees every year in any Government or private hospital under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana. This, he finds quite reassuring.

All of this is, of course, an imaginary story that may turn into reality if India continues to witness politics of development. The Modi dispensation has introduced a number of programmes for the benefit of the poor and the vulnerable. These initiatives are making visible difference on the ground. It may be too early to find a poor household that has benefited from all schemes and programmes meant for the poor, but finding a poor household that has remained untouched by any of these may be difficult as well. Indeed, the poor should be the focus of the Government welfare programmes. But there is something that the Modi Government could do for the middle-income people, too, without assuming any additional fiscal burden. One such intervention could be to include the Above Poverty Line (APL) population in the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana upon payment of premium. This will be a huge benefit to the informal sector workers and their families that belong to the APL category.

Currently, this section of society has two options: To pay hospital bills out of their own pocket, which can be prohibitively expensive or buy an insurance policy from one of the insurance companies. If they pay hospital bills out of their own pockets, the deadly cocktail of one's needs and emotions gets exploited by the private hospitals. And if one buys an insurance policy, it can be several times more expensive than what could be if they were to join the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana and take advantage of the negotiated discounted prices. Kishan's expected meteoric rise from the BPL to APL category should prove to be a boon, and not bane. However, this will only be so when there is something for the APL population too.

*(The writer is a development economist, formerly with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the World Bank)*

**POINTCOUNTERPOINT**

IF REPORTS OF TREATMENT OF THE PILGRIMS ARE TRUE, VIJAYAN MUST REALISE THAT HE CAN'T TREAT AYYAPPA DEVOTEES LIKE INMATES OF A GULAG.

—BJP PRESIDENT  
**AMIT SHAH**



BJP PRESIDENT'S TWEETS ON SABARIMALA ARE MISLEADING. ARRANGEMENTS MUST HAVE CAUSED INCONVENIENCE TO SANGH PARIVAR ELEMENTS.  
 —KERALA CHIEF MINISTER  
**PINARAYI VIJAYAN**

# How to kill a dream

The gunning down of Avni is symptomatic of a crisis of governance and brings to the fore one of the most pressing problems of the human-animal conflict which demands professional solutions



VK BAHUGUNA

Social activism is a sign of a vibrant, responsive and progressive society. Indian social activism has assumed gigantic proportions, but often, emotive activism, devoid of objectivity, derails the smooth functioning of institutions of governance and creates confusion. The latest in a series of such instances is the shooting of a man-eating Tigress in Maharashtra's Yavatmal district. For the past few weeks, animal rights activists and organisations have been castigating the Maharashtra Government for the killing of Tigress Avni in Pandharkawada forests of Maharashtra's Yavatmal district. They have charged the forest department for her cold-blooded killing, so much so that Union Minister Maneka Gandhi dubbed her killing as a straight case of crime and raised the hackle by demanding the sacking of Maharashtra Forest Minister Sudhir Mungantiwar.

The State Government on November 10 set up an inquiry committee to prove the death of the tigress. Let us examine the facts from the point of view of rule of law as also from the point of view of overall animal welfare, moral and professional ethos.

Tigress Avni was eliminated on the night of November 2, 2018, with help from a sharp shooter, Asgar Ali. During the last two years, the tigress killed 13 people. Due to public pressure, the Chief Wildlife Warden seemed to have ordered that the big cat be either captured or killed as she was found to be dangerous for human life. Even the Mumbai High Court, after initial refusal, allowed the shooting. The Supreme Court, however, refrained from interfering.

Strictly speaking, the forest department was within the legal boundaries to neutralise the man-eating tigress. Chapter III of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, deals with the subject of Hunting of Wild Animals and provisions of Chapter IV under Section 11(a) empower the Chief Wildlife Warden to order elimination of such animals.

Going by the rule book, foresters were within their right to have taken the decision to eliminate the man-eating tigress. However, going by the post-mortem and other reports, several questions arise that need to be answered. Further, the issue is not just about the killing of the tigress but involves larger issues of systemic malfunctioning of our social fibre and governance under which we are surely and certainly destroying the living space of the wildlife by fragmenting their corridors and encroaching on their habitats.

When results of our irrational behaviours are visible, like the killing of 13 people by Avni, and subsequently her elimination, the hue and cry being raised on her death is only emotionally targeting the forest department. There's no discussion about the real causes that led to the situation, which is bound to rise in the near future.

Tiger conservation in India is an internationally acclaimed success story. Since tigers are a prolific breeder, conservation efforts are not going to be derailed by the unfortunate killing of Avni. However, the way this issue was han-

AVNI'S KILLING HAS THROWN A TIMELY CHALLENGE FOR FORESTERS, STATE GOVERNMENTS AND THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT TO SERIOUSLY TREAT THE DISEASE OF SHRINKING HABITAT AND FRAGMENTATION OF FOREST LANDS INSTEAD OF TREATING THE SYMPTOMS



dled and the manner in which she was killed does not absolve the foresters and other officials from criticism. They did handle the case in an unprofessional manner. The moot question here is: Why did the State Government, the district administration and the forest department not take proactive action when the first human killing was reported? The order of the Chief Wildlife Warden, too, needs to be examined. It needs to be ascertained whether the order was to tranquilise or to kill the tigress. If the order was to tranquilise, then why did the forest department lack the basic capacity to fire the dart gun? Why were they not able to train one of their staff? If it was a professional decision to kill her, due to management compulsions, were all protocols in the rule book followed?

According to the shooter, Ali, "We have been roaming in the forests for many days and after two forest guards identified the animal as T1, a forester fired the dart. But in a fraction of a second, she charged towards us with a roar. If I had not opened fire, she would have killed two to three people." But the post mortem report, as reported in the media, said that the tigress was shot when she was facing away from the shooter and the dart found lodges in its left thigh and did not show any impact of being fired from a tranquilising gun. If this statement in the post mortem report is true (subject to verification), it contradicts the self-defence theory of the shooter and is a matter of suppression of facts. The

Chief Wildlife Warden has to come clean on criticism.

It was a long pending correct decision to remove the tigress from this forest area. Only an efficient forest manager will be able to suggest if the elimination could have been well-planned and if the tigress could have been captured and sent to a zoo.

If it was a right decision to kill her, the Chief Wildlife Warden should make it clear as to what happened on the night of November 2 and what were the orders of the State Government. Honest professionals must face the public and clear the smoke.

The meat of the story, however, is: Tiger population in India has been steadily rising. In 2006, there were 1,411 tigers in the country, which increased to 2,226 in 2014. The 2018 census data is not yet out. Forest area in Yavatmal district is 19.9 per cent (2,606 sq km) of the geographic area (13,582 sq km), as per the Forest Survey of India's 'State of Forest Report 2017'. Though tigers are increasing, there has been a decrease of six sq km forest areas in Yavatmal district, compared to the assessment in 2015.

The State Government had been diverting forest lands in Yavatmal for the setting up of a cement factory and other projects without assessing its impact on wildlife. Though the tiger population is going up at an average of 30 per cent and conservation measures are bearing fruits, the forest area and the wildlife habitat are shrinking

with the net result that young tigers are seeking territories in new fragmented forests, honeycombed by villages with little prey base. Tigress Avni and its two cubs were a victim of circumstances. There was shortage of food and no secure territory.

The killing of Avni has thrown a timely challenge for the foresters, State Governments and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to seriously treat the disease of shrinking habitat and fragmentation of forest lands instead of treating the symptoms. They must pull up their socks and find professional solutions for such situations, especially on how to consolidate forest catchments for food and water security, fragmentation of forestlands in tiger and elephant corridors *et al*.

At the same time, foresters must upgrade their infrastructure and professional capability to meet such challenges, and show their spine in the same way the unsung foresters had shown. For their grit, determination and professional capability had led to tigers, other wild life and forest biodiversity to survive in India in difficult situations. In the end, we must remember that notwithstanding perceived lapses on the part of authorities, which will be clear after a fair inquiry, the intention of governance was correct as we must also feel for 13 poor Indians who lost their lives. Now, the forest department must rehabilitate Avni's two cubs.

*(The writer is a Retired Civil Servant)*

# Fighting pollution, the Beijing way

There's a lot India can learn from the Chinese capital which has registered tremendous improvement in its air quality. First, we need a political will to fight the bad-air days



KOTA SRIRAJ

In the first week of November 2018, this writer paid a visit to Beijing and came back quite impressed as to how China was managing its air pollution woes. During the peak hours, when the air was anything but healthy, citizens used masks to protect themselves. In contrast, in India, we are yet to understand the threat that air pollution poses to our health. This is evident by the limited use of protective gear, such as face masks, particularly among our children and the elderly. An interesting aspect about pollution management in Beijing was that though the ambient air quality approached unhealthy levels during the day, it did not stay there for long. There was both a natural and man-

made reason for this.

The natural reason pertained to the geographical position of the city which afforded it a constant minimum wind speed. This aided in blowing away noxious gases. The man-made reason was that Beijing's city administration was acutely aware about the worsening air quality and, thus, ensured that a plethora of measures is taken to clamp down pollution-causing conditions.

For instance, unlike in India, the municipal authorities keep spraying water on busy roads throughout the day at regular intervals. This does not allow the dust to rise. On the other hand, dust vacuum trucks keep tidying up the roadways across the city on a regular basis. The result is a spic and span city infrastructure that does not contribute to pollution.

One amazing aspect of Beijing that would strike everyone is that in spite of the population density, the city bears an unhurried and paced look about it. The main reason for this is the efficacy of the public transport, especially the Beijing subway or

the metro. China's underground transport system has evolved tremendously and is now the mainstay of mass transit. The efficacy of the metro could be gauged by the fact that during rush hours, the frequency of the metro improved to four-minute interval between each arrival.

Add to this, the surface transport. The buses running on electric pantographs complement the metro in a pollution-free manner. In order to make vehicular pollution even less, transport authorities in Beijing have limited the number of private cars on the roads by auctioning registration numbers. This has ensured that not everybody and anybody has been able to add to the vehicular sprawl and pollution.

Comparatively, not long ago, Delhi and Beijing were neck-to-neck in handling pollution but this is now a thing of the past. Beijing today stands way ahead — not as much in clean air as it is in its awareness and efforts to clean up its air. Thanks to the 'air purity first' attitude, ambient air quality in Beijing has started to

improve steadily; whereas pollution levels in Delhi are rising.

In 2017, the yearly average concentration of PM 2.5, that is the particulate matter with a size of 2.5 microns or less, in Beijing was less than half as that of Delhi. In addition to this, Delhi is also surging ahead of Beijing in yet another unflattering area. The number of "very unhealthy" days, or the period when the pollution levels are very high, is also exceeding four times that of Beijing.

Beijing has now embarked on a fight against pollution and is setting an example for other nations to follow. This, the city has been able to do because of a firm resolve and its air pollution policy. For instance, when the great smog hit central, northern and eastern China in January 2013, it prompted the Chinese Government to launch a comprehensive action plan to tackle air pollution. It was based on a regional approach that identified key polluted regions, such as Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei for a time-bound action plan. It set specific pollution reduction targets and defined

'10 measures' to guide the development of regional action plans. Based on these 10 measures, China's Ministry of Environmental Protection issued implementation rules for Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region and surrounding areas. Accordingly, Beijing's Government formulated action plans that included setting specific targets, such as restricting the total number of vehicles in the city to six million by the end of 2017, reducing coal consumption by 80 per cent till 2020 and meeting annual average PM 2.5 concentration of micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m3) by 2017.

Beijing is implementing these measures quite seriously. For instance, in 2017, the quota for new vehicles was fixed at 150,000 cars, with 60,000 allotted only to fuel-efficient cars. In 2018, this quota was reduced to 100,000, annually. Similarly, in 2017, coal consumption was reduced to 11 million tonnes as Beijing closed all its big coal-fired power stations. Besides, Beijing has also enforced stringent norms to con-

trol industrial pollution. In 2016, its environmental watchdog imposed fines totaling \$21.8 million. It has also undertaken a massive greening programme. During the past five years, about 4,022 hectares of urban green spaces have been created.

To effectively reduce Beijing's air pollution, surrounding provinces, such as Tianjin, Hebei, Shandong, Shanxi and Inner Mongolia coordinated and implemented a joint action plan. A combination of Beijing's own action plan and those of its surrounding regions has paid off. In 2017, Beijing recorded 226 blue-sky days having good air quality, compared to just 176 in 2013. In the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, PM 2.5 levels decreased by about 30 per cent between 2013 and 2017. This has helped Beijing meet the PM 2.5 target it had set for itself in 2013.

The ongoing bad air days in Delhi are a reminder that we need to learn our lessons from the fight Beijing is giving to air pollution.

*(The writer is an environmental journalist)*



**FIND AN ELIGIBLE REPLACEMENT**

Trump must expeditiously identify a new nominee for attorney-general who can be questioned by the Senate early in the new year about his/her integrity. That nominee also should be required, as a condition of confirmation, to promise not to allow political considerations to influence the administration of justice.  
*(Los Angeles Times editorial)*

# Bhadohi gets carpet export excellence tag

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Known for its hand-woven carpets around the world, Bhadohi received a major boost as the government has extended the 'export excellence' tag to it.

Under the "Towns of Export Excellence" tag, carpet makers of the city will get financial assistance from the Central government to procure modern machines, improve export infrastructure, and organise fairs and exhibitions in different parts of the world to attract global buyers.

The status was granted by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), under the commerce ministry, an official said. Bhadohi, small township situated on the banks the river Ganges, will be the 37th town to get this status.

"This was a long pending demand of car-

pet manufacturers of Bhadohi. It will give a real boost to the sector, where lakhs of small artisans are engaged in this work. The tag would help put the carpet city on the world map," Federation of Indian Export Organisations President Ganesh Kumar Gupta said.

He said that the move should help small artisans and weavers, and the incentives should not be limited to big players of the sector.

The domestic industry, which is facing tough competition from countries including China, would avail incentives under this tag to promote its growth and exports, he added.

The other cities which got this status include Tirupur, Ludhiana, Kanoor, Karur, Dewas, Indore, Bhilwara, Surat, Kanpur, Ambur, Jaipur and Srinagar.

The local industry players of Bhadohi

hailed the government's decision, saying that the move would help to further improve the quality of the product and explore new markets.

"Currently, the share of India's hand-woven carpets in the world is 30 per cent and we want to increase it to 50 per cent by 2022. Such initiatives by the government will help us in achieving our target," Bholanath Baranwal, carpet exporter from Bhadohi, said.

Baranwal, who is also President of Eastern UP Exporters Association and All India Carpet Trade Fair Committee, said that the decision is "moral booster" for the industry.

He also sought attention of the government in improving infrastructure at ports and roads to reduce transactions cost of exporters.

In Bhadohi, over 2,000 exporters and 5,000 small manufacturers are engaged in the sector. At the national level, the sector employs about 25 lakh people.

According to the policy, selected towns, producing goods worth Rs 750 crore or more gets this tag based on potential for growth in exports. The threshold limit for towns producing items in handloom, handicraft, agriculture and fisheries sector, is only ₹150 crore.

The incentives given to these towns include financial assistance under the Market Access Initiative Scheme; common service providers in these areas are entitled for Export Promotion Capital Goods (EPCG) Scheme; and financial support to develop export infrastructure.

Carpet export in October grew by 34 per cent in October to USD 138 million.

# Maruti drives in new Ertiga, price starts at ₹Rs 7.44L

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) Wednesday launched an all-new version of its multi-purpose-vehicle, Ertiga with price starting at ₹7.44 lakh, hotting up competition in the mass market MPV segment. The new offering, based on MSI's 5th generation HEARTECT platform, is bigger than the previous version and offers 10 per cent better fuel efficiency. The petrol variant now features a new 1.5 litre engine with smart hybrid technology and lithium ion battery.

While the petrol variants of the new Ertiga are costlier by up to ₹71,000 from the outgoing version, the diesel versions are costlier by up to ₹20,000.

The petrol variants, including two automatic transmission trims, are powered by an all-new 1.5 litre engine and are priced between ₹7.44 lakh and ₹9.95 lakh. The diesel variants have the same 1.3 litre engine as the earlier version and are tagged between ₹8.84 lakh and ₹10.9 lakh. The new Ertiga will take on the likes of Honda BR-V and Mahindra Marazzo in the mass market multi-purpose vehicle (MPV) space, which are available in a price range of ₹9.45 lakh and ₹13.9 lakh. Commenting on the launch, MSI MD and CEO Kenichi Ayukawa said: "The next gen Ertiga has been designed with thoughtful features and great attention to detail, keeping in mind the requirements of our ever evolving customers." The company is offering the latest K15 petrol engine option with progressive smart hybrid and lithium ion battery in the new

Ertiga, he told reporters here.

"I am confident that our customers will appreciate best in fuel class efficiency, which has increased by nearly 10 per cent for the petrol variant," Ayukawa said. Maruti Suzuki India has invested over ₹900 crore in the development of the new Ertiga. The new offering is more spacious — 40 mm wider, 5 mm taller and 99 mm longer than the previous version.

The CEO said as a leading automobile manufacturer of the country, MSI will continue to pursue 'Make in India'. "We are further investing in our research and development centre to introduce latest technologies and higher level of localisation," he added.

Keeping in mind India's pursuit to cut emissions, reduce dependence on imported fuel and leadership in clean technology, he said MSI will bring new technology like CNG, hybrid and electric vehicles to bring down emissions and give environment friendly vehicle options to its customers. The company said the new platform has made Ertiga stronger and more rigid, thereby enhancing its safety and also improving NVH (noise, vibration and harshness) performance.

# ₹29,088-cr indirect tax evasion detected

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The investigation arm of the Finance Ministry has detected tax evasion worth ₹29,088 crore in 1,835 cases during April-October period of the current financial year, a senior official said on Wednesday.

Of this, the Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI), which is enforcement agency for checking indirect tax evasion, has detected evasion of goods and services tax (GST) worth ₹4,562 crore in 571 cases.

However, the bulk of the evasion was detected in case of service tax. The total number of cases where service tax was evaded

stood at 1,145 involving ₹22,973 crore.

In case of central excise duty, the DGGI detected 119 cases where tax evaded was worth ₹1,553 crore. "DGGI officers have detected total indirect tax evasion of Rs 29,088 crore during April-October," the official told PTI.

He further said that the total amount of detection was likely to be more as the data does not include detection by field offices of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC).

On recovery of evaded taxes, the official said that a total amount of ₹5,427 crore was realised during the seven-month period till

October. These, he added, includes recovery from previous cases and those detected during the current financial year.

Of the total recovery, ₹3,124 crore was from GST evaders, followed by ₹2,174 crore in case of service tax, and ₹128 crore from those who had evaded central excise.

The larger chunk of recovery during April-October in GST, the official said, can be attributed to the decision of the CBIC to tighten on evaders.

With a view to focus on checking evasion, the apex indirect tax body had in September set up the

Office of Commissioner GST (Investigation), headed by Neeraj Prasad.

Last month, the Finance Ministry had extended the informant reward scheme of central excise and service tax to GST. The scheme was modified to include officers of other government agencies like police, BSF, CISF and coast guard. As per the reward scheme, informers and government servants were eligible for reward up to 20 per cent of the net sale-proceeds of the contraband goods seized and/or amount of duty/ service tax evaded plus amount of penalty levied and recovered. With respect to cases of

detection of drawback frauds or abuse of duty exemption schemes under various Export Promotion Schemes, the informers are eligible for reward up to 20 per cent of recovery of drawback claimed fraudulently and/or recovery of duties evaded. GST, which subsumed 17 local taxes like excise and service tax, was rolled out on July 1, 2017.

In the run up to launch of the new indirect tax regime GST, the ministry had renamed the Directorate General of Central Excise Intelligence (DGCEI), mandated to check service tax and central excise duty evasion, as DGGI.

## NIFTY 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP CHANGE	
NIFTY 50	10670.95	10671.30	10562.35	10600.05	-56.15
DRREDDY	2608.00	2655.00	2577.15	2600.45	157.30
GRASIM	845.00	868.25	841.00	867.00	29.05
YESBANK	196.10	200.80	194.60	198.40	6.30
BAJAJFINSV	5690.00	5872.60	5690.00	5868.00	179.45
UPL	760.00	784.50	760.00	781.00	21.80
BAFINANCE	2389.00	2435.00	2361.70	2432.00	51.90
AXISBANK	610.90	628.65	610.20	625.75	13.10
ADANIPOWER	355.25	362.85	352.55	362.00	6.75
IOC	145.40	148.50	141.10	141.40	2.35
ULTRACEMCO	3980.70	4054.00	3937.05	4038.05	61.60
TITAN	917.50	929.90	909.55	929.00	13.55
ASIANPAINT	1329.00	1342.50	1313.75	1325.50	18.65
SUNPHARMA	525.50	536.30	525.50	532.90	7.45
MARUTI	7340.00	7466.00	7331.50	7419.00	85.05
HINDPETRO	255.75	261.80	245.05	246.00	2.75
SBIN	283.45	289.55	283.05	286.50	3.05
BPCL	337.00	342.85	332.30	329.50	3.00
HINDALCO	220.60	225.15	217.20	223.50	1.55
BHARTIARTL	331.00	339.45	330.15	333.40	1.45
KOTAKBANK	1169.95	1185.00	1169.85	1174.60	6.65
HDFCBANK	2012.75	2023.95	2004.00	2019.45	7.00
CIPLA	522.80	528.05	521.30	522.20	1.50
GAIL	343.00	347.25	340.20	345.00	0.95
TATAMOTORS	184.40	186.75	183.75	184.05	0.30
HINDUNIVLR	1690.05	1706.00	1678.70	1692.90	-1.10
HDPC	187.10	189.25	184.00	187.25	-4.65
IBULHSGFIN	725.00	725.00	694.00	704.60	-2.00
ICICIBANK	356.35	360.30	353.05	356.80	-1.10
COALINDIA	261.50	263.20	260.25	260.40	-1.05
ITC	284.50	284.80	280.00	282.65	-1.20
JSWSTEEL	327.00	329.40	326.00	326.55	-1.70
INDUSINDBRK	1558.80	1568.95	1538.40	1549.05	-8.80
LI	1410.00	1413.75	1393.25	1403.25	-9.85
INFRATEL	259.05	260.55	256.45	258.35	-1.95
ONGC	155.00	155.50	151.50	151.80	-1.30
NTPC	149.15	149.85	147.15	147.25	-1.90
ECHERMOT	24744.00	25300.00	23960.10	24267.50	-328.30
VEDL	204.00	204.40	201.00	201.95	-3.30
M&M	787.80	787.80	764.70	769.40	-13.20
ZEEL	450.80	450.80	435.60	440.00	-8.10
WIPRO	320.00	320.00	313.25	315.00	-6.30
HEROMOTOCO	2952.60	2961.50	2892.20	2900.25	-59.85
TATASTEEL	562.00	562.00	550.00	551.40	-11.90
RELIANCE	1137.50	1145.50	1107.05	1113.25	-24.15
BAJAJ-AUTO	2673.00	2673.00	2591.10	2602.90	-63.60
HCLTECH	1003.05	1014.00	979.55	984.35	-24.60
TECHM	709.70	709.80	684.25	691.70	-18.00
POWERGRID	187.50	187.85	181.30	182.00	-6.40
INFY	640.00	640.05	612.10	619.50	-21.90
TCS	1871.00	1871.05	1798.55	1813.00	-65.25

## NIFTY NEXT 50

SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP CHANGE	
NIFTY NEXT 50	27226.80	27411.75	27147.45	27375.10	211.95
IDEA	42.35	45.55	42.25	44.50	2.10
DLF	174.00	183.50	173.55	182.30	7.40
L&T	131.10	137.00	131.10	136.10	4.50
AUROPHARMA	779.85	807.40	779.05	803.00	24.10
ASHOKLEY	107.60	110.90	107.20	110.60	2.95
BIOCIN	610.00	612.25	610.00	629.30	16.80
PIDILITIND	1128.55	1159.90	1128.55	1153.30	27.20
MRF	6625.10	67568.00	66110.00	67560.00	1335.55
LICHSGFIN	458.20	472.60	458.20	469.00	10.55
ABCAPITAL	112.90	115.80	112.50	115.15	2.35
BANKBARODA	111.10	113.45	110.50	112.40	2.20
ACC	1475.00	1505.10	1463.20	1499.00	29.05
BRITANNIA	5910.00	6025.00	5910.00	5998.00	10.30
SUNTV	608.00	627.00	608.00	620.00	10.95
INDIGO	1070.00	1079.00	1042.30	1048.00	14.85
BANDHANBNK	463.80	473.00	460.00	468.50	6.35
DABUR	394.15	403.45	394.15	399.40	5.30
BEL	93.45	95.15	92.30	94.10	1.20
AMBUJACEM	216.00	218.20	214.05	217.25	2.25
HINDZINC	264.95	267.35	263.10	266.30	2.75
HDPC	387.00	393.80	382.25	390.35	3.30
MCDOWELLN	626.50	645.45	624.80	633.00	4.70
SHREECEM	15930.00	16092.95	15625.90	16020.05	114.95
CADILAC	353.30	360.30	352.45	357.55	2.55
BOSCHLTD	18650.00	19093.45	18472.30	18727.00	131.70
DMART	1415.00	1428.95	1405.00	1421.00	8.50
NIACL	204.90	205.60	202.15	203.90	1.10
MARICO	353.00	354.00	350.10	352.95	1.85
LUPIN	852.50	857.55	845.50	851.05	2.45
NHPC	26.00	26.20	25.70	26.05	0.05
ICICIPRULI	324.70	324.70	318.95	321.55	0.55
GOBREJCP	708.00	711.60	697.20	708.70	0.50
COLPAL	1158.95	1167.65	1153.20	1158.35	0.40
OIL	203.50	205.35	201.75	202.85	0.05
ABB	137.50	134.80	132.05	134.00	-2.70
OFSS	3453.80	3460.00	3405.20	3433.00	-7.40
CONCOR	684.95	685.85	670.25	674.85	-1.55
PETRONET	216.00	216.00	213.60	214.30	-0.90
SRTRANSFIN	1185.00	1209.00	1164.50	1187.00	-5.60
SAIL	62.50	62.50	61.30	62.00	-0.40
HAVELLS	678.00	682.50	665.75	672.00	-5.70
PEL	2286.80	2317.90	2222.25	2265.00	-21.55
BHEL	67.80	67.80	65.90	66.70	-0.70
MOTHERSUMI	153.00	153.50	150.10	151.00	-1.75
SBLIFE	566.05	570.25	558.10	559.00	-6.55
GICRE	307.05	307.10	302.00	302.85	-3.90
NMDC	99.00	99.25	97.20	98.05	-1.30
ICICI	942.25	952.90	932.00	932.00	-161.90
PGHGI	839.60	839.60	812.30	812.30	-16.20
SIEMENS	937.00	937.00	910.55	913.70	-21.55

## BSE 500

Script	Last Price	Abs Change	% Change	COROMANDEL	408.85	8.50	2.12
Traded				CORPBANK	28.15	0.65	2.36
3MINDIA	20735.00	416.50	2.05	CRISIL	1477.65	-25.45	-1.69
8KMILES	135.80	6.45	4.99	CROMPTON	202.50	-2.25	-1.10
AARTIND	1499.10	6.10	0.41	CUB	167.95	0.90	0.54
ABB	1345.80	6.20	0.46	CUMMINSIND	788.40	4.00	0.51
ABBOTINDIA	7510.00	-107.35	-1.41	CYENT	620.10	-17.85	-2.80
ABCAPITAL	114.85	1.90	1.68	DABUR	399.00	4.55	1.15
ABFREL	195.00	6.80	3.61	DALMIABHHA	2380.00	126.95	5.63
ACC	1498.30	28.20	1.92	DBCORP	182.15	3.55	1.99
ADANIPOWER	360.90	6.75	1.91	DBL	483.00	3.70	0.77
ADANIPOWER	46.40	-0.95	-2.01	DCBBANK	158.75	2.25	1.44
ADANITRANS	236.40	0.70	0.30	DCMSHRIRAM	369.95	-16.65	-4.31
ADVENZYMES	183.55	-0.65	-0.35	DEPAKERT	164.30	-2.55	-1.53
AEISLOG	226.95	1.45	0.64	DEEPAKNI	263.25	1.45	0.55
AEANG	1592.00	-47.10	-2.87	DELTAACORP	263.25	7.55	3.14
AJANTPHARM	1144.00	33.30	3.00	DENABANK	16.55	0.00	0.00
AKZOINDIA	1605.00	16.50	1.04	DHANUKA	445.60	3.90</	

# Trump under fire for backing Saudi crown prince

AP ■ WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump has defended his decision not to hold Saudi rulers accountable in the brutal killing of dissident journalist Jamal Khashoggi, saying maintaining strategic ties with Riyadh and keeping the global oil prices down were in the best interests of the US and the world, a stand criticised as a "betrayal of American values."

The murder of Khashoggi, a one-time insider-turned critic of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and a resident of the US, in the Saudi consulate in Turkey and dismembering of his body has spurred a wave of international anger against Saudi Arabia and its rulers. The US last week imposed sanctions on 17 individuals of Saudi Arabia for serious human rights abuse resulting from their roles in the killing of 59-year-old Khashoggi at the kingdom's Consulate in Istanbul on October 2. Saudi Arabia has blamed Khashoggi's death on rogue agents but denied claims that the crown prince had knowledge of the operation.

Trump essentially argued that although the murder of Khashoggi was "terrible" and could not be condoned, it did not merit the disruption of a strategic relationship he has elevated to extraordinary levels. "We're not going to give up

hundreds of millions of dollars in orders and let Russia and China have them ... it's a very simple equation for me. I'm about make America great again," Trump told reporters.

"King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman vigorously deny any knowledge of the planning or execution of the murder of Khashoggi. "Our intelligence agencies continue to assess all information, but it could very well be that the Crown Prince had knowledge of this tragic event - maybe he did and maybe he didn't!" Trump earlier said in a statement that immediately drew sharp criticism from his political opponents and the media.

Reacting to the president's comments, Republican Senator Bob Corker and Democrat Bob Menendez issued a statement on behalf of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The two called on Trump to focus a second investigation specifically on the crown prince so as to "determine whether a foreign person is responsible for an extrajudicial killing, torture or other gross violation" of human rights. The Washington Post, where Khashoggi was a contributor, said President Trump's latest statement on the dissident journalist was a "betrayal of American values."

"President Trump on Tuesday confirmed what his administration has been signalling all along: It will stand



behind Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman even if he ordered the brutal murder and dismemberment of journalist Jamal Khashoggi," the Editorial Board of the Post said in a stinging editorial. "Mr.

Trump has betrayed American values in service to what already was a bad bet on the 33-year-old prince," it said while terming his statement as "crude". Responding to questions from reporters at the

White House before leaving for Florida to spend his Thanksgiving holidays, Trump said his decision was all about America first. "We're not going to give up hundreds of billions of dollars in orders and let Russia, China and everybody else have them. It's all about — for me — very simple, it's America first," he said.

"Saudi Arabia, if we broke with them, I think your oil prices would go through the roof. I've kept them down. They've helped me keep them down. Right now, we have low oil prices, or relatively I'd like to see it go down even lower. "But I think that it's a very simple equation for me. I'm about making America great again and I'm about America first," Trump argued. He denied the allegations that this was at the expense of human rights. "At some point, things very positive, frankly, could happen with Iran, but we also need a counterbalance. And Israel needs help also. If we abandon Saudi Arabia, it would be a terrible mistake," Trump warned.

The President refuted the Post's allegations that by taking such a decision, he was putting his personal and commercial interests ahead of national interests. "Well, I have nothing to do with Saudi — just so you understand, I don't make deals with Saudi Arabia. I don't have money from Saudi Arabia. I have nothing to do with Saudi

Arabia. I couldn't care less," he said. "I will tell you and as most of you know, being President has cost me a fortune and that's okay with me," he said.

"All I do is focus on this country and making great deals for this country. I don't focus on making on great deals for myself because I don't care anymore," Trump said. Saudi Arabia, Trump said, is buying hundreds of billions of dollars worth of things from the US. "If I say we don't want to take your business, if I say we're going to cut it off, they will get the equipment — military equipment and other things — from Russia and China," he said, adding that in that case the two countries would be "very, very happy" because right now the US is doing "very well" against China. "We're doing very well against everybody including Russia. I'm going to keep it that way. I'm not going to tell a country that is spending hundreds of billions of dollars and has helped me do one thing very importantly — keep oil prices down so that they're not going to USD 100 and USD 150 dollars a barrel," he said. Noting that the oil prices right now are in a great shape, Trump insisted that he is not going to destroy the world economy. "I'm not going to destroy the economy for our country by being foolish with Saudi Arabia," the US president added.

# 'Won't pay Pak as it has done nothing for US'



PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump has reiterated that the USD 1.3 billion in aid to Pakistan will remain suspended until the country acts against militant safe havens inside its territory. The President's statement came days after he said that Pakistan does not do "a damn thing" for the US, alleging that its government had helped al-Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden hide near its garrison city of Abbottabad.

"I want Pakistan to help us. We're no longer paying USD 1.3 billion to Pakistan. We're paying them nothing because that's what they've done to help us. Nothing," Trump told reporters at the White House on Tuesday before leaving for his private Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida for the Thanksgiving holidays. Over the last few days, Trump has accused Pakistan of not helping the US in its fight against terrorism.

In an interview to Fox News over the weekend, Trump said that people in Pakistan knew that Laden was living in a mansion near their garrison city of Abbottabad, but they did not tell the US and kept on accepting billions of dollars in aid. "And I cut those payments off a long time ago. We're not paying Pakistan any money because they're not helping us at all and we'll see where it all goes," Trump said.

Early this year, Trump announced to stop all security assistance to Pakistan. "I hope to have a good relationship with Pakistan," said Trump, indicating that the relationship between the two countries can come back on track if Pakistan took action against terrorist groups and their safe havens. "But right now, we're paying Pakistan nothing. I cut them off. They were getting USD 1.3 billion a year. They're not getting anything now," Trump asserted. However, former Pakistani Ambassador to the US, Husain Haqqani, said Trump might be incorrect in saying that Pakistan has not done anything for the US.

Over the decades, Pakistan has helped the United States with some of its policy objectives, he said. "He is right in noting that Pakistan has offered tactical cooperation in return for aid while at the same time undermined the strategic US objectives," Haqqani told PTI.

Pakistani leaders, he said, are being disingenuous in describing the US as "ungrateful". Americans have provided over USD 43 billion in military and economic assistance since 1954, helped build Pakistan's conventional military capability, and bailed Pakistan out of both economic and political crises on several occasions, he said. Haqqani, who is the director for South and Central Asia at the prestigious Hudson Institute think-tank in Washington DC, said Islamabad would continue to be tempted to go back to old transactional patterns, but not Washington.

"It is the Americans who are likely to be less interested in returning to what I describe in my book on the subject as 'Magnificent Delusions'. Not only do Pakistan's ambitions in Afghanistan conflict with the US plans but the two countries strongly disagree about China's expanding influence in Asia," he said. Observing that only a strategic rethink on the part of Pakistan can lead to a reset in US-Pakistan ties, Haqqani said until then, occasional twitter spat and "we paid a heavy price for being your ally" statements will continue to characterise the unusual relationship.

Ties between the US and Pakistan strained after Trump, while announcing his Afghanistan and South Asia policy in August last year, hit out at Pakistan for providing safe havens to "agents of chaos" that kill Americans in Afghanistan and warned Islamabad that it has "much to lose" by harbouring terrorists. In September, the Trump administration cancelled USD 300 million in military aid to Islamabad for not doing enough against terror groups like the Haqqani Network and the Taliban active on its soil.

# 'Ivanka's personal emails had no classified info'

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump has defended his daughter Ivanka Trump who is being criticised for using her private email for official purposes in a possible violation of federal record-keeping laws, saying the mails did not contain classified information and have not been deleted. President Trump, in the run-up to the US Presidential election in 2016, had slammed former secretary of state Hillary Clinton for using a private email server during her term as the top US diplomat. The Washington Post on Tuesday reported that Trump's daughter Ivanka, in her capacity as the presidential advisor, sent hundreds of emails about government business from a personal email account last year to White House aides, Cabinet members and her assistant.

This was in violation of public records rules, the daily alleged. Trump said that these emails were not classified like those of former secretary of state Hillary Clinton. "Just so you understand, early on and for a little period of time, Ivanka did some emails," Trump told reporters when asked about the charges from his political opponents. "They weren't deleted like Hillary Clinton, who deleted 33(000) — she wasn't hiding — she wasn't doing anything to hide her emails," he said. "I looked at it just very briefly today and the presidential records — they're all in presidential records. There was no hiding. There was no deleting like Hillary Clinton did. There was no servers in the basement like Hillary Clinton had. You're talking about a whole different — you're talking about all fake news," Trump said. What Ivanka did is



all in the presidential records. "Everything is there. There was no deletion. There was no nothing. What it is is a false story. Hillary Clinton deleted 33,000 emails. She had a server in the basement. That's the real story," Trump said. Ivanka, 36, is a businesswoman, fashion designer, author and reality television personality. Ivanka and her husband Jared Kushner are both presidential advisers.

Meanwhile, Republican Congressman Trey Gowdy wrote to the White House asking for more information on Ivanka's usage of her personal email for government businesses. Democrats on the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee said they are planning to look into the use of her personal email account for businesses purposes to determine whether she violated federal law.

# USD 1.66 bn in security aid to Pak suspended: Pentagon

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The US has suspended USD 1.66 billion in security assistance to Pakistan after President Donald Trump's directive, the Pentagon has said, in what experts believe is a strong signal of American frustration. The Pentagon's statement came days after President Trump said that Pakistan does not do "a damn thing" for the US, alleging that its government had helped al-Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden hide near its garrison city of Abbottabad.

"USD 1.66 billion of security assistance to Pakistan is suspended," Col Rob Manning, spokesman of the Department of Defence, told reporters in an e-mail response to questions on Tuesday. No further breakdown of the suspended security assistance to Pakistan was provided. According to David Sedney, who served as Deputy Assistant Secretary Defence for Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asia during the previous Obama administration, the blocking of military assistance to Pakistan, which began in January this year, is a strong signal of American frustration. "But, so far Pakistan has taken

no serious steps to address the core US concern — that Pakistan tolerates and often encourages groups which use violence against Pakistan's neighbours," Sedney told PTI.

"Pakistan's leaders have promised cooperation, but beyond words, serious cooperation has not happened, therefore President Trump is frustrated and so are most Americans," he said in response to a question. "This frustration does not ignore the suffering that Pakistani people have undergone. It just asks Pakistan to recognise that it should act to help stop the suffering of others," said the Senior Associate at the Center for Strategic and International Studies think-tank.

Previously, Sedney was at the Department of State and the National Security Council, as well as Acting President of American University of Afghanistan. He was part of the Pentagon when Laden was killed in a raid by US commandoes in Pakistan's Abbottabad. Over the last few days, Trump has said that people in Pakistan knew about the presence of Laden. "I agree with the views of Carlotta Gall of the New York Times who reported in her book 'The

Wrong Enemy' that a very small group of very senior Pakistani military leaders knew about Laden's presence in Pakistan. I have not seen any evidence that his presence in Abbottabad was widely known by many in Pakistan," Sedney told PTI in an interview. While Pakistan has suffered terribly from terrorism by Islamic extremists, Islamabad has also enabled extremist groups that attack its neighbours, he observed. After years of dithering, in recent years, Pakistan's security forces have moved strongly against the extremists that threaten the Pakistani state, Sedney said.

"What the US seeks, what President Trump is asking for, is for Pakistan to take the same kind of measures against the Taliban, Lashkar-e-Taiba and against all groups in Pakistan that threaten Pakistan's neighbours," he said. "But, we still see the Taliban moving weapons, fighters and money through Pakistan. We still see Taliban commanders taking refuge in Pakistan, keeping their families in Pakistan, holding meetings and conducting training in Pakistan and shipping explosives from Pakistan into Afghanistan," Sedney alleged.

# 'Lankan eco on brink of anarchy due to Prez Sirsena sacking PM'

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's current political crisis due to President Maithripala Sirsena's "irresponsible" action of sacking prime minister Ranil Wickremesinghe has left the country on the brink of an "economic anarchy" never experienced before, the ousted finance minister said. On October 26, Sirsena, in a controversial action, sacked Wickremesinghe and replaced him with former president Mahinda Rajapaksa, plunging the island nation into political chaos.

Wickremesinghe has demanded a floor test to prove his majority. Sirsena's party did not cooperate with parliamentary Speaker Karu Jayasuriya to hold the floor test. Ousted finance minister Mangala Samaraweera said: "As a result of these actions, Sri Lanka is on the brink of an economic anarchy and chaos as never experienced before."

"The cavalier and irresponsible actions of the president starting on October 26th based on personal animosities and precipitating a series of illegal acts, places at risk Sri Lanka's ability to meet its immediate debt obligations." In early January 2019, we have to repay USD 1 billion of Rajapaksa's

debt taken in January 2014, the repayment of which is also under the purview of Parliament," he said on Tuesday. Samaraweera said as per Article 148 of the Constitution, Parliament shall have full control over public finance. In the absence of a legitimate government, a grave situation has now arisen as there is no legal way to meet public expenditure and obligations of the state from 2019, he said. "The Constitution does not provide for any alternative arrangements for public finance, even with the intervention of the executive envisaged under the limited circumstances of article 150(3) under which the President can only allocate finances for the first three months of a new parliament.

"Thus, under the current circumstances, from January 1st 2019 until a new parliament is convened, the spending power of the state ceases to exist," Samaraweera said. A legitimate government with an adequate majority in parliament would have had the opportunity to present at least a vote on an account which would have covered at least the first three months of the new year enabling payment of pensions, salaries and settlement of debts, he said.



Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan walks along with Malaysia's Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad as he inspects an honor guard during a welcoming ceremony in Putrajaya, Malaysia, on Wednesday

# 'Pak keen to learn from Mahathir experience'

Kuala Lumpur/islamabad (PTI): Pakistan is keen to learn from the vast experience of Malaysia's veteran Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad how he transformed the country's economy, Prime Minister Imran Khan said on Wednesday. Khan, who is on a two-day official visit here, said one of the main reasons he has made a trip to Malaysia is out of his admiration for Mahathir. Mahathir, 93, Malaysia's longest-serving prime minister, staged a spectacular comeback

to politics in May this year, becoming the world's oldest head of government. "We look upon you as a statesman, someone who has transformed this country." "We have followed Malaysia's progress, especially since Dr Mahathir came into office, and my party (Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf) wants to learn from your experience how you transformed the economy and developed it, raised the per capita income, the Gross Domestic Product," he said at a joint press conference with

Mahathir, the official Bernama news agency quoted Khan as saying. The 66-year-old cricketer-turned-politician said that as both he and Mahathir came to power with a mandate from the people on an anti-corruption platform, Pakistan and Malaysia face similar situations in terms of unprecedented debt. "We want to talk to you (Dr Mahathir) about dealing with the crisis and how to come out of it and I am very pleased with the morning discourse," Khan said.

# China: Differences with India managed through dialogue

PTI ■ BEIJING

China on Wednesday presented an upbeat picture of Sino-India ties ahead of this week's border talks, saying the relations maintained "sound momentum" as the two countries "properly managed" differences through dialogue and consultations. The 21st round of India-China border talks between National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Chinese State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi will be held at the picturesque Dujiangyan near southwest China's Chengdu city from November 23 to 24.

Announcing the talks, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said: "under the strategic guidance of the two leaders, China-India relations have maintained upward momentum of growth." "With ever-deepening cooperation in all areas, the two sides have maintained close communication and coordination in all border related affairs.

"We have properly managed the differences through dialogue and consultation. The border areas on the whole maintained stability," he said, answering a question on how China viewed the progress made during the 20th rounds of talks. Both Doval and Wang are designated Special Representatives for the border

talks. This will be the first round of talks for Wang who earlier this year succeeded State Councillor Yang Jiechi in a reshuffle.

Special Representatives' talks are regarded as highly significant by both the countries as they cover all aspects of bilateral relations besides making efforts to resolve the border dispute.

The India-China border dispute covered the 3,488-km long Line of Actual Control (LAC). China claims Arunachal Pradesh as part of its southern Tibet. Officials maintain that this round of talks may focus more on reviewing the progress of dialogue being held on trade and maintenance of peace at borders than movement towards solution to the dispute as India headed for general elections early next year. Elaborating further on China's view on the border talks, Geng said the two sides attached great importance to it.

"The two special representatives will have in-depth exchange of view on border related issues. They will follow the guidance of the consensus reached by the two leaders bearing in mind the general picture of the bilateral ties and benefits of the two peoples on the basis of the outcomes that have been achieved to actively promote the negotiations. "At the same time, we properly manage differences, peace and tran-

quility at the border areas. The two sides will also exchange views on major issue of bilateral ties and the regional and international issue of mutual interest," he said.

Officials on both sides maintain that though a solution to the border dispute still eludes the two countries, a lot of headway has been made in the 20 rounds of talks in terms of working out mechanisms to restore peace and tranquillity along the border to resolve tensions out of the aggressive patrolling by troops. The last round which was held in New Delhi between Doval and Yang took place in the immediate backdrop of 73-day standoff between the two militaries at Doklam over Chinese military's plan to build a road close to India's strategic Chicken Neck corridor connecting the northeastern states.

It ended after the People's Liberation Army (PLA) halted the plans to build the road. The Doval-Yang meeting in New Delhi in December last year also prepared the ground for the informal summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping at Wuhan in April, which resulted in not only normalisation of relations but gave a new fillip to the improvement of relations in all spheres of the relations notwithstanding the border dispute.

# Interpol picks Kim as president

AFP ■ DUBAI

Interpol announced on Wednesday that Kim Jong-yang of South Korea had been chosen as its new president, beating a Russian official whose candidacy had unnerved Western nations. The US-backed Kim, acting president of the global police body, was picked at a meeting of delegates from member nations in Dubai to replace Meng Hongwei, who went missing in his native China in September.

Beijing later said Meng resigned after being charged with accepting bribes. There had been growing calls within Western nations for Interpol to reject Russian candidate Alexander Prokopchuk — a Russian interior ministry official and current Interpol vice president — over fears Moscow could abuse the role to target political opponents. On Tuesday, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo threw his weight behind Kim, who will serve out Meng's term until 2020. "We encourage all nations and organisations that are part of Interpol and that respect the rule of law to choose a leader with integrity. We believe Mr Kim will be just that," Pompeo told reporters. Critics have raised concerns over Russia's previous applications for Interpol "Red Notices", or international arrest warrants, to target those who have fallen foul of the Kremlin.

Interpol's president chairs its General Assembly while day-to-day operations are handled by the organisation's Secretary general Juergen Stock. In an open letter this week, a bipartisan group of US senators said choosing Prokopchuk would be like "putting a fox in charge of a henhouse".

"Russia routinely abuses Interpol for the purpose of settling scores and harassing political opponents, dissidents and journalists," they wrote. Harriett Baldwin, a minister of state at the British foreign office, told parliament on Tuesday that London would support Kim's bid. Anti-Kremlin figures had also



Kim Jong-yang of South Korea was chosen over Russia's Alexander Prokopchuk

raised concerns, including Alexei Navalny, the Russian opposition leader who has been repeatedly jailed by authorities. "Our team has suffered from abuse of Interpol for political persecution by Russia," Navalny wrote on Twitter. "I don't think that a president from Russia will help to reduce such violations." US National Security Council spokesman Garrett Marquis echoed the endorsement for Kim. "As recent events show, the Russian government abuses INTERPOL's processes to harass its political opponents," he said on Twitter. The controversy also comes amid security concerns over accusations of Russian agents attempting to poison an ex-spy in Britain and trying to hack the network of the global chemical weapons watchdog.

Ukraine, deeply at odds with Moscow over its annexation of Crimea and support for separatists, threatened to pull out of Interpol if Prokopchuk prevailed. Lithuania also said it would consider withdrawing from the network. Russian presidential spokesman Dmitry Peskov dismissed the US senators' letter as a "vivid example" of an attempt to interfere in the vote. Moscow's interior ministry



denounced a "foreign media campaign aimed at discrediting Russia's candidate". But two foes of Russian President Vladimir Putin, who have been targeted by international arrest warrants sought by Moscow, also said Tuesday they were launching a bid to get Russia suspended from Interpol for abusing the agency. The legal challenge was announced by financier Bill Browder, named in multiple Interpol warrants, and Mikhail Khodorkovsky — a former oil baron who spent 10 years in a Russian jail and now lives in exile in London. "The Interpol constitution has very specific rules which forbid countries who are serial abusers from using the system," Browder told reporters.

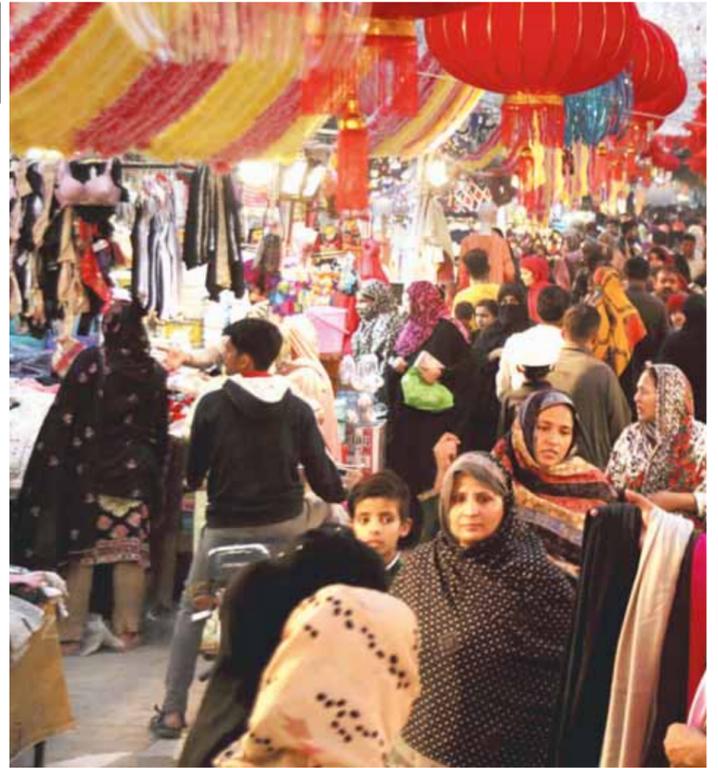
Briefly arrested in Spain this year under a Moscow-issued Red Notice, Browder said the Russian candidacy was an attempt by Putin to "expand his criminal tentacles to every corner of the globe". He fought for — and in 2012 secured — US sanctions against Russian officials believed to be involved in the death of his tax consultant, Sergei Magnitsky. Magnitsky died in jail in 2009 after accusing Russian officials of a USD 230-million tax fraud. Russia has

## Kremlin denounces 'unprecedented pressure' over Interpol vote

Moscow (AFP): The Kremlin on Wednesday denounced "unprecedented pressure" against a Russian candidate to lead Interpol, after a South Korean was instead chosen to lead the global policing body. "Of course we are sorry that this was not our candidate," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters. "At the same time there are no reasons not to agree with the vote result." Peskov also condemned the pressure exerted against the Russian candidate, Alexander Prokopchuk, on the eve of the vote.

"The election took place in the atmosphere of unprecedented pressure and interference in these elections," the Kremlin spokesman said. "The elections were complicated." There had been growing Western calls for Interpol to reject Prokopchuk over fears Moscow could abuse the role to target political opponents. On Tuesday, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo threw his weight behind Kim. Critics have raised concerns over Russia's previous applications for Interpol "Red Notices", or international arrest warrants, to target those who have fallen foul of the Kremlin.

rejected the claims and this week announced it was opening a new probe into Browder on suspicion of running a "transnational criminal gang", even suggesting he was behind Magnitsky's death. Russian prosecutors said he would be put on an international wanted list "in the near future". Multilingual Prokopchuk worked in tax enforcement before starting as a Russian representative at Interpol in 2006, according to the interior ministry.



A market is decorated with lights for Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi to celebrate the birthday of Prophet Mohammed in Lahore, Pakistan on Wednesday

# Victims recount horror of Kabul blast as toll rises

AFP ■ KABUL

Minutes after he took a seat among hundreds of religious scholars at a ceremony for the Prophet Mohammad's birthday in Kabul, a huge explosion shook the room, throwing Ahmad Fareed to the floor. Scattered around him were the bloodied bodies of turbaned men who had taken the full force of the suicide blast and probably saved his life.

"It was absolute horror, people dead and wounded, covered in blood and pieces of flesh," Fareed, 40, told AFP on Wednesday as he lay in a hospital bed with leg and shoulder injuries. "My friend and his little son were also next to me, covered in blood and not moving." At least 55 people were killed and 94 wounded when the bomber blew himself up in the middle of the banquet hall at the Uranus Wedding Palace on Tuesday evening — one of the deadliest attacks in Afghanistan this year.

A video posted on social media purportedly filmed by one of the hundreds of attendees showed a large gathering of men listening to a recitation of the Koran before an explosion triggered pandemonium. On Wednesday morning, as cleaners prepared the multi-storey venue for more events, bloodied turbans, sandals, overturned chairs and broken glass still littered the cavernous room where the massacre happened. The attack drew widespread condemnation in Afghanistan and abroad, with the United



The wedding hall in Kabul, Afghanistan, which was struck by a suicide bomber on Tuesday. Hundreds of religious scholars and clerics had gathered to mark the birthday of Prophet Muhammad

Nations describing it as an "atrocious" US ambassador to Kabul John Bass said he was "sickened and deeply saddened" by the bombing, while the European Union delegation to Afghanistan said the explosion was "an attack on all of us, religious or not, who value freedom". President Ashraf Ghani declared Wednesday a national day of mourning for the victims of the attack, which he described as an "unforgivable crime" Security at the wedding hall included a body search by an armed guard followed by physical checks by several religious students, said Obaidullah, who suffered multiple injuries to his face and body.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility, though the Taliban were quick to condemn the blast. The Islamic

State group, which has claimed most suicide attacks in Kabul this year, has not issued a statement. It is not clear why the religious scholars were targeted on one of the holiest days in the Islamic calendar. While Muslims around the world celebrate the Prophet Mohammad's birthday, some fundamentalists criticise the events as heretical innovations in Islam. Most of the people at the gathering were Sufis, a mystical branch of Islam, said Mehrab Danish, an adviser to the religious affairs minister. "But it is too early to say they were targeted because they were followers of Sufism," he cautioned. Sectarian militants in Pakistan have long targeted Sufis, but such attacks on the group are rare in Afghanistan.

# 'China hasn't altered unfair, unreasonable trade practices'

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

China has not fundamentally altered its "unfair, unreasonable and market-distorting" trade practices, the US has said in a new report, ahead of a crucial meeting between US President Donald Trump and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping. Trump and Xi are scheduled to meet in Buenos Aires on the sidelines of the G-20 Summit in Argentina on November 30 and December 1.

China and the US, the world's top two economies, are currently locked in an ongoing trade war as each country has introduced stiff tariffs on goods traded between each other. Trump has promised to fix China's "longtime abuse of the broken international system and unfair practices".

update as part of this administration's strengthened monitoring and enforcement effort," US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer said. "This update shows that China has not fundamentally altered its unfair, unreasonable, and market-distorting practices that were the subject of the March 2018 report on our Section 301 investigation," he said.

Running into nearly 50 pages, the report said that the evidence gathered in this update demonstrates China fundamentally has not altered its acts, policies and practices relating to technology transfer, intellectual property and innovation, and "indeed appears" to have taken further unreasonable actions in recent months.

The report reiterates that China uses foreign ownership restrictions, such as joint venture requirements and foreign equity limitations, and various administrative reviews and licensing processes to require or pressure technology transfer from US companies. Further, China's regime of technology regulations forces US companies seeking to license tech-

nologies to Chinese entities to do so on non-market based terms that favour Chinese recipients, it alleged. The report said that instead of accepting the USTR request for consultations on its 30-1 investigation, China expressed "strong dissatisfaction" with the US and decried the investigation as "irresponsible" and "not objective". The USTR said China shows no signs of ceasing its policy and practice of conducting and supporting cyber-enabled theft and intrusions into the commercial networks of US companies. This illicit conduct provides the Chinese government with unauthorised access to intellectual property, trade secrets, confidential business information, technical data, negotiating positions and sensitive and proprietary internal business communications, it said. In recent months, the Department of Justice has indicted a dozen individuals and corporate entities directed by the Chinese government to obtain commercial secrets from 15 companies, predominantly in aerospace and high-technology sectors.

# US says China hacking increasing ahead of Trump-Xi meeting

AP ■ BEIJING

US government report ahead of a meeting between Presidents Donald Trump and Xi Jinping accuses China of stepping up hacking aimed at stealing American technology as a tariff dispute escalated. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer's report reflects US skepticism and a possible source of new acrimony ahead of the meeting in Buenos Aires aimed at defusing the dispute companies worry will chill global economic growth.

The two sides have raised import duties on billions of dollars of each other's goods in the fight over US complaints Beijing steals or pressures companies to hand over technology. Chinese hacking efforts aimed at stealing American technology and trade secrets have "increased in frequency and sophistication" this year, said Lighthizer's report, issued Tuesday in Washington.

Asked about the report, a Chinese foreign ministry

spokesman, Geng Shuang, said US-Chinese trade relations were "mutually beneficial" and it was "natural to have trade frictions." "The key is to engage in dialogue and consultation on the issue based on mutual respect, equality and good faith," Geng said at a regular briefing. Trump is pressing Beijing to roll back industry plans its trading partners say violate its market-opening obligations that Chinese leaders see as a path to prosperity and global influence.

Those include "Made in China 2025," which calls for state-led creation of Chinese champions in robotics and other fields. American and Chinese officials have been talking in preparation for the Trump-Xi meeting and news reports say Beijing has sent written proposals but no details have been released. Beijing has tried without success to recruit France, Germany, Japan and other governments as allies against Trump. They dislike his tactics but echo US complaints.

# California fire death toll climbs to 81

Los Angeles (AFP): The death toll from the devastating wildfire in northern California rose to 81 Tuesday with the discovery of two more sets of remains, officials said. The number of people listed as unaccounted for in the deadliest and most destructive fire in state history jumped up by nearly 200 to 870.

This number has been fluctuating a lot in recent days amid the confusion of the search for bodies in the town of Paradise, which was largely destroyed by the flames. The figure peaked Saturday at 1,276, and on Monday was down to 699. Now the number has gone back up after police worked through a backlog of voice calls, Butte County sheriff Kory Honea said. Another three people died in a second major blaze that struck Malibu in southern California. In the north, the so-called Camp Fire has scored 152,000 acres of land and destroyed more than 12,600 homes. It started on November 8 and is only now 75 per cent contained. And officials are now bracing for significant rain on Wednesday and perhaps later in the week, which will help put out the fire.

# Over 3,000 Sikh pilgrims in Pak for Guru Nanak Jayanti

PTI ■ LAHORE

Over 3,000 Sikh pilgrims from India arrived in this Pakistani city on Wednesday to take part in festivities ahead of the birth anniversary of Guru Nanak. On their arrival in Lahore, the Sikh pilgrims left for Gurudwara Janamasthan in Nankana Sahib, the birthplace of Guru Nanak, where the main function will be held on Friday on the occasion of Guru Nanak Jayanti.

Minorities Senator Anwar Lal, Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) chairman Tahir Ehsan and secretary Tariq Wazir, and Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee president Tara Singh were among the Pakistani officials who greeted the Sikh 'yatis' at the Wagah Railway station. "As many as 3,080 Sikh pilgrims arrived here today on two special trains. The third train is expected to arrive here to bring another 700 or so yatis," ETPB spokesman Amir Hashmi told PTI. He said the Pakistan government had issued 3,800 visas to Indian Sikhs.

Sikh group leader Amerjeet Singh congratulated Pakistanis on the birth anniversary



of Prophet Muhammad on Eid Milad-un Nabi. He said Sikh pilgrims get love from Pakistanis and urged the Pakistan government to issue at least 10,000 visas for Sikhs for next year's 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak. He thanked the Pakistan government for the proposed opening of the Gurudwara Kartarpur in Narowal for pilgrims. He hoped there would be no hurdles in its opening for Indian Sikhs. ETPB chairman Ehsan said the

Pakistan government has made foolproof security arrangements for the pilgrims. Rangers and elite force personnel have been deployed along with police for the security of the visiting pilgrims. He said the board has better boarding arrangements at the gurudwaras where the pilgrims would stay during their visit. During their 10-day stay, the pilgrims will also visit some other gurudwaras in Punjab province. They will leave for India on November 30.

# Lancet study says 98 mn Indians may have diabetes by 2030

PTI ■ BOSTON

Nearly 98 million people in India may have type 2 diabetes by 2030, according to a study unveiled on Wednesday which found that the number of adults with the disease worldwide is expected rise by over a fifth. The study, published in The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology journal, found that the amount of insulin needed to effectively treat type 2 diabetes will rise by more than 20 per cent worldwide over the next 12 years.

Without major improvements in access, insulin will be beyond the reach of around half of the 79 million adults with type 2 diabetes who will need it in 2030, said researchers from Stanford University in the US. The findings are of particular concern for the African, Asian, and Oceania regions which the study predicts will have the largest unmet insulin need in 2030 if access remains at current levels.

Results showed that worldwide, the number of adults with type 2 diabetes is expected rise by more than a fifth from 406 million in 2018 to 511 million in 2030. Over half of them will be living in just three countries — China (130 million), India (98 million), and the US (32 million), researchers said. According to World Health Organization (WHO), India had 69.2 million people living with diabetes in 2015. At the same time, global insulin use is projected to rise from 526 million 1000-unit vials in 2018 to 634 million in 2030,



and will be highest in Asia (322 million vials in 2030) and lowest in Oceania (4 million), they said. The analysis underscores the importance of tackling barriers to the insulin market, particularly in Africa. The researchers warn that strategies to make insulin more widely available and affordable will be critical to ensure that demand is met.

"These estimates suggest that current levels of insulin access are highly inadequate compared to projected need, particularly in Africa and Asia, and more efforts should be devoted to overcoming this looming health challenge," said Sanjay Basu from Stanford University, who led the research. "Despite the UN's commitment to treat non-communicable diseases and ensure universal access to drugs for diabetes, across much of the world insulin is scarce and unnecessarily difficult for patients to access," said Basu.

"The number of adults with type 2 diabetes is expected to rise over the next 12 years due to ageing, urbanisation, and associated changes in diet and physical activ-

ity. "Unless governments begin initiatives to make insulin available and affordable, then its use is always going to be far from optimal," he said. Insulin is essential for all people with type 1 diabetes and some people with type 2 diabetes to reduce the risk of complications such as blindness, amputation, kidney failure, and stroke, researchers said. As global rates of type 2 diabetes soar and people with type 2 diabetes live longer, a comprehensive picture of global insulin need is required because insulin treatment is costly, and the international insulin market is presently dominated by only three major manufacturers, they said. Using data from the International Diabetes Federation and 14 cohort studies (representing more than 60 per cent of the world population with type 2 diabetes), researchers estimated the burden of type 2 diabetes in 221 countries and territories between 2018 and 2030.

They estimated the potential number of insulin users, amount of insulin required, and the burden of diabetes complications under varying levels of insulin access and treatment targets (from 6.5 per cent to 8 per cent HbA1c, a measure of blood glucose), in adults aged 18 or older. The researchers calculated that compared to current levels of insulin access, if universal global access was achieved, the number of people with type 2 diabetes worldwide using insulin in 2030 would double (from around 38 million to 79 million).

# INDULGE IN A TRIBAL EXTRAVAGANZA

Encapsulating the tribal ethos of India—Aadi Mahotsav, being held from November 16-30 in the capital—is the perfect platform for artisans and cultural performers from the marginalised communities to showcase their craft. The Managing Director of the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED), **PRAVIR KRISHNA**, in an interview with **ANKITA SAXENA** reveals the organisation's plan to further their revenue potential

**TRIFED**, an organisation of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, hosts the 'Aadi Mahotsav' to provide an opportunity to the families of the tribal communities to display their products to a wider audience and increase their incomes. **PRAVIR KRISHNA** talks about the overwhelming response to this fair and how it is helping the tribes of India live a better life through this initiative. Excerpts from the interview:

**How has the response been to Aadi Mahotsav?**

The fair has become bigger in scale from last year and is much brighter and better. This year, there are around 1,000 tribal artisans from 27 states of India who are showcasing their skills, cuisine, culture, music and dances. It is the perfect way to showcase the tribal ethos and has already attracted around 80,000 people till now. There are over 250 stalls and the participants have already done business worth over ₹1 crore. We plan to organise around 200 such festivals all over the country in the coming time.

**What is the objective of this fair?**

The aim of Aadi Mahotsava is very simple—it is to provide the tribals with market access. These communities have some of the finest craftsmen and artisans but they are weak in marketing their products. They usually get stuck in the vicious net of the middlemen who buy these products at a very low cost from them and sell it in bigger markets at higher prices, thus robbing the tribals of the fair price for their products. We have tried to bring the producers closer to the big markets through this exhibition. To encourage them, we sponsor each participant by paying for their travel, lodging and even transportation of their goods. This is an important exhibition as the organisers do not seek to make any profit out of it, rather the earnings out of the sales here, all belong to the producers.

**How else does TRIFED market**



**the tribal products?**

We create opportunities for marketing of tribal products through establishing a network of TRIFED Indian retail outlets. We are on an expansion drive and have recorded a phenomenal leap from 29 retail store to 105 outlets. Our expansion has grown by 200 per cent and our procurement has grown by 375 per cent. We believe that the tribal community now needs to

take the second step towards value addition to their raw materials in order to increase their incomes. We are also engaging with the ecommerce platforms and have tied up with players like Amazon, Snapdeal, Flipart and the government agency, GeM, to take the tribal products on the digital platform.

**How are you working to add**

**value to the tribal products?**

We want to turn the tribal commerce on its head and this can be done by adding value to the raw materials the tribal communities procure from the forest. They are dependent on products like handlooms, artifacts made from metal, wood, bamboo and textiles, which we are promoting through retail outlets. The minor forest produce is however equally valuable and can be used to increase the incomes. For example, mahua when sold in the market, fetches a lower price than a squash made out of it, which adds around 100 per cent value to the raw product. Similarly, tamarind can be turned into a chutney or sauce to increase its worth five times and thus benefiting the community more. We want the tribal community to get at least 70-80 per cent of the total value chain instead of the current 20-30 per cent because of the middlemen. We are also in talks with the Ministry of Food Processing Industries to set up pilot projects in Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh for the same.

**What is the TRIFED Van Dhan Brigade?**

We feel that the opportunity of livelihood for the tribes is not to be provided to them by any gratis or support from the government. It is in fact, their right to trade as given by the Forests Rights Act and we are the vehicles to further this. The government is playing its role by identifying the tribes, training them to fine-tune their craft according to market needs, procuring the products and then distributing them. The TRIFED Van Dhan Brigade is our initiative to help the tribal communities achieve better lives. We have asked ISRO to help with satellite images to map the tribal areas. Also, in order to make this initiative successful, we have to decentralise the mechanism and use the district magistrate machinery to deliver the benefits to the right people in the remotest areas.

CORPORATE BRIEFS



Dr U D Choubey, Director General, SCOPE speaking during launching of 'Decent Work Country Programme' organised by ILO

**BV TECH EXPO POSTPONED TO MARCH 2019**

The second BV Tech Expo India and the second E-Vehicle Show India, which was to be organised by the M7 Creation from November 22-24, at the NSIC Exhibition Complex in Okhla, New Delhi, has been postponed to March 2019. The organiser of the expo, Anupreet Singh Jaggi, informed that due to unavailability of ample space for the exhibitors, they have decided to extend the expo to March 22-24, 2019.

**NO VISA FEE TO VISIT THAILAND FOR INDIANS**

The Thai government recently approved the exemption of the visa-on-arrival fee for citizens of 20 countries. From November 15, 2018, to January 13, 2019, citizens of India, Andorra, Bulgaria, Bhutan, China including Taiwan, Cyprus, Ethiopia, Fiji, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Papua New Guinea, Romania, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan will be exempted from the 2,000 Baht visa-on-arrival fee for the purpose of touring in Thailand not more than 15 days.

**PM TO LAUNCH CITY GAS DISTRIBUTION BIDDING AT DEOGHAR, SHEIKHPURA AND JAMUI**

The Deoghar, Sheikhpura and Jamui districts will be included within the 50 Geographical Areas under the 10th bidding round of City Gas Distribution to be launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi. GAIL (India) Limited's Jagadishpur-Haldia-Bokaro-Dhamra pipeline project, also popular as 'Pradhan Mantri Urja Ganga', shall serve as the feeder source for natural gas supply to the proposed city gas project in addition to maintaining supplies to various fertilizer and industrial units enroute.



Khadi once again won the accolades from the Vice President of India M Venkaiah Naidu, when he visited the exclusive stall of Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) at the Ambedkar International Center, before chairing the commemorative event of the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, organised by FICCI-Aditya Birla CSR Centre for Excellence.



Under the guidance of Dr Laique Hussain, the National School of Drama, recently organised the 14th edition of the nine-day biannual theatre festival for children—Jasnebachpan. The opening ceremony of the carnival saw the presence of the secretary of the Ministry of Culture, Arun Goel, and the eminent theatre personality-director, Rudraprasad Sengupta.



The Technological Institute of Textile and Sciences (TIT&S), Bhiwani, Haryana, is celebrating its platinum jubilee on November 24. In a pre-event, the director of TIT&S, Prof G K Tyagi, informed that the member secretary of the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), Prof Alok Mittal, will grace the occasion as the chief guest while the vice chancellor of the Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak, Prof B K Punia, will be the guest of honour at the milestone event.



The CRPF pavilion at the IITF 2018 at Pragati Maidan provides a glimpse into the duties, achievements, gallantry acts, training, weapons used by the CRPF and various theaters that CRPF works in. The pavilion theme is—'Sarvatra Vidyaman, Satat Gatiman' which means 'present everywhere, perpetually moving'. The pavilion depicts historical moments and the journey of CRPF through time from the day of its raising.



The Buyer-Seller-Meet of the Indian handicrafts, home furnishings, floorings and textiles, Indian house ware, decoratives and fashion accessories was inaugurated on November 19 at Copenhagen by the Ambassador of India in Denmark, His Excellency Ajit Gupte, along with the chairman of the Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPC), O P Prahlada, and the EPC's executive director, Rakesh Kumar.

**GUIDE TO STRENGTHEN CONCRETE STRUCTURES IN INDIA**

The department of civil engineering, SRM University, Delhi-NCR, Sonapat, Haryana, organised a guest lecture on 'Deterioration



Mechanism and Durability of Reinforced Concrete' on November 20, inviting the former special director general of CPWD, Er Ashok Kumar Sharma. Given his 42 years of CPWD and EIL experience, Sharma informed the students about the bad practices followed in the country which cause early deterioration of concrete structures and explained the steps one should take to ensure long life of these structures.



**HUNAR HAAT AT IITF RECORDS OVERWHELMING RESPONSE**

The ongoing India International Trade Fair, 2018, is attracting a large crowd at Pragati Maidan to the Khadi Pavilion and 'Saras', an eco-friendly kural, rural crafts and industry items. Apart from the rural handicrafts in the state pavilions, as many as 94 master artisans mainly belonging to minorities from 22 states have been making a mark with a treasure trove of their artifacts created with their traditional skills at the 'Hunar Haat'. Organised by the Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India, the display profile 'Hunar Haat' features the legacy of Indian culture displays, beauty, dignity, form and style to enliven the home as well as the office space.

## India, Indonesia bond over shared platter



This fest is a good way to promote both Indonesian culture and tourism. Inviting countries from Asia here at the fest is the best way to bring in more harmony via food." At this year's edition, the

'Thought Fest' saw discussions between experts around culture, health and cuisine, and the 'Food Fest' offered cookery workshops with celebrity chefs from the participating countries and Indian television celebrities

like Puja Talwar, Advaita Kala and Imam Siddique. Food stalls by some of the most superlative restaurants from the South Asia region like the Soda Bottle Opernwala, Atara Catering, Chaat Chowk

and Orza sprawled the landscape. Other attractions included a 'Bazaar Section' and a 'Fun Fest' which saw performances by music bands like the Delhi Indie Project and the Rocknama.

The founder and director of SAAG and Food for Thought Fest, Maneesh Baheti, said, "We are very honoured to be given the opportunity of kick-starting the 70 year celebrations of India-Indonesia friendship with this fest. The confidence bestowed on us by the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism, the attendance of a 16 member troupe for cultural performances and the Masterchef from West Sumatra, gives us tremendous encouragement.

## Culinary indulgence at its best



Food has the capability to bring together people and cultures from across the globe and what better way to experience a variety of delicacies than from the very best. If you happen to be in Thailand, visitors have a paradise of culinary experiences, waiting to be explored. Complimenting this love for cuisine, the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), in collaboration with Michelin, has unveiled the second Michelin Guide in Thailand edition that continues to celebrate the kingdom's dynamic culinary evolution. The new Michelin Guide Bangkok, Phuket and Phang Nga 2019, is an expanded edition, featuring not only the capital, but also the surrounding cities. The guide offers

culinary information in Bangkok, Phuket, Phang Nga as well as Bangkok's surrounding provinces—Nonthaburi, Pathum Thani, Nakhon Pathom, Samut Sakhon, and Samut Prakan. In this edition, 217 dining and 67 lodging establishments are featured, with a total of four two-star restaurants, of which one is a new addition, and 23 one-star establishments, of which 10 are new additions.

The governor of TAT, Yuthasak Supasorn, said "Bangkok and its surrounding provinces are long-known as a melting pot of Thai culinary culture, but Phuket and Phang Nga are offering as plenty as fantastic gastronomic experiences. Thailand is indeed a world-class dining destination, and

TAT is very pleased that Michelin has recognised this and has been helping to enhance the awareness among travellers from around the world."

In the 2019 edition, all of the two-star restaurants from the previous selection—Gaggan, Le Normandie, and Mezzaluna—retain their awards. The only addition, moving from one star to two, is Sühring, which offers unique and contemporary European dishes with the modern German cooking.

Of the 23 one-star establishments in this edition, Le Du and Gaa are the only two restaurants that progress from the 'Plate'—a designation given to restaurants for a good meal with fresh ingredients and capable prepa-



ration—to earn one star, while eight are new entries.

Among these new entries, five are located in Central Bangkok—Canvas, Methavalai Sorndaeng, R-Haan, Saawan and the Sorn.

The other two one-star restaurants are located within Bangkok's vicinity—the Ruean Panya (in Samut Sakhon province) and the Suan Thip (in Nonthaburi province).

There is one restaurant in Phuket, awarded one star—PRU, a sophisticated restaurant, tucked inside a luxury resort, offering delicate and neatly presented dishes created using many ingredients sourced from its own 96-hectare organic farm. In addition, three restaurants previously with one star, namely Elements, Nahm, and Saneh Jaan, have retained their awards, despite having new chefs at the helm.

The food lovers who wish to explore the cuisine of these destination can procure the complete selection of the Michelin Guide Bangkok, Phuket and Phang Nga 2019 from the Michelin website. It is available in a bilingual digital edition (Thai and English) and a print version can be bought at leading bookstores for 650 Baht.

**Amitava Mukherjee is NMDC's new Director (Finance)**

Amitava Mukherjee has assumed the charge as Director (Finance) of NMDC Limited, a Schedule 'A' Government of India Enterprise, with Navratna status, under the Ministry of Steel. From the 1995 batch of the Indian Railway Accounts Services (IRAS), he is a Cost Accountant and holds a Master of Commerce degree from the Guru Ghasi Das University, Bilaspur. Prior to joining NMDC, he held the post of General Manager (Finance) in Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) for a period of around two and half years. During his service in IRAS, he held various key positions in the Eastern Railways from 1997 to 2016 like the head of the Standing Core Committee on Service Tax, Traffic Accounts Office and the IT Department. Before joining the IRAS, he worked in the

Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) as Accounts Officer from 1994-1997. During his service period in the Indian Railways, Mukherjee received the National Award for outstanding services during the year 2006. He was also nominated by the Railway Board to various task groups for centralised applications of finance and accounts department of the Indian Railways for monitoring progress and to suggest improvements and enhancements to such applications and for Development of Traffic Accounts Management System. He has attended various international training programmes conducted by the European School of Business at London and Paris; ICLIF at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and INSEAD at Singapore.



Trend Blazer

'We've to have gumption as actors'

Actress **KAREENA KAPOOR KHAN** said that actors or actresses have to have gumption to do whatever they feel like. She said, "We hear about actresses being turned down for speaking up because we are in the film industry and a lot of reporting is done here. I am sure it's everywhere but today we have lot of opportunities and path-breaking actors, be it Radhika Apte and the girl in *Sacred Games* Kubra. We have girls who are fighting back and doing brilliant roles. We have to have gumption as actors that this is what we are going to do be it on any medium. An actor's colour, shape or size doesn't matter."



'It (Fraud Saiyyan) is a very interesting film, which is based on a true story. Comedy and humour are not forced deliberately in it. It seamlessly flows on screen. The character that I play in the film is one of those which every actor would want to play.'

—Arshad Warsi

Actor **RAJKUMMAR RAO** has completed shooting of Mikhil Musale's *Made in China*. Announcing the schedule wrap, Rajkumar took to Twitter and wrote: "Schedule wrap for *Made in China*. What a fun shoot, can't wait to share it with you guys on the big screen." He also shared an image with his team. The film is hilarious take on a struggling Gujarati businessman and the bizarre journey he undertakes to become a successful entrepreneur. It also stars Mouni Roy.

Actor **ROBERT DE NIRO** has split from his wife **GRACE HIGHTOWER** after more than 20 years of marriage. "Some times things don't work out the way you hope or want them to," said a source. The actor married Hightower in 1997 after dating for a decade. They share two children together, 20-year-old son Elliott and six-year-old daughter Helen Grace. This isn't the first time the two have separated. De Niro filed for divorce in 1999 and engaged in a custody dispute over their son. The two eventually smoothed things over and the divorce was never finalised. In November 2004, the two renewed their vows in front of an A-list crowd such as Martin Scorsese, Meryl Streep, Ben Stiller, Tom Brokaw and others.

Director **NAYANA SAGAR** brings in another adaptation of it with her own elements of eccentricities in the "absurdly gruesome yet gloriously funny comedy" play. "This is not the first time I have chosen dark comedy as the genre. The previous play that I directed was *August Osage County*. But this one is much lighter than that," she says. However, why did she only choose Kesselring's play? "That's because it excited me and made me want to direct a new project. It is always about finding a subject which has crazy content in it. This time I wanted something lighter and more colourful than *August Osage County*. May be it was something like rejuvenation of the soul moving away from darkness to some light," says Nayana.

She finds that as per today's audience, it is also a kind of relaxation to their minds that when they come to watch a play, they don't leave with heavy hearts and a story that is so intense. This one has a lot of farce, slapstick, easy and laughable jokes, on which "may be in real life, you won't laugh out that loud. But here, you would because you are not in those circumstances. Someone else is."

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With a new doll in the shape of **TAIMUR ALI KHAN**, the celebrity branding of children seems to have gone to the next level, says **TEAM VIVA**

HONEY, THEY BLEW UP THE KID

The celebrity-obsessed times that we live in ensure that by extension, the children of people in the spotlight, too, are in the constant glare of the media and more importantly nurtured and grown into a legacy of continuing brand value. Particularly in India, where children are treated second to only god in domestic hierarchy, a *dulara* commands everybody's attention. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the recent manifestation of a doll in the likeness of a cuteness overload called Taimur Ali Khan. When producer Ashwini Yardi tweeted a photo and said that this was being sold in Kerala, it practically broke the internet. Coming after the 100 plus fan clubs dedicated to the two-year-old on social media, this was certainly the next level in obsession.

However, his father Saif Ali Khan seemed pretty amused as he said, "Maybe I should trademark his name... The least they could do is send me one! I am glad people are benefiting from him. I only ask God for his safety and happiness in return." Kareena on the other hand, did let the emotions of a mother peek out when she said, "Taimur can't run away from his popularity and neither can his parents. When I saw the doll, I wondered what was I supposed to say. But Saif pointed out that it is because people love him so much and such things are a blessing

for him. There is so much genuine warmth for our son that it's bad to stop people from clicking his pictures or making his dolls. But they should understand that he is a two-year-old child and needs a normal life. Both Saif and I are struggling to give him that and will continue to do so without telling the media to back off, no matter how annoying it gets after a point. It's tough on him as it's on Saif and me."

Unwavering focus on a child born to celebrity parents is not something unheard of in the West. Within a week of being born, Princess Charlotte, the second child of Prince William and the Duchess of Cambridge Kate Middleton, was splashed on the cover of newspapers and magazines. In another month, a commemorative doll version of the little princess, priced at \$100 and made by at least three different companies, appeared in the market. Some collectors had special "reborn" versions of baby Charlotte made, paying thousands of dollars where every vein and hair was perfectly in place.

But this was certainly not the first. The first commemorative doll was probably the Venus of Willendorf and other Venus figures discovered in Europe that are between 25,000 and 40,000 years old. In the 16th century, Margaret Lennox commissioned a painted portrait of her toddler granddaughter, Arabella Stuart,



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who many considered the rightful heir to Queen Elizabeth I. Incidentally, in the painting, the child holds tight to a small doll, which with its red hair and pale skin looks suspiciously like the Virgin Queen. But it was during the Victorian era that the production of commemorative dolls exploded. In the Western world, the birth of the middle class meant that disposable income was on the rise and dolls were no longer just for the wealthy to perpetuate their physical entity. Owning your own version of a real life idol connected you with the personality at an intimate level and could even be granted the value of a souvenir that could turn into a heirloom meant to be auctioned later.

Says Ashish Chakravarty, chief creative officer, Contract Advertising, "This doll can be seen as a gradual progression from the obsession with Rajesh Khanna's shirts, Govinda's baggies or Aamir's cap. But the obsession with a kid is a first for sure in India. But then we aspire to get a part of the star dust and that is what can be seen here. Once there were the Madonna dolls. Even those of Michael Jackson. But the latter became such a superbrand and a leader of a pop cult that people followed the goings-on of his children, who became minor celebrities even without having done anything. Saifeena is a brand. The mother is the reigning queen of Bollywood and the

father is both nawaab and new-age and currently has the entire internet fandom at his feet courtesy *Sacred Games*. Taimur is a physical manifestation of Saifeena. So it had to happen. Besides, the kid is real cute and draws an *aww* from everybody."

Remember the kid in the Murphy ad? Or the babies in the Johnson ads? Taimur takes us back to this old world of innocence that we desperately want to hold on to. The Murphy baby featured everywhere. Except Taimur, according to Neeraj Bassi, chief strategy officer and managing partner, Publicis India, comes with the halo of a pedigree. "For Taimur, the curiosity spirals because the paparazzi has limited access unlike his Western counterparts, who even have their social media profiles in place by the time they are born," he says.

Besides, the birth of celebrity children is part of another event in the star's brand persona. "Earlier, the celebrities themselves were protective of their children. Raj Kapoor's children did not interact with the public till the time they appeared in films. The late Sridevi, too, was really protective about her girls. But times have changed and now the extended life of a celebrity, umbra and penumbra taken together, are as much saleable. There's no aura about secrecy. Look at the way that everybody in Bollywood posts intricate details of the growing up years of their children and their naming ceremonies. Business today is dependent on social media hits and recalls. A doll company, therefore, sensed a business opportunity here. Taimur was the top choice because he is the most popular. I won't be surprised if the trend catches on and a clothes company markets a line of what Taimur wears," says Chakravarty.

However, there is a dark social turn to events that everybody overlooks. The Taimur doll imposes the idea of misplaced regality and aspiration among other regular children playing with the doll. Imagine Taimur arrayed between superhero dolls that kids love to play with. It is as if the childhood ideals themselves are part of a huge franchise.

Not only that, these myth-making around him that can spin out of control vis-a-vis his real personality as he grows into adulthood. As Bassi says, "What we are doing to that kid's life is unfair as is setting unattainable benchmarks for regular kids. Taimur can't have a normal life as every action of his is being watched. His life is a performance art. In such a scenario, the star child gets fixated with that attention and develops personality problems in the long run. Heaven help him if he falls short of the towering expectations of him as an adult." Perhaps that's the reason why Saif himself is wary of Taimur becoming an actor. For if he fails to retain the same level of stardom, it is a crashing fall for anybody to take. If only we knew where to draw the line.



Urban twist to black comedy

As director **NAYANA SAGAR** adapts Joseph Kesselring's *Arsenic and Old Lace*, she tells **CHAHAK MITTAL** how every script needs vigorous editing to bring each character to life and keep the audience glued to the seat

When *Arsenic and Old Lace* premiered at Broadway in 1941, there were little gasps of breath and whoops of suppressed laughter around. Nobody could imagine getting away with black humour, a few maniacs and some murders on the stage in such a way, but it did turn out to be very very funny. It became Joseph Kesselring's legacy that is still re-incarnated and has been adapted by numerous directors.

Director Nayana Sagar brings in another adaptation of it with her own elements of eccentricities in the "absurdly gruesome yet gloriously funny comedy" play. "This is not the first time I have chosen dark comedy as the genre. The previous play that I directed was *August Osage County*. But this one is much lighter than that," she says. However, why did she only choose Kesselring's play? "That's because it excited me and made me want to direct a new project. It is always about finding a subject which has crazy content in it. This time I wanted something lighter and more colourful than *August Osage County*. May be it was something like rejuvenation of the soul moving away from darkness to some light," says Nayana.

She finds that as per today's audience, it is also a kind of relaxation to their minds that when they come to watch a play, they don't leave with heavy hearts and a story that is so intense. This one has a lot of farce, slapstick, easy and laughable jokes, on which "may be in real life, you won't laugh out that loud. But here, you would because you are not in those circumstances. Someone else is."

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Indian dialect in the play to "bring characters to life." In Nayana's adaptation, set in the late 1980s sub-urban Bombay, the play revolves around two ladies of the D'Silva family of Vasai, who are habitual of killing old and lonely men who arrive at their doorstep looking for rental accommodation by tipping a pinch of arsenic in their red wine.

"Most of the stories that you hear, whether Italian, American, French, Dutch, Hindi or any other language, the stories are always the same. The emotions are universal. In Ranjit's adaptation, I didn't like the language, which was vintage and a proper Hindi in an Anglo-Indian setup from near sub-urban Bombay. I thought that Hindi is



dilution of the existing plot. We don't have much scope to play but we can edit it to make it crisp, which I usually do too." One of her directions were Yasmina Reza's *God of Carnage*, which was also made into a film, *Carnage*, by Roman Polanski starring Kate Winslet and Jodie Foster. Kate had revealed that Polanski gave the cast only a weekend to prepare for the scenes and all the dialogues to be enacted. This, Nayana feels, is one of the examples of immortality of theatre. She says, "We feel that theatre has not been patronised much. But that is a misconception because there is still a sizeable chunk of audience which finds theatre appealing."

She gives her own example saying that her visit to London is never complete without a visit to West End. "How can I miss going to West End and watching a play when in London? In every city, there are such theatre geeks who want to see live performances. Hence, the madness around theatre is never going to get diminished. It has been there for years and will stay for much more decades to come," says she. The play stars actresses Sohaila Kapur, who is known for films like *Daas Dev* and *Land of the Gods*, as one of the four protagonists. Playing the role of an old manic woman who murders people for social service was something that she had "never imagined about." She says, "It was a challenge to embody the role of someone who kills people and doesn't even regret doing that. The play can simultaneously make people laugh, wonder and also surprise, which is the beauty of this repertoire."

If we ask Nayana's inspiration behind her directions, for her, there would be no particular playwrights or directors that she follows. What appeals to her is "rather stories and something that can make someone glued to the seat for 90 minutes."

The play will surely be a "mesmerising experience" for the audience as she calls it. This comes from someone who has directed several plays by always adding her own new elements, just like she portrayed a Punjabi family of Delhi in her adaptation of *God of Carnage*, which was originally set up in a French backdrop.

(The play will be staged at 7pm at the Sri Ram Centre for Performing Arts today.)

'An artiste is always a struggler'

While singer **RICHA SHARMA** belongs to the old music school, she does not shy away from using technology to gather an audience, says **C MITTAL**

Singer Richa Sharma, who recently replaced compatriot Sonu Mohapatra, as a judge on Zee TV's *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa*, believes that contestants remain strugglers in the industry despite the early exposure. "I have been a struggler and still remain one. So does the young talent here. You've got to be patient, therefore. As a young performer in Delhi, everyone waited for me to sing. In Mumbai, the scenario changed as I waited for everyone to hear me sing. It was an ocean of talent. Hence, an artiste is always a struggler," she tells us.

And that's the one crucial lesson she is imparting to contestants on the show as she values the student-mentor bonding. "No matter who they are or where they come from, they become like our own kids in a few days as we become emotionally attached to them. They become our responsibility as well," says Richa, who finds herself transiting a flux in the music industry where stars rise and fall in days, depending on the fan following for peppy numbers, millions of YouTube hits, overnight born virtual sensations, self-made artists, remixes and remakes. She belongs to the old world which was once dominated by the father-son duo of SD/RD Burman and Kishore Kumar. "Arijit Singh's songs are the only ones which throw us back to the glorious era of love songs," she says. Similarly, she recalls that the Neeraj Shridhar-led band



*Bombay Vikings*, which was prominent in the mid-1990s, was the perfect example of how remixes and remakes should be composed and created. She says, "The way they recreated *Woh Chali* and *Kya Surat Hai*, brought a new spice to those old songs. They felt completely new yet so nostalgic. Now that's how remakes should be made."

However, the singer also applauds technology and social media in helping out young singers and aspirants, who have emerged on their own strength. She herself uses technology as a tool for gathering audience. "If I want to sing today, I don't need a composer or a lyricist to write a song for me. I can just open a social media app in my phone, go live and sing for the audience who wants to hear me. Who will wait for a new song when there is such instant gratification?" she asks.



Deputy Chief Minister, Govt of NCT Delhi, Manish Sisodia, released a book *Veda-Tattvanusheelana* written by Dr. Asha Goswami, a Krishna scholar and prolific creative writer, at his residence. The author, who has been associated with a large number of publications, said the book in ten chapters highlights the importance of the Vedas and the Vedic Mantras for present-day life. It provides very informative knowledge to the present-day generation about their past heritage, and the basic truths associated with their favourite gods or goddesses such as Mother Durga, Rudra, Shiva and Vishnu.

SYED MODI TOURNAMENT

# Easy wins for Saina, Kashyap

## Top seeds Pranaav-Sikki lose

**LUCKNOW:** Top seeds and mixed doubles defending champions Pranaav Jerry Chopra and N Sikki Reddy were crushed out in the opening round Syed Modi World Tour Super 300 here on Wednesday.

The Indian pair lost 14-21 11-21 to China's Ren Xiangyu and Zhou Chaomin in just 31 minutes.

Meanwhile, Saina Nehwal and Parupalli Kashyap notched up easy wins to make winning start.

Second seeded Saina, who had won the Lucknow tournament thrice in the past, thrashed Mauritius' Kate Foo Kune 21-10 21-10 in the women's singles, while former Commonwealth Games champion Kashyap disposed of Thailand's Tanongsak Saensomboonsuk 21-14 21-12 in a one-sided men's singles match.

London Olympics bronze medalist Saina will face compatriot Amolika Singh Sisodiya next, while Kashyap will meet Indonesia's Firman Abdul Kholik.

Former Singapore Open champion B Sai Praneeth also crossed the men's singles opening hurdle, beating Russia's Sergey Sirant 21-12 21-10.

He will square off against Shesar Hiren Rhustavito of Indonesia.

Subhankar Dey, who had claimed his maiden title at Saarlouis Open, beat Sweden's Felix Burestedt 21-15 21-13 to set up a clash with Lu



Indian shuttler Saina Nehwal in action against Mauritius' Kate Foo Kune during Syed Modi International Badminton Championships, in Lucknow on Wednesday

Guangzu of China.

Former national champion Rituparna Das, seeded eighth, saw off Russia's Natalia Perminova 21-19 18-21 21-10 and will face compatriot Shruti Mundada in the women's sin-

gles. Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Ashwini Ponnappa, seeded sixth, also notched up a 21-10 21-10 win over compatriots Krishna Prasad Garaga and Rutuparna Panda in the mixed doubles opening round.

Among others, Prashi Joshi, Saili Rane, Riya Mookerjee, Pardeshi Shreyanshi, Reshma Karthik and Sai Uttejitha Rao Chukka also made it to the women's singles second round.

### AMOLIKA EXCITED TO FACE SAINA

**LUCKNOW:** Amolika Singh of Lucknow was looking most excited on Wednesday. After qualifying for the main draw on Tuesday, she won her first round match against Aruna Prabhudesai 21-18, 12-21, 21-18. But more than the win, she was excited about her next round match, where she is pitted against Olympic medal winner Saina Nehwal.

"I am really very excited to play against my idol, I am taking it as a biggest opportunity so far of my career and will give my best shot," she said.

### LUCKNOW SPECIAL TO ME: SAMEER

Defending champion Sameer Verma on Wednesday said that playing in Lucknow was always special for him as he started his international career by winning the Junior Asian Badminton Champion. "I was the part of junior national camp here in Lucknow and in the last edition won the Syed Modi title as well and hope it will remain lucky for me this time too," he said.

# Dipa eyes Olympic berth

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian gymnast Dipa Karmakar would be aiming to put behind the injury-marred disaster that was the Asian Games when she aims for a positive start to her Olympic qualification bid with the World Cup of artistic gymnastics in Cottbus, Germany from Thursday.

The four-day showpiece is part of an eight-event qualifying system under which the gymnasts will make the cut based on the aggregate of their top three scores.

The four-member Indian team, which also comprises B Aruna Reddy, Ashish Kumar and Rakesh Patra, will look to make it count with good performances.

Dipa, who finished fourth at the Rio Olympics, will be India's best bet in the tournament after clinching the Gold at the Artistic Gymnastics World Challenge Cup at Mersin, Turkey in July this year.

The 25-year-old from Tripura endured a poor comeback from injury in the Jakarta Asian Games where she had to



pull out midway after her knee problem flared up again.

Aruna, on the other hand, won a Bronze medal in one of the earlier world cups this year in the women's vault event in Melbourne and she too will fancy her chances.

Among the men, Ashish has been India's brightest with a Bronze in floor exercise at the 2010 Asian Games in Guangzhou, China.

He also won a Bronze and Silver medal at the 2010

Commonwealth Games in floor exercise and vault respectively. Rakesh also had some decent performances this year, a fourth-place finish in the ring apparatus finals at the Commonwealth Games being the highlight. He also narrowly missed a medal at the Melbourne World Cup in February, finishing fourth.

The run-up to the event, however, has been chaotic with the showdown between the Sports Authority of India (SAI) and the de-recognised Gymnastics Federation of India (GFI) affecting the athletes. The bitter war between the two bodies led to the Indian gymnasts missing the world Championship in Doha last month.

In fact, ahead of the Cottbus event, the Sports Authority of India refused to bear the cost of Yogeshwar Singh and Pranati Das, while clearing the other four gymnasts to participate in the tournament.

This prompted Pranati and Yogeshwar to express their grievances to SAI in a letter early this month.

## LOCAL EVENTS

### FINE START FOR TVESA

Tvesa Malik got off to a fine start with an even par 70 in the first round of the Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour on Wednesday. Tvesa, who has emerged as a fine talent this season, shot two birdies against two bogeys at the Palms Golf Club and Resort. She is now one shot ahead of second-placed Smriti Mehra, who had a fine front nine with one-under 33. However, in the back nine she gave away three bogeys against just one birdie on 17th for a total of one-over 71. Third placed Gursimar Badwal shot 74 but did not find her first birdie till the 16th hole. She birdied 17th too, but had a total of six bogeys, with 3 in each half, including one on 18th.

### DSC XI ENTER FINAL

DSC XI defeated CID Club by nine runs to enter the final of Atal Kalam Mega Motors T20 Corporate Cup at AR Jaipuria School on Wednesday. Batting first, DSC scored 104 runs in 20 overs with Anil Lal (43) being the top scorer. In reply, CID Club were bundled out for 95 runs.

### AKHIL INFRA THRASH RCC

Akhil Infra Club thrashed Rudransh Cricket Club by eight wickets in a league match of the 15th BBD 'A' Division League at LDA Stadium on Wednesday. In the 'C' division match, Kalpana Sports Foundation crushed Paramount Cricket Club by 114 runs.

### BRIEF SCORES:

**RCC:** 101 (Deependra 22, Shivam 16; Chandresh 17/4, Vikas 28/3)  
**Akhil Infra:** 103 (Vikasdeep 55, Mohit 31; Raguvendra 22/2)

**KS:** 194 (Advitiya 73, Gopesh 57; Pratyush 32/2, Raj 36/2, Ravi 45/2)

**PCC:** 80 (Ravi 15, Rahul 15; Ajay 13/4, Aman 18/3)

### TANUSHREE WINS BRONZE

Tanushree Pandey bagged the bronze medal in the 3rd World Junior Soft Tennis Championship at South Korea on Wednesday. Tanushree lost to Hamashima Rayena in the semi-finals.

## SINGLES

### MOUDGIL SWEEPS AIR RIFLE EVENTS

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM:** Anjum Moudgil of Punjab completed an unprecedented golden sweep at 62nd National Shooting Championship by winning five events here. She won the Women's 50m Rifle Prone individual and team Gold on Wednesday, her fourth and fifth of the competition. The star rifle shooter had earlier won Gold in the 10m Air Rifle and 50m Rifle 3 Positions. The other star of the day was Haryana's Shirin Godara, who won five Gold medals including the Junior Women's 50m Prone individual.

### ARJUN PICKS FIFER IN COOCH BEHAR GAME

**NEW DELHI:** Arjun Tendulkar, son of batting maestro Sachin Tendulkar, shone bright with the ball, picking up a five-wicket haul against Delhi in an U-19 Cooch Behar Trophy match here on Wednesday. Representing Mumbai, the junior Tendulkar returned with figures of 5/98 as Delhi U-19 slumped to 394 for 9 in their first essay at the Feroz Shah Kotla Stadium at stumps on day three. Asked to bat, Mumbai had scored 453 in their first innings with opener Divyaansh (211) scoring a double century. Delhi still trail Mumbai by 59 runs. Arjun's scalps included rival skipper Ayush Badoni, Vaibhav Kandpal, wicket-keeper Gulzar Singh Sandhu, Hirithik Shokeen and Prashant Kumar Bhati. Arjun, a promising left-arm pacer, is a regular member of the Mumbai U-19 team.

### PRAJNESH, SASI ENTER PUNE QUARTERS

**PUNE:** Prajnesh Gunneswaran demolished his opponent with ease while young Sasi Kumar Mukund yet again impressed with his perseverance as the two Indians moved to the quarterfinals with contrasting victories at the KPIT-MSLTA Challenger. In the second round contest between the two left-handers, Prajnesh overwhelmed Germany's Lucas Gerch 6-1, 6-3 in just 53 minutes at the Centre Court. Wild card entrant Mukund did extremely well against sixth seed Briton Jay Clarke before the Briton opted out of contest in the third set due to a back problem. Mukund was leading 5-7, 6-4, 4-1 at that time. Mukund has a tough task at hand as he is up against top seed Radu Albot, who outplayed Maverick Banes 6-3, 6-1.

### MANPREET JOINS LIST OF ADIDAS ATHLETES

**NEW DELHI:** To add to the already strong portfolio of athletes, Adidas on Wednesday announced their association with Manpreet Singh Pawar, Indian field Hockey player and the current captain of India men's National field Hockey team. Manpreet joins an elite list of athletes that includes Hima Das, Swapna Burman, Rohit Sharma, Kuldeep Yadav, Rishabh Pant, Dipika Pallikal, Zeel Desai, Nikhat Zareen, Siddhant Banthia, and Manjot Kalra to name a few. On announcement of his relationship with adidas, Manpreet said, "Association with adidas is an opportunity that every sportsperson looks forward to and I am really excited to have been given this chance of joining their family. It carves the strengths of a sportsperson by offering the world class products and I am looking forward to great years of association with the brand."

### TOP RANK SIGNS VIJENDER SINGH

**NEW DELHI:** Vijender Singh, a three-time Indian Olympian, 2008 Olympic Bronze medalist, and current unbeaten super middleweight contender has signed a multi-year agreement with Top Rank. Singh (10-0, 7 KOs), who has fought all but one of his professional bouts in India and England, will make his debut under the Top Rank banner in early 2019. "Top Rank is very excited to enter into a contract with Vijender," Bob Arum said. "We intend to make him a big star in the United States and look forward to him participating in major events in India, where he is already a major superstar." "I am really excited to be on board with Bob Arum and Top Rank," Vijender Singh said. "I have always wanted to work with someone who is the best in the business, and I know Top Rank has been the driving force behind boxing's biggest superstars, including Oscar De La Hoya, Floyd Mayweather, and Miguel Cotto.

Agencies

# MARY, LOVLINA TARGET FINAL SPOT

## Five-time champion eyes getting closer to record sixth Gold; Borgohain looks to enter maiden final

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Already assured of a record seventh medal at the Women's World Boxing Championships, celebrated MC Mary Kom would look to go one step closer towards her sixth Gold when she takes the ring in the 48kg semi-finals here Thursday.

Out of the four Indian semi-finalists, five-time champion Mary Kom (48kg) and Lovlina Borgohain (69kg) will take the ring on Thursday while Sonia Chahal (57kg) and Simranjit Kaur (64kg) will have their semifinal bouts on Friday.

The four Indians cannot get a better chance to emerge champions on home conditions, but a lot will depend on the celebrated Mary Kom, who have already become the most successful woman boxer in history of the championships by assuring herself of a seventh medal.

Undoubtedly, all eyes will be on the 35-year-old mother of three when she enters the ring at the KD Jhadav Hall for her semifinal bout against Kim Hyang Mi of North Korea.

The 'Magnificent Mary' had beaten Kim in their last meeting at the summit clash of the Asian Championships last year and the Manipuri veteran sounded confident of a win again.

"I am confident. I also know when to drop guard and when to attack. I have worked with the coaches and have a plan in place to counter her," said Mary Kom, after a strenuous practice session on Wednesday. Mary Kom, who is chasing her sixth Gold, will draw her strength from the vast reservoir of nearly two decades of boxing while the North Korean's USP is her aggression and quick movement which was witnessed on Tuesday when she pummeled her South Korean opponent Chorong Bak.

Equally important will be Lovlina Borgohain's performance as the country would be looking at young pugilist to beat her Chinese Taipei opponent Chen Nien-Chin and progress to the final round.

The welterweight category (69kg) boxer had done extremely well throughout the championships and was particularly good against Australia's Kaye Frances Scott, a Commonwealth Games Bronze medal winner, in the quarterfinals.

Women's Boxing WC  
Live from 1:00pm IST  
STAR SPORTS SELECT 1

The Assamese boxer will also get a chance to avenge her only loss to the Chinese Taipei opponent.

Borgohain feels she has matured as a boxer and can think on her feet now.

"I was inexperienced last time when I took on her. But I now know how to tackle her. I did watch some of the video clips to know her style of boxing," said 21-year-old. Two other Indians in fray, Sonia (57kg) and Simranjit Kaur (64kg) will turn out in their semifinals on Friday, and both were prepared for their respective bouts.

"I have beaten my North Korean opponent (Jo Son Hwa) once before. But both of us know each other's style. I am confident of winning because I have worked with the coaches on my strategies," said Sonia.

Simranjeet added: "I have worked hard and am prepared well for my bout." In Thursday's semifinals, bouts in five weight categories — 48kg, 54kg, 60kg, 69kg and 81kg — will take place while the remaining five are slated for Friday.

MARY HAD BEATEN KIM IN THEIR LAST MEETING AT THE SUMMIT CLASH OF THE ASIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS LAST YEAR AND THE MANIPURI VETERAN SOUNDED CONFIDENT OF A WIN AGAIN



## Politano's winner lifts Italy past USA

AFP ■ GENK

Late substitute Matteo Politano scored an injury-time winner to lift a new-look Italy to a 1-0 win over the United States in an international friendly in Genk on Tuesday.

Roberto Mancini's side had looked set for another goalless draw after crashing out of the Nations League with a 0-0 stalemate against Portugal in Milan on Saturday.

But Politano came on three minutes from time and slotted home in the 94th minute.

It got Italy belatedly off the mark in a match they had dominated but which demonstrated Mancini's difficulty converting opportunities into goals.

"We had so many chances, the important thing is that it was a good performance," said Mancini.

"It was the first time we were playing together, so we couldn't think of playing like the first half for 90 minutes.

"We got a little stretched as we pushed harder to find the breakthrough. I would have



minutes for Domenico Berardi.

"Sensi did really well, so did Kean and Grifo. Acerbi and De Sciglio impressed me too," said Mancini.

"The Euro qualifiers are coming up next year, so we've had a few too many draws and defeats lately, here's hoping we get all victories."

Federico Chiesa and Leonardo Bonucci missed early chances as Italy dominated the first half and let the United States have few opportunities.

Ethan Horvath got his fingers to a curling Berardi shot from the edge of the box, and then got down low to keep out a Marco Verratti free-kick.

Walker Zimmerman had a rare chance for the United States on 65 minutes from a free-kick, but home goalkeeper Salvatore Sirigu saved his header.

With the clock ticking down, Mancini brought on Politano for Kevin Lasagna and he found a way through by finishing off an excellent move after Roberto Gagliardini and Verratti combined in the area.

## Neymar injured as Brazil beat Cameroon

AFP ■ MILTON KEYNES

Neymar could be an injury doubt for Paris Saint-Germain's Champions League clash with Liverpool next week after limping off during Brazil's 1-0 friendly win over Cameroon on Tuesday.

The forward suffered an apparent groin problem and was replaced in the eighth minute, to boos from the crowd in the central English town of Milton Keynes.

Everton's Richarlison, Neymar's replacement, headed in on the stroke of half-time for his third Brazil goal on his sixth appearance to secure victory for the Selecao.

A mixture of cheers and jeers welcomed Neymar, his World Cup theatrics in Russia providing ammunition for his detractors.

And there was little sympathy when the star attraction went off after making little impact.

Richarlison appeared dangerous from the moment he was introduced and Roberto



Firmino went close three times.

The Liverpool striker almost turned in Willian's cross but Andre Onana made a fine instinctive save. Firmino next sent a free header wide from Richarlison's cross and was then denied by the goalkeeper from point-blank range.

Richarlison scored from the resulting corner, powerfully heading in Willian's set-piece. Cameroon might have levelled after 52 minutes, but Stephane Bahoken could not get a touch on Karl Toko Ekambi's cross.



## France see off Uruguay

**PARIS:** A shoulder injury to Kylian Mbappe overshadowed France's 1-0 friendly win over Uruguay at the Stade de France on Tuesday as Didier Deschamps' world champions ended the year on a high note.

Mbappe had to be replaced in the first half after a nasty fall, continuing a miserable night for his Paris Saint-Germain coach Thomas Tuchel. PSG face Liverpool in a crucial Champions League clash at the Parc des Princes on November 28.

When asked if he could give "reassuring news" about Mbappe in his press conference, France coach Deschamps said: "Not necessarily reassuring, but not worrying either."

"He had some shoulder pain after his fall and he has to have tests Wednesday morning, but there is no serious concern."

After the disappointment of seeing the Netherlands pip them to a place at the Nations League finals with a late Virgil van Dijk goal in Germany on Monday, Olivier Giroud's 52nd-minute penalty gave France victory in a repeat of the two teams' WC quarter-final meeting.

"It was important to finish on a positive note, even in the last defeat (by the Netherlands) saw us miss out on the (Nations League) semi-finals," Deschamps told M6. AFP

# India fall short by hit

## Australia hold nerve in rain-hit game to beat India by 4 runs in first T20

PTI ■ BRISBANE

A sloppy India failed to get an ideal start to the Australia tour, losing the rain-hit opening T20 International by four runs at the Gabba on Wednesday.

India first faltered in the field, letting Australia score 158 for four after rain shortened the contest to 17 overs a side. Glenn Maxwell was the star batsman for Australia, hammering 46 runs off 24 balls.

The 45 minute rain stoppage meant India were set a revised target of 174 runs in 17 overs.

Opener Shikhar Dhawan smashed a sublime 76 off 42 balls in the run chase before Dinesh Karthik came up with a pulsating 30 off 13 balls towards the end but India still finished agonisingly short on 169 for seven.

It was a morale boosting win for Australia, who have endured a dismal run of late in limited overs cricket.

Dhawan got India off to a quick start, putting on 35 off 25 balls for the opening stand with Rohit Sharma (7).

The latter was caught at long on off Jason Behrendorff (1-43) in a bid to accelerate his strike-rate. In keeping with the strategy used during the T20I series in England, KL Rahul (13) came out to bat at number three.

Dhawan and Rahul put on 46 runs for the second wicket, but it was mostly down to the left-hander's belligerence. He hit ten fours and two sixes overall, and reached his ninth T20I half-century off only 28 balls.

Rahul though was patchy at best and struggled for timing. He was stumped off Adam Zampa (2-22) in the ninth over, with the leg spinner also accounting for skipper Virat Kohli (4) who never really got going coming down at number four.



Glenn Maxwell plays a shot during his quick fire 46 run innings against India in first T20 at Brisbane. PTI

Zampa should have had a third wicket but he dropped a return chance from Dhawan (on 65). The batsman enjoyed another life at 74, when substitute Nathan Coulter-Nile put him down at square leg off Billy Stanlake (1-27).

The asking rate was climbing up and it took a toll on Dhawan, who finally holed out of Stanlake, leaving

Rishabh Pant (20 off 15 balls) and Karthik with a mountain to climb.

They nearly achieved the impossible, putting on 51 off a mere 24 balls, toying around with the Australian bowling. But what is becoming increasingly frustrating with Pant, he played yet another loose and unnecessary stroke, throwing his wicket away.

It left Karthik to finish off things, but he found the going tough without enough support from the other end. With 13 needed off 6 balls, Krunal Pandya (2) and Karthik holed out off consecutive deliveries off Marcus Stoinis (2-27).

This was after Maxwell hit four sixes in a whirlwind knock before rain came, after Chris Lynn scored 37 runs off 20 balls to help Australia recover from a slow start.

India had won the toss and opted to bowl on a surprisingly green wicket. Kuldeep Yadav was picked ahead of Yuzvendra Chahal as expected, while the hosts also included a spinner in Adam Zampa and left out medium pacer Coulter-Nile.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar (0-15) and Jasprit Bumrah (1-21) got India off to a good start but Aaron Finch (27) pulled things back a bit. Khaleel Ahmed (1-42) got the initial breakthrough as D'Arcy Short (7) was caught at long on. The left-arm pacer proved expensive thereafter.

Kuldeep took a sensational catch

running back to dismiss Short, and from there onwards, he had a marked influence on the game.

Later he also picked up 2-24 in his four-over spell. He dismissed Finch and then sent back Lynn as well, thus reducing Australia to 75-3 in the 11th over.

Apart from Yadav's stunning effort, India were rather poor in the field. Skipper Kohli had dropped Finch in the fourth over, a straight chance spilled at cover, and then miss fielded later on as well.

Ahmed too dropped Stoinis (33 not out off 19 balls) late in the Australian innings, while Maxwell should have been run-out.

Finch took advantage of the reprieve and put on 40 runs off 26 balls with Lynn for the second wicket.

But it was Maxwell who stole the show with his belligerent hitting as Australia crossed 150 in the 16th over. He put on 78 runs off 37 balls with Stoinis as Indian bowlers proved expensive even before the death overs began.

Krunal Pandya had a forgettable day with both bat and ball. He went for 0-55 in his four overs before rain intervened, sucking out momentum from the Australian innings and leaving them only five deliveries on resumption of play.

Bumrah bowled cleverly, conceding only five runs after the disruption, while Australia still finished with a challenging total on the board.

**Shikhar Dhawan smashed a sublime 76 off 42 balls while Dinesh Karthik came up with a pulsating 30 off 13 balls towards the end but India still finished agonisingly short on 169 for seven**

## 'Pant's dismissal was turning point'

PTI ■ BRISBANE

Young Rishabh Pant's dismissal in the penultimate over "changed things", according to India skipper Virat Kohli after Australia won an exciting first T20 International by four runs on Wednesday.

Australia made 158/4 in 17 overs but India were given a target of 174 in the same number of overs owing to the Duckworth-Lewis method in the rain-hit game.

India looked on course with Pant and Dinesh Karthik adding 51 runs in 3.5 overs before the burly keeper-batsman was dismissed trying to play a cheeky shot off Andrew Tye.

"It was a close game, exciting one for the crowd to watch and for the players as well, was a see-saw battle. We started well with the bat, fumbled in the middle overs, in the end we thought we'll win with Pant and Karthik but it changed again with Pant's dismissal," Kohli said at the post-match presentation.

Kohli lauded opener Shikhar Dhawan's power-packed 76 off 42 balls after a prolonged lean patch that started in England and continued till the second last match of the home series against West Indies.

"He's (Dhawan) a very strong player at the top of the order. He hasn't got a T20 hundred yet, but the way he plays it really benefits the team. That's how it goes in the game. What we can do is learn from them and get



Rishabh Pant plays a shot during his innings against Australia in first T20. PTI

back better," the skipper said.

Kohli feels closely-placed remaining two games on November 23 and 25 could be a good thing for the team as it won't be fretting over the loss for a long time.

"On the day, if we can have three-four guys to stand up for the team, that's what we want. Don't have much time to think of things, which can be a good thing as well as a bad thing."

Australian T20 captain Aaron

Finch said: "Thought the boys played really well, especially in the middle overs with the bat."

On a lighter note, Finch admitted that he never understands the equations of Duckworth-Lewis method.

Man of the match Adam Zampa was delighted at having picked up the prized wicket of Virat Kohli.

"Really good feeling. Virat being the player he is, just thought he was a big wicket at the time. Getting him out, I was really excited."

## MISSED CHANCES IN FIELD COST US: DHAWAN

PTI ■ BRISBANE

Opener Shikhar Dhawan on Wednesday said poor fielding cost India the game after the visitors lost by four runs via D/L method at the Gabba.

Dhawan smashed a sublime 76 off 42 balls in the run chase before Dinesh Karthik came up with a pulsating 30 off 13 balls towards the end.

"It was a good game of cricket. It was a very close match and both the teams played really well. We got a lot of confidence from this game and will take it forward to the next game."

"Of course missed chances in the field had their own impacts. The dropped catch and missed run out opportunity but that is part and parcel of the game and we took it in our stride. We conceded a few extra runs (in the middle overs) but otherwise we played well," said Dhawan after the loss.

Indians were poor in the field on Wednesday. Skipper Virat Kohli and Khaleel Ahmed dropped catches while couple of run out opportunities was even wasted.

Chasing the stiff target, Dhawan held the Indian innings together but got out at a crucial juncture. Adam Zampa (2/22) had earlier left the middle-order struggling, dismissing both KL Rahul and Kohli.

"I knew we had to score some big runs in those overs and I was looking for that when I got out. He (Zampa) was influential in this game and his statistics were very good. We needed momentum and he took wickets that moment. From there the game got a bit more



Kuldeep Yadav celebrates after dismissing Chris Lynn. ICC

away from us when Rahul and Kohli were dismissed. He bowled well and with a lot of control," said Dhawan.

"It was a game where we had to target all the bowlers. We didn't have much time (in the match). We tried to target him (Zampa) but he got us out. Next game, we will have better plans against him and implement them in the middle," he added.

Rishabh Pant and Karthik put on a rollicking stand of 51 runs from 24 balls thereafter and almost dragged India to victory.

But the final turning point in the see-saw battle came when Pant was holed out off Andrew Tye.

Dhawan praised Pant, who was playing at this big ground for the first time.

"Playing at such big grounds is about thinking and experience. Rishabh is a youngster and batted here for the first time. So, for him it was vital experience and he came here first time, and played such a knock," he said.

## BAILEY BATS FOR WADE'S INCLUSION

PTI ■ BRISBANE

Former Australia captain George Bailey feels in-form Matthew Wade must be in the mix when Australia select their playing XI for the opening Test of the four-match series against India beginning at Adelaide on December 6.

The 30-year-old Wade, who played his last Test against Bangladesh at Chittagong last September, has scored 412 runs at an average of 82.4 to lie at the third place in the list of Sheffield Shield run-scorers.

Wade had kept wickets for Tasmania in Shield games against Western Australia and Queensland but since then has played as a batsman.

The wicket-keeper batsman has hit five fifties with his top-score being a 137 in Tasmania's loss to Victoria that earned him a man-of-the-match honour.

Given his run of form, Bailey believes he should be in the mix when selection chairman Trevor Hohns zeros in on Australia's team for the four-Test series opener that starts on December 6.

"I can't speak highly enough of the way he's going about his cricket, Bailey was quoted as saying in the 'Sydney Morning Herald'.

"If you're looking at those numbers he'd very much have to be in the mix for a Test. He's a good fielder, just pick your six best batters, simple.



"He's in complete control of his game."

Bailey also pointed out how Wade has scored some valuable runs with the tailenders and adapted to a different kind of pitches across the country.

"That's been the most pleasing thing this year. I don't think we've given him great situations on a number of occasions," Bailey said.

"His ability to go through the gears, to start his innings, accelerate when he needs to."

Meanwhile former great Shane Warne feels Australia has a lot of great cricketers and it is time to replace under-fire batting coach Graeme Hick with one of them.

He was critical of Hick, under whom, Australia have lost their last 18 matches out of the past 24 matches in all formats.

## Anderson to miss third Test against Sri Lanka

AFF ■ COLOMBO

England fast bowler James Anderson on Wednesday said that he has been left out of the final Test against Sri Lanka to give match practice to fellow paceman Stuart Broad.

"Yes I'm not playing this game, Broady's going," Anderson said ahead of the dead-rubber final Test of the three-match series when the visitors will be gunning for a 3-0 white-wash.

"The thinking is that with the series sewn up it's an opportunity to rotate."

"Going to the West Indies as well (in January) and with a view to that I think the feeling is they want Broady to get some Test cricket under his belt," said Anderson, 36.

"So it's going to be a week off. It's been a frustrating trip for me really because you want to contribute to the wins. But I feel like I've tried my best but it's not really been a series for the seamers," he added.

Anderson has taken just one wicket over two Tests that have seen the spinners dominate.

England sewed up the series — a first away series win since beating South Africa in 2015-16 — on Sunday in Kandy, in a closer contest than their first Test trouncing of the hosts in Galle.

The final Test begins in Colombo on Friday.

## NZ expect tougher contest in 2nd Test

AFF ■ DUBAI

Two days after one of the most sensational wins in Test cricket, New Zealand are preparing in Dubai for the second Test against Pakistan with coach Gary Stead expecting an even tougher contest.

New Zealand pulled off an extraordinary four-run win in Abu Dhabi on Monday as they defended a modest target of 176. Debutant left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel took 5-59 as Pakistan's last seven wickets fell for just 41 runs.

The win was Stead's first as head coach since he replaced Mike Hesson in August and he believes it will change Pakistan's mindset ahead of the second Test which starts on Saturday.

"Pakistan are a good team, hard to beat over here," said Stead. "That's what makes this really, really pleasing. But they'll be better for it, and if they were taking us lightly, they won't be now."

"I expect them to be better and I expect us to be better as well."

New Zealand have not beaten Pakistan in an away series since 1969 and Stead thinks they need further improvement in order to change that.

"I don't think we've won too many Tests when we've scored 153 in the first innings," said Stead of New Zealand's first innings total.

"It was always going to be that we need to keep fighting and fighting, and



New Zealand players celebrates after defeating Pakistan by 4 runs in first Test. Blackcaps

my message to the boys was that if you can lose wickets in clumps, then why can't we do that back to them through sustained pressure," said Stead.

Fast bowler Neil Wagner, who became the eighth New Zealand bowler to complete 150 Test wickets in Abu Dhabi, praised the team's spirit.

"It was an amazing fightback," said Wagner. "We knew we'd be in with a chance if we kept fighting. That last hour (on day four) was quite freakish."

Wagner broke the dangerous stand of 82 between Azhar Ali (65)

and Asad Shafiq (45) and then claimed Yasir Shah's wicket to play his role.

"We know that even if we are a little bit behind we can keep fighting, we know what we can achieve. It was bloody tough, hard work, a big fight and it will just get harder. (Pakistan) will come back hard."

"Hopefully we can do something similar and pretty special."

The second Test starts in Dubai from Saturday while the third and final, again in Abu Dhabi from December 3.

## RANJI TROPHY

UP TAKE FIRST INNINGS LEAD

NEW DELHI: In form batsman Priyam Garg (88) skipper Akshdeep Nath (56) and veteran Suresh Raina (41) played with responsibility to give Uttar Pradesh an all-important first innings lead against Services at Airforce Complex ground in New Delhi on Wednesday. Earlier, Services bundled out for 260 runs, adding just four runs to its overnight total.

DELHI FACE CHALLENGE AFTER HYD POST 460

Hyderabad: Ravi Teja struck his maiden first-class hundred, helping Hyderabad post a daunting 460 against Delhi on day two of the Group B match. Hyderabad, resuming the day at 232 for three, continued to frustrate Delhi who are here without their key bowlers including Navdeep Saini and Ishant Sharma. Opener Tanmay Agarwal could only add eight runs to his overnight 112 before being bowled by Delhi pacer Kulwant Khejroliya. Teja then took the innings forward with an unbeaten 115 off 206 and got help from Chama Milind, who was run out for 58. Pacers Khejroliya and Gaurav Kumar took three wickets each for Delhi and did not concede too many runs. Hyderabad were all out for 460 in 170.3 overs. In response, Delhi were 21 for no loss in seven overs at stumps, facing a stiff challenge of taking the first innings lead. Sarthak Ranjan and Hiten Dalal were batting on six and 14 respectively.

KERALA ON TOP AGAINST BENGAL

Kolkata: Opener Lalaj Saxena hit a second successive century of the season to put Kerala in the driver's seat against Bengal in their Elite Group B match. Starting at overnight 14 with the team's score at 35 for one, Saxena stood tall in a glittering 143 from 190 balls (21x4s, 2x6s) as Kerala surpassed Bengal's first innings score of 147 in the opening session before notching up a sizeable 291 in 83 overs. In their second essay, Bengal lost opener Koushik Ghosh (1) cheaply to be five for one in 2.2 overs — still needing 139 runs to avoid a first innings defeat with two complete day's play remaining. Saxena not only held the Kerala innings together en route to his 14th first class century, but counter-attacked Mohammed Shami with both his sixes coming against the Australia-bound India pacer. BCCI had cleared Shami to play the match subject to him bowling not more than 15-17 overs in an innings. But the star pacer ended up bowling 26 overs returning with 3/100 that aptly summed up Bengal's misery after they opted for a green top in their effort to register the season's first win.

KARNATAKA, MUMBAI IN CLOSE FIGHT

Belagavi: Arch-rivals Karnataka and Mumbai were in a close fight for the first innings honours in their Group A game. Mumbai did well to restrict the hosts to 400 all out, built mainly around rookie Krishnamurthy Siddharth's anchoring 161 after Karnataka resumed at their overnight 263 for 4. Shivam Dubey ended up with a highly creditable seven-wicket haul for 63 runs. In reply, Mumbai made 99 for 2 by stumps on day two, still 301 runs in arrears, with Jay Bista cracking an unbeaten 69. In Nagpur, veteran Wasim Jaffer (153), skipper Faiz Fazal (151) and wicket-keeper batsman Akshay Wadkar (102 not out) steered reigning champions Vidarbha to a massive 529 for 6 declared against Baroda who replied with 41 for no loss. In Raipur, Chhattisgarh managed to restrict Railways to 132 for 4 after putting on 300 in their first innings.

TN REACHES 122 FOR 3 AGAINST ANDHRA

Ongele: Tamil Nadu made 122 for 3 in 50 overs at stumps on the second day after bowling out Andhra for 216 in the first innings of the Elite Group 'B' match. Resuming at 198 for 8, Andhra's innings ended for the addition of 18 runs. Tamil Nadu was provided a solid start by the experienced Abhinav Mukund and M Kaushik Gandhi as the duo added 70 runs for the first wicket. Mukund stroked some fluent boundaries, before being the first man to go for 31. Kaushik Gandhi (38, 7x4) went 10 runs later while skipper Baba Indrajith fell for a 28-ball 7. Baba Aparajith (27 batting, 80 balls, 4x4) and N Jagadeesan (8 batting) ensured that the visiting team didn't suffer any further losses before bad light brought an early halt to the day's proceedings.

RAJASTHAN FIGHT BACK AGAINST JHARKHAND

Ranchi: Rajasthan conceded the first innings lead to Jharkhand but remained in the hunt for victory in their Elite Group C game. Rajasthan, who were bundled out for a paltry 100 in the first essay, performed better in the second to make 127 for 4 at stumps on day 2, after skitting out Jharkhand for 152. Robin Bist made 45 after the other top-three Rajasthan batsmen failed. Earlier, Jharkhand resumed the second day at 92 for 5 and overhauled Rajasthan's score with Ishan Jaggi making a fighting 79 in 131 balls with 10 fours. At Guwahati, Odisha were on top with Assam tottering at 60 for 4 in their second outing and still trailing by 59 runs. At Rohtak, Haryana held the upper hand when they managed to bundle out Goa for 177 after putting on 276 in their first innings. At Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir held the advantage after putting up 442 on the board in the first innings against Tripura, who trailed by 307 runs.

MEGHALAYA, UTTARAKHAND IN COMMAND

Shillong: Meghalaya put up a spirited bowling show to tighten their grip over Nagaland in their Plate group match. Resuming on 338/5, Meghalaya managed to add just 51 runs this morning as Nagaland left-arm pacer Pawan Sual returned with 5/96. In reply, Meghalaya trio of Gurinder Singh (4/37), Aditya Singhania (3/12) and Lakan Singh (3/23) shot out Nagaland for a paltry 106 runs in 46.3 overs before enforcing follow-on.