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DEBATING INDIA'S
'DRACONIAN' LAWS

WORLD 11
'MISSING SAUDI SCRIBE
KHASHOGGI LIKELY DEAD'

VIVACITY 13
CHOOSING GIFTS
FOR KIDS

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DELHI FACE
MUMBAI IN
HAZARE FINAL
12 SPORT

DUSSEHRA TURNS TRAGIC

Amritsar revellers mowed down on tracks by speeding trains while watching Ravana dahan; death toll may rise to 50 plus



Relatives mourn at the site of train accident at Joda Phatak in Amritsar on Friday

PTI

**PNS ■ AMRITSAR/
CHANDIGARH**

The occasion of Ravana dahan to mark the end of Durga Puja festivities, turned out to be a heartrending event in Amritsar when a speeding train mowed down around 52 revellers who were gathered on the tracks to watch the ten-headed effigy go in flames across the railway crossing. The revellers did not hear the approaching trains in the deafening burst of crackers. While around 52 were feared dead in the gruesome accident, many more were injured. The train was coming from Jalandhar to Amritsar when the incident occurred in the evening at Joda Phatak. "There are more than 50 casualties. We are evacuating people, injured are being taken to the hospital", said SS Shrivastava, Commissioner of Police, Amritsar, moments after the tragedy, indicating the magnitude of the tragedy. Sub Divisional Magistrate, Amritsar I, Rajesh Sharma said 50 bodies have been found and at least 50 injured have been admitted to a government hos-

pital. Officials said the toll may be higher.

At least 300 people were watching "Ravana dahan" at a ground near the tracks. As the effigy was lit and the fireworks went off, a section of the crowd started retreating towards the tracks where a large number of people were already standing to watch the event, officials said. However, two trains arrived from the opposite direction at the same time giving little opportunity to people to escape, they said. Several people were mowed down by one of the trains, they said. Eyewitnesses told The Pioneer that when the effigy was burnt the deafening noise of the crackers drowned the sound of the approaching train. "No one heard the train coming and it was running at quite a speed," said Sukhjinder Singh an eyewitness. "I have lost my minor child. I want him back," an inconsolable mother could be heard. "Several times we have been requesting the authorities and local leaders telling them to take up the issue with rail-

way authorities to slow down the trains near this Phatak during Dussehra, but no one has listened," a local said. Wails and cries of people filled the air as friends and relatives frantically looked for their near and dear ones. Severed bodies, including of many children, were still lying on the accident site hours after the incident with angry people not allowing authorities to remove them. It was heart rending sight as the dismembered body parts laid strewn on the blood-soaked ground. Many bodies could not be identified. People shouted slogans against local MLA Navjot Kaur Sidhu, who was present as chief guest during the event. She later said she rushed to the hospital immediately after the incident. Another eyewitness blamed the organisers of the Dussehra committee for sheer negligence. "Were they not aware that a train passed from the track every day," asked Pawan Kumar, the eyewitness. She later told reporters that after she left the spot she got a call that such an accident

had taken place. "I am camping at the hospitals to supervise rescue and relief...to ensure that people get the bodies of their near and dear ones. I will camp here the entire night to see that affected people get some succour." Navjot, also a former MLA, wondered how train could move at a speed and there was no mechanism to warn railway authorities about the gathering. Eyewitnesses said there were no barricades near the railway tracks and the people were forced to see the Dussehra ceremony by standing on tracks. The effigy of Ravana was being burnt around 200 feet away from the railway track. Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh rushed to Amritsar to personally supervised relief and rescue efforts. He has asked all Government and private hospitals to stay open. "My Government will give ₹5 lakh to kin of each deceased and free treatment to injured in Government and private hospitals. District authorities have been mobilised on war footing," he tweeted.

Protesters foil women bid to enter Sabarimala

Priest threatens to close temple if any woman of barred age group enters premises

**PNS ■ SABARIMALA
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**

Two women, including a TV journalist in her late 20s, nearly made it inside the Sabarimala temple on Friday under heavy police security, but they had to retreat amid massive protests by Ayyappa devotees and the head priest's threat to close the temple if any woman of the barred age group of 10-50 years entered the premises of the sanctum sanctorum. One of the two women wore police uniform and helmet in an apparent bid to misguide the protesters. The attempt by the women to go to the temple followed a recent Supreme Court ruling allowing anybody to enter the temple negating the tradition barring women of menstrual age group from entering the premises of the celibate Lord Ayyappa. The police unbombust was a sequel to the apex court order to provide protection to such women wanting to go up on the pilgrimage. A third woman of 46 years,



Journalist Kavitha Jakkal escorted by police to Sabarimala Temple on Friday

PTI

who trekked through the forests up to Pamba, five km down the temple, also retreated following the intense protests. As the woman journalist and the other woman reached the hilltop, a massive gathering of devotees blocked them at Valiya Nadappandhal, the queue complex located a few metres down the holy 'pathinet-tampadi' (the 18 sacred steps

leading to the premises of the temple). The women agreed to return as, first, the police said they did not want to take them to the Sannidhanam, the temple complex, by using force against the devotees protesting against their entry. Second, the 'tantri' (head priest) declared that he would close the temple if the women entered the sanctum sanctorum.

TDB to file review plea in top court

Nilakkal: Amid the huge protest after the Sabarimala verdict, the Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB) on Friday decided to file an appeal against the apex court's order of allowing women of every age to enter the historical shrine. The Board also said it is ready for any sort of compromise to end this extreme scenario. "We have decided to appeal against the Supreme Court verdict that allowed women of all age groups to enter the Sabarimala Temple," TDB President A Padmakumar informed the media. **Agencies**



An effigy of demon king Ravana set ablaze at TT Nagar Dussehra ground on Dussehra festival in Bhopal on Friday

Pioneer photo

Capital's air quality nosedives to very poor

SAPNA SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Air quality in the national Capital on Friday has recorded "very poor" as National Ambient Air Quality Index (NAAQI) marked the index "red". The values of both the pollutants — Particulate Matter (PM) 10 and PM 2.5 were recorded at 8 pm 270 and 125 respectively in Micro Cubic Per

Gram (µgm-3). System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR), a unit of Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), has forecast air quality "very poor" till Sunday. Concentrations of both the pollutants (PM10, 2.5) for next three days are — 270-125, 297-138 and 311-144 (µgm-3). This further means the concentration of pollutants in

air is abnormal. Notably, the permissible limits of both the pollutants are 100 and 60 micro cubic per gram. Marking the red to air quality on NAAQI, the SAFAR in its advisory cautioned people to avoid all physical activity outdoor and move activities indoors. Also, asthma suffering people have been suggested to keep relief medicine handy.

Stocks drop more than 1.3% on liquidity, margins concerns

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Led by carnage in stocks of housing finance sectors and major sell-off in shares of market leader Reliance Industries as well as heavy correction in IT and banking sectors, the BSE sensex shed 464 points or 1.33 per cent to close at 34,315.63 points. Friday's market movement is worrisome because stocks saw a free fall despite strengthening of Indian Rupee. **Detailed report on P11**

CAPSULE

2 TERRORISTS KILLED IN J&K SHOOTOUT Srinagar: Two unidentified terrorists were killed on Friday in a shootout with security forces in Jammu & Kashmir's Baramulla district, police said. Security forces signalled a sports utility vehicle (SUV) to stop at Kraalhaar in Baramulla but the terrorists travelling in it opened fire at them, a police spokesman said. Security forces have cordoned off the area and launched a search operation to track down the terrorists, the police official said.

₹10 CR SEIZED FROM CAR IN POLL-BOUND T Hyderabad: In a major haul, police in Telangana on Friday seized ₹10 crore cash from a car. The cash was seized during checking of vehicles by the police in Adilabad district of Telangana, which is going to polls on December 7.

300 FLEE TRIPURA AFTER CLASH OVER MOLESTATION Agartala: Around 300 people of 61 families have fled and at least one house was torched in a clash between two communities in West Tripura district over alleged molestation of a tribal girl, police said Friday. The four alleged molesters were arrested, they said. According to the police, the girl, along with her boyfriend, had come to Ranirbazar area Thursday from a nearby locality to see Durga idols there and four youths allegedly molested her and snatched her mobile phone.

Halted by Titli, N-E monsoon to hit southern India soon

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The northeast monsoon is likely to arrive in the southern peninsula - coastal Andhra Pradesh, Rayalaseema, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and south interior Karnataka - within the next 24 to 48 hours. While it brings heavy rainfall in these regions, its deficiency may lead to drought or drought-like conditions in the southern parts of the country. According to officials, the weather conditions are favourable for the arrival of northeast monsoon and withdrawal of southwest monsoon. The arrival of northeast monsoon was halted by the Cyclone 'Titli' in the Bay of Bengal. The northeast monsoon that spans

from October to December mainly affects the five regions in the southern peninsula. Officials said that unlike southwest monsoon, there is no official onset date for northeast monsoon, which sets in one go over the region, while the former sets in place by place. According to private weather forecaster Skymet, the withdrawal of southwest monsoon 2018 commenced very late on September 28. "In fact, southwest monsoon started retreating at a rapid pace and at that point it seemed that this would be the quickest withdrawal of monsoon in the last few years," the Skymet said. The Skymet said monsoon had withdrawn from entire northwest, east and central



India within a week. Not only this, conditions were looking favourable for the early onset of northeast monsoon during the second week of October itself. Meanwhile, the India Meteorological Department has expressed hope of normal northeast monsoon, this year. The IMD has cited neutral El Nino conditions in the Pacific and the neutral Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD), both of which have a bearing on rainfall in the Indian subcontinent, as supporting evidence for the outlook.

ED files money laundering cases into AI deals during UPA regime

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate has slapped money laundering charges in several cases of irregularities in connection with the decision related to Air India during the UPA regime. The move comes in the wake of CBI FIRs against Air India and other Government officials of that period. The controversial decisions include aircraft purchases by Air India and its merger with Indian Airlines. The CBI FIRs detailed the "illegals and violations" and loss to the exchequer due to the controversial decisions taken by



the Finance Ministry and the Civil Aviation Ministry during the regime of P Chidambaram and Praful Patel. Two cases are related to the controversial merger of Air India and Indian Airlines and alleged irregularities in the purchase and leasing of aircraft by the two State-run carriers under the UPA Government which caused "huge" losses to the exchequer, according to the

CBI. Earlier, the CAG had detailed the loss to exchequer due to the big purchase of flights for Air India and some of which were sold to private airlines at cheap rates. The other two cases relate to surrender of profitable routes and timings of Air India to favour national and international private players which allegedly caused a "huge" loss to the State-run carrier and alleged wrongdoing in the purchase of software for the airline. It is expected that the ED will soon issue summons to a few officials and others involved, asking them to appear before it.

'I did not come for name and fame in this industry'

SANA RIYAZ ■ BHOPAL

Hailing from Jabalpur, young Bollywood playback singer Sourabh Joshi says, "I did not come for name and fame in this industry. He has created a niche for himself in the music industry of Hindi Cinema. The energetic and talented engineering student Sourabh never wanted to be in music industry. But it is said that what is destined to be yours comes to you automatically and so is the story of Sourabh Joshi.



that I grabbed a really good job with Reliance in Mumbai."

Elaborating further, he said, "At my company I used to sing at events and so my friends suggested that I should go for playback singing as my voice is of that kind. As I went with my friends' advice, I started to take it seriously and then the day came when I performed with Mohit Chauhan." After performing with Mohit, Sourabh started performing with Rekha

Bharadwaj in live concerts. Soon, Sourabh got his Bollywood debut in movie Haider. Talking about it, he said, "I met the music composers of Haider as they had heard me at live concert at Rekha Bharadwaj. Then I was called for recording. Seriously, I never thought that I will get this opportunity. I got a call from Vishal after few days of recording and then the song was out."

Talking about working with Rekha Bharadwaj, Sourabh said, "It is such a blessing for me." Sourabh said that his various projects are in the pipeline. He also worked on a cover song on Gandhi Jayanti. While signing off, he said, "If only you have passion to work in this industry then try and work hard to achieve it."

Last day of Ramleela: Victory of good over evil shown

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The victory of good over evil was splendidly showcased on the last day of Ramleela Utsav. Watching Ravana Vadh live on stage was a delightful experience for the Bhopalites. In the closing ceremony of 'Ramleela Utsav' Ravan Vadh and Rajya abhishek was staged here on Friday.

The programme organised by Madhya Pradesh Culture Department, the Ramleela Utsav showcased different episodes from the epic Ramayana. Here on Friday, the audiences were enthralled to watch Ravan Vadh and Rajya Abhishek at Ravindra Bhavan Auditorium.

Proceeding with the various episodes of Ramayana, the Ram Leela concluded with

staging the last episodes of the epic mythology tale. The event began with staging the Setuband Rameshwar, Angad Ravan samvad, Laxman shakti, Meghnath, Ravan Vadh and later, Rajya Abhishek, (crowning of lord Rama) was performed. The captivating staging was of Ravan Vadh and Rajya Abhishek of Lord Ram. The 80 artists of Rangrez Kala Sanskar Group of Gwalior spontaneously performed every episode of Ramayana on stage leaving the audience totally stunned. With the help of Hanuman and Laxman Ram killed Ravana and took Sita back to Ayodhya. Having received Hanuman's report on Sita, Rama and Lakshman proceeded with their allies towards the shore of the southern sea. There they are joined by

Ravana's renegade brother Vibhishana. The monkeys named Nala and Nila construct a floating bridge known as Rama Setu across the ocean, and the princes and their army cross over to Lanka. A lengthy battle ensues and Rama kills Ravana. Rama then installs Vibhishana on the throne of Lanka.

Later, Ram along with Sita and Laxman returns to Ayodhya. It was a time of festivity all over as Ram returns to his kingdom.

The highly decorated stage, wonderful costumes, attracting props and moreover wondrous presentation was all about the grand closure of Ramleela Utsav. The audiences were mesmerised as they witnessed Ramayana in different episodes live on stage.

Locals seen enjoying Diwali shopping

Bhopal: This festive season, people are enjoying diwali shopping at different spots of the city. Bhopalites are busy buying decorative items, dress materials and eatables. To give more opportunity to the shopaholics, an exhibition cum sale is being organized at Gauhar Mahal from Thursday.

Organized by Sathiya Welfare Society, the historical shopping hub of the city is adorned with sparkling and fizzy shades of around 27 districts of the State. The exhibition cum sale display special items for this festival and provide opportunity to the people to buy traditional and unique items for their homes.

Artisans from Indore, Chhatarpur, Betul, Jhabua, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh have arrived at the fair. There is a unique collection of diwali lanterns, diyas, diyas made of terracotta, rangoli colours and manual books with various

rangoli patterns. Besides, the fair sports a collection of silver puja thalis embedded with meenakari work. Around 33 stalls have been put up at the fair. Chanderi and Maheshwari work on half silk cotton suits added more zest at the fair. Lots of designer sarees and suits with applied work of Jamdani silk and patch work are also displayed. Sarees in bagh print and heavy zardozi work are also available there at affordable prices.

Ornaments are best attraction for women. A horde of ladies could be noticed at the ornament stalls. These stalls included imitation jewellery with a touch of Gujarat and Rajasthani jewellery embedded with kund-dan karigari with the finishing of pretty traditional look. The other stalls are displaying the Hyderabad ornaments including gulband with anardana giving them a traditional touch of Hyderabad as well. SR

Devotional music, Garba Raas held

Bhopal: At Jawahar Bal Bhavan the students filled the atmosphere with devotion and spiritual ecstasy. The students gave performances of devotional music and Garba Raas at Jawahar Bal Bhavan.

On the occasion of Navaratri in Jawahar Bal Bhavan, the Devotional music programme was organized by the modern music division under the guidance of Vijay Sapre. During the performance, the students presented devotional songs dedicated to Goddess Durga.

During the performance, the students gave tribute to all the nine forms of Goddess and even thanked her for her blessings.

The students presented melodious tracks during the performance leaving the audience spellbound. Director of Jawahar Bal Bhavan Umashankar Nagaiyach told

that the programme was organized on the last day of Navratri by the modern music division, Devi Bhakti. The children gave beautiful presentation of the songs of the Goddess, after hearing the children's parents and the audience became emotional.

The centre of attraction of the programme was Garba dance. Around 30 children participated in the dandiya training and were trained by dance instructor Sangh Mitra Bankar. She taught children the different dance steps of dandiya and garba on traditional garba songs.

They learned Krishna Leela, Holi and other forms that they presented during the programme.

On the concluding day the children performed dance on songs like 'Pankhira O Pankhira' leaving the audience mesmerized. SR



Idols of Goddess Durga queue up for immersion (left) and devotees carrying idols of Goddess Kali and Durga for immersion in the Upper Lake on the last day of Navratri festival in Bhopal on Friday



Pioneer photo

Trikarshi theatre troupe to woo audience with new plays

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The Trikarshi theatre troupe is all set to woo the Bhopalites with new plays. In a theatre festival, Trikarshi theatre troupe will present new productions that would be featuring new theatre artists.

The Vibha Mishra Memorial Theatre Festival will begin on October 25 at Shaheed Bhavan auditorium. Currently, the theatre troupe is busy in doing the final rehearsals of the plays. The five day long theatre festival will be a mass treat for the theatre lovers.

A two-month long theatre workshop for the same is being organised under the direction of founder of Trikarshi theatre troupe KG Trivedi.

During the month long theatre workshop, students are

A two-month long theatre workshop for the same is being organised under the direction of founder of Trikarshi theatre troupe KG Trivedi

taught the basic acting exercises to strengthen their acting foundation.

This training programme would further train the students to free them from self-consciousness and strengthen their concentration through sensory exercises.

Students will be given

assignments to apply in their theatrical personality and performances.

How to use the props and properties, speech therapy, improvisation of stories, body movements, facial expression with dialogue, and footwork on music along with other experimental exercises will be taught to them by the theater personalities.

At the theatre festival three new plays including Bhola directed by Mridula Bharadwaj, Kanyadaan directed by Shivakant Verma and Jayaz Hatyare directed by Rahul Singh will be staged. Notably, more than 50 theatre aspirants are a part of the festival.

Apart from these three plays, Hindi plays including Actress and Beton Wali Vidhwa will also be staged at the theatre festival.

Full dress rehearsal parade organised at Memorial Corridor

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Full dress rehearsal parade was held in the Memorial Corridor situated on Lal Parade ground on Thursday for the Police Memorial Day October 21. Director General of Police (acting) VK Singh took inspected the parade and reviewed the arrangements for the parade.

On this occasion, Additional Director General of Police, SAF Vijay Yadav was also present. Sub-Inspector Shaily Thomas plays the Chief Guest in the rehearsal.

The Police Memorial Day parade will be held on Sunday from 8 am on, October 21. In the parade, Governor Anandiben Patel will be the Chief Guest.

In the state six policemen laid their lives for the country during the year.

The martyred policemen were ASI Amrit Lal Bhilala, ASI Devchand Naagle, HCM Indrapal Singh Sengar, HCM Arvind Kumar Sen, constable Raj Bahadur Yadav and Constable Balmukund Prajapati.

On the Police Memorial Day parade IPS ASP Jabalpur Hansraj Singh will lead the parade, while second in Command would be State Police Service DSP Dhar Mohit Yadav.

In the parade District Force, Government Railway Police Platoon (Women), Special Armed Forces, District Force / Government Railway Police Platoon (Male), Nagar Sena Platoon, Color Party, Police Band Platoon and Dog Squad

The martyred policemen were ASI Amrit Lal Bhilala, ASI Devchand Naagle, HCM Indrapal Singh Sengar, HCM Arvind Kumar Sen, constable Raj Bahadur Yadav and Constable Balmukund Prajapati

would participate.

On this occasion, Inspector General of Police Bhopal, Jaydeep Prasad, Deputy Inspector General of Police, SAF Sanjay Tiwari, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Deepak Verma (Central Area) and Deputy Inspector General of Police Bhopal, Dharmendra Choudhary, Commandant 25th Corps, Monica Shukla were present. Deputy Inspector General of Police, Deepak Verma, read out the names of police officers / employees of all the states of the country who were martyred on duty. During this period, paid tributes to the martyrs. At the height of 16 thousand feet on October 21, 1959, a troop of 10 CRPF soldiers was patrolling the hot springs in Ladakh led by Sub Inspector. Karam Singh were killed in an attack by Chinese army. In his memory this day is celebrated by all police units of the country.

Motorbike, valuables worth ₹1 Lakh burgled

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Valuables worth ₹1 lakh and a motorbike were burgled from Mayur Colony under Sukhisewania police station area on Thursday.

According to the police, the victim Naresh Shrivastava along with his family had gone to visit his relative on October 8 and when they returned on Thursday they found that the valuables were missing.

A complaint was made by the victim with the Sukhisewania police and in the complaint the victim had claimed that on his return he found that the locks were broken and on entering the house was found ransacked. Gold jewelry and other valuables worth ₹1 lakh and motorbike parked inside the house were

Gold jewelry and other valuables worth ₹1 lakh and motorbike parked inside the house were found missing claimed the victim

found missing claimed the victim.

In the burglary the almira which was having the valuables was targeted and the other valuables were not disturbed. The police have registered a case under sections 457 and 380 of the IPC and have started further investigation.

Meanwhile, Shahpura police arrested eight persons on the charge of gambling and

recovered ₹9000 cash, playing cards from their possession in Shahtan Singh Square on Thursday.

Acting on a tip off, eight gamblers were caught gambling by Shahpura police late in the night on Thursday near a Durga pandal at Shahtan Singh Square.

Police received information that gamblers are gambling near Durga pandal and based on the information the place was raided where 8 persons were found gambling.

Police said that in the raid the gamblers were found gambling and in the raid around ₹9000 cash was recovered from their possession.

The details of the 8 gamblers nabbed would be investigated in the further investigation.



Inspector General of Police Jaideep Prasad and District Collector Sudam Khade performing 'Shastra Puja' in police armory on the occasion of Dussehra festival at District Reserve Police (DRP) line in Bhopal on Friday

Pioneer photo



Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) workers participate in a Foot March (Path Sanchalan) on the occasion of Dussehra festival marking foundation day of their organisation, in Bhopal on Friday

Pioneer photo

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UNICEF, NGO hold photography workshop



STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Around 25 adolescents participated in the photography workshop for adolescents groups organised by NGO Vasudha Samaj Sanasthan with support of UNICEF, Madhya Pradesh. Many participants have marked their recognition how

where they were exposed to various facets of photography, how to use camera, what is focus, zoom, ISO, as part of effort to strengthen voices of adolescents in the districts and giving them the voices of adolescents a platform. They were exposed to DSLR and using mobile for photography. The aim was to encourage them to use camera to share their view on efforts and issues which they see in the ground shares Gayatri Parihar of Vasudha.

Satish Dave who works with children and adolescents and young photographer Parth were two trainers, and on format which was worked by Anil Gulati, UNICEF Communication Specialist. The adolescents not only learned about photography and camera in class, but were in field and in villages clicking on issues which they feel are important be it water, sanitation, Anganwadi, mother and child, nutrition being served to children, immunization, hygiene, and challenges of garbage etc. and many times often get missed in media also. Michael Juma, Chief, UNICEF, Madhya Pradesh shares that Continuous empowerment of adolescents on techno-savvy skills like photography has the potential to improve their skills -sets and employability to enable them to realize their dreams. Inspiringly images taken by the adolescents which are grounded on issues impacting their lives such as child marriage, drop-out of school and adolescent anemia should be taken into policy consideration by decision makers and partners. Adolescents who participated in the workshop clicked the images of global hand-washing day which was marked on October 15 in schools of the district.

THE WORKSHOP WAS ORGANISED FOR 3 DAYS FROM OCTOBER 13 TO 16, 2018 AT MEGHNAGAR WHERE THEY WERE EXPOSED TO VARIOUS FACETS OF PHOTOGRAPHY, HOW TO USE CAMERA, WHAT IS FOCUS, ZOOM, ISO, AS PART OF EFFORT TO STRENGTHEN VOICES OF ADOLESCENTS IN THE DISTRICTS AND GIVING THEM THE VOICES OF ADOLESCENTS A PLATFORM.

Effigies of social evils burned on Dussehra by changeloomers, NGO



STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

This Dussehra in Madhya Pradesh while all were burning effigies of Ravana in the evening, adolescents of the village Nagor of Jhabua district, village Hadha of Umaria district, and youth changeloomers of Harda and in Bhopal NGO Spandan and its partners were burning effigies of different kind. These were effigies of social evils like child marriage, malnutrition, violence against women, dowry, and gender discrimination. Gayatri Parihar of Vasudha Sanasthan which works for women and children

in Jhabua and Umaria says we need to say no to violations of rights of children and women, which are social evils. This was strongly felt by adolescents with whom we engage in Jhabua and Umaria and they only prepared the effigy and worked on the issues. In Harda youth changeloomers prepared the effigy, highlighting challenges and burnt them with a message to say no to these in Harda and MP. Anil Soumitra of Spandan NGO in Bhopal said we burnt effigy of these evils and with a message of saying no to them and taking steps to eradicate

these challenges. The effigy was burnt at Jawahar Chowk in Bhopal. It is 2018 and while Ravana may be resting in his grave, the millennial generation has its own devils to fight and many Ravana to be defeated. In the age of internet and rampant social media use, it is easy to fall prey to many Ravana who try to take advantage under the convenient guise of an innocent person. However, if we stay alert and take some quick action, we can conquer these new-age Ravana... and well, not have to engage in a full-fledged war with a ten-headed man in a foreign land.

Married woman dies under mysterious circumstances

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

A 25-year-old married woman died under mysterious circumstances during treatment at Bansal hospital after she was admitted 2-3 days ago; Shahpura police have registered case and started investigation on Thursday. According to the police, the deceased Rolly Shrivastava died while undergoing treatment at Bansal hospital in Shahpura. Police were informed and based on the information a police team reached the spot and started investigation. In the initial investigation family members have told the police that the deceased died of illness but post mortem report is awaited after which the reason of the death would be revealed. Police said that after the deceased went ill around a week ago she was at home and around 2-3 days ago she was admitted to Bansal hospital where she died during treatment. Police have not found any suicide note which could help in establishing the reason and no other reason was found behind the death reason would be investigated. The body was sent for the post mortem after the preliminary investigation. The police have registered a case under section 174 of the CrPC and have started further investigation. Meanwhile, a 46-year-old man died who was hit by a speeding jeep near Kalara village under Gunga police station area on October 12; man died late in the evening on Thursday while undergoing treatment. According to the police, a man was hit by a speeding vehicle near Kalara and was rushed to hospital later he died late in the evening on Thursday while undergoing treatment. The deceased who was identified as Bhagwan Singh was hit by a speeding jeep but the details were not found as the errand driver escaped the spot and is still missing. After the preliminary investigation the body was sent for the post mortem. The police have registered a case under section 304 A of the IPC and have started further investigation.

Free urology camp held by Sewa Sadan eye hospital

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Siddh Bhau, Chairman of the Sewa Sadan Eye Hospital Trust, met the patients admitted in the hospital for their surgeries and inquired about their well-being in 92nd Free Urology Camp here on Friday. Siddh Bhau said due to the lack of specialised medical facilities and resources these poor patients are deprived of the proper treatment. He re-iterated that almighty God himself have sent the surgeons and trained paramedical staff to relieve them from the agony of the diseases. Siddh Bhau enquired about well-being of the operated patients also. He expected from duty Doctors, paramedical staff and volunteers to behave politely and sympathetically with the patients. Earlier he went to the operation theatre and met the operating surgeons and took an account of ongoing surgeries. As many as 35 patients of various urinary disorders have been operated on Friday. These include seven patients of Prostate enlargement, 16 patients of Kidney and Gal Bladder Stone, two patients of Harnia and 10 other patients of various urinary disorders. This camp was jointly organized by Sewa Sadan Eye Hospital, Jeev Sewa sansthaan and Jai Shiv Shakti Health and Education Foundation, Bangalore. It was learnt that total 527 patients have registered their names for treatment. After their preliminary investigations, about 128 patients identified for their uro surgeries. Efforts are being made to perform all surgeries before and upto October 21, 2018. America based urology specialists Dr Shibban Warikoo, Delhi based Dr Salim Naik, Dr Surabhi Desai, Dr Neeraj Sharma and Dr Prashant Jain, Ahmedabad based Dr Darshan Shah, Radiology specialist Dr Deepak Jhangiyani from Mumbai Anesthetist Dr Deepak Jain, Dr Shailendra Singh and Dr Ajay Raghuvanshi Urologist Dr CP Dewani, Dr Dhirendra Shrivastava and Dr Sudhir Lokwani of Bhopal have also rendered their services in the camp. Physician Dr Naresh Himthani of Apollo Ahmadabad and Dr Abhishek Gyanchandani of Delhi have taken the responsibility of the post operative care of the operated patients.

Workshop on folk dances to be held

Burglars struck at a house in Regal Kasturi colony under Awdhpuri police station area on Thursday and decamped with valuables worth ₹1 lakh. According to the police, the victim, Navdeep Kumar had gone for some work on Wednesday and when he returned on Thursday the valuables were found burgled. A complaint was lodged by the victim with the Awdhpuri police and in his complaint he stated that he had gone for religious function at his parents' house in Piplani on Wednesday and when he returned on Thursday the doors of the house was found burgled. Gold chain, gold finger ring, gold ear ring and Rs 50000 were found burgled. The total loss in the burglary was over ₹1 lakh. Gold jewellery was targeted by the miscreants that raised suspicion that the miscreants were aware of the gold jewelry at the house, said police. The police have registered a case under section 457 and 380 of the IPC and have started further investigation. The security guards of the society and domestic help would be questioned in the investigation. The victim had provided the list of valuables burgled but the loss was not provided. Footages of installed CCTV cameras would be searched during the further investigation to establish the identity of the miscreants. Meanwhile, electronic goods worth ₹65000 were burgled from Bharat Nagar under Piplani police station area on Thursday. The victim lives in a rented room and is pursuing engineering. He failed to lock the room and got asleep and in the morning the electronic goods were found burgled. The police have registered a case of burglary and started further investigation.



Women devotees of the Bengali community apply vermilion on each other's faces as they take part in the 'Sindoor Khela', a ritual before the immersion of Goddess Durga idols into water bodies on the last day of the Durga Puja Festival at TT Nagar Kalibari in Bhopal on Friday. Pioneer photo

IGRMS displays Dussehra rath of Bastar

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya display of a dussehra rath of Bastar, a symbol of bravery and endurance, received a lot of response. The festival of Dussehra is celebrated with great devotion at Jagdalpur town of Bastar district, Chhattisgarh from ancient times. It is an occasion to propitiate Danteshwari Mai, the supreme goddess of the local pantheon. On this occasion Rath (Chariot) is drawn by people with the help of ropes and a procession follows the moving of Rath. The institution of boarding the Rath started from the days of Maharaja Purshottam Dev, who was the ruler of Bastar in 14th century. King Purshottam Deo went to Jagannath Puri temple for worship and came back as 'Rath-pati' with a divine permission to mount on chariot. Since then, Dussehra is being celebrated by people of Bastar in this unique way. Deities from various small temples across Bastar travel to district headquarters of Jagdalpur. The chariot on which the procession of local deities is carried out is made of special wood from Odisha and its construction is supervised Dhakada tribe. The tribal worships the chariot before it is used. The Parja tribe provides ropes to pull

Valuables worth ₹1 I burgled from Regal Kasturi colony

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

65-year-old woman robbed of gold chain

65-year-old woman was robbed of her gold chain at Ahinsha Vihar Colony under Ayodhya Nagar police station area late in the evening on Thursday. According to the police, the victim Sumitra Singh was near her home when she was attacked by two bike borne miscreants and snatched the gold chain she was wearing. A complaint was lodged with the police by the victim stating that two bike borne miscreants appeared and attacked her and escaped with the gold chain she was wearing. She raised alert but before she could be helped the miscreants managed to escape the spot. The victim was not able to notice the miscreants and registration number of the bike due to dark and as the miscreants was shocked due to the sudden attack by the miscreants. Based on the complaint after the preliminary investigation the police have registered a case under section 392 of the IPC and have started further investigation. The victim is a resident of Ahinsha in Ayodhya Nagar area.

65-year-old woman robbed of gold chain

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Workshop on folk dances to be held

Workshop on folk dances to be held

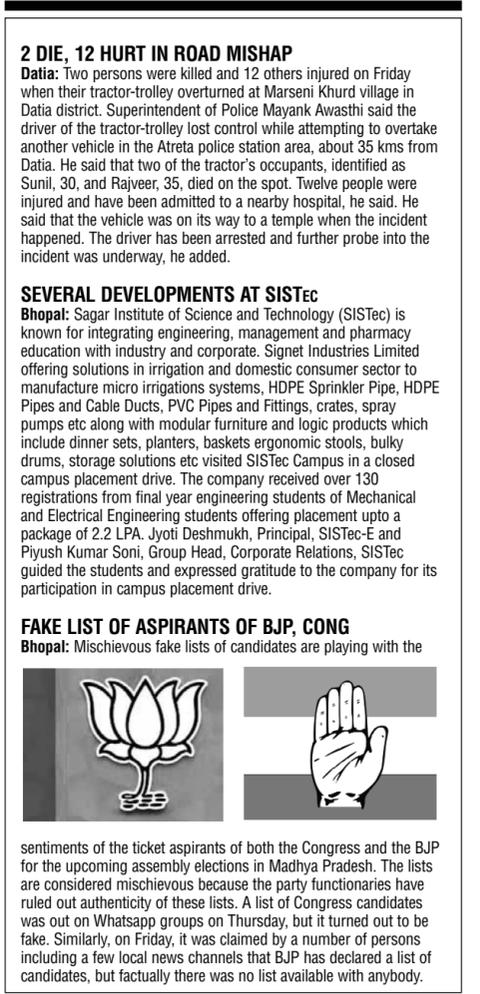
Workshop on folk dances to be held

INBRIEF

2 DIE, 12 HURT IN ROAD MISHAP
Datia: Two persons were killed and 12 others injured on Friday when their tractor-trolley overturned at Marseni Khurd village in Datia district. Superintendent of Police Mayank Awasthi said the driver of the tractor-trolley lost control while attempting to overtake another vehicle in the Atrata police station area, about 35 kms from Datia. He said that two of the tractor's occupants, identified as Sunil, 30, and Rajveer, 35, died on the spot. Twelve people were injured and have been admitted to a nearby hospital, he said. He said that the vehicle was on its way to a temple when the incident happened. The driver has been arrested and further probe into the incident was underway, he added.

SEVERAL DEVELOPMENTS AT SISTEC
Bhopal: Sagar Institute of Science and Technology (SISTec) is known for integrating engineering, management and pharmacy education with industry and corporate. Signet Industries Limited offering solutions in irrigation and domestic consumer sector to manufacture micro irrigation systems, HDPE Sprinkler Pipe, HDPE Pipes and Cable Ducts, PVC Pipes and Fittings, crates, spray pumps etc along with modular furniture and logic products which include dinner sets, planters, baskets ergonomic stools, bulky drums, storage solutions etc visited SISTec Campus in a closed campus placement drive. The company received over 130 registrations from final year engineering students of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering students offering placement upto a package of 2.2 LPA. Jyoti Deshmukh, Principal, SISTec-E and Piyush Kumar Soni, Group Head, Corporate Relations, SISTec guided the students and expressed gratitude to the company for its participation in campus placement drive.

FAKE LIST OF ASPIRANTS OF BJP, CONG
Bhopal: Mischievous fake lists of candidates are playing with the sentiments of the ticket aspirants of both the Congress and the BJP for the upcoming assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh. The lists are considered mischievous because the party functionaries have ruled out authenticity of these lists. A list of Congress candidates was out on Whatsapp groups on Thursday, but it turned out to be fake. Similarly, on Friday, it was claimed by a number of persons including a few local news channels that BJP has declared a list of candidates, but factually there was no list available with anybody.



VIEWPOINT

Darkness dancing in Light, 2 goddesses merging in one



Romit Bagchi

felt or rather enjoyed while at a tiny, sleepy place known as Lataguri, surrounded by Gorumara forest of north Bengal, on the moonless, Amavasya night-the night of Kali Puja.

On that night, nothing seemed to me real, except the darkness-the primordial darkness, the darkness preceding the cosmic creation. Darkness was hanging thick and deep outside and I felt that there was no light left within me strong enough to resist the darkness. Powerless to resist, I decided to embrace it. I felt that darkness was a subject of study and it could not be known by flooding it with light.

The impenetrable gloom reigning all around reminded me of the dark beginning of all created things, a time before the gods awoke. It made me to imagine the State when the Supreme Force-lying immobile in an apparent slumber on the rim of inscrutable silence under impassive, pitch-dark skies- was awaiting the time to churn and stir things out of its creatively dark bosom.

I felt the darkness inside me, around me, above me, engulfing me in a mighty swipe. Everything belonging to the sensory world, so over-



powerfully real in light for flesh and blood, seemed lost in the pregnant, serene darkness pervading the horizons from end to end. I mused over whether the darkness was that the Goddess Kali represents? She, the Adi Shakti, is supposed to have conjured up the worlds from her darkness for her delight of creation and she at the same time goads the created into the void of nothingness for her delight of destruction to new-create things.

The darkness reminded me of T S Eliot who defies darkness as something coming from the divine, asking the soul of man to be still and allow the encroaching darkness to descend in full so that the darkness becomes the transmuting light and the stillness becomes the dance of the divine. What Swami Vivekananda wrote in his

poem on the Mother Kali swept into my mind- "The stars are blotted out, the clouds are covering clouds, it is darkness vibrant, sonant. In the roaring, whirling wind are the souls of a million lunatics just loose from the prison-house wrenching trees by the roots.

The sea has joined the fray and swirls up mountain-waves to reach the pitchy sky.

The flash of lurid light reveals on every side a thousand, thousand shades of death begrimed and black, scattering plagues and sorrows, dancing mad with joy. Come, Mother, come! For Terror is Thy name, Death is in Thy breath and every shaking step destroys a world for ever. Thou 'Time', the All-Destroyer! Come, O Mother, come! Who dares misery love and hug the form of Death, dance in Destruction's dance, to him the Mother comes."

Is this the darkness that we must crave for? Must we wake up to this darkness which is the light to light the beauty within? For the darkness without can drive out the darkness within. Should we allow it to sweep its way into us, in spite of ourselves, despite the gravitational resistance, despite our unquench-

able hunger for light to see, enjoy, wallow and fall? Should we allow the darkness to swallow up all that is dear to us, rending the veil asunder that covers our depths to lead us to a new light through the passage-the tunnel through darkness?

And is this the transition that the Goddess Kali presides over, a prescient presence lurking everywhere, enveloping us in darkness, driving us into a kind of eyeless musing at a certain juncture, to awaken us to a new dawn, to a new life that springs up from within the womb of darkness and takes us into an effulgence that never fades?

I do not know why the joyous illumination of Durga Puja longs to merge in the reflective darkness of Kali Puja this time. While a certain part of my mind is still craving for the light of the festivities another one is yearning for the darkness proper to the moonless Amavasya night when Kali Puja is held.

Two goddesses are merging in one, light merging in darkness, joy of living loving to lose itself in the void of a non-existence whence must emerge a new existence, unknown, yet palpable. I must say that it is a strange feeling. But it is real nonetheless.

Funds for cleaning Ganga going down the drains



Experts suggest solutions for cleaning of the holy river

PNS ■ HARIDWAR

Despite the Ganga activists sacrificing lives to make their voice heard and crores of rupees being spent in the name of Ganga cleaning, the harsh reality remains that the water is still not fit for holy dip and 'Achman' (drinking with hands as a ritual) at some places where drains pour out their untreated waste directly. The solution lies in ensuring that not a drop of wastewater is discharged in the city stretches of Ganga, say the scientists.

A Japanese organisation Asahi Glass Foundation which is striving to create a new society based on the values of the civilisation has suggested ways to keep the Ganga clean. Supporting advanced research in the fields of science and technology and by recognising efforts to solve the environmental issues, it has suggested deactivating the retarders of Ganga cleaning by taking certain steps.

Based on the inputs from IIT scientists, it says that with more than half of wastewater generated from the slums in

the cities of India discharging in the rivers directly, it is imperative to scientifically treat the organic-manure-rich wastewater being thus generated. The same water can be used then for irrigation purposes by the farmers for high profit-giving organic farming, those associated with the organisation suggest.

The experts say that the Government depending on very expensive foreign expertise despite indigenous availability in abundance is making the humongous sums being spent for Ganga cleaning projects going down the drains.

Speaking to *The Pioneer*, former professor from Indian Institute of Technology D S Bhargava said, "For immediate cleaning of Ganga without spending money, it is a high time that we adopt safe, scientific and economic disposal of the city's waste waters. A one-act solution to all these problems in a symbiosis manner is to construct a dam-like structure or a retaining wall between the river and the city.

Between the dam or wall and the city, a parallel covered canal or a huge sewer can be laid to carry all the waste waters generated from the city upto some three kms down-

stream of the city where the entire wastewater is given zero primary and secondary treatments depending on the finances available with the civic body of the city."

A part of the untreated or treated manure-rich wastewater can be pumped to farmers for organic farming and the farmers would only be too glad to pay for it and provide some financial support to the civic body apart from desisting from committing suicides, he suggested. The Ganga due to its extremely high self-purifying abilities would get purified by the time it reaches the next urban centre, he added.

Dr Vijay Verma, an expert, opines, "The Hindus themselves are polluting Ganga by immersing the mortal remains of their near and dear ones in it. This is principally responsible for the pollution of the holy river. Steps must be taken to stop such practice."

The dam-like structure which acts as a barrier between the city and the river can beautifully be developed into a very aesthetic river-front or a picnic-spot with umbrella-cum-chairs for the city dwellers, opine the engineers.

'Statue of Unity' unveiling ceremony Gujarat delegation invites CM



at Kedarnath is now going on fast and the number of pilgrims is rising steadily.

The delegation informed the CM that around the 'Statue of Unity', guest houses of each State would be constructed.

Gujarat Food and Civil Supplies Minister Jayesh Bhai Radadia presented a shawl of Gujarat and a replica of statue of Sardar Patel to the CM while Rawat in reciprocal ges-

Speaking on the occasion, the CM termed Sardar Patel as a great patriot, an able administrator and also a farsighted politician and said that the 'Statue of Unity' would turn out to be a unique identity of united India

ture presented the members of the delegation with shawls and replica of Kedarnath shrine.

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

A delegation from Gujarat called upon the Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat at his official residence here on Friday and invited him to participate in the unveiling ceremony of 'Statue of Unity' scheduled on October 31.

The delegation comprised the Gujarat food and supplies Minister Jayesh Bhai Radadia, legislators Mukesh Patel, Raman Bhai Patel, Karsan Bhai Solanki and Yogesh Bhai Patel, secretary Mohammad Shahid,

Director General of police T S Bisht and joint secretary Industry B S Mehta.

The delegation also made a presentation through a film about the 182- meter tall statue of Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel.

Speaking on the occasion, the CM termed Sardar Patel as a great patriot, an able administrator and also a farsighted politician and said that the 'Statue of Unity' would turn out to be a unique identity of united India.

He termed the ambitious project envisaged by the Prime

Minister as an inspiration for the common people across the country. Hailing the Sardar's monumental contribution to the unity of the country, the CM said that the nation would hold him in grateful remembrance forever.

The CM also heaped praise on the initiative of the Prime Minister in the reconstruction of Kedarnath Dham and also the sincere support the Centre has been giving to the State Government on the matter. He said that due to interest shown by the PM, the development of infrastructure

Dry climate in Doon, light rain/snow in higher reaches today



PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The Regional Meteorological Centre has forecast dry weather in Uttarakhand while, according to its report, it might rain or snow in the higher reaches in some districts like Uttarkashi, Rudrapur, Chamoli and Pithoragarh on Saturday. As per the weather forecast, the climate would be generally, dry in the rest of the State on the day, though the sky would remain generally to partly cloudy.

In Dehradun, the sky would remain generally clear to partly cloudy on the day. The maximum temperature on Friday in the city settled at 32.3 degree Celsius-four notches above the normal, while the minimum hovered at 14.2 degree Celsius which was normal. On Saturday too, the same temperature would continue with slight variations.

The Met department officers said that though it is snowing now sporadically in the higher reaches of the State it would take some more time for the mercury in the plains to dip sufficiently to usher in the winter.

They said that the people must wait till the first or the second week of November to get the feel of winter in Dehradun and other places in

PEOPLE MUST WAIT TILL THE FIRST OR THE SECOND WEEK OF NOVEMBER TO GET THE FEEL OF WINTER IN DEHRADUN AND OTHER PLACES IN THE PLAINS

the plains. However, they say that it might rain in the interim under the influence of the western disturbance which might make the mercury to plunge down.

At Mukteshwar, the minimum temperature settled at 9.3 degree Celsius-two notches above the normal, and the maximum at 21.9 degree which was normal while the minimum was 10.2 at New Tehri normal and the maximum was 21.2 degree Celsius-normal. In Pantnagar, the maximum temperature was 32 degree Celsius, two notches above the normal, and the minimum settled at 14.5 degree Celsius-one notch below the normal.

Evil torched, Good triumphs

Dussehra a day to take the battle within, say saints

PNS ■ HARIDWAR

The Dussehra festival was celebrated across Haridwar district with devotion and gaiety on Friday. A large number of people flocked to the grounds in their hordes where the effigies of Ravana were torched, marking the symbolic victory of the Good over Evil. The enthusiastic participation of the children and the youngsters in such functions was a notable feature of this year's celebration. The places in Haridwar city where the effigies were set ablaze as part of the celebration were Rodi Belwala grounds, Daksh temple grounds, Ramlila grounds at BHEL and Jatwara bridge.

The saints based in the holy city said that though a traditional festival celebrated with fervour and joy every year, it connotes something deeper than the mere torching of effigies. Speaking to *The Pioneer*, the head of All World Gayatri Parivar Dr Pranav Pandya said, "The battle between Rama and Ravana is eternal and universal. It is going on at all times and climes within and without us. Before killing Ravana in the external world, we have to hunt for him inside our souls and vanquish that too."

Dwelling on the importance of Dussehra festival, the



Sashastra Puja (worship of weapons and tools) held at an ashram in Haridwar on Friday

Pioneer photo

Matri Sadan founder Swami Shivanand said, "Anyone who lives driven by the senses is Ravana and the one who lives while keeping senses under control guided by the light within is Rama. In course of the nine days of Navratri, one worships the primordial energy embodied as Durga to gain strength to attain Ramatva

(godly virtues)." Celebrated on the tenth day of the Shukl Paksh (bright moon day) in the month of Ashwin as per Hindu calendar, Dussehra also marks the transition from the rain to the winter.

It also brings changes in the human body, making the people to eat less and refrain from

eating things difficult to digest. Dr Sunil Joshi of Gurukul Ayurvedic College says that eating fruits and more of fluids keeps one fit during the changing season when the winter is setting in. "Lord Rama personifies control over senses and desires, even in food. This aspect of the festival should not be ignored," he added.

Polythene ban remains largely ineffective in State

Authorities fail to act effectively to enforce ban

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Despite directions from the High Court on more than one occasion, followed by repeated instructions from the Chief Minister, the ban on polythene in the State has remained largely ineffective. The authorities concerned have failed to strictly enforce the ban on polythene and polystyrene disposables even in the provisional State capital Dehradun.

It will be recalled that following High Court orders, Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat had, earlier, announced that the polythene ban would be enforced strictly across the State from August 1 this year. The municipal corporation and district administration undertook some routine activities as part of measures for enforcing the ban. Attempts were made to raise public awareness and those found violating the polythene ban were penalised. However, such actions did not continue effectively for long.

As a result of this, though there has been some partial effect of such efforts, the general public in Dehradun and most of the traders have continued to use the banned polythene bags as they were using these items



The municipal corporation and district administration undertook some routine activities as part of measures for enforcing the ban

before the ban was put in place. Officials have the usual response to queries regarding implementation of polythene ban. They stress on the need for raising public awareness while adding that drives to penalise violators of the ban and seize the banned items are being undertaken regularly. Meanwhile, observers opine that the authorities have so far not taken effective measures seriously to enforce the polythene ban.

The supply of the banned items has not been checked and

the ban has not been enforced effectively even within the Government establishment. Due to this, it is not uncommon to see government employees also using the banned polythene bags. With the urban local body elections to be held across the State in the near future, the focus of the authorities will be on facilitating the polls.

At the same time, the use of the banned polythene for various purposes is also expected to rise during the polls as seen during such activities. With the officials concerned neither acting on nor even talking of the polythene ban, it remains to be seen whether the ban will be acted upon or forgotten like other regulations and restrictions being flouted with impunity in Dehradun and elsewhere in the State.

FALAH-E-INSANIYAT TERROR FUNDING CASE

Got money from Pak: Prime accused to NIA

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

The prime accused in the Falah-e-Insaniyat Foundation (FIF) terror funding accused Salman had confessed to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) that he has received funds from Pakistani operatives during the last five years.

Salman is one of the main accused in the terror funding case and is presently in NIA custody.

"Salman has admitted that he was receiving funds from a Pakistani national based in Dubai. During the last five years he received funds to the tune of ₹1 crore as per his confessions so far," a senior NIA official said.

NIA suspects he is one of the handlers of FIF, a social welfare arm of Pakistan-based terrorist group Lashkar-e-Tayyiba as he was in direct touch with the deputy chief of FIF.

Salman still maintains that



he was not aware that there were terror links to the money he was receiving for the last five years.

During interrogation, Salman has admitted that he was receiving funds for the last five years and utilising the money in his home district Palwal in Haryana for community services like marriage, building houses, building and running the local mosque in his home district and funding family members of terrorists whom they considered as martyrs.

Arrested accused Salman is from Uttwar, Mewat region of

Haryana. His father shifted to Nizamuddin area of the national capital before his birth. He married a local Mewati lady and has five children.

He started a tour and taxi service besides a dairy products business in Delhi but incurred losses.

He had visited Saudi Arabia for Umrah. He also visited Dubai few years back where he met few Pakistani nationals and thereafter he started getting funds through Hawala.

He claimed that he has spent all the funds on religious activities in Uttwar and in local areas but kept no records.

Rajnath rings in Dussehra with BSF jawans

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/BIKANER

Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday celebrated Dussehra with BSF jawans and performed 'shastra puja' in the forward post in Bikaner along the highly sensitive Indo-Pak border. This was for the first time that a senior Union Minister conducted the 'shastra puja' or worship of weapons on the occasion of Vijaya Dashami along India's border with Pakistan.

Singh arrived at the frontier headquarters of the Border Security Force (BSF) at Bikaner on Thursday evening to celebrate the Dussehra festival with the jawans, an official said. Singh's deputy Hansraj Ahir did the shastra puja at the BSF camp in Humhama in Srinagar in Jammu & Kashmir.

Addressing the BSF personnel, the Home Minister praised the multi-dimensional role of the BSF in guarding the Indo-Pak and Indo-Bangladesh borders, maintaining law and order in internal disturbances and tackling the Left Wing Extremism. Referring to the regular firing from across the border in Jammu & Kashmir,



Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh addresses BSF jawans at a border outpost in Bikaner on Friday

PTI

Singh said Pakistan, despite being a neighbour, never exercised "good neighbourly behavior" and instead sponsoring terrorism.

"There is proper coordination among our Army, police and paramilitary forces to fight against them," Singh said. The Home Minister said that recently launched 'smart fence' pilot project, which entails deploying laser-activated fences and technology-enabled barriers to plug vulnerable gaps along borders, will help the border guarding forces in maintaining peace in forward

areas.

The project was launched along Indo-Pak border in Jammu & Kashmir while it will be implemented along the Indo-Bangla border in Dhubri, Assam, next month, Singh said. During the two-day visit, the Home Minister interacted with the family members of the BSF personnel and attended a feast with the jawans, another official said. Singh also visited the family of a BSF jawan, who is currently posted in Jammu & Kashmir, and enquired about their wellbeing.

Later, Singh reviewed the

situation on the border and assessed the progress in various infrastructure projects. The 3,323-km-long Indo-Pak border is considered to be highly sensitive. Even though the border in Rajasthan is peaceful, the border guarding forces of the two countries often engaged in massive firing in Jammu & Kashmir, leading to loss of human lives and properties.

Last year, the Home Minister had celebrated Dussehra at ITBP's Jhoshimath Unit in Uttarakhand along the Sino-Indian border.

PM Modi seeks technocrats' views on how tech sectors can help make 'new India'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday sought the views of IT professionals on how the technology and electronic manufacturing sectors can help in making a 'new India'.

"Dear professionals associated with the IT sector, technocrats and tech-lovers, I have a request...Have a look at this Open Forum on the 'Narendra Modi Mobile App' and share your views," he tweeted and gave a link which takes people to the Narendra Modi app.

It says, on October 24, the Prime Minister will address a huge "townhall" with people associated with IT and electronic manufacturing sector.

Professionals, experts and technocrats from all over India will take part in the event, it says. They will discuss with the him, ways through which the vibrant IT and electronic manufacturing sector can undertake initiatives and volunteer to contribute in building a 'new India'.

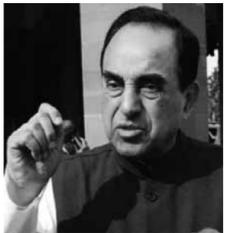
Swamy urges CBI to widen probe against Air Asia

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

BJP leader Subramanian Swamy has urged CBI to widen the ongoing probe in the "illegal" allotment of flying licenses to Air Asia. In a detailed complaint of more than 200 pages to CBI Director Alok Verma, Swamy said that the Air Asia deal during UPA regime violated aspects of national security rules, foreign investment regulations and civil aviation norms. In his complaint Swamy produced many internal emails exposing the lobbying with Finance and Civil Aviation officials by Air Asia officers and Tata Group officers, who are already facing CBI probe.

CBI in May last week registered FIR against Air Asia Chief Tony Fernandes, Tata Trusts' Managing Trustee R Venkatraman and others. CBI's FIR had alleged that Venkataraman was lobbying the Government to secure mandatory approvals, some of them through "non-transparent means", including the then Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) clearance, No Objection Certificate and the attempt for removal or modification of 5/20 rule. Air Asia officials Bo Lingam, Rajinder Dubey, Sunil Kapur and lobbyist Deepak Talwar were also named by CBI in the FIR.

In his complaint Swamy pointed out that both Air Asia



and Tata Group officials violated many rules including national security related norms in connivance with former Finance Minister P Chidambaram and former Civil Aviation Minister Ajit Singh. Swamy said that "the hasty grant of approval of FDI in a company yet to be incorporated" and which was not engaged in operating scheduled and non-scheduled air transport services was contrary to the FDI policy permitting FDI only in existing airlines.

"In this matter, it is of important to note that a particular

Director (Mr.Ramadurai) of Air Asia India Ltd had not received requisite security clearance from Home Ministry," said Swamy urging CBI to widen the probes on the entire frauds and violations committed by Air Asia and Tata Group top officials in connivance with former Finance and Civil Aviation Ministers.

To overcome contaminated water, CSIR-IITR comes out with 'Oneer'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

At a time when infection through drinking water is becoming a matter of health concern, the CSIR-Indian Institute of Toxicology Research (CSIR-IITR), Lucknow, has come out with a safe and affordable water purification system "Oneer" that can be best utilised in homes and small establishments as well as in rural areas.

Recently, the technology of Drinking Water Disinfection System "Oneer" was transferred to New Delhi-based private firm Bluebird Water Purifiers in the presence of Union Minister of Science & Technology Dr Harsh Vardhan and Director General, CSIR, Dr Shekhar C Mande.

Dr Harsh Vardhan said that Oneer developed by CSIR-IITR will provide safe and

clean drinking water at a cost of just 2 Paise / Ltr. The Community level model is of 450 LPH capacity. It can be scaled up from 5,000 to 1 lakh L/day; and is maintenance and membrane free.

"The technology will be helpful for rural people since it can be solar-powered. This development is in line with the 'Make in India' Mission," he said.

The technology can eliminate all disease causing pathogens such as virus, bacteria, fungi, protozoa and cyst.

It provides safe drinking water to domestic and communities as per national and international standards prescribed for potable water. The smaller unit is particularly suitable for homes, street food vendors, and small establishments, said a CSIR official. It is an electronic device that runs

on solar energy and provides clean water for less than two paise per litre. Unlike Ultra Violet (UV) water purifiers that kill microorganisms from clear water, Oneer can also treat brackish or turbid water with microorganisms.

Dr Mande said that Oneer-a safe drinking water device is especially for rural areas.

He said that currently, a large proportion of India's rural community is consuming water that does not meet the WHO drinking water quality standards. According to the World Health Organization, "access to safe drinking-water is essential to health, a basic human right and a component of effective policy for health protection". The device will go a long way in meeting the requirements of potable water in rural and urban areas, Dr Mande added.



Minister of State for Human Resource Development Satya Pal Singh during the meeting of Education Ministers of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Member States

Pioneer photo

Landslide creates artificial lake in Tibet, Arunachal on flood alert

Itanagar/New Delhi: Districts along the Siang river in Arunachal Pradesh have been put on high alert for possible flash floods after China informed India about a landslide blocking a river in Tibet leading to formation of an artificial lake, officials said on Friday.

A senior official of the Union Water Resources Ministry said the flood water is likely to reach Arunachal

Pradesh by Friday night. Chinese Embassy spokesperson Counselor Ji Rong said that his country has activated the 'Emergency Information Sharing Mechanism' with India following the landslide on Wednesday morning near Jiala Village in Milin County in the lower ranges of Yaluzangbu river in Tibet.

The Indian official said, "They (China) first informed us

on Wednesday about the landslide and creation of an artificial lake. Water is over-topping (breaching). It will reach Arunachal Pradesh and cross the high flood level by Friday night."

The reason cited behind the landslide was "natural causes". The official added that districts along Siang have been put on high alert.

The water will cross "high flood mark" and the situation

is being monitored at the highest level, the official added. "The data is being shared on hourly basis," the official said.

Yaluzangbu river is called Siang when it enters Arunachal Pradesh and Brahmaputra in Assam.

Ji said the Hydrological Bureau of Tibet Autonomous Region has begun to share with the Indian side hydrological information every hour, such as

the water level and flow rate at the Nuxia hydrological station and the temporary hydrological station downstream of the barrier lake.

The Chinese side will closely monitor situation of the barrier lake, and continue to notify the Indian side the follow-up developments through bilaterally agreed channels timely, he said.

The Chinese side has been keeping close communication

with the Indian side on Yaluzangbu River hydrological information, reflecting another positive gesture of implementing the Wuhan consensus between President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Ji said. In April this year, President Xi and Prime Minister Modi reached important consensus on promoting China-India all-round cooperation during the informal summit in Wuhan. **PTI**



Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe with Congress president Rahul Gandhi, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at a meeting in New Delhi on Friday

PTI

WCD Ministry set to organise women organic farmers festival

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Women and Child Development Ministry is organising a festival next week to promote women organic farmers and entrepreneurs.

Union Women and Child Development Minister Maneka Gandhi said over 500 women entrepreneurs would be coming together from across the country with their organic products such as cereals, rice, pulses, skin-care products, fabric and jewellery.

"The move aims to empower women to boost organic culture and promote women organic farmers and entrepreneurs," she told reporters.

"It is a matter of great satisfaction for me that the ministry's efforts ultimately boost these illustrious rural women's local communities and economy by creating jobs and keeping farmers thriving in addition to spreading awareness about the benefits of organic products," said Gandhi.

PM greets Lotay Tshering for winning Bhutan elections

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday congratulated Lotay Tshering, president of Druk Nyamrup Tshogpa for his party winning the Bhutan elections and reiterated India's commitment to work with the new Government for socio-economic transformation in that country. Druk Nyamrup Tshogpa party won 30 of 47 national assembly seats in the third general election in Bhutan. The PM also congratulated Tshering for his own election to the National Assembly, a state-

ment from the Prime Minister's Office said.

During his telephonic conversation, Prime Minister Modi welcomed the successful conduct of general elections, which is an important milestone for consolidation of democracy in Bhutan.

Modi conveyed that India attaches the highest priority to further strengthening unique ties of friendship and cooperation with Bhutan, which is based on shared interests and values, utmost trust, goodwill and mutual understanding. **PTI**

Piyush Goyal to receive Carnot prize



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister for Railways, Coal and Corporate Affairs Piyush Goyal will on Friday receive the prestigious Carnot prize for his contribution towards sustainable energy solutions, an official statement said.

The former Power Minister will be awarded by the Kleinman Center for Energy Policy at the University of Pennsylvania School of Design, a statement from the Rail Ministry said.

The Carnot Prize is the Kleinman Center's annual recognition of distinguished contributions to energy policy through scholarship or practice. The award in the energy sector is named after French physicist Nicolas Sadi Carnot who recognised that the power of the steam engine would "produce a great revolution" in human development. The 2018 Carnot Prize is a recognition of India's efforts under PM Modi, as the nation charts the path towards eliminating energy poverty with sustainable energy solutions, the statement said.

'Worshippers of the Buddha' won't be returned: Culture Ministry to AP

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Culture Ministry has turned down the Andhra Pradesh Government's request for returning a famous 3rd Century stone panel titled 'Worshippers of the Buddha' which was stolen from its museum way back in 2005 and is presently kept in the National Museum in Delhi. The Centre has argued that the decorative artifact is safer in the National Museum than at the Andhra Pradesh's Chandavaram site museum which is more prone to thefts in view of poor security.

It has also argued that the artifact is getting increased appreciation at the National



Museum which has high footfalls daily.

The Ministry has, nevertheless, asked the Chandrababu Naidu Government to give details of the security measures it has at the ground-level at the small under-resourced

Chandavaram site museum to ensure its safety and that it is not stolen again.

The ancient Indian limestone decorative panel that depicts two pairs of figures flanking an aniconic representation of the Buddha was

returned to India in 2016 by the National Gallery of Australia. The NGA had purchased the panel in 2005 for \$595,000 from New York art dealer and artifact trafficker Subhash Kapoor who is now in a Chennai jail.

In fact, the return of the antiquity was made after art historian Robert Arlt provided documentary evidence that 'Worshippers of the Buddha' was excavated from the stupa near the Buddhist site of Chandavaram in the 1970s, stolen from the site museum in 2001 and, by implication, illegally exported from India, according to a paper published in a Journal for Art Market Studies.

The Culture Ministry's apprehension about the safety of the Buddha panel is not without reason. In 2000 and 2001, a total nine artifacts were stolen from the Chandavaram museum under the Department of Andhra Pradesh Department of Archeology and Museum. Four antiquities have been recovered till date.

Ironically, Andhra Pradesh is considered to be the hotspot of artifact thefts. According to reports, between 2012 and 2014, more than 250 people were arrested under the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972. Nearly two-thirds of these arrests were made in Andhra Pradesh (including Telangana) and neighbouring

Karnataka.

The last theft reported from the Southern State was in November 2017, when a stone sculpture of Nandi dated 11th-12th century was allegedly stolen from Sri Anadavalli Ammaru Temple at Gudimallam in Andhra Pradesh's Chittoor district. Earlier in 2008, two Nizam-era swords and other antique articles stolen from the State Museum at Nampally were recovered by the Cyberabad police. Two flower pots and decorative pieces of an ancient clock burgled from the museum are yet to be recovered.

Now, facing flak for failing to provide adequate security at

its museums, the Andhra Pradesh Department of Archaeology and Museums is in the process of creating a digital repository of museums in the State with the twin objective of leveraging technology for taking the heritage of AP closer to people and for effective management of the museums.

In the first phase, all the collections, including artifacts, antiques and manuscripts, at six museums in Vijayawada, Guntur, Nellore, Kurnool, Kakinada and Rajamahendravaram will be digitised in three-dimensional format and made available online, said AP Government officials.

Temple talk

The signs have been there for a while now — the BJP will not go into the 2019 Lok Sabha poll sans the Ram Mandir issue

It has never been a secret in the mainstream Indian centre right — for lack of a better, equally-intelligible-to-all term — that though Prime Minister Narendra Modi's charisma, his governance record in Gujarat and the fantastic campaign his team put together for the 2014 General Election ensured a shift of a sizeable chunk of non-core BJP voters to the party, the ideological issues that have been articulated by the BJP through support for demands such as that of a Ram Temple to be built in Ayodhya were never put on the back-burner unlike under the AB Vajpayee-led first BJP/NDA Government. The RSS chiefs' traditional Vijay Dashami address to the Sangh cadre in which he called upon the Government publicly to bring in a law/ordinance for the construction of a Ram Temple at the janmasthan in Ayodhya has, however, now made it clear that while the inclusive sabka saath sabka vikas campaign may well continue into the 2019 election it will probably be co-terminus with a Hindu cultural pride outreach. The stand of the BJP on the Sabarimala Temple issue too, it may be noted, is one of simultaneity — the party has officially welcomed the Supreme Court's 4:1 majority verdict lifting the restrictions on females between the age of 10 and 50 from entering the hill-top shrine, while on the ground in Kerala the party and its affiliated organisations, just like the Congress and even a section of the Communists, have aided in the organisation of 'devotee protests' against the women who have tried to visit the temple to pay obeisance. The point is that there has been mass upsurge against the apex court order among a largely traditional populace and that is being reflected in power-seeking political parties, and there are no other kind, aligning themselves with popular sentiment.

In this context, the largely drawing room conversations in metros around how the Ram Temple issue will be subject to the law of diminishing political returns does not perhaps take into account which way popular Hindu sentiment if argued will go in the event of proactive measure from the Government on the lines urged by the RSS chief. While the jury is still out on whether there will be a mass upsurge as was seen in north and west India at the peak of the Ram temple movement led by LK Advani, the power of such an emotive and deeply felt issue should not be underestimated. Look at it like this: There will be some impact for sure, and perhaps enough for many who may otherwise be not too happy with the current regime's performance in handling the economy, creating employment and boosting infrastructure to support the BJP on an issue that symbolises Hindu cultural pride. And the BJP could not really be accused of springing a rabbit out of a hat because unlike in the past, the current party leadership is not apologetic or diffident about accepting that its commitment to core, defining ideological issues and a secular good governance for all citizens is not mutually exclusive.

50 WORD EDIT VIP brat begs

The law finally caught up with VIP brat Ashish Pandey and it showed just what an entitled brat he is. After his gun-waving, threatening behaviour at a South Delhi five-star hotel was captured on a mobile camera, Pandey started sending social media messages to his friends and acquaintances begging them not to let the clip go 'viral' by sharing it. Too late. Now, he has surrendered, denied bail and sent to jail.

Truly rural

India's villagers are smarter than its city slickers when it comes to fake news

How many times have we lost track of our destination among the wooded mountains where the GPS has played truant? And how many times have locals come to the rescue? Technology doesn't always work and if the survey by the Digital Empowerment Foundation is anything to go by, then Whatsapp users in rural India do not blindly trust messages they receive, simply because they share trust with what they can see and feel and not what is fed to them. Though the survey seems to skim the surface a bit, with a sample size of only 1,018 users, the fact that subjects are from far-flung places like Barmer in Rajasthan, Bettiah in Bihar and Warangal in Telangana, seems to be a good enough indicator of their innate wisdom, something that has foxed psephologists when analysing electoral verdicts. Only eight per cent of the respondents marked 10 as their trust score on a scale of 1-10, where 1 stands for complete distrust and 10 for complete trust. This is perhaps also a pointer to the fact that it is much more difficult to convince the rural voter than the urban voter, the latter cresting the wave of perception, the former clutching on to ground reality. This is certainly not good news for political parties, who largely load their propaganda tools on social media platforms, hoping to generate a swell of opinion in their favour. Last heard, much of the campaigning for the panchayat polls happens on WhatsApp.

It has, in fact, become the direct tool of communication with a huge voter base. Data shows that the share of active WhatsApp users in rural India has doubled since 2017, according to a survey done by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies. Post this penetration, at least 30 people have been lynched since May, ostensibly acting on fake reports and videos being circulated on the sharing platform about child lifting and thefts. Perhaps, the horrendous outcomes of fake news have now triggered defence mechanisms among the rural populace, considering the victims have been among their own, and forced them to rethink if they are not being used as cannon fodder for political tussles. Collective mistrust could explain why about 66 per cent of rural users do not access this platform for news consumption despite spending up to four hours on it daily. Also, the countryside is still conservative when it comes to news consumption, used to the older media purveyors like vernacular newspapers and television. This is borne out by the survey finding that around 38 per cent users are active on up to five WhatsApp groups, the majority being in groups with friends, followed by work colleagues, and family. If these figures are true, then it means that WhatsApp in outlier towns and villages continues to be primarily a tool for socialisation. Anyway, the watchdogs and Government, who worried about the circulation of fake news on this platform, may breathe easy though there is a need for a deeper survey.

Laws against terrorism, for example, are not effective per se since they do not rely on the judgement of humans based on reasonable evidentiary support but on social conditioning the accused have been subject to



The international community has always faced a quagmire in its desperate attempt to give a definition to terrorism. After all, one man's freedom fighter is a terrorist for the other. The issue in defining it is the danger it entails of becoming so narrow that it does not incorporate all forms of terrorism. Similarly, there exists the danger of it becoming so wide that it holds no meaning and any criminal could be held liable as a terrorist.

General tendency is to equate terrorism to Islamist fundamentalist terrorism, although this is usually the result of being continually exposed to a traditional and textualist mass media. In reality, this is not the case and terrorism is not solely restricted to militant Islamism. It is, in fact, so wide and multi-faceted that it takes different forms across the globe and cultural demographics.

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notions of human autonomy and free will. Last, even preventive detention faces the problem of not being specifically defined as it always revolves around systems of pre-charge detention, pre-trial detention, administrative detention, immigration detention and national security detention.

The lacunae in the laws related to preventive detention on an international level are also contributing to many different problems. The basic right to hearing on time is the main issue that sprouts from it. Another major issue is the problem with granting of bail. A person is presumed innocent until proven guilty. But many countries have no provision for grant of bail to the accused. The main question on the debate revolving the rights of the suspected terrorists is: How effectively is the law safeguarding them? For this, we need to look at the general rule that is followed in most countries that are in a continuous raging battle against terrorism, especially India.

In India, the Constitution itself sanctions the preventive detention laws while at the same time, guaranteeing fundamental rights to a detained person. Entry 9 of List I in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution provides the Parliament with the exclusive right to enact laws relating to preventive detention for matters that are related to foreign affairs, defence or the security of the nation. In the recent past, the enactment of various laws relating to preventive detention and the

subsequent cases challenging the validity of the provisions of the same have added new contours of development to the laws.

In today's time, National Security Act of 1980 (NSA) and the Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities Act, 1974 (COFEPOSA) are the main preventive detention legislations. The Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act, 1985 (TADA), the Prevention of Terrorism Act, 2002 (POTA) and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA) are some of the other legislations that were enacted to counter terrorism in India. In particular, it was the UAPA Act that was used recently to arrest five activists, including Sudha Bharadwaj, Vernon Gonsalves, Varavara Rao, Gautam Navlakha and Arun Ferreira who were put under house arrest after orders from the Supreme Court.

POTA, which was legislated after the strikes in the Indian Parliament, had two repressive measures that are inconsistent with the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Right (ICCPR). First, it did not allow the legal counsel to be present during the time of interrogation of the accused. And second, it allowed the prosecutor to file a charge sheet extending to a time period of 180 days. Additionally, it was almost impossible for the accused to be granted a bail as it could be granted only when the court thought that there were 'reasonable grounds to believe' that the accused is not guilty of the alleged offence and

not likely to commit the offence while on bail".

POTA was, thus, repealed in 2004. But after the Mumbai bombings, the presence of POTA was introduced in the UAPA (Amended) wherein it was stated that any officer 'knowing of a design or 'having reason to believe' that a person might commit an act will have the power to arrest the person. Bail was denied again to 180 days of investigation period. The ICCPR is an instrumental human rights treaty which provides people with protection for civil and political rights. India acceded to the ICCPR in 1979 after which it issued a declaration regarding Article 9 of ICCPR, which specifically deals with preventive detention. It was stated that the Article has to be operated in conformity with Article 22 of the Constitution of India which provides safeguards for an arrested person. But it has been seen time and again that detention laws in India are incompatible with Article 9 of the ICCPR as safeguards are not applicable to persons 'arrested under any law providing for preventive detention'.

The present law in force to counter terrorism, UAPA, itself suffers from many drawbacks. It provides a very huge definition of 'unlawful activities', includes action which disclaims, questions, disrupts the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India due to which any fair comment against the Government of the day can land a person in jail. Further, detention of the filing of a charge-sheet can be stretched up to 180 days and

the Court can, only on a bare perusal of the police diary, deny bail to an accused. Furthermore, the Government is also empowered to label any organisation as a terrorist organisation by a notification in the Official Gazette.

Therefore, despite the claim made by India that its laws are internationally complied with certain facets, like the excessive periods of detention or arbitrary implantation of policies, leave no room for basic human rights of the accused to be exercised. In any case, the state should not deprive any 'suspected terrorist' of the basic rights of being presumed innocent until proven guilty. Thus, the laws against terrorism are not effective per se since they do not rely on the judgement of humans based on reasonable evidentiary support but on the social conditioning, they have received. This could counteract the efforts of the war on terrorism since it further divides a population already subjugated by communal and cultural conflict.

Without debate and deliberation of a courtroom, which is the fairness of a just trial, this detention of suspects means nothing to this impending struggle against one of the most frightening forces the world has dealt with. Thus on moral and legal grounds, laws related to terrorism need to be visited again by the legislature.

(Raghav Pandey is Assistant Professor of law, and Nelsal Bist is a fourth year student of law at the Maharashtra National Law University, Mumbai)

POINT-COUNTERPOINT



The Government must pass a law to authorise the building of a Ram Mandir in Ayodhya rather than test the patience of society. —RSS chief MOHAN BHAGWAT

To make such utterances at a time when the Supreme Court is about to hear the matter smacks of a mischievous political design. —BJD national vice president SIVANAND TIWARI

Out of the big tent

Over the years, most big tent parties in Pakistan have begun to shrink in their appeal, alienating voters and leading to political cynicism and apathy



Analysts often casually describe the ideological orientation of mainstream political parties. For example, in the US, the Democratic Party is seen to be a party of liberals and Left-liberals whereas the Republican Party is understood to attract votes from fiscal and social conservatives. Yet, ever since the 1930s, there have been plenty of occasions when many conservatives voted for the Democratic Party and the liberals opted to cast their ballots for the Republican Party.

During the 1964 US Presidential election, a large majority of conservatives voted for the Democratic Party. During the 1980 elections in the US and then again in 1984, many Democratic Party voters switched to vote for the conservative Republican Party candidate, Ronald Reagan. The same happened in the UK between 1979 and 1987, when the Conservative Party candidate, Margaret Thatcher, managed to attract an impressive number of former liberal and even some pro-left votes.

Most established mainstream parties are what are called 'big tent parties'. According to the anthology Making Sense of Political Ideology: The Power of Language in Democracy (Brook, Huglen, Howell) the term and concept of 'big tent' originated in the US. Holly M. Allen in Class in America wrote that the Democratic Party was the first proper big tent party.

During the Democratic Party's shift to the Left, soon after the onset of economic depression in the US in the late 1920s, Holly says that the party managed to defeat the increasingly conservative Republican Party by broadening the party's appeal to attract votes not only from liberals but also from 'Southern conservatives', labour unions, African-Americans and farmers. The Democratic Party managed to coax voters from across classes and ideological, racial, religious and sectarian persuasions to back the party's plans to resurrect the country's collapsed economy.

The Democratic Party won all US elections between 1932 and 1952 until the Republican Party too, transformed itself into becoming a big tent entity. For example, it retained its conservative core, but it did not (at least till the 1980s) do away with the many Left-liberal economic policies first introduced

by the Democratic Governments. So, big tent parties are broad-based organisations which have Left or Right ideological cores, but these are malleable enough to absorb as many variants of the core as possible. This helps the party attract a lot more votes compared to the votes a party hinged on an inflexible ideological core would be able to.

Germany's two established mainstream parties — the centre-right Christian Democratic Union and the centre-left German Social Democratic Party — have been big tent parties and so have UK's Conservative Party and the Labour Party. Interestingly, the chief of the All-India Muslim League (AIML), Muhammad Ali Jinnah, was quick to learn from the Democratic Party in this context when, in his pursuit to make the AIML the leading Muslim party in India, Jinnah turned it into a big tent entity.

Till 1940, AIML's appeal was largely restricted to urban, Urdu-speaking middle-class Muslims. At the party's core was a modernist and progressive understanding of Islam. In the early 1940s, Jinnah green-lit the entry of communist Muslim ideologies into the party as well as some prominent leaders of 'lower-caste Hindus'. And just before the important 1945-46 general elections in India, Jinnah had also approved the admission of Bareilly spiritual figureheads (pirs) in Punjab and some conservative 'Deobandi' ulema. The party's ideological core, however, remained entrenched in modernist Islam and a call for a separate Muslim-majority country. To turn the party into a big tent organisation, the ideological core was subtly reformed to absorb the sentiments of Muslims from across ethnicities, classes, sects and sub-sects to help it win the majority of India's Muslim votes.

The experiment worked. But soon after Pakistan's creation, the big tent did not hold and the party splintered into various factions. The experiment was not lost on a young politician, ZA Bhutto. The August 12, 1962 edition of Dawn quoted Bhutto, then a young Minister in Ayub Khan's modernist regime, as saying that the country needed a 'broad-based party'. He then went on to explain that Ayub's Muslim League would be an inclusive party comprising a diverse group of people invested in 'the national interests'.

But as Ayub's League became identified more with authoritarianism and the economic decline, Bhutto launched his own party in 1967 — the PPP. The Press reported its launch as a socialist party. However, in the party's Foundation Papers, Bhutto explained that the

party was inspired by the broad-based structure formulated by Jinnah within the AIML. That's why, right from the beginning, three blocs emerged within the PPP. On the left were staunch Marxist and socialist ideologues and trade unionists; in the centre were 'Islamic socialist' and social democrats; and on the right were 'liberal' feudal chiefs, 'moderate' Islamists and the progressive bourgeoisie.

No matter what their ideological core, big tent outfits naturally settle in the centre, becoming centre-left or centre-right. The idea is always to remain inclusive and, thus, bag many votes as possible from a varied mass of the electorate. In 1988, a big-tent from the right emerged in the shape of the Islami Jamhoori Ittihad (IJI). It was more of an alliance than a big tent party, enacted to challenge the PPP's broad appeal. But the IJI was too invested in its rightist core and was torn asunder before the PMI-N emerged from it as the right's big tent version.

The PMI-N appealed to big capitalists, petty-bourgeoisie traders and shopkeepers, religious conservatives and sections of the urban middle-classes. It was only naturally that the party would begin to slowly move towards the centre. In 2008, it had become a centre-right big tent organisation which, by 2016, had also begun to appeal to segments of the 'liberal' urban middle-classes.

Imran Khan's PTI is aspiring to convert itself into becoming a bigger tent by adopting the 1970s' populist rhetoric of the PPP and the 'pro-establishment' sentiments of the IJI. But at its core lies an ideology which largely appeals to a 'blocked elite' and/or an urban bourgeoisie, which is economically empowered but, politically frustrated by what it believes is the 'corrupt' hegemony of the two established big tent parties, the PPP and the PMI-N. Most political scientists have insisted that big tent parties are vital for the health of democracy mainly because of their inclusivity. Recently, political observers in Europe and the US, while commenting on the rise of populist and intransigent outfits and personalities in the West, have pointed out that, over the years, most big tent parties in the region have begun to shrink their tent, thus alienating a large number of voters.

These voters thus could not identify with the mainstream parties and have become vulnerable to political cynicism and apathy, or worse, have been bagged by dogmatic parties or by far right or far Left factions within what were once big tent parties.

(Courtesy: Dawn)

Fight for the Baloch cause

Until now, India has responded to Pakistani claims of human rights violations in Kashmir under the right of reply at UNHRC. It is now time that human rights violations on the Baloch minority in Pakistan are raised by us independently

On October 12, 2018, the 73rd UN General Assembly (UNGA) elected 18 new Council members that will serve for a period of three years, starting January 1, 2019. India got re-elected to the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), which comprises of 47 elected member states. India had previously been in the UNHRC during 2011-2014 and 2014-2017. India's last tenure ended on December 31, 2017, and in accordance with the rules, it wasn't eligible for immediate re-election since it had already served two consecutive terms.

India got elected getting 188 votes in the Asia-Pacific category, becoming centre-left or centre-right. The idea is always to remain inclusive and, thus, bag many votes as possible from a varied mass of the electorate. In 1988, a big-tent from the right emerged in the shape of the Islami Jamhoori Ittihad (IJI). It was more of an alliance than a big tent party, enacted to challenge the PPP's broad appeal. But the IJI was too invested in its rightist core and was torn asunder before the PMI-N emerged from it as the right's big tent version.

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(Courtesy: Dawn)

at UNHRC, by mentioning that the Pakistani claims on Kashmir are baseless. This has been seen in the famous issue of the photo of a Palestinian girl being passed as a Kashmiri at UN by Pakistan's representative. India had in its right to reply arguments added that Pakistan should enforce disappearances and targeting of political dissidents in Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It is probably time that human rights violations on the Baloch minority, caught between Pakistan and China, are raised independently and prominently by India.

Given that Indian media is free, the Government cannot ask it to become silent against the atrocities being carried out by the Pakistan military to carry out ethnic cleansing of us from our land and hand over our resources to China as Beijing builds its moose around Islamabad to control the country as its de facto ruler. The Baloch would like New Delhi to play its historic role in the region the way it did when China invaded Tibet and when Pakistan carried out its genocide in Bangladesh."

Nabi Bakhs Baloch, leader of the Baloch National Movement in North America, said, "India must support Baloch national struggle and as a neighbour we have lot of expectations from the Indian Government to support our national struggle. We, the Baloch, are struggling against terrorism and for our own land. Hafeez Hassanabadi, senior leader of the Hyrbayri Marri-Led Free Balochistan Movement



(FBM), who also served as Pakistan's Minister of State for Defence in the 1950s, said, "For the last 15 years in an unending and relentless military operation (since Musharraf killed Nawab Akbar Bugti, former Governor of Balochistan Province in Pakistan), thousands of people have been victims of enforced disappearances, numerous villages have been burned down and numerous people have been 'killed and dumped' on the roads, in open fields and in deserted, desolate areas. The Baloch look towards India as a regional power, who would use its mandate at the UNHRC to highlight the realities of brutal human rights violations of the Baloch population by Pakistan."

Noted Baloch Human Rights Lawyer Kachkol Ali, who has been a speaker, former Minister and Opposition leader in Balochistan provincial Assembly of Pakistan also averred, "While it is the obligation of the UN and civilised countries to initiate appropriate action in a country where the following unimaginable atrocities — namely crimes against humanity, genocide, ethnic cleans-

ing and war crimes — are being committed, it is regrettable that the aforesaid element of international crimes are being severely committed by Pakistani security forces and the international community and the UN are silent. To me, the principle of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) is not being complied with given the atrocities against the innocent Baloch population by the security forces in Pakistan. Their miserable behaviour is questionable in light of R2P as well as international humanitarian law which dictate that it is the responsibility of the civilised world to intervene in an altruistic manner without any consideration to end impunity against any nation. Pakistan has been committing genocide, ethnic cleansing, crime against humanity and war crime but the world is silent and they are viciously guilty of self-seeking apathy and of culpability by their silence. To quote Bernard Shaw: "The worst sin towards our fellow creatures is not to hate them, but to be indifferent to them: That's the essence of inhumanity." (The Devil's Disciple, Act 11)

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FIGHT ZIKA

Sir — This refers to the 50-word edit "Zika attack" (October 19). The outbreak of Zika has been causing consternation in the mind of people living in the vicinity of affected places. Aedes aegypti mosquito is said to be the carrier of Zika virus.

A couple of years ago, Anthrax and Ebola threatened the mankind. Zika is an addition to the fleet of dreadful diseases. In January 2017, three cases were reported from Ahmedabad. Again in July 2017, it made its appearance in Krishnagiri district of Tamil Nadu.

The recurrence of Zika virus in large scale, numbering 80 laboratory-confirmed cases, of which 22 are pregnant women, is posing the biggest challenge to medical authorities.

In the case of pregnant women, the virus, it is opined, affects the foetus leading to birth defects, particularly the microcephaly, smallest size of the head. The meaning disclosure is that the microcephaly does not have cure. Health authorities must wake up before this virus claims heavy toll and spreads across the nation far and wide.

KV Seetharamiah Hassan

SABARIMALA STAND-OFF

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Faith and law" (October 19). That women aged between 10 and 50 did not turn up at Sabarimala is not something that for the protesters to gloat over, leading to birth defects, particularly the microcephaly, smallest size of the head. The meaning disclosure is that the microcephaly does not have cure. Health authorities must wake up before this virus claims heavy toll and spreads across the nation far and wide.

Madhavi from Andhra Pradesh and Subhasini Raj of the New York Times were heckled and prevented from reaching Ayyappa's abode. Nevertheless, it is a matter of time

Planet Earth: A need to make it the best it can be

This refers to the article, "The global warming goal and India" (October 19) by RK Pachauri. The world is now talking about the climate change report released recently by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The report warned of far-reaching consequences, like deluge, drought, wildfire and scarcity of food, to name a few.

The ongoing technological revolution has allowed human beings to spread their wings across all parts of the planet, almost leaving behind the basic rudiments related to the Nature, like planting trees and keeping the environment clean. Against these ongoing developments, countries all over the world should come together and forge strong plans, keeping the IPCC report in mind. Natural metamorphosis has been happening for almost a long time now. For example, Korkai, a beautiful hamlet in Tuticorin of Tamil Nadu, was once the beautiful port area of the Pandyan Kingdom. Due to natural phenomena of sea-



water receding from the area, Korkai has now become an inland away from the Bay of Bengal. More to the point, areas like Tuticorin, Tutunelveli and Kanyakumari are home to rigorous agricultural/fishing activities and natural resources/visas. Apart from denaturalising, the international community should work together towards a new green world and making the planet the safest-ever haven for all.

P Senthil Mumbai

SHUN VIOLENCE

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Faith and law" (October 19). Events in Kerala are disturbing. If tradition, faith and belief are the basis for retaining religious customs and practices, severe and arbitrary changes to these practices would still be prevalent. Till a review petition is filed, such protests would be out of place.

Shashi Via email letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Faith and law" (October 19). Events in Kerala are disturbing. If tradition, faith and belief are the basis for retaining religious customs and practices, severe and arbitrary changes to these practices would still be prevalent. Till a review petition is filed, such protests would be out of place.

What it will take to save the Himalayas

Multi-faceted challenges that a fast unfolding water crisis poses to the Himalayan region require an integrated water management policy

Deteriorating water situation in the Himalayan region calls for urgent actions on the part of countries situated in the region to manage the Himalayan ecosystem and its water bodies in an integrated and sustainable manner. Water is a vital resource needed to support life, economy, culture and civilisations. The Himalayas, just like the Western Ghats, plays a critical role as watershed. It provides water, food, energy and myriad ecosystem services to the people living in the region. Water sources of countries in the Himalayan region vitally depend on the monsoon rains and streams emanating from the Himalayas. It is pretty clear now that climate change and global warming are affecting rainfall patterns, the concentration of snow and ice and eventually the flow of streams in the Himalayas. This may lead to irreversible changes in the landscape and waterscape of the Himalayan region, inviting catastrophic impact on about 1.5 billion people who are dependent on the Himalayas.

An estimated 50,000 glaciers in the Himalayas are both a boon and bane for mountainous countries like Bhutan and Nepal. These glaciers are a major source of irrigation in summer months. They support farm practices and livelihood of a large population. However, given the speed at which these glaciers are melting and retreating due to changes in climatic conditions, there will be frequent and unpredictable devastating glacial lake outbursts and floods, causing severe damages to lives, livestock and livelihood. Receding water flows in the rivers, erratic and torrential rain fall and frequent floods in the region require both supply as well as demand side management. Conservation practices and water use efficiency are the need of the hour. The fact of the matter is that farming practices in the Himalayan region are water-intensive. In India, for example, farming and its ancillary practices use over 90 per cent of the fresh water. In the coming years, more water will be required to produce adequate food to support a growing population. Keeping these factors in mind, there are predictions that some of the Himalayan countries, such as Pakistan and India, can turn into 'water scarce countries' between 2025 and 2035.

Besides food, another challenge is energy demand. Fortunately, the Himalayan ecosystem has the potential to meet such demand, provided potential is harnessed sustainably. The relation between economically viable hydropower potential and actual generation is abysmally low. For example, Nepal's current installed hydropower capacity is 753 MW, whereas its identified economically viable potential is 43,000 MW. Harnessing energy potential of water streams to the optimum level will enhance energy security and reduce poverty. However, while installing such structures for water storage and hydro-energy, upstream-downstream linkages must be considered. Transparency in data sharing and joint monitoring of such structures will strengthen cooperation among countries.

Water, a natural gift to humanity, flows through myriad natural veins,

NATION CELEBRATES DUSSEHRA

Mysuru Dasara Elephant March enthrals lakhs



A caparisoned Arjuna brought back scenes of a bygone era in Mysuru on Friday as he ambled along the 5 km Dasara procession route starting from Mysuru Palace carrying golden howdah and idol of goddess Chamundeshwari on his back. PTI

KESTUR VASUKI ■ BENGALURU

The Navaratri festival in the Southern city of Mysuru concluded on Friday with the world famous Jumbo Savari witnessed by lakhs of people. The celebration of victory over evil draws devotees from around the world to this place. Mysuru Dasara, now the nada habba (state festival), represents various streams of cultural heritage.

The Vijayadashami festivity which marks the jumbo savari (elephant march) also showcased Karnataka's cultural heritage resplendent with folk art forms, as Arjuna led other richly embellished elephants through the more than 5-km route from Mysuru Palace to Bannimantapa.

The majestic pachyderm Arjuna carrying the idol of goddess Chamundeshwari, placed in a 750-kg golden howdah, found its way from the grand Mysore palace to the cheers of lakhs.

The "Jumbo savari", observed in the royal style since the days of the erstwhile Mysuru Maharajas, began with Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy along with his

wife Anita showering petals on Goddess Chamundeshwari, the presiding deity of the historical city.

Armed contingents, including the mounted police, are part of the procession that conjures up images of a bygone era when the maharajas used to celebrate Dasara and cap it with the victory procession.

Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wodeyar, the scion of the erstwhile Mysuru Royal family, also offered puja to the Goddess. Pramoda Devi Wodeyar is the widow of Srikantadatta Narasimharaja Wodeyar, the last descendant of the Wodeyar dynasty. Srikantadatta Narasimharaja Wodeyar had died of cardiac arrest on December 10, 2013.

This will be followed by the torchlight parade at the Bannimantap Grounds, which includes equestrian events besides a display of synchronised exercise and motorcycling by police personnel. The torchlight parade will officially bring down the curtains on the 10-day festival, popularly termed the 'Naada Habba', which is also a celebration of the State's and the country's diverse culture.

The Dasara festivities began with the Vijayanagara Kings as early as the 15th Century. The festival played a historical role in the 14th-century at Vijayanagara empire where it was called Mahanavami and the festivities are shown in the relief artwork of the outer wall of the Hazara Rama temple at Hampi, the world heritage site.

After the fall of the Vijayanagara to Deccan Sultanates, these celebrations came to an end under Muslim rulers. The Wodeyars of Mysuru formed a kingdom in Southern parts of the Vijayanagara Empire and continued the Mahanavami (Dasara) festival celebration, a tradition started initially by Raja Wodeyar I (1578-1617 CE) in the year 1610 at Srirangapatna near Mysuru.

Mysuru is a great tourist destination attracts thousands to the ten day festivities in Navaratri. The city is also known as cultural capital of Karnataka has many tourist destinations around the city which include Chamundi hills, Krishnaraja Sagara Dam, century old zoo garden, Srirangapatana and other places.



A devotee blows a conch during immersion of Goddess Durga's idol on the last day of the Navratri festival in Bengaluru on Friday. PTI

Two members of Mysuru royal family die on final day of Dasara festivities

PTI ■ MYSURU

The Mysuru royal family suffered a double blow on Friday as the Dasara festivities when Putta Chikkammani (98), mother of Rajamata Pramoda Devi, and Vishalakshi Devi, sister of late Maharaja Srikantadatta Wadiyar, died in hospital.

The royal family has announced postponing rituals associated with the Dasara festival to October 22, Raja Chandra, brother-in-law of the late Maharaja, said.

He said Pramoda Devi's mother died in the morning while sister-in-law Princess Vishalakshi Devi, youngest daughter of late Maharaja of Mysuru Jayachamarajendra Wadiyar, died in the evening. He said Chikkammani died in a private hospital here due to aged related complications.

Raja Chandra said being in a state of impurity following the

He said Pramoda Devi's mother died in the morning while sister-in-law Princess Vishalakshi Devi, youngest daughter of late Maharaja of Mysuru Jayachamarajendra Wadiyar, died in the evening

death, the royal family, including the titular Maharaja Yaduveer Krishnadatta Wadiyar, could not take part in rituals like special prayers to weapons, welcoming the entry of elephant carrying howdah and Uttara Pooja.

By evening, Vishalakshi Devi died in a private hospital in Bengaluru, he said, adding, she was 55.

The deaths cast a shadow on the 10-day long Mysuru Dasara festivities which came to an end Friday.

Dussehra celebrated with traditional fervour in Rajasthan

PTI ■ JAIPUR

Colourful effigies of Ravana along with the demon king's son Meghnad and brother Kumbhakaran were set on fire across Rajasthan on Friday as the people celebrated the symbolic triumph of good over evil on the occasion of Dussehra.

Also known as Vijay Dashmi, the festival marked the culmination of navratri during which, Ramlila was enacted to depict the life of Lord Ram in different parts of the city.

The effigies of different sizes were set ablaze amid chants of 'Jai Shri Ram' as the spectacular fireworks lit up the sky.

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Dussehra fairs were organised at several places in the city including Adarsh nagar, Mansarovar, Vidhyadhar Nagar, Malvia Nagar among others. Dressed in their festive best, people visited the fairs in large numbers.

The Rastriya Swamsevaka Sangh (RSS) also conducted 'Shastra Puja' and took out a march at seven places in the city.

Devotees bid adieu to goddess Durga, her children

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Devotees across West Bengal on Friday bade teary farewell to goddess Durga on 'Bijoya Dahasmī' as she went back to her abode in Kailash after her five-day-long annual sojourn along with her four children to her maternal home.

Following the Dashami rituals, clay idols of Devi Durga and her children were taken from beautifully decorated pandals and households for immersion in rivers and other waterbodies.

Women pay their obeisance to the goddess with betel leaves, betel nuts, turmeric and bael leaves, known as 'Debi Baran' and urge her to come back again next year.

In the metropolis, idols were taken in processions that

included bands, colourfully decorated tableaux and people dancing to the beats of dhak, the traditional drum associated with Durga Puja, to the banks of river Hooghly for immersion.

The immersions will continue till well after midnight with most of the idols being taken to Babughat area on the bank of the Hooghly.

Similar rituals are witnessed all over West Bengal with idols being taken for immersion to river banks or other large waterbodies.

On the banks of river Ichchhamati on the Indo-Bangladesh border at Taki in North 24 Parganas district, the idols are brought on boats from both sides of the border and are immersed in the river.

The sight of the culturally similar people on both sides of

the border together going through the rituals of immersion of the idols with equal fervour is a visual delight and is witnessed by thousands of tourists coming from various places.

People of all hues and age forgot their worries and monotonous daily chores as they participated in the almost week-long extravaganza, which is described as the largest community festival in the world by the West Bengal Tourism.

Part of the Durga Puja festivities are good food, merriment, night-long pandal hopping and an escape from the daily routine, which will all be missed along with the going back of Devi Durga with her four children Lakshmi, Saraswati, Kartikeya and Ganesh, till the next year's 'Sharad Utsav'.



A crowd gathers to watch the burning of an effigy of demon king Ravana, marking the end of Dussehra festival in Allahabad on Friday. AP

Muslims shower flowers on RSS procession in Ajmer

FIANS ■ JAIPUR

A rare display of harmony was seen in Ajmer on Friday when Muslims showered flowers to welcome an RSS procession taken out on Dussehra.

The procession started from Government Moiniya Islamiya High secondary School and was attended by many people.

State Education Minister Vasudev Devnani and Ajmer Mayor Dharmendra Gehlot along with several BJP leaders participated in the programme.

The procession was given a warm welcome by members of BJP Minority Cell under the

'When the procession reached Ajmer Dargarh, the workers of the minority cell showered flowers on them,' said Rajendra Kumar Lalwani, senior RSS worker

leadership of district president Shafeeq Khan.

"When the procession reached Ajmer Dargarh, the workers of the minority cell showered flowers on them," said Rajendra Kumar Lalwani, senior RSS worker.

After passing through the main areas of the city, the procession concluded at Moiniya Islamiya School.

Vijayadasami celebrated with religious fervour across Kerala

Thiruvananthapuram: People across Kerala celebrated Vijayadasami on Friday with thousands of children, aged two to three, being initiated into the world of learning and writing.

Vijayadasmi, dedicated to goddess Saraswathi, the deity of learning, marks the end of the annual nine-day-long Navaratri festival.

Children, along with their parents, gathered in large numbers at temples of Saraswathi, schools and cultural centres where arrangements were made for the 'ezhuthiniruthu' (initiation ceremony). Vijayadasami is observed as the day of 'Vidyambham' the beginning of learning. PTI



Hindu married women dance during 'Sindur Khela' (applying vermilion) on the occasion of 'Bijoya Dashami' at a Durga Puja pandal at Bolpur in Birbhum district of West Bengal on Friday. PTI

Assam Guv greets people on Dussehra

PTI ■ GUWAHATI

Assam Governor Jagdish Mukhi on Friday greeted the people of the state on the occasion of Bijoya Dashami and Dussehra.

"I extend my warm wishes to the people of Assam on the occasion of Bijoya Dashami and Dussehra which reinforce the eternal message of victory of good over evil," the Governor said in a message.

The occasion of Bijoya Dashami and Dussehra "consign our vices, promote our virtues and strengthen the bond of universal brotherhood, friendship and camaraderie among all fellow being in our society".

Counting of votes of J&K local elections today

PTI ■ SRINAGAR

The stage is set for the final leg of urban local body elections in Jammu and Kashmir as the counting of votes for the 52 civic bodies, polling for which was held in four phases earlier this month, will be done on Saturday.

"All the arrangements for counting of votes have been put in place at respective district headquarters. The counting of votes will begin at 9 am tomorrow (Saturday)," an official of the election department said.

The fate of over 3,000 candidates will be decided by the end of the day.

The elections are a direct contest between the BJP and the Congress. A large number of independents are also in the fray. The National Conference and the PDP did not participate in the polls.

The urban local bodies polls in Jammu and Kashmir were held after a gap of 13

WHILE MODERATE TO HEAVY POLLING WAS WITNESSED IN JAMMU AND LADAKH REGIONS, THE KASHMIR VALLEY SAW AN ABYSMALLY LOW VOTER TURN OUT

years, with the last elections being conducted in 2005.

The polling was held amid tight security arrangements in four phases starting October 8 and ending on October 16.

While moderate to heavy polling was witnessed in Jammu and Ladakh regions, the Kashmir valley saw an abysmally low voter turn out.

Nearly 17 lakh voters were eligible to vote for 79 urban local bodies of the state but polling was held only for 52. No voting was

held in 27 civic bodies in the Valley either because there was no candidate or only one candidate had filed nominations for a particular ward.

Of the 598 wards in Kashmir, 231 candidates were elected unopposed, while there were no candidates on 181 wards.

The overall voting percentage for these polls in the state stood at 35.1 per cent.

In the valley, there were no signs of any electioneering in the run up to the polls as militant outfits had threatened to target those taking part in the elections in any form, while separatist groups like the Hurriyat Conference had called for a boycott.

The election authorities kept secret the identity of the contesting candidates in view of the security threat to them, prompting political parties, which were against conduct of polls in the present circumstances, to question the genuineness of the process.

Goa Congress dissolves Shiroda, Mandrem block committees

Panaji: Congress dissolved block committees of Shiroda and Mandrem assembly constituencies in Goa Friday, after the MLAs from the two seats quit the party to join the BJP.

State Congress spokesperson Amarnath Panjikar said on Friday said that Mandrem and Shiroda block Congress committees have been dissolved with immediate effect

Subhash Shirodkar who represented Shiroda assembly constituency in South Goa and Dayanand Sopte who represented Mandrem in North Goa resigned as members of the state Assembly on October 16. Both joined the BJP the same day.

State Congress spokesperson Amarnath Panjikar said in a statement Friday that Mandrem and Shiroda block Congress committees have been dissolved with immediate effect.

Goa Minister rules out change in Parrikar's leadership

FIANS ■ PANAJI

In yet another flip flop over the issue of leadership change in Goa, Power Minister Niles Cabral on Friday ruled out any alternative to ailing Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar.

The Minister also said that his cabinet colleague and Agriculture Minister Vijai Sardesai's discussion with BJP President Amit Shah on Thursday about finding alternatives to Parrikar was only borne out of "personal interest".

"It is a statement from his (Sardesai) personal interest. I am speaking for the BJP party and BJP party has a leader... We have a leader in Parrikar and he will always be our leader," Cabral told the media at the state Bharatiya Janata Party headquarters.

On Thursday, after a meeting with Amit Shah, Sardesai had said that they had discussed leadership alternatives to Parrikar, who has been ail-

ing for more than eight months now.

"BJP leadership is seriously looking at the leadership issues and I have explained to him (Shah) the aspirations of the Goan people... There are some names that are being discussed," Sardesai had said.

Cabral said it was wrong to suggest that Parrikar, who is suffering from advanced pancreatic cancer and has been in and out of hospitals in Goa, Mumbai, New York and Delhi, was not active vis a vis his duties as a Chief Minister.

The Minister, however, conceded that Parrikar was now inaccessible to the people of Goa, on account of his illness.

"Accessibility to the people is not there, which you also know very well. When I am not well, accessibility is (also) a problem," Cabral said, adding that the issue of accessibility can be resolved by keeping in touch with people online.

—STATUE OF UNITY—

CM flags off Ekta Yatra prior to inauguration

PNS ■ GANDHINAGAR

Gujarat Minister Vijay Rupani flagged off 'Ekta Yatra' from Bardoli in south Gujarat to create awareness about Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's contribution in integrating 562 Princely States under the fold of Union of India at the time of Independence amidst chanting of slogans of 'Ek Bharat; Shreshtha Bharat (One India; Great India).



BARDOLI WAS THE PLACE WHEREFROM SARDAR PATEL HAD LAUNCHED SATYAGRAHA (CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE) IN 1928 AGAINST THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO INCREASE TAX BY 30 PER CENT

in 1928 against the British Government's decision to increase tax by 30 per cent.

This is in the run-up to unveiling the Statue of Unity by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sardar Patel's birth anniversary on October 31. The Ekta Yatra is scheduled to cover 10,000 villages of the state to cover all sections of the populace irrespective of their caste, creed or community group, while 60 Ekta Rathis (chariots) will tour 5,000 villages in phase one.

The Statue of Unity has been built near Kevadia downstream the Sardar Sarovar Project (SSP) dam on the Narmada, touted to be the world's highest statue. Bardoli was the place wherefrom Sardar Patel had launched Satyagraha (civil disobedience)

Speaking on the occasion CM Rupani said the Ekta Yatra has been taken up 'in the larger interest of the nation'. It was Sardar Patel who had counselled and persuaded the princes to join India at the time of partition, he said adding that had there been no Sardar Patel, India's map would have looked different, forcing Indians to seek visa for visiting Junagadh and Hyderabad. Sardar Patel had many more singular contributions, including refurbishing the Somnath Temple, rising above the politics of appeasement for cultural integration, he added.

"It is the government's duty to convey the great leaders' contributions to the people. Sardar Patel's messages would reach every home during Ekta Yatra. The previous governments' attempt to praise only one family-dynasty and delete chapters on national leaders like Gandhiji, Sardar Patel, Dr Ambedkar and Veer Savarkar from history," he said.

Meanwhile, CM Rupani and his deputy Nitin Patel reviewed the preparedness of the grand inauguration ceremony of Statue of Unity - the tallest statue of the world.

He also met key persons in completing the statue project in time.

UPA used housing scheme to promote one family: Modi

'UPA built 25 lakh houses in 4 years, we constructed 1.25 cr during the same period'

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI



Slamming the previous UPA Government for exploiting its flagship housing scheme to "promote" one particular family and "create" vote banks, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday that his Government had built as many as 1.25 crore houses for the poor and needy during the last four years, as against a mere 25 lakh houses constructed by the Manmohan Singh dispensation during an earlier four years.

Speaking at a public meeting after participating in the centenary celebrations of Shri Saibaba Samadhi at Shirdi and handing over keys of houses to beneficiaries of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Gramin (PMAY-G), Modi indirectly targeted Gandhi-Nehru family by charging that the previous Government had exploited its flagship housing scheme to promote "one particular family" and derived political mileage out of them.

Maintaining that his Government was committed to giving one house to each of homeless families in the country by 2022 when India celebrates its 75 years of independence, the Prime Minister said that his Government had already traversed half the distance in its ambitious mission. "During the last four years, we have made a serious attempt to shift poor and middle class family from shanties and rented houses to their own houses. The previous Government had made this kind of an effort in the previous years as well. But, the intention of the previous Government was not to empower poor people through new houses, but it was promote one particular family and to create vote banks in the process," Modi said.

"The previous UPA government did not think in terms of building a good house that has toilet, electric, water and gas connections. When there is no political axe to grind behind any Government scheme

aimed at benefitting the poor and needy people, then you get inspired and the implementation of such schemes gathers momentum," the Prime Minister said.

Comparing the number of houses built under the PMAY-G during by the current Government during the last four years and the number of houses constructed by the UPA Government during the previous corresponding period, Modi said: "The previous Government had constructed mere 25 lakh houses (under Indira Awas Yojana) across the country during four years. However, after the BJP-led Government came to power at the Centre, we built as many as 1.25 crore houses during the last four years. This means, the previous Government would have taken as many as 20 years to build that many houses we constructed during the last four years."

Modi said that while the previous Government would take 18 months to build a house, while the NDA Government was doing it in less than 12 months.

The Prime Minister said that apart from reducing the time taken for constructing a house, the Government had increased the size of the house as well as the monetary assistance from ₹70,000 to ₹1.20 lakh (for each house). "The beneficiaries are chosen in a scientific and transparent manner. The subsidy is directly transferred to the bank account of the beneficiaries. In addition, we have taken care to ensure that the house is a long-lasting structure with all basic infrastructure facilities," he said.

"People and resources are the same. But, our government's intentions are clean. We are for the welfare of the people. That's the results are also faster," he said.

Dwelling upon the Centre's newly launched 'Ayushman Bharat' healthcare scheme (also known as Pradhan Mantri Jan

Arogya Yojana), the Prime Minister said that as many one lakh people had already benefited from the scheme within a month of its launch. "The average claim made by each beneficiary was Rs 20,000. Under Ayushman Bharat, 50 crore poor people would get free medical treatment up to ₹5 lakh per year for serious ailments," Modi said.

Referring to reports that Maharashtra had received deficient rainfall this year, the Prime Minister said that the Centre would provide assistance to the state through the Prime Minister Crop Insurance Scheme.

Availing that the Centre was committed to encouraging tourism in Maharashtra, the Prime Minister said: "In Maharashtra, there are many places associated with faith like Shirdi. There are places of tourist attraction like Ajanta-Ellora where visitors come all through the year. I am told that there are now direct flights to Shirdi. The frequency of flights to Shirdi will be increased so that Saibaba devotees from all over the world can come there all through the year."

Earlier in the day, Modi offered prayers at the Saibaba temple and took part in an event marking conclusion of the year-long Saibaba Mahasamadhi centenary programme organised by the Shri Saibaba Sansthan Trust. According to devotees, Sai Baba took Mahasamadhi or left the mortal form on the day of Dussehra or Vijaydashami.

On the occasion, the Prime Minister released a silver coin to commemorate Saibaba Mahasamadhi centenary year celebrations.

Modi distributed keys to a few of the 2.5 lakh families beneficiaries under the ambitious PMAY-G. After handing over the keys in person to a few of the families, the Prime Minister interacted with several beneficiary families via video-conferencing across different districts in the State.

He also performed the bhoomi puja for various development projects worth ₹485.54 crore. These included a 10 MW solar power system, a new Rs 11.41 crore 'darshan' queue shelter and the 166.39 crore Sai Knowledge Centre.

Chavan nails PM's lie, says UPA built 25L houses a year

Quotes cag figures, says UPA built 2.24 cr houses from 2004 to 2013...

PM modi has not fulfilled promise made under PMAY

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI



Seeking to nail a "lie" spoken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his speech at Shirdi in Maharashtra, former Chief Minister Ashok Chavan on Friday said that under the "Indira Awas Yojana", the previous UPA Government had constructed 25 lakh houses every year as against Modi's claim of 25 lakh houses in four years.

Contesting the "false" figures quoted by the Prime Minister during his speech made after handing over keys to a few of the beneficiary families under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Gramin (PMAY-G), Chavan castigated the Prime Minister for "spreading lies" in the temple town of Shirdi about the houses for the poor and needy constructed by the previous UPA Government.

"The people of India are getting habituated to the lies spread by the Prime Minister. But, he has hurt the sentiments of Sai Baba devotees like me by lying at Shirdi.... The Prime Minister has misled the people of the country by making a false claim that the UPA Government built only 25 lakh houses during four years, as against 1.25 crore houses constructed by the NDA government in that corresponding period of four years," Chavan said in a statement issued here.

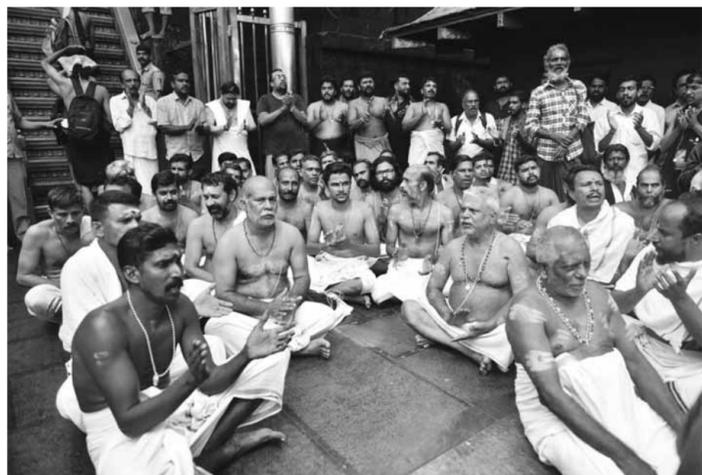
"Under the Indira Awas Yojana, between 2004 and 2013, during UPA government, 2 crore 24 lakh 37 thousand houses were constructed.

QUOTING THE STATISTICS MADE AVAILABLE IN THE CAG REPORT OF 2014, CHAVAN SAID THAT THE UPA GOVERNMENT CONSTRUCTED 1 CRORE 28 LAKH 92 THOUSAND HOUSES DURING 2008-2013

Therefore, during the UPA government's tenure, almost 25 lakh houses were completed every year. However, the statistics released by the current government prove that the objectives of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana have not been fulfilled," Chavan said.

Quoting the statistics made available in the CAG report of 2014, Chavan said that the UPA Government constructed 1 crore 28 lakh 92 thousand houses during 2008-2013.

"The Rajiv Awas Yojana, launched during the UPA government in 2013, saw the construction of 1.17 lakh houses in one year. Prime Minister Modi has changed the name of this scheme to Sardar Patel National Urban Housing Mission, with the promise of constructing 2 crore houses by 2022. However, till July 10, 2017, a mere 1.33 lakh houses had been constructed," senior Congress leader said. "Despite being in a holy place like Shirdi, Modi refused to stop misleading the people of the nation. I pray to Sai Baba to give the Prime Minister the wisdom to speak the truth," Chavan said.



Hindu priests and temple staff sit on a protest against a ruling from India's top court to let women of menstruating age entering Sabarimala temple in Kerala on Friday

Six terrorists killed in last 24 hours in Kashmir

PNS ■ JAMMU

With the elimination of six more terrorists in the last 24 hours in different incidents across Kashmir valley the security have come closer to breaching the previous year tally of 213 - highest after 2010 when 270 terrorists were killed in the joint operations.

According to official sources since January 1, 2018 till date a total number of 193 terrorists have been neutralised by the joint teams of security forces in the State.

Ahead of the peak winter season the security forces are expected to neutralise more terrorists in the coming days as several of them hiding in upper reaches of North Kashmir area are expected to shift to safer hideouts.

To trap them during transit several joint teams of security forces have been closely tracking movement of small groups of foreign terrorists before neutralising them.

Out of an estimated number of around 300 active terrorists across Kashmir valley more than 100 foreign terrorists are hiding in different hideouts across frontier districts of North Kashmir.

According to Ministry of Defence spokesman, the security forces foiled an infiltration bid by killing three terrorists in upper reaches of forests of Boniyar in North Kashmir's Baramulla district on Thursday.

A search party patrolling in the forward areas had first intercepted a group of terrorists in the thickly forested area of Boniyar.

The terrorists after intercepted by the Army opened fire triggering a gunfight which culminated in the killing of three terrorists. The operation is still underway in the forward area and army had rushed additional reinforcements in the area to plug the possible infiltration routes.

On Friday morning two more terrorists were killed in a brief shootout with the jawans

According to Ministry of Defence spokesman, the security forces foiled an infiltration bid by killing three terrorists in upper reaches of forests of Boniyar in North Kashmir's Baramulla district on Thursday

of the State and paramilitary forces in north Kashmir's Baramulla district.

Director General of Police Dilbagh Singh told reporters, "When jawans of the state police noticed some suspicious movement near security check point along the highway a Sports Utility vehicle was signalled to stop at Kralhaar.

Singh said, "instead of stopping the vehicle one of the terrorists opened fire on police/CRPF personnel from his pistol while another tried to escape. He said both of them were neutralised by the brave jawans in retaliatory fire. Police also recovered 1 AK rifle, 2 Chinese pistols and

other arms and ammunition from the vehicle. The two terrorists were later identified as Pakistan based cadre of Jaish-e-Mohammad who were operating under the code names of Faizan and Wahab in the area.

Meanwhile, in another brief encounter a newly-recruited terrorist was killed in a shootout at a village in South Kashmir's Pulwama district late Thursday night. Police said that a joint team of Army's 50 RR and SOG personnel had set up a Nakka at Dougam Kakapora following inputs about the presence of terrorists at 11:30 pm.

The gunfight broke out after the security forces challenged the movement of the militants. One terrorist was killed in a brief shoot out. He was identified as Showkat Ahmad Bhat, a resident of Padgampora, Awantipora. Bhat had joined militancy on October 2 and was associated with Tehreek-ul-Mujahideen.

Class 9 student gang raped, attempts suicide

IANs ■ PATNA

A gang-raped Class 9 student was seriously injured on Friday after she leapt from a building and landed on high voltage wire in Bihar's Lakhisarai district, triggering mob violence, police said.

The victim was battling for life after jumping from the roof of a three-storey building in Chitranganj where she was raped after being intoxicated, Lakhisarai Superintendent of Police Kartikey Sharma said.

According to Sharma, the girl along with one of her friends had gone 'pandal' hopping on Durga Navami on Thursday. It was unclear how she reached the third floor of the building, Sharma said.

The police suspect that she must have jumped from the building after gaining consciousness. She was recovered in a half naked condition. She was possibly forced to consume

HER GIRLFRIEND, THE OWNER OF THE BUILDING AND ANOTHER SUSPECT HAVE BEEN DETAINED, THE POLICE OFFICER SAID

liquor before being raped, Sharma added. The police are waiting to register her statement as she remains unconscious.

Her girlfriend, the owner of the building and another suspect have been detained, the police officer said. Police have recovered some of the victim's clothes, liquor bottles and glasses from the building roof.

The incident triggered violent protests in the area. Hundreds of people blocked roads and ransacked public property demanding immediate police action. Additional security forces have been deployed in the area.

VHP demands renaming of Faizabad to Sri Ayodhya

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

The VHP Friday hailed the Uttar Pradesh government's decision to adopt a proposal to rename Allahabad as Prayagraj and demanded that the name of Faizabad be changed to "Sri Ayodhya".

VHP spokesman Sharad Sharma said the renaming of Allahabad aimed to free the mindset of slavery and added all sections of people had hailed this step of the state government.

"The Uttar Pradesh Government is taking steps in the interest of the people and their sentiments and its decision to change the name of Allahabad is praiseworthy... Now they need to change the name of Faizabad to Sri Ayodhya," Sharma said.

He said there were still a number of streets, buildings and districts which reminded them of the days of slavery.

"We have got freedom from the British rule but their symbols still hurt the self respect of every Hindustani," he said.

The present Government needed to understand their feelings and free the coming generations from these symbols of slavery, he claimed.

Senior minister Siddhant Singh had said the move would help highlight Indian culture at international level

Sharma said the Adityanath Yogi-led government could make an announcement about it on Diwali and please the seers of the temple town of Ayodhya.

Earlier this week, the state Cabinet approved a proposal to rename the historic city of Allahabad as Prayagraj.

Senior minister Siddhant Singh had said the move would help highlight Indian culture at international level.

BJP spokesperson Manish Shukla had praised the government for rectifying a historical mistake but Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav had criticised the move. Congress spokesman Omkar Singh had opposed the move, claiming the name change would affect the history in which Allahabad had played a significant role in the Independence struggle and later.



RSS workers take part in a foot-march (path sanchalan) on the occasion of Vijay Dashmi in Beawar, Rajasthan on Friday

Moderate temblor jolts Kashmir

IANs ■ SRINAGAR

An earthquake of moderate intensity jolted Jammu and Kashmir on Friday.

Sonam Lotus, Director of the MET Department, said the quake measured 5.2 on the Richter scale and occurred at 6:55 p.m.

"The coordinates of the quake were latitude 38.4 degrees north and longitude 73.8 degrees east. The epicentre was in Tajikistan-Xinjiang region," Lotus said.

No loss of life or damage to property was reported in Kashmir, which is located in a seismologically vulnerable zone.

In October 2005, an earthquake measuring 7.6 degrees on the Richter scale killed over 80,000 people in divided Kashmir.

Bomb explosion before Biren Singh's visit to Kangpokpi

PTI ■ IMPHAL

Unidentified miscreants triggered a powerful blast at a market place in Manipur's Kangpokpi district, few hours before Chief Minister N Biren Singh's scheduled visit there, police said on Friday.

The blast took place near the post office at Kangpokpi Bazaar, under the jurisdiction of Kangpokpi police station, shortly after Thursday midnight, the police said.

The blast occurred at around 1.10 am and there was no report of any casualty, a senior police officer told PTI, adding, only two cars were damaged in the incident.

Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh was supposed to visit a place near Kangpokpi

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As the apex body for the \$154 billion Indian IT BPM industry, we have strived to ensure the continued growth of the sector, facilitate partnerships, and fuel expansions

Kamal Agarwala, SME Council Chair, NASSCOM

BUZZ FROM GOVT

Moderation in inflation in the last two months has lowered the projected inflation trajectory. I vote for keeping the policy repo rate unchanged. Recognising that inflation risks have been persistent, and to reaffirm the commitment to securing the mandated 4 per cent inflation target on a durable basis, it is apposite to change the stance of monetary policy from neutral to calibrated tightening



Urjit R Patel, Governor, RBI

₹ rebounds 29 paise to 73.32 against US dollar

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The rupee recovered early losses and finally settled 29 paise higher at 73.32 against the US dollar on Friday, amid a weakening greenback.

Traders said the selling of the US currency by exporters and foreign fund inflows were the other factors that provided support to the home unit.

At the Interbank Foreign Exchange (Forex), the rupee opened lower at 73.62, but soon recovered the lost ground and jumped 31 paise to touch a high of 73.31 on increased selling of the American currency by exporters and banks.

The domestic unit settled the day up by 29 paise at 73.32 against the US dollar. The rupee had settled 13 paise lower at 73.61 against the US dollar Wednesday. Forex market remained shut on Thursday on account of "Dussehra".

Meanwhile, market benchmark BSE Sensex plunged by 464 points or 1.33 per cent to close at 34,315.63 points due to losses in index major Reliance Industries, HDFC and Infosys.

"Despite the fall (in equity benchmark), rupee gained some weight supported by stability in oil prices," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services Ltd.

Forex reserves decline by \$5.14 bn as ₹ continues to fall

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The continuing fall of the rupee has had its impact on foreign exchange reserves, which plunged by \$5.143 billion to \$394.465 billion during the week to October 12 on account of decline in foreign currency assets, according to the RBI data released on Friday.

This is one of the steepest falls that forex kitty has seen in recent decades.

In the previous week, the reserves had declined by \$915.8 million to \$399.609 billion.

As the rupee has been plummeting, the RBI has sold over \$40 billion of its reserves to prop it up since the beginning of the current fiscal.

The rupee had lost more than 16 per cent since January and plunged to 74.43 last week to the dollar, making it the worst emerging market currency. Friday the rupee closed at 73.32 to the greenback.

In the reporting week, foreign currency assets, a major component of overall reserves, plunged by a whopping \$5.232 billion to \$369.999 billion, as per the RBI data.

Expressed in US dollar, foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of the non-US currencies such as the euro, the pound and the yen held in the reserves.

Forex reserves had touched a record high of \$426.028 billion in the week to April 13, 2018. Since then the forex kitty has been on slide and is now down by over \$31 billion.

Gold reserves rose by \$71.4 million to \$20.522 billion in the reporting week, the data showed. The special drawing rights with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was up by \$6.4 million to \$1.472 billion.

The country's reserve position with the IMF also rose by \$10.7 million to \$2.471 billion, the apex bank said.

IL&FS Investment Manager's non-executive director resigns from board

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

IL&FS Investment Managers Ltd on Friday said non-executive director Vibhav Kapoor on its board has resigned.

"We hereby inform that Vibhav Kapoor, non-executive director of the company, has resigned as a member of the board of directors," it said in a regulatory filing.

The company did not give the reason for his resignation.

This is in continuation to a spate of resignations of the board of directors from IL&FS and its group firms ever since the loan defaults started arising nearly a month ago.

Independent directors of IL&FS Financial Services - Renu Chhali, Surinder Singh Kohli, Shubhalakshmi Panse and Uday Ved had earlier stepped down.

On October 3, IL&FS Engineering and Construction Company had announced the resignation of its Managing Director Murlidhar Khattar.

The IL&FS group is facing serious liquidity crisis and has defaulted on interest payment on various debt repayments since August 27. It has over ₹91,000 crore in debt at the consolidated level.

There are concerns that default by a large NBFC like

IL&FS will create liquidity crunch in the financial markets.

The country's largest lender SBI as well as insurance behemoth LIC, who are key shareholders in IL&FS, have come to the rescue of the debt-ridden IL&FS group to avoid the contagion effect that may arise if the group collapses.

SBI (with 6.42 per cent stake) earlier this month said that it will buy good assets worth ₹45,000 crore from IL&FS, while LIC (the largest shareholder at 25.34 per cent) is expected to up its stake further in the company.

Among others shareholders of the IL&FS are Orix Corporation of Japan at 23.54 per cent, The Abu Dhabi Investment Authority 12.56 per cent, HDFC 9.02 per cent, and Central Bank of India 7.67 per cent. The RBI also had to intervene in the matter and has announced measures to boost capital flow to the NBFC sector.

The regulator came up with further boost for the sector and allowed banks to use government securities equal to their incremental outstanding credit to NBFCs, over and above their outstanding credit to them as on October 19, which can be used to meet liquidity coverage ratio requirements.

Why no insurance cover allowed to those having congenital anomalies? HC to RDAI

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has asked the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDAI) to "explain the reasonableness" of not granting insurance cover to people suffering from congenital anomalies.

"What is the objection to giving insurance cover to them (people suffering from congenital anomalies)," a bench of Chief Justice Rajendra Menon and Justice V K Rao asked the IRDAI and sought its response before the next date of hearing on December 17.

"Give the justification for such exclusion," the court said to the insurance regulator.

The bench also issued notices to the General Insurance Council and the Life Insurance Council, which represent the entities that carry on the business of general and life insurance respectively, and sought their stand on the issue before the next date.

The court was hearing a PIL seeking directions to the Centre, the IRDAI and insurance companies to remove congenital anomalies, like



external or internal abnormality in the womb, from the list of general exclusions in the health or life insurance policies.

The petition, by Nipun Malhotra, has challenged the "arbitrary" and "illegal" mechanisms adopted by the IRDAI in denying the rights of Persons with Disabilities (PwD) to seek insurance cover for themselves on the ground that their conditions are categorised under the scope of "congenital anomalies", as defined under a July 29, 2016 circular by the regulator.

Congenital anomalies are also known as birth defects and could be caused by single gene defects, chromosomal disorders, multifactorial inheritance, environmental teratogens and micronutrient defi-

ciencies. Malhotra, a disability rights activist who suffers from locomotor disability from birth, has sought a direction to the IRDAI to remove the phrase 'congenital anomalies' from the standardised definition of the 2016 circulars.

He has also sought direction to take a relook at the exclusionary clauses in insurance contracts and ensure that insurance companies do not reject claims on the basis of exclusions related to congenital anomalies.

In his petition filed through advocate Jai Dehadrai, he has said the effect of the circular and regulations was that PwDs found it next to impossible to seek insurance cover, when undergoing any health related complications.

To curb rising onion price, Nafed told to boost supply in Delhi

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

To check rising onion prices, the Centre on Friday directed co-operative Nafed to boost supply in the national capital from the buffer stock and also asked Mother Dairy to reduce the rates by ₹2 per kg on the kitchen staple in all its Safal outlets.

A decision in this regard, was taken in a high-level meeting chaired by Consumer Secretary Avinash K Srivastava, called to review the price and supply situation of onion with concerned stakeholders.

Currently, retail onion prices in the national capital are ruling in the range of ₹30-40 per kg on tight supplies, as per the trade data.

"Arrivals of kharif crop is expected to increase significantly within a week. This would improve availability in consuming areas, thereby, helping moderate prices," the ministry said in a statement.

Meanwhile, it was decided in the meeting that onion supplies in Delhi from the buffer stock under the Price Stabilisation Fund (PSF) should

be increased by 2-3 times from the current level so as to tide over any constraint in the interim supply of onions in the market, it said.

The implementing agency Nafed, has been directed to increase the quantity supplied from the PSF stock, it added.

A buffer stock of onion has been created by the Centre using the PSF to offload it in the market in times of tight supply and contain price rise.

That apart, the Mother Dairy has been asked to reduce the prices of onion by ₹2 per kg on all variants.

"Mother Dairy agreed to reduce the rates from ₹25.90 to ₹23.90 for the loose variant and from ₹27.90 to ₹25.90 for the packed variant at all its stores in Delhi," the Government added.

Mother Dairy's subsidiary Safal has 400 outlets in Delhi-NCR.

With regard to kharif onion output, the government said the Horticulture Commissioner has indicated that the area sown to the kharif onion is higher than the year-ago.

RBI announces more steps to increase credit flow to NBFCs

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank on Friday announced more measures to increase liquidity flows to the non-banking financial companies. The RBI permitted banks to use Government securities equal to their incremental outstanding credit to NBFCs, over and above their outstanding credit to them as on October 19, to be used to meet liquidity coverage ratio requirements.

The move will help provide liquidity to housing finance companies (HFCs) and non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) which have come under pressure following series of default by IL&FS group companies.

"... Banks will be permitted to also reckon Government securities held by them up to an amount equal to their incremental outstanding credit to NBFCs and HFCs, over



and above the amount of credit to NBFCs and HFCs outstanding on their books as on October 19, 2018, as Level 1 HQLA under FALLCR within the mandatory SLR requirement," RBI said in a notification.

This will be in addition to the existing FALLCR of 13 per cent of total deposits, and limited to 0.5 per cent of the bank's total deposits.

Liquidity coverage ratio refers to highly liquid assets that financial institutions need to hold in order to meet short-term obligations.

Yes Bank shares slump 6% as RBI refuses more time to Rana Kapoor

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of Yes Bank fell by 6 per cent on Friday after the Reserve Bank refused to grant more time to its long serving CEO and MD Rana Kapoor and asked the private sector lender to appoint his successor latest by February 1, 2019.

The scrip dropped 6.06 per cent to settle at ₹217.70 on the BSE. During the day, it slumped 8 per cent to Rs 213.10.

The stock was the worst hit among the 30-Sensex blue chips.

On the NSE, shares of the company tanked 5.41 per cent to close at ₹219.35.

In terms of equity volume, 41.17 lakh shares of the company were traded on the BSE and over 5 crore shares changed hands on the NSE during the day.

Shares of Yes Bank had



faced huge selling pressure Wednesday also, plunging nearly 7 per cent.

Stock markets were closed Thursday for Dussehra.

"The Reserve Bank of India has reaffirmed that a successor to Rana Kapoor, MD & CEO, Yes Bank should be appointed by February 1, 2019," the lender had said in a stock exchange filing.

The RBI had earlier curtailed the three-year term that the board had sought for Kapoor, also one of the promoters of the bank, to January 31, 2019, and asked the bank to find a replacement.

Govt to allow data services in flights within national boundaries

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The telecom department is considering to allow only data services initially in flights and water vessels within Indian territorial boundaries, an official source said.

Under the proposed in-flight connectivity guidelines, both voice and data services would be provided to passengers on flights and maritime transport within the national boundaries.

"DoT will initially seek application for data services under IFC (in-flight connectivity) guidelines. There are some issues around gateway for voice so that will not start immediately," a Department of Telecom official said.

In-flight connectivity service is available in most of the developed markets.

While mobile phone use will still be restricted during takeoff and landing, the Telecom Commission has approved lifting the ban on the use of mobile phones and internet services at cruising altitudes.

NASSCOM inks MoU to expand Indian SMEs

PTI ■ DUBAI

IT industry body NASSCOM has signed an MoU with a leading technology community in Dubai to help small and medium-sized Indian enterprises expand their operations in the Middle East and North Africa region.

The MoU between the National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) and the Dubai Internet City (DIC) is first of its kind in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

Under the agreement, the DIC will provide NASSCOM's, small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) members opportunity to develop their operations by offering support and a platform to expand in the MENA region.

The MoU was signed by Ammar al-Malik, Managing Director of DIC and Dubai Outsourcing City (DOC) and Kamal Agarwala, SME Council Chair, NASSCOM.

UNDER THE AGREEMENT, THE DIC WILL PROVIDE NASSCOM'S, SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES(SME) MEMBERS OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP THEIR OPERATIONS BY OFFERING SUPPORT AND A PLATFORM TO EXPAND IN THE MENA REGION

The DIC is mandated to provide Indian tech startups and SMEs an opportunity to establish themselves in Dubai and get access to the largest technology community, providing them with a gateway and necessary support to grow in the UAE and the wider region.

"The Middle East offers tremendous growth opportunities for innovative tech firms, with huge untapped potential," said al-Malik, Managing Director of DIC and DOC.

The \$8 billion UAE tech industry is growing rapidly and DIC, as the leading tech-

nology business community in the region, serves as a natural launch pad for Indian technology.

According to NASSCOM, there have been great efforts for the continued growth of the sector. "As the apex body for the \$154 billion Indian IT BPM industry, we have strived to ensure the continued growth of the sector, facilitate partnerships, and fuel expansions," said Kamal Agarwala, SME Council Chair, NASSCOM.

Dubai Internet City is already home to leading technology Indian companies, and we firmly believe that this MoU will serve as a major catalyst for Indian businesses to expand into the region, said Agarwala.

DIC is home to leading Indian multinationals, including Tata Consultancy Services, Tech Mahindra, Wipro, and the HCL Technologies.

The integrated community hosts a large number of Indian professionals within its 24,000-strong workforce, which includes diverse workers from over 150 nationalities.

State subsidies to improve mills' liquidity & clear cane dues: Report

PTI ■ MUMBAI

State Governments' announcement of cash subsidy is likely to improve the liquidity of mills, helping them in making cane payments to farmers, a report has said.

Recently, Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Haryana's state advisory policy (SAP) had announced a cash subsidy of close to ₹10,000 crore as on mid-September 2018. Icrs said in a report which added that this move is likely to result in more improvement in the mills' liquidity and support them in making cane payments to the farmers.

"The cash subsidy of ₹4.50 per quintal by the UP Government is likely to improve the contribution margin from sugar by ₹400450 per tonne. Further, the soft loans of ₹4000-crore are at low interest rates of 5 per cent, which

would enable the mills to save the interest costs against working capital limits," Icrs Ratings senior vice president and group head, Sabyasachi Majumdar, said. He said, the Haryana Government has also announced financial assistance (subsidy and soft loans) of ₹16 per quintal to clear the cane dues of SY2018 (sugar year).

"These steps are likely to provide some liquidity to the sugar mills and support them in clearing farmer dues," he added.

In UP, the mills availing loan under the Scheme for Extending Financial Assistance to Sugar Undertakings-2018 (SEFASU-2018) will have to ensure 100 per cent payment of outstanding cane price of crushing season SY2017 and SY2018, including utilisation of this sanctioned loan, by November 30, 2018, the Icrs report said.

Govt likely to appoint new CEA in next 1-2 months

THE GOVERNMENT ON JUNE 30 INVITED APPLICATIONS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF CEA

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government is likely to appoint a new chief economic advisor (CEA) in the next one or two months, sources said. A search committee appointed by the Finance Ministry is expected to finalise the list of suitable candidates soon and appointment is likely in 1-2 months, they said further.

The Government on June 30 invited applications for the

appointment of CEA on deputation basis after Arvind Subramanian quit the office ahead of completion of his term.

The Finance Ministry has appointed a search committee headed by former Reserve Bank of India governor Bimal Jalan to shortlist candidates for the post. Other members of the panel are economic affairs secretary and department of personnel training secretary.

Subramanian was appointed as CEA on October 16, 2014, for a 3-year term and was given an extension last year. His official contract was till May 2019. Subramanian is currently a visiting lecturer of public policy at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and a senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics.

'Missing Saudi scribe Khashoggi likely dead'

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump has said it looks like Saudi Arabia's missing dissident journalist Jamal Khashoggi is dead and warned of "very severe" consequences if the kingdom is responsible.

Trump's remarks came after he was briefed on the investigation by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo who returned from a trip to Saudi Arabia and Turkey.

Khashoggi, 60, who has not been seen since entering Saudi Arabia's consulate in Istanbul earlier this month, is feared to have been killed inside the mission. The incident has resulted in a global outrage, more so in the US where he lived as a legal permanent resident and worked for "The Washington Post".

"It certainly looks that way to me. It's very sad. Certainly, looks that way," Trump told



reporters at Joint Air Force base Andrews before boarding Air Force One on his way to Montana for a campaign rally. This is the first time that the US has officially acknowledged about Khashoggi's death, who was last seen entering the Saudi consulate in Istanbul.

Turkish investigators have told local media and also to the US media that Khashoggi was brutally killed inside the consulate on October 2.

"Well, it'll have to be very severe. I mean, it's bad, bad stuff. But we'll see what happens," Trump told reporters when asked what would be the

consequences of such an unfortunate incident.

The President's remarks came hours after he had a detailed meeting with Pompeo, who a night earlier arrived from his trip to Saudi Arabia and Turkey, where he talked to them about the missing journalist.

"We are waiting for some investigations, and waiting for the results.

We will have them very soon, and I think we'll be making a statement, a very strong statement. But we're waiting for the results of about three different investigations, and we should be able to get to the bottom fairly soon," Trump said.

Trump so far has resisted the call for strong action against Saudi Arabia.

During his meeting with Trump, Pompeo advised that Saudi Arabia be given some more time to complete investigation.

US Prez praises congressman who assaulted reporter

AFP ■ WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump on Thursday praised a US congressman who assaulted a reporter, making light of the attack.

Greg Gianforte was sentenced to six months of deferred jail time, 40 hours of community service, 20 hours of anger management sessions and USD 385 in fines and court fees for the misdemeanor assault that propelled him and his congressional race into the national spotlight last year.

Trump's remarks at a rally in Montana come amid an international outcry over the disappearance of Jamal Khashoggi, a journalist who has been missing since entering Saudi Arabia's consulate in Istanbul on October 2, whom the president has said is likely dead.

At the rally, Trump urged people to vote for Gianforte, describing him as "an incredible

Montana leader" and "one of the most respected people in Congress."

"By the way, never wrestle him," Trump said, referring to Gianforte's assault on The Guardian reporter Ben Jacobs. "Any guy that can do a body slam — he's my kind of, he's my guy."

Trump said he originally thought the assault — which took place on the eve of his election — might hurt Gianforte's chances. "Then I said, 'Well wait a minute, I know Montana pretty well, I think it might help him.' And it did," the president said.

The Guardian US editor John Mulholland took aim at Trump's remarks.

"To celebrate an attack on a journalist who is simply doing his job is an attack on the First Amendment by someone who has taken an oath to defend it," he said, referring to the amendment to the US constitution that guarantees freedom of the Press.

Turkey suggests remains taken out of consulate

AP ■ ISTANBUL

A Turkish official said on Friday that investigators are looking into the possibility that the remains of missing Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi may have been taken to a forest in the outskirts of Istanbul or to another city — if and after he was killed inside the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul earlier this month.

The official told The Associated Press that police have established that two vehicles belonging to the consulate, left the building on October 2 — the day Khashoggi had walked into the consulate and vanished.

One of the vehicles travelled to the nearby Belgrade Forest while the other travelled to the city of Yalova, across the Sea of Marmara from Istanbul, the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity due to the secrecy of the ongoing investigation.

It was not immediately



A view of Saudi Arabia's consulate in Istanbul on Friday

AP

clear if police had already searched the areas.

Turkish reports say Khashoggi was brutally murdered and dismembered inside the consulate by members of an assassination squad with ties to Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

The Saudis have dismissed those reports as baseless but have yet to explain what happened to Khashoggi, a colum-

nist for The Washington Post who wrote critically of Prince Mohammed's rise to power.

President Donald Trump, who first came out hard on the Saudis over the disappearance but had since backed off, said Thursday that it "certainly looks" as though Khashoggi is dead, and that the consequences for the Saudis "will have to be very severe" if they are found to have killed him.

Turkey denies giving 'any kind of audio tape' on Khashoggi to US

AFP ■ ISTANBUL

Turkey on Friday denied giving "any kind of audio tape" from the investigation into the disappearance of journalist Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul to US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo or any American official.

"It is out of the question for Turkey to give any kind of audio tape to Pompeo or any other US official," said Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu, two days after meeting with the US's top diplomat for talks in Ankara.



A dozen of Indonesian journalists hold posters with photos of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi during a protest outside Saudi Arabian Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia on Friday

AP

Turkey's pro-government press has reported that Turkey has an audio recording that proves the alleged murder of Khashoggi at the consulate and that he was tortured before his death.

The existence of the tape has never been confirmed on the record by Turkish officials.

ABC News, quoting a senior Turkish official, reported Thursday that during his visit to Turkey this week Pompeo heard this audio and was shown a transcript of the recording. But Pompeo denied the report.

"I've seen no tape. I've seen no -- or I've heard no tape. I've seen no transcript," he told reporters during a trip to Latin America.

Cavusoglu, like other Turkish officials, stopped short of revealing details of the investigation but vowed they would be shared in due course.

"We will share the results to emerge with the entire world. It is out of the question for us to share this or that information with any country," he said, quoted by the state-run Anadolu news agency.

Saudis may blame intelligence official for Khashoggi killing: Post

IANIS ■ ISTANBUL

The rulers of Saudi Arabia are considering blaming a top intelligence official close to Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman for the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, the Washington Post reported.

The plan to assign blame to Maj. Gen. Ahmed al-Assiri, a high-ranking adviser to the crown prince, would be an extraordinary recognition of the magnitude of international backlash to hit the kingdom since the disappearance of

Khashoggi, a prominent Saudi dissident, it said.

A resident of Virginia and contributor to The Washington Post, Khashoggi was last seen entering the Saudi Consulate here on October 2. The Post based its report after speaking to three people with knowledge of the Saudi plans.

Blaming Gen. Assiri could also provide a plausible explanation for the apparent killing and help deflect blame from the crown prince, who American intelligence agencies are increasingly convinced was behind

Khashoggi's disappearance, the daily said. Turkish officials have said they possess evidence showing that 15 Saudi agents assassinated and dismembered Khashoggi in the consulate.

After two weeks of blanket denials and mounting pressure from Turkey and Washington, Saudi Arabia said it would conduct its own investigation to determine who was responsible, the Post said. But even with the investigation still ostensibly underway, the Saudis are already pointing to Gen. Assiri as the culprit, it said.

European, Asian leaders want free trade, push back at Trump

AP ■ BRUSSELS

European and Asian leaders pledged their support for free trade at a meeting on Friday that underscored global trade tensions with US President Donald Trump.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said the Asia-Europe Meeting in Brussels would send a signal that "countries are coming together here from Europe and Asia that all want rules-based global trade and are committed to multilateralism." The meeting brought together 30 European leaders with their counterparts from 21 Asian nations as well as top officials from the European Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Together, the group accounts for some two-thirds of the world's economic output, 55 percent of global trade and 60 percent of the world's population.

A written statement said the leaders "highlighted the vital need of maintaining an open world economy and upholding the rules-based multilateral trading system, with the World Trade Organization at its core."

Trump slapped 25 percent tariffs on steel imports and 10 percent on imported aluminum from the EU on June 1. He said the move was to protect US national security interests, but the Europeans claim it is simply protectionism and breaks



French President Emmanuel Macron speaks with Norway's Prime Minister Erna Solberg and Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte during a round table meeting at an EU-ASEM summit in Brussels on Friday

AP

global trade rules.

The EU hit back with tariffs on about \$250 billion worth (\$3.4 billion) of U.S. steel, agricultural and other products.

The stakes are even higher in Trump's trade war with China. Trump has imposed tariffs on about \$250 billion worth of Chinese products amid US accusations that China engages in cyber-theft and coerces foreign companies into handing over technology in return for access to the Chinese market, as well as by Trump's anger over China's trade surplus with the US.

The wide-ranging agenda in Brussels also included discussions on climate change. In their closing statement, the leaders expressed "profound

concern that current global efforts are insufficient" to meet goals set out in the 2015 Paris climate accord. Trump has removed the US from that deal.

On the sidelines of the meeting, the EU signed a pact with Vietnam that aims to tackle illegal logging. Later the EU was signing a free trade deal with Singapore.

In another conclusion that ran counter to US policy, European and Asian leaders praised the Iran nuclear deal — another multilateral initiative rejected by Trump.

"Preserving the nuclear deal with Iran is a matter of respecting international agreements, and promoting international security, peace and stability," they said.

British-Pakistani cleric released from jail

IANIS ■ LONDON

Radical preacher Anjem Choudary was released from prison on Friday after serving half of his sentence for urging support to the militant Islamic State group and pledging allegiance to it.

Choudary, 51, who was a key figure for a succession of extremist Islamist groups, emerged early morning from Belmarsh prison in southeast London. The 51-year-old former lawyer of Pakistani descent was sentenced in 2016 to five-and-a-half years in prison.



People attend a farewell ceremony in Kerch, Crimea on Friday

AP

Afghanistan delays polls after Taliban attack

AFP ■ KABUL

Afghanistan postponed legislative elections in Kandahar province on Friday, after a Taliban-claimed attack on a US-Afghan security meeting killed a powerful police chief and threatened stability across the south.

Saturday's parliamentary ballot would be delayed by one week, a spokesman for President Ashraf Ghani said in a statement, following an extraordinary meeting of the National Security Council.

The Independent Election Commission would announce the new date, he added.

Preparations for the vote in Kandahar, the Taliban's birth-



place, were thrown into turmoil on Thursday when a gunman wearing a security forces uniform opened fire on a gathering of US and Afghan officials.

General Scott Miller, the top US and NATO commander in Afghanistan, escaped unhurt, but Kandahar police chief General Abdul Raziq was killed along with the head of the provincial intelligence unit

and an Afghan journalist.

Another 13 people were wounded in the assault inside the heavily fortified provincial governor's compound, including the governor and two Americans.

Voter turnout for the election — which is more than three years late — already was expected to be far lower than the 8.9 million people officially registered, following the Taliban's pledge to attack the ballot.

Raziq's death is likely to deter even more voters from showing up at the more than 5,000 polling centres around the country, which Afghanistan's overstretched security forces have been tasked with protecting.

More than 2,500 candidates are competing for 249 seats in the lower house, which is responsible for making laws and supervising the government.

Hundreds of people have been killed or wounded in poll-related violence so far. At least 10 candidates have been killed.

Despite the threat of violence, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan on Friday urged eligible voters to "exercise their constitutional right to vote."

The poll is seen as a crucial test for next year's presidential election and an important milestone ahead of a UN meeting in Geneva in November where Afghanistan is under pressure to show progress on "democratic processes."

GLOBE TROTTER

BULGARIA INDICTS SUSPECT IN JOURNALIST KILLING

Sofia: Bulgarian prosecutors on Friday indicted a man accused of the rape and murder of a television journalist and the court hearing the case ordered him to remain in custody pending trial. Severin Krasimirov, 20, was handcuffed and under heavy guard when he appeared before the regional court in the northern town of Ruse.

FOUR KILLED IN ROAD ACCIDENT IN PAKISTAN

Peshawar: At least four members of a family were killed in a road accident on Friday after the vehicle they were travelling in was hit by a dumper in northwest Pakistan, said police. The incident happened in Mansehra district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province when a dumper went out of driver's control and dashed into a taxi the family members were travelling in.

TURKEY TO HOST 4-NATION SUMMIT ON SYRIA CRISIS

Ankara: A Turkish official says a summit between the leaders of Turkey, France, Germany and Russia will be held in Istanbul this month to discuss the conflict in Syria. Presidential spokesman Ibrahim Kalin, in a written statement Friday said a summit will take place on October 27.

TAIWAN: WILL CONTINUE TO PUSH FOR PAPAL VISIT

Taipei: Taiwan said Friday it would continue to push for a papal visit to the island after the Vatican turned down its most recent invitation. Vice president Chen Chien-jen made the invitation during an audience with the pope Sunday as Taiwan seeks to deepen ties with its only ally in Europe after the Holy See signed a historic deal with Beijing.

FBI LEAKER JAILED FOR FOUR YEARS

Washington: A former FBI agent who leaked internal documents showing how the agency used racial profiling in counter-terror investigations was sentenced to four years in prison Thursday. In the third case this week to underscore the Trump administration's determined crackdown on media leaks, Terry Albury, a 17-year FBI veteran and son of an Ethiopian refugee, was ordered to prison for 48 months by a Minnesota judge after pleading guilty in the case.



Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe waves as he departs an EU-ASEM summit in Brussels on Friday

AP

Six dead in fire at Rohingya camp in Myanmar

AFP ■ YANGON

Six Rohingya were killed Saturday on Friday after a blaze tore through an overcrowded camp for the persecuted minority in Myanmar's Rakhine State, the local fire service said.

Global attention has focused on the 720,000 Rohingya Muslims forced from the State's north into Bangladesh last year by a brutal military crackdown.

The UN Human Rights Council has accused top Myanmar generals of genocide over the bloody campaign, allegations the country strongly denies.

Sitharaman holds bilateral talks with her US, ASEAN counterparts in Singapore

PTI ■ SINGAPORE

Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday held a series of bilateral meetings with her counterparts from ASEAN nations and US Defence Secretary James Mattis on the sidelines of ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meet here.

Defence Ministers from ASEAN countries and that of Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, Russia, and the US have gathered here for the 12th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) and the 5th ADMM-Plus, which is being hosted by Singapore.

The ADMM and ADMM-Plus serves as key Ministerial-level platforms in the regional security architecture, promoting strategic dialogue and practical cooperation between ASEAN and its partners.

"Smt @nsitharaman in a bilateral meeting with #SecDef James Mattis, United States Secretary of Defense on the sidelines of ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meet (Plus) in Singapore," the defence minister tweeted.

Sitharaman also met her Malaysian counterpart Mohamad bin Sabu, Australian Defence Minister Christopher Pyne, Philippines' Secretary of

National Defense Delfin Lorenzana and Vietnam Defence Minister Ngo Xuan Lich during her fast-paced day-long meetings.

She will also hold a bilateral meeting with her Singapore counterpart Dr Ng Eng Hen.

According to sources, India and Singapore will extend their already comprehensive bilateral defence collaboration. A new agreement is likely to be signed for the Army-to-Army collaboration as well as bilateral hosting of logistics and furthering supports for exchange visits by of naval vessels of the two countries, the sources said.

10-WICKET ABBAS DESTROYS AUSSIES

Mohammad grabs fifer in each innings to help Pakistan win 2nd Test by a record margin of 373 runs, seal series 1-0

AFP ■ ABU DHABI

Medium pacer Mohammad Abbas took his maiden ten-wicket haul in a match to fire Pakistan to a 373-run win over Australia in the second Test in Abu Dhabi on Friday.

Abbas followed his 5-33 in the first innings with figures of 5-62 to wreck Australia for 164 after they were set a big 538-run target.

The win gave Pakistan a 1-0 win in the two-match series after Australia fought back to draw the first Test in Dubai last week.

This becomes Australia's heaviest defeat against Pakistan, beating the 356-run hammering at this same venue four years ago.

It was Abbas who destroyed Australia with a haul of 17 wickets in the series — becoming the first Pakistani fast bowler to take ten wickets in a Test since Mohammad Asif's feat against Sri Lanka at Kandy in 2006.

Abbas had jolted Australia with four wickets off just 23 balls while Yasir Shah finished with 3-45 to give Pakistan their tenth series win on the neutral venues of United Arab Emirates (UAE).

They have only lost one series — 2-0 to Sri Lanka last year — since being forced to play their home matches in UAE since 2009.

Australia's batsmen had no answers to his accurate seam bowling under cloudy conditions at Sheikh Zayed Stadium as only Marnus Labuschagne (43), Travis Head (36) and Aaron Finch (31) offered some resistance.

Yasir dismissed number ten Jon Holland soon after lunch to hand Pakistan victory. The first Test ended in a draw in Dubai last week.

Australian opener Usman Khawaja could not bat after suffering a recurrence of a knee injury during practice on Thursday.

Abbas jolted the Australians in the seventh over of the day when he removed a solid-looking Head, getting an edge to substitute wicketkeeper Mohammad Rizwan, deputising for Sarfraz Ahmed.

Sarfraz, who was hit on the helmet by a rising Mitchell Starc delivery on Thursday, had gone for a precautionary scan.

Head and Finch added 61 runs for the second wicket while Starc (28) and



Mohammad Abbas celebrates after dismissing Marnus Labuschagne. Abbas emerges as the star performer for Pakistan clinching 5 wickets in each innings of 2nd Test AP



Dhabi on Wednesday.

'ABBAS IS THE BEST'

Rival captains Sarfraz Ahmed and Tim Paine were unanimous in their praise of wicket-taking sensation Mohammad Abbas, who helped Pakistan thrash Australia in the second Test.

Abbas finished with 10 for 95 for the match after taking 5 for 33 in the first innings, ending up as man-of-the-series with 17 wickets in two Tests.

Sarfraz claimed Australia weren't ready for Abbas, who was also named man-of-the-series on Pakistan's trip to England earlier this year.

"Looks like they hadn't prepared for Abbas, they took him a little easy," said Sarfraz.

Australia entered the two-Test series focused on the threat of leg-spinner Yasir Shah, although he managed just eight wickets.

"But credit goes to Abbas, because the pitch is not suitable for fast bowlers," said Sarfraz.

"The way he bowled, he was the best bowler on either side. The way he bowled throughout he was the main factor for us winning the series."

Paine agreed with Sarfraz's assessment of Abbas. "Abbas is a world-class bowler," said Paine.

"He (Abbas) challenged our defence and was too good for us. Yasir didn't get the wickets, but he bowled just as well. Over here, one of the things our bowlers talked about was building pressure from both ends. That is what Pakistan did really well together."

PAKISTAN'S BIGGEST WINS IN TERMS OF RUNS IN TESTS

Margin	Opponent	Venue	Season
373 runs	Australia	Abu Dhabi	2017-18
356 runs	Australia	Abu Dhabi	2014-15
341 runs	India	Karachi	2005-06
328 runs	Bangladesh	Dhaka	2014-15
301 runs	Sri Lanka	Colombo	1994

Faisal Features

BEST BOWLING IN A MATCH IN UAE

Figures	Bowler	Opponent	Venue	Season	Result
11-136	Rangana Herath (Sri Lanka)	Pakistan	Abu Dhabi	2017-18	Won
10-95	Mohammad Abbas (Pakistan)	Australia	Abu Dhabi	2018-19	Won
10-97	Saeed Aijmal (Pakistan)	England	Dubai	2011-12	Won
10-174	Devendra Bishoo (West Indies)	Pakistan	Dubai	2016-17	Lost
10-203	Mark Craig (New Zealand)	Pakistan	Sharjah	2014-15	Won
10-210	Yasir Shah (Pakistan)	West Indies	Abu Dhabi	2016-17	Won

Faisal Features

Labuschagne added 67 for the sixth wicket, but it only delayed the inevitable. Abbas had Mitchell Marsh (five) and Finch (31) before wicket and dismissed Tim Paine for nought — before Yasir Shah removed Starc and Peter Siddle for three.

Australia had reached 155-7 at lunch with the writing very much on the wall. Pakistan made 282 in their first innings and then bowled out Australia for a paltry 145, gaining a match winning 137-run lead. The highlights of Pakistan's batting in

this match were 94 and 66 from opener Fakhar Zaman in his first Test while skipper Sarfraz returned to form with innings of 94 and 81.

Both the teams now play a series of three Twenty20 internationals with the first in Abu

SINGLES

SOMDEV BACKS NEW ATP RANKING SYSTEM

THANE: Former India Davis Cup singles stalwart Somdev Devvarman on Friday backed the new ATP ranking system, saying it will be a good thing for the Indian players in the long run. From 2020, ATP Ranking points will begin at the ATP Challenger Tour, a change that could significantly reduce the number of ATP-ranked players in the country. Conceding the new ranking format will hurt Indians initially, Devvarman said it will be beneficial to youngsters in the longer run. "It is going to hurt in the beginning. But towards the end a lot of junior players, between 17-19 (years) who are taking that decision whether to turn pro immediately or to go to college for four years and then turn pro, will find it a lot simpler because nobody wants to be on the transition tour for four years. "I think it will be a good thing for the Indian players in the long run if they treat it in a correct way," he said.

ADITI SLIPS TO T-30 IN SHANGHAI

SHANGHAI: Indian golfer Aditi Ashok played a roller-coaster of a round to end the day with a 1-over 73 that saw her slip from T-22 to T-30 in the Buick LPGA event here on Friday. Aditi, who shot 71 in the first round, is now even par for 36 holes. The leader is Sei Young Kim (67-67) at 10-under, while Ariya Jutanugarn (66-69) is 9-under and shares second place with Danielle Kang (67-68) is third. Aditi, 96th in the Rolex World Rankings and 63rd in Race to CME Rankings, has had a mixed season with 20 starts in which she missed seven cuts. The tournament is the second of five being played in South Korea, Japan, China and Taiwan in the LPGA's annual Asian swing.

TOUGH DAY FOR SHUBHANKAR IN KOREA

JEJU ISLAND: Indian golfer Shubhankar Sharma started with a birdie from the tenth hole but failed to maintain the momentum and slipped to T-71st place at the halfway stage of the CJ CUP @ NINE BRIDGES tournament on Friday. Sharma ended the second day at 3-over 75 for a two-day total of 5-over 149. With no cut being applied in the limited field event, Sharma stayed on for the weekend with a chance to improve his scores and position. Brooks Koepka, recently named the PGA TOUR player of the year, gave himself a chance to become the No 1 player in the world as he shot a 7-under par 65 to move to within one shot of the lead. Koepka will move to the top of world rankings on Monday if he wins the tournament, as long as former No 1 Justin Thomas, the defending champion here, does not finish any better than second.

AUS A COMPLETE CLEAN SWEEP, WIN 3RD ODI

MUMBAI: Australia A Women completed a 3-0 sweep against India A Women by beating the latter by five wickets in the third One-Day International here on Friday. The clash was a dead rubber as Australia A had taken an inaccessible 2-0 lead after beating the hosts in the first two ODIs by 91 runs and four wickets respectively. Choosing to bat, skipper Punam Raut led from the front with a 98-run knock from 123 balls as the hosts managed to put 254/8 in the allotted 50 overs. Mona Meshram (57) too played her part to perfection while wicket-keeper Sushma Verma remained unbeaten on 40. But Australian opener Georgia Redmayne laid the foundation of the win with her 123-ball 98. She was ably supported by Tahil McGrath (62) and Josephine Dooley (67) as the Aussies hammered a listless Indian attack.

WOLF TAKES 4-SHOT LEAD AT INDIAN OPEN

GURGAON: Austrian Christine Wolf slotted birdies almost at will to card a second successive 4-under 68 and open up a massive four-shot lead over the rest of the field at the halfway stage of the Hero Women's Indian Open here on Friday. Wolf, who had never shot a round in the 60s in her previous four visits to India, including three of them to this DLF Golf and Country Club course, has now done it twice in last two days. With seven birdies in a sparkling nine-hole stretch and three bogeys, she shot 68 to set herself up for her maiden LET win in a six-year long pro career. Her best at HWIO is T-11 in 2016, when she had a share of the lead after the first day.

Agencies

Delhi, Mumbai battle for Best

PTI ■ BENGALURU

A daring Delhi will have to be at their best to upstage the mighty Mumbai when the traditional domestic powerhouses square off in the final of the Vijay Hazare Trophy here on Saturday.

Both teams have their bases covered though Delhi have an upper hand in the pace department with Navdeep Saini and Kulwant Khejroliya doing the job for the team in helpful conditions at the Chinnaswamy Stadium.

Mumbai, on the other hand, have a star-studded batting lineup comprising Ajinkya Rahane, Prithvi Shaw and in-form captain Shreyas Iyer.

With the firepower they possess, Mumbai should not be missing the services of Rohit Sharma, who played the quarterfinals and semifinals before joining the India ODI squad ahead of the West Indies series beginning on Sunday.



Prithvi Shaw bats during Vijay Hazare PTI

Mumbai, who have won the tournament twice ever since it became a pan India affair, have cruised into the final having thrashed Bihar and Hyderabad in

Mumbai vs Delhi
Live from 9:00am IST
STAR SPORTS 2

the quarter and semi-final respectively.

Pacers Dhawal Kulkarni and Tushar Deshpande have delivered in crunch moments and so has young left-arm spinner Shams Mulani, who is Mumbai's leading wicket-taker in the tournament with 16 scalps.

Captain Iyer has led from the front, amassing 366 runs at an average of 122 including two hundreds and a fifty. Shaw, who turned heads with special performances in his debut Test series against the West Indies, has made his presence felt in the four games he has played so far, scoring 348 runs at 87 including a quickfire 61 in the semifinal.

However, it will be a test for them against Saini and

Khejroliya. Both the Delhi pacers and rest of the team will be fired up for the final, considering they came out of nowhere to beat Jharkhand in the second semi-final.

Gautam Gambhir-led side were on the brink of elimination before Pawan Negi, batting at number nine, played a sensible knock under severe pressure to take Delhi over the line in the final over of the match.

The in-form skipper, who missed out in the last game, will be expected to deliver again alongside Dhruv Shorey and Nitish Rana.

Gambhir's opening partner Unmukt Chand has not yet fired in the knock-out stage and will be under pressure to perform in the all-important final.

The likes Pranshu Vijayaran and Lalit Yadav will also like to play their part in the summit clash.

Khaleel sets eye on World Cup berth

PTI ■ GUWAHATI

Having impressed the team management with his skill set, left-arm pacer Khaleel Ahmed now wants to seal his spot in the 2019 World Cup bound Indian squad with some good performances in the upcoming series against the West Indies. Khaleel made his debut during India's victorious Asia Cup campaign in Dubai and his ability to swing the ball at a fair pace impressed none other than stand-in captain Rohit Sharma.

With 18 games left before India's World Cup opener against South Africa on June 5, next year, Khaleel has his priorities in place.

"It's a good preparation for me for the World Cup. I want to take as many wickets as I can in the ODIs leading up to the World Cup. It will also boost my confidence and I will be under less pressure, if I am picked for the World Cup," Khaleel said ahead of India's first ODI against West Indies on Sunday.

His stint at the Delhi Daredevils with Zaheer Khan as the mentor has helped him evolve, feels Khaleel.

"I think I became a better bowler with his (Zaheer's) advice," the 20-year-old from Rajasthan's Tonk said.

"I have spent a lot of time with Zaheer bhai during my two-year stint at the Delhi Daredevils. We played in different conditions during IPL and he always kept discussing on how to bowl on different surfaces," he added.



Khaleel Ahmed celebrates after Rohit Sharma after India beat Hong Kong AP

In his second series with the senior team, Khaleel recalled how nervous he was before his debut against Hong Kong, in which he recorded impressive figures of 3 for 48.

"I was very nervous (for my debut) as my first tournament happened to be a big tournament like the Asia Cup. There was pressure. But after doing well on debut, I felt I could go further," Khaleel said after the net session at Assam Cricket Association's Barsapra Stadium.

Even though it's his second series, Khaleel said that the seniors have never made him feel like a newcomer.

"I never have a feel that I'm a junior in the side. Seniors support me well. Everyone keeps talking to me and boost my confidence," he said of the good camaraderie in the side, he said.

Wimbledon to introduce final set tie-breaks



Kevin Anderson celebrates after beating J Isner AP

AFP ■ LONDON

Wimbledon will introduce tie-breaks in the final set of all events for the first time next year, but only once the score in the deciding set reaches 12-12, the All England Lawn Tennis Club announced on Friday.

"Our view was that the time had come to introduce a tie-break method for matches that had not reached their natural conclusion at a reasonable point during the deciding set," said the club's chairman Philip Brook.

A tie-break is normally played to decide the set when the score reaches 6-6. However, until now

the US Open has been the only Grand Slam that uses a tie-break in the fifth set.

In this year's Wimbledon men's final, South African Kevin Anderson lost to Novak Djokovic in straight sets less than two days after beating John Isner 26-24 in the fifth set after more than six-and-a-half hours on court.

Djokovic's own five-set semifinal victory over Rafael Nadal also had to be played over two days due to the delay in a conclusion to the Anderson-Isner match.

"While we know the instances of matches extending deep into the final set are rare, we feel that a tie-break at 12-12 strikes an equitable

balance between allowing players ample opportunity to complete the match to advantage, while also providing certainty that the match will reach a conclusion in an acceptable timeframe," added Brook.

The AELTC said it had studied data from the past 20 years at Wimbledon, as well as consulting players and officials before reaching the decision.

Big-serving American Isner was also famously involved in the longest match in Wimbledon history when he beat France's Nicolas Mahut 70-68 in the deciding set in 2010 after over 11 hours on court over three days.

DIBABA READY FOR JEPKOSGEI CHALLENGE

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Ethiopia's distance running great Tirunesh Dibaba also declared herself fit despite having a recovery period of just five weeks from the gruelling Berlin Marathon.

Three Olympic Gold winner in 5,000m and 10,000m, Dibaba ran an outstanding time of 2:18:55 at the Berlin Marathon on September 16 but she said she has recovered quickly despite the short amount of time between the two races.

She said she is ready to challenge for the first prize cheque of \$ 27,000 — the richest half marathon winner's jackpot in the world — in the Capital city on Sunday.

"One of my plans was to run a 21K (half marathon) after Berlin and my manager told me about Delhi, and I thought it was a good idea," said Dibaba, who has turned into one of the world's top road runners after a medal-laden track and cross country career.

"I've recovered more-or-less, although I wanted to run faster in Berlin. I've come to Delhi with the first target of winning, I'm not thinking about times too much," added Dibaba.

The ADHM course record of 66:54 was set by Kenya's Mary Keitany in 2009.

Current half marathon world record holder Joyciline Jepkosgei said weather conditions would be key in the race on Sunday.



Half Marathon world record holder Joyciline Jepkosgei and Olympic Gold medalist Tirunesh Dibaba pose with their bibs PTI

"I'm very happy to be here, it's a privilege to meet Indian people, and I'm looking to run a fast time. Of course, it all depends on the weather and climate," added the diminutive Kenyan who holds the world record of 64:51 set in October 2017.

Speaking about challenge of competing against Tirunesh Dibaba, who is arguably the greatest ever woman distance runner in the world

"It is a tough field on Sunday and it is an honour to be running along with Tirunesh. I will try to give my best to win the race," said Jepkosgei. Delhi has a reputation as a flat and

fast course, demonstrated by the times posted by the leading runners in recent years, and the 14th edition of the ADHM — which has established itself as one of the world's leading races over the distance — is expected to have good running conditions on the race day.

The men's race will see 2016 Olympic marathoners Gopi Thonakal and Nitender Singh Rawat go head-to-head, the former also the 2017 Asian marathon champion and the latter the leading Indian man in last year's ADHM.

The target for both men is not only Rawat's Indian Delhi Half Marathon's best of 63:53 set in 2017 but the national record of Bugatha Shrinu from Bhopal in 2016.

vivacity

METOO IS NOT
A BATTLEFIELD:
CHITRANGDA
- P14



Choosing gifts for kids

People want to buy for your kids and they will give something. If you have a strong view on what that thing shouldn't be, make it known beforehand. To be fair, you should also try to give some thought to what they may like.

Gifts are made to make someone happy and satisfied. When it comes to the kids, the best of the all gifts and things should be those products that are useful as well as entertaining for them. Gift should not harm to detract the child for good and bad habits. The best thing about choosing a gift for children is to help their parent choosing a thing that is not only best thing to play and learn but the most suitable and safe product as well. Gifts are very important for healthy and energetic minds. So, whenever child do any of the good thing or activity this would be a positive sign to gift them as a reward for their motivation.

Gifting small kids in each and every aspect will make them feel happy. Gifts for kids may vary depending upon the boy and girl. For boys you need to gift with the vehicle toys of different kinds and cycle, etc. For girl baby you can gift toys related to images of small babies, flowers and kitchen wear. Even gifting the clothes will be very useful for them. You can also gift chocolates of different varieties and biscuits. You can take them to restaurants for a lunch on their birthdays or even giving the books or pens which they required in schooling.

Kids have a pretty uncluttered mind, they don't care if something is down market or up market,

Choose a gift according to occasion keeping in mind the choice and preference of kids and give them gifts with good packaging which would excite them, with lots of love and blessings.

branded or unbranded, in fashion or out of fashion.

For kids of age group 6-10 years we can gift an activity book or a storybook according to their age. Now a days various types of activity books are available like drawing and colouring books, paper craft, etc, it is a good way to keep them engaged and keep them away from TV. For girls we can gift some dolls or soft toys, for boys we can gift them some good remote control toys which they love to play. A box of chocolates or cookies is loved by kids of all age group. On special occasions like festivals and birthdays we can gift them apparel of their choice. School going kids need too many stationaries like pencil, colour pencils, lunch boxes, crayons, glitter pens, pencil box etc. So these stuff make ideal gift for them as they are too happy to receive new stationaries. For very small kids below 2 years of age, one can gift baby kits containing baby bath, baby oils, lotions, etc.

So choose a gift according to occasion keeping in mind the choice and preference of kids as give them those gifts with good packaging (which excites them) with lots of love and blessings.

Arts and Crafts: Want to encourage creativity? Give a basket of basic tools-markers, crayons, paper, glue sticks, stickers, safety scissors etc. Tailor the items to the child's age. How about sidewalk chalk? For older kids, consider craft kits-simple models, jewelry making etc. My nieces raved last year over journals I bought them with black paper and glowing gel pens.

Building and Construction: From the youngest child-wooden blocks, baby legos etc. to sophisti-



Children love gifts, so you must give some thought before buying gifts for kids, says **TEAM VIVA.**

cated K'nex and other construction toys. There are blocks in every size and material. Consider wooden train sets for both the experiences of designing and building tracks and also for pretend play.

Pretend Play: There is so much in this category. There are wonderful play towns, schools, castles etc. for the preschool crowd. Play food, cash registers, dolls and kitchens etc.

My favorite is a dress up box (you may not even have to buy anything!)

of hats, clothes, accessories, etc. My son has a collection of hats (wizard, firehat, robin hood etc.)and fake glasses and hair. Old halloween costumes are great fun. Hand puppets and puppet theaters are other good choices.

Books and Puzzles: Every child needs to have books to read, books to have read to them. Reluctant readers may be more likely to read books based on popular characters or comic books or books about their

hobbies.

One idea is to ask people to contribute towards something more costly than a normal gift, such as a bike or scooter. Far better something is given by a group of people and really appreciated than lots of small gifts that go to waste.

Use your judgement to decide whether something is a fad that will quickly come and go. Will they really use it more than once or twice?

Be prepared to sacrifice a small

amount of excitement and buy something sensible. Deliver it with an explanation of why it was chosen.

If you've chosen well, they'll appreciate it. Maybe not at first. Maybe not hysterically, but the real value, appreciation and enjoyment will follow.

A common marketing tactic is to suggest that grandparents buy toys for their grandchildren like those they used to have themselves.

It goes without saying, this alone is not good enough reason and, if not fully considered, will lead to disappointment for both.

That said, if you still have some of your old toys, they'll love the novelty of playing with them and hearing how you did the same at their age.

What do you do with all those neglected toys from years gone by. Keep them and live with the clutter...or store them elsewhere. In our

experience, this is largely delaying the inevitable.

Sell them on eBay. Why not involve your children in this and encourage them to save by putting the money in a bank account for them?

Give it to a charity shop. Let the shop decide what has value and what can be thrown away. Feel doubly good about clearing some space by simultaneously helping a charity.



AYUSHMANN KHURRANA
Badhaai Ho's success is an overwhelming and a humbling moment for me as an actor. As an artiste, I have always backed concepts, filmmakers who were doing clutter breaking work. I have been lucky enough in my journey to have got the right films and I'm thankful to all my filmmakers for believing in me.



USHA UTHUP
 I represent a true *Bharatiya* (Indian). What I love about myself is that I am a *Madrasi* (Tamilian), I have studied in Mumbai, married to a Keralite and live in Kolkata. Isn't it amazing? I don't understand why people want to restrict themselves to a particular region they belong to.



KAREENA KAPOOR KHAN
 The film (*Veere Di Wedding*) is quite different from what I have done previously. While the movies I have acted in had a male lead, this story revolves around four girls who are at different stages in their lives and their friendship. I am glad we made a film like this one.



CARDI B
 There are things I want to do with my daughter. I want to go to the beach, want to take a stroll down the street with her. I don't know who's next to me now and their intentions. I don't want to show my baby to the public right now. I'm not mentally ready. So paparazzi be everywhere.

GIGI HADID
 I loved my body when I was curvier. Then as I lost (the weight), people were still mean. I know I'm skinny. I'm looking in the mirror. I'm trying to eat burgers and do squats. I want an ass too. I get it. I got it. Thank you.



'Storytelling will never change'

Cinematographer HARIS ZAMBARLOUKOS talks about the emotional connect in films and working with Kenneth Branagh. By ASMITA SARKAR

Fantasy stories and films may be disregarded as content not serious enough but the thought process that goes into world building proves that it is no easy feat.

Creating the Marvel Universe, for instance, took decades with plots and subplots linking different superheroes and multiple individuals are invested in the process. Haris Zambarloukos, cinematographer, worked on the first Thor film (2011), which was directed by Kenneth Branagh.

Use of technology like VFX has become one of the elements of a fantasy film but Zambarloukos says that what really matters is the emotional content and how it connects with the audience. While technology has made the experience more real and immersive by taking the audience inside the film storytelling has not changed.

For him, technology is a way to delve into more unknown categories. However, it is crucial to maintain the emotional journey. Technology shouldn't distract us from the story, he says. "As filmmakers it is important to remember that technology is only a tool," he says. "Sometimes it is hard because you are taken in with what you can create visually and how far you can push boundaries of reality that you forget sometimes the underlying use of it," he adds.

The first time an audience saw a film, *The Arrival of a Train* (1896), they were so taken back to see a train coming towards them that they left the theatre causing almost a stampede. "The impact 100 years ago was also an emotional experience," says he.

While talking about the

process of filmmaking he says that it is a collaborative effort and nobody's singular voice translates onto the screen. There are hundreds of people who work on a film and there are priorities like in any organisation. "At some point someone has to make the decision though," he says. "The best way to navigate through a film is by having a great director and script. Kenneth is a fantastic director who plays with emo-

THE FIRST TIME AN AUDIENCE SAW A FILM, THE ARRIVAL OF A TRAIN (1896), THEY WERE SO TAKEN ABACK TO SEE A TRAIN COMING TOWARDS THEM THAT THEY LEFT THE THEATRE



tions very well. Thor is a family story and one of the central themes is sibling rivalry while the fights and affection from the father was the anchor. He used these to centre the audience's focus," he adds.

The cinematographer has worked with Kenneth on *Thor*, *Sleuths*, *Murder on the Orient Express* and *Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit*. "It has been a fantastic association. I like being his

way of storytelling and we have worked together for so long because of our mutual storytelling ambitions. He loves to tell stories about the human condition and so do I," he says.

His next project, *Artemis Fowl*, based on the science fiction novels written by Irish author Eoin Colfer, is his next. The series has had a huge following in the early 2000s when

they were released and the pressure runs high. "We wanted to remain authentic to the material but certain judgement calls have to be made. There are decisions made on the script before I am involved. They are made by the writer, director and producer," he says. The eight novels are about a teenage genius, who is also an anti-hero, and his adventures in a magical land where fairies exist.

The film is being adapted by Disney.

Having worked for twenty years so far, he says that he's never been overwhelmed and has handled every roadblock as a challenge. "I have been working with the same people for a long time and together we overcome the challenging situations," he says.

Apart from films being his passion it has also given him

more — his life partner — since he met his wife on the sets of *Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit*. "The achievements as a cinematographer are an every day affair but this film is close to my heart personally because I met my wife while shooting for it," he says.

Thor Ragnarok will premier on October 28 at 1 pm and 9 pm on Star Movies for the first time in India.

'#METOO ISN'T ABOUT BASHING MEN'

Actress CHITRANGDA SINGH feels that the movement is not a battlefield for genders

The beginning of every change is when we start talking about it. And the talk has started. Realistically speaking, there is a huge difference in Western society and us. Just because we watch English shows and movies doesn't make us that society.

"There is a difference in our society and in our thought process, and that is the reason why we can't have a similar #MeToo movement in India," Chitragda said. "I want to quote Tanushree Dutta here. She was right in saying that for a #MeToo movement to happen, society has to create that atmosphere. We need to be ready in our intent, not just an idea," added the actress.

The actress feels men and women need to come together to bring about change.

"I don't think any movement works with just one gender going on about it, till the time the other gender doesn't come and stand next to you. Until the time the men in our society don't feel that it is their responsibility to come and stand next to that woman and make her feel safe, it (the impact of #MeToo) is very difficult."

Chitragda stressed that "it is not at all about men versus women."

"It is about making our society safe. It is not male bashing at all. #MeToo movement is for men as well."

After making quite an impact in the West, the #MeToo wave has swept into Bollywood and beyond following Tanushree revisiting an unpleasant episode with veteran actor Nana Patekar on the sets of *Horn 'OK' Pleassss* in 2008.

It has brought out many dark truths from the world of Bollywood, with women coming out to name and shame their predators. Big names like

Vikas Bahl, Chetan Bhagat, Gursimran Khamba, Kailash Kher, Rajat Kapoor, Alok Nath, Anu Malik and Sajid Khan have been named for using their position to exploit the vulnerable. Multiple female actors, journalists and others have accused the famous names of sexual harassment and in some cases, rape. Those who stood by silently like Anurag Kashyap while the perpetrators roamed free have also had to become accountable. Kashyap resigned from the position of director of MAMI. Chitragda, who has worked in the film *Inkaar*, which was based on sexual harassment at the work place, supported Tanushree.

"I believe her. I want to hear what Nana has to say. But my only take on this... and I am not only saying this for Tanushree... is that if there is truth, then it must be heard.

It doesn't matter whether she came out after three years or five years or ten years.

"If there was rape or molestation or any kind of harassment — whether it happened now or five years ago, and if the person is choosing to talk about it now, you have to listen to her. It doesn't make that rape or molestation or assault or harassment any less," added the actress.

What hurts her most in the ongoing debate is when people say: "Tab kyun nahi boli (why didn't you say then)?"

"Are you serious? Are you kidding me that you would come up with a return like this? That is shocking and disheartening," she said.

However, she understands the problem behind it. "It is because somewhere men feel that they need to be defensive. It is not about men versus women. They should feel an ownership of the fact that if she is saying the right thing, we need to stand with her. Just stand with the right."

She feels the onus lies on the media to keep the dialogue on. "Please don't make it as a sensational headline and let it pass and move to the next — this is my request to the media."

The actress will be seen next in Gaurav K Chawla's *Baazaar*.

—IANS

Photo: Pankaj Kumar



'Difficult to defend oneself in Bollywood'

2018 has been a fantastic year for women empowerment. Now, for the first time in the history of *Koffee with Karan*, Karan Johar is all set to lay down the carpet for two of the most powerful young divas, Alia Bhatt and Deepika Padukone, of Bollywood to open the talk show's new Season 6.

Deepika talks about how it's not easy to stand up for each other in Bollywood

While *Padmavat* turned out to be one of the biggest blockbusters, Deepika continues to be disappointed because she feels that there wasn't any need to be in that space, in the first place. When Karan asked if she felt she received adequate support from within the industry, she said, they mostly did. Adding, "Standing up for yourself is not always taken in the right sense" While the Bollywood fraternity always stands together as a family, there are times when it's difficult to openly speak up about some issue.

For everyone who ever said that Bollywood's leading ladies cannot see eye to eye, this episode is sure to be a huge surprise as Alia and Deepika charm everyone with their all their pizzazz and #GirlPower.

The episode will see them set the house on fire with their candidness as they spill some beans on some of the most well guarded secrets by the dazzling beauties.

Alia Bhatt and Deepika Padukone will be the first guests to grace the sensational *Koffee* couch on October 21 at 9PM on Star World.

OLD SOUL

Actor RIDDHI SEN speaks to A SARKAR about the unconventional life he has lived while growing up in a household full of talented performers

When you meet Riddhi Sen you know he's made from the chip off the old block. All of 20 and already a National Award winning actor, he is inspired from 83-year-old Bengali actor Soumitra Chatterjee, who has received the Legion of Honour and Dadasaheb Phalke Award.

He's got the best kind of achievements as an actor and he still continues acting. "It is difficult to be satisfied with your work as an actor since it is linked so closely with our personhood. The older you grow the meaning keeps changing. It is the only profession with a direct connection to life. I think no award no matter how big it is can stop the growth of an actor. If they stop they are not an actor. Life teaches you about acting," he said.

Despite his years, there is no nervousness but enough humility for the opportunities he has had from a young age because of his family.

Son of actor/director Kaushik Sen and grandson of Chitra Sen, his playing ground had been the backstage of a theatre which led him to decide at the age of three and a half that acting was his Holy Grail. "I owe everything to my family. The most important thing while growing up is the ambience you see around since kids pick up from it. They learn more from observing and my parents taught me that acting is a subject you need to take out time to study just like physics and chemistry," he said. Focussed on carving out a niche for himself from a young age, he stopped conventional schooling right after finishing his class 10. "My parents knew that physics and chemistry is not going to help me at the end of the day. Acting is what I actually want to do in life. My parents supported me silently even though lots of people said a lot of things," he said.

He started out with helping with stage craft and light design at his father's 25-year-old theatre group Swapanasandhani. "My mother says that when I came out of school at the end of the day I



'I owe everything to my family. The most important thing while growing up is the ambience you see around since kids pick up from it'

young actor believes that the duration of his screen time doesn't make a difference if the character that he plays contributes to the script.

"As long as a script is not giving out a wrong or derogatory message which will be harmful for the society I am okay with it. And my character can have three or 15 scenes but if there's something the character is contributing to the script I am okay with it," he said.

Before taking on *Helicopter Eela* he didn't know that Ajay Devgn will be producing it. He has worked with Devgn's production house in an earlier project, *Parched*, which had run into controversy over some bold scenes in the film.

In Devgn's latest home production, Kajol played Riddhi's mother and the film centres around the struggles and strains around their relationship when she enrolls at his college. He describes working with Kajol as "beautiful".

"She is what she is. The interviews I read of her 15 years ago and now, nothing has changed. Her value system is so strong. I love people who don't pretend and she speaks her mind. Seeing that from close proximity has been beautiful. When you're doing a movie what you take back are the memories of the people you meet. If you dread going back to the set every morning it means that you're not enjoying," he said.

He remembers being treated like family by the cast and crew when he received the news of winning the National Award in 2018 while shooting for *Helicopter Eela*.

"Pradeep da announced it on the microphone and everyone was congratulating each other. They got a cake for me. What I loved is that when I got the news it was for what I love doing the most and I went right back to it in 10 minutes. It's a rare moment," he said.

ENCOUNTER 20 MINUTES

THE STRANDED CHARACTER

As the season seven of *Arrow* hits TV screens, actor STEPHEN AMELL addresses a few questions that were left unanswered in the previous season



It was Oliver Queen's life that went kaboom as the season six of *Arrow* concluded. So what's in store for its viewers this season? We learn it from Oliver himself.

■In the season six finale, Oliver Queen went to jail after declaring he was Green Arrow. Where do we find the character as the season seven begins? Does he have any allies in jail?

Oliver is in prison with a bunch of people that he put in prison. It's not good. It's really bad.

And no, he doesn't. He's on his own. Oliver is trying to keep his head down and to manage his time. He's taking it day by day, step by step. He hasn't had any contact with Felicity (Smoak, played by Emily Bett Rickards). He's just trying to press on.

■On an emotional and mental level, how does Oliver cope with prison?

He copes really badly. In the premiere episode of season seven, there's nothing about him that's heroic. It's pretty much the opposite. Prison life is really tough. As an actor, I'm really enjoying myself. I'm having a really good time playing Oliver, but it's been tough for the character.

■How does he cope with being separated from his family and his team?

Badly. That's my whole answer. He deals with everything badly.

■How would you describe a day in the life of Oliver Queen in prison? Is he constantly watching his back?

That pretty much sums up his life behind the bars. He's in prison with a bunch of people that he put in prison, so he's always got to watch his back. In some ways the situation is great because we got some great people to come back to the show that we haven't seen in a while.

■To give an example?

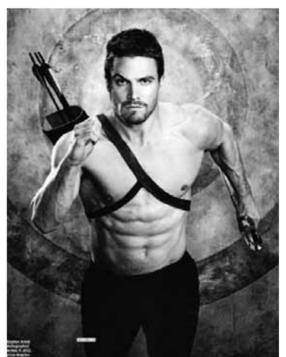
I'm afraid that's a secret for now. I can't reveal any names currently. Absolutely not. But I was

really thankful that some of the people have come back. There are some people that we hadn't seen in a reasonable amount of time, but that's all I can say. It's really cool to see them back in the show.

■Did you watch any prison movies to inspire your portrayal of Oliver Queen behind bars?

Not really. In the first episode (of season seven), I took a lot of inspiration from our director, James Bamford. I don't know how much of it will end up in the episode but we did a lot of stuff where I stared down the barrel of the camera. There's a lot of material from Oliver's perspective. We really try to show that perspective in this season.

■Will fans see a new side to the character in prison? How long will the character stay in prison with all the craziness happening outside?



You know what? The thing that I like about Oliver right now is the fact that he's not heroic. In season seven, it's the complete opposite of that. In the past, he has always been the one to take charge and solve problems. He would save people. But that's not what he's doing in the premiere. And he has a life sentence.

■Will he stick to that?

Well, Oliver can break out of prison at any point of time. However, the terms of the deal he made means that he will stay inside. I talked about this a lot with Beth Schwartz because I kept saying, "We know that Oliver can break out of prison at any point, right? No, he's behind the bars. He is inside. And Oliver has effectively no contact with the outside world. His prison time is literally just the prison time."

■Looking back at season six, what was your standout moment from last season?

I really liked the finale. I liked Oliver's moments with everyone in that episode. My scene with Emily (Bett Rickards), where I'm telling her what I'm going to do. That was a highlight for me. And my last scene with Paul (Blackthorne, who played Quentin Lance) was another. I feel sad just thinking about it. That was intense, too.

■The CW announced the crossover between the Arrowverse and Batwoman at their upfront event in May. How long has the crossover been in works?

They told me about it two days before the upfront, but it was very exciting. To be honest, I was thankful that they had me back for the upfront. They don't always bring back shows that are running because they often want to talk about their new shows. To be there and to make that announcement was really cool. I think it showed a lot of faith in me and I appreciate it.

■How does it feel to have an iconic character like Batwoman join the Arrowverse?

It's absolutely awesome. I don't think this character has ever been done in a live-action project, right? That's fantastic. I hope it's great. I'm really glad that they're doing a show with the character. I hope it works out. David Rappaport nailed the casting with Grant (Gustin, in *The Flash*) and Melissa (Benoist, in *Supergirl*). Me? Maybe. But I'm sure he has nailed the casting with Batwoman, too. It's going to be fantastic.

■When Oliver finally gets out of the prison, what are your thoughts on him meeting Batwoman?

Wait... Oliver is getting out of the prison? Maybe. I don't know anything about that. Hopefully he'll be out of prison to interact with Batwoman. That's a spoiler, right? Well, I'm very excited. I'm also very excited that they are considering doing a series with the character. I think that's amazing.

■What can you tease about Oliver's interaction with Batwoman in the crossover?

Oliver's interaction with Batwoman in the crossover is not the interaction that I'm most interested in. For that too, he has to get out of prison first.

■Apart from the appearance of Batwoman, what else can you tease about the season's crossover?

What can I say? I feel like there's a character in the crossover that nobody actually knows about yet, which is also very exciting. Do watch this space. (The show airs on *Colors Infinity* at 11 pm.)

HOME DECOR 10 MINUTES



Bring in the joy

Architectural designer SARABJIT SINGH shares tips on how to give a makeover to your house this festive season

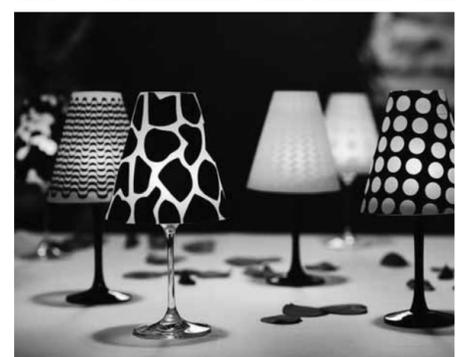
With the festive season around the corner, decorate your home elegantly with the right accessories, colours, and much more.

Festive colours: Use traditionally vibrant or bold colours to add in a festive effect to your home. Ochre, lime green and crimson red are the ideal colours to enhance and jazz up any space.

Décor items to own: Today, with the array of décor items on offer, households feel spoilt for choice and find them to be an imperative part of a festive house makeover. For me, a large cluster of hanging lanterns in a nice metal finish with cutwork motifs is a must-have décor item this festive season.

Re-arrange your furniture: Festivals mean an inflow of guests, which often leads to space issues. Move your furniture around, let the sofa be closer to the wall and table in the centre. This will bring in a change and make your space look bigger. You can also use ethnic inspired cushions, throws, screens in wood or metal and hanging lanterns to make your space look more festive without altering your furniture. Use lots of cushions and sofas dressed in a mix match of colours. You could opt for an ottoman instead of a centre table to give a spacious vibe to your space.

Re-do your walls: Use a mirror mosaic with a mix of mirrors of different sizes



collected from various places over time and fixed in unique patterns so that the reflection in the mirrors makes the space look bigger

and lighter. Further, a marigold or lotus motif in brass repeated on any wall in a random pattern would surely help add a festive pop to your space.

I would also recommend using brass screens and decorative hanging lights with auspicious brass motifs to complete your Diwali look.

Mix and match modern and traditional elements: Use a mix of traditional and modern elements such as mason jar candle stands with candles of different colours, paper lanterns and wine glass candle holders to create a unique, festive look.

CAUSE 15 MINUTES

Creating cross-border conversations

What do pilgrims in Punjab's Dera Baba Nanak feel when faith travels across the border to Gurdwara Kartarpur Sahib in Pakistan through binoculars or a telescope? At a time, when borders have mental images as frontiers of cross-fire, illegal crossings and violence, a documentary filmmaker intends to humanise them and create conversations on cross-border relationships.

Director Samarth Mahajan, 27, comes from Dinanagar, a small town situated 10 miles from the India-Pakistan border. Interactions with borderland citizens was a way of life in his growing-up years.

After his National Award-winning non-feature film *The Unreserved*, which was an inquiry into the lives of passengers who use the unreserved compartment in trains, the idea of *The Borderlands* struck him.

"During *The Unreserved*, we met a young Kashmiri guy who told us how he supported Pakistan while his brother, being an army man, supported India. The conversation ended with him telling us that if he got a job in India, he would start supporting India too.

"It taught us something about the fluidity that a borderland citizen might experience due to the 'other' country being an immediate reality," said Mahajan. This piqued his interest, resulting in researching stories from border areas. "We found such counter-intuitive narratives that we had to start making the film. In the current context, when borders are

Growing up while interacting with borderland citizens, documentary maker SAMARTH MAHAJAN narrates how he aims to take the concept of boundaries much beyond Indo-Pak

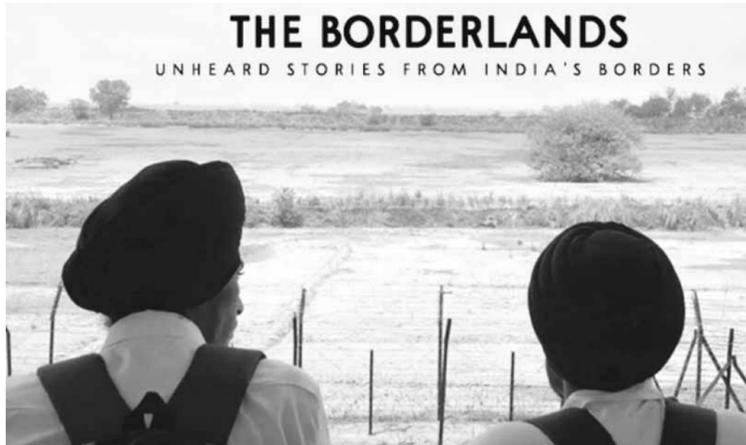
being used as a divisive tool and depicted as hubs of violence, we intend to humanise them and create conversations on cross-border relationships," he added.

The intent of the film's team — camera and shorts — is to explore all of India's borders.

"Our journey is divided over three phases, Kutch to Punjab, then Kashmir to Arunachal Pradesh, and then our borders with Myanmar, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. We feel a film will be representative of the title *The Borderlands*, only when we move beyond the set image of borders being the Indo-Pak border or the LoC in Kashmir," he said.

For example, he said, they are looking at how families cope when, in Diu and Kutch, fishermen looking for a better catch often drift into Pakistan's waters and are consequently jailed. Or how, in Jaisalmer and Barmer, grooms from a Pakistani Hindu community visit border towns in Rajasthan in search of brides. Can such alliances break stereotypes?

The research for the project involves a mix of visits to border towns in Punjab, Rajasthan and



Gujarat, talking to locals, watching previous visual works on India's borderlands, reading travel books and ethnographic accounts of researchers.

Mahajan, who has taken the crowdfunding route through 'Wishberry' for the movie, feels it could be image-changing for people who have grown up in the mainlands to know about life in the borders.

"As mainland citizens, it is quite easy for us to say that we want to wage war with another country, without having any idea of the effects on the lives of people there. We are hardly taught to comprehend what it means to

THE BORDERLANDS
UNHEARD STORIES FROM INDIA'S BORDERS

belong to a nation. Borderland narratives can shed a new understanding of fluidity in identities and movement across borders," said Mahajan.

When the film takes complete shape — by April 2020 — Mahajan hopes for a theatrical release for *The Borderlands* in tier-I and tier-II cities. They are in talks with a few digital platforms. "Our bare minimum budget for the film is ₹25 lakh, yet to do it at the scale which the idea deserves, we need funds to the tune of ₹1 crore. The crowdfunding campaign has inspired us by proving that people trust our idea and ability." But has the market for documentaries

opened up in India? "The market is improving with the springing up of digital platforms like Netflix and Amazon which have dedicated sections for non-fiction films. There is still a gap between traditional distributors and non-fiction filmmakers. The distribution networks for documentary films remain fragmented and non-fiction filmmakers continue to shy away from taking professional routes of distributing their films due to fears about return on investment of time and energy. "There is a dearth of development funds, which is a major reason why we decided to crowdfund," Mahajan said. —JANS

Weaving hope

To mark October as the breast cancer awareness month and raise funds for patients' treatments, a gallery here will exhibit and sell artwork-printed carpets, gallerist-doctor Tarana Khubchandani said.

Titled *cARTPet*, the event will put out hand-woven and tufted carpets reproduced from key artworks of 22 renowned Indian artists, including S.H. Raza, Satish Gujral, Thota Vaikuntam, Paresh Maity and Ram Kumar.

The exhibition and sale, from October 22 to November 1, will culminate her and curator Brinda Miller's two years of art collection work.

The exhibition preview on October 21 will also host an awareness session where doctors and women could converse about breast cancer.

Khubchandani, a breast cancer survivor herself, narrates a fascinating backstory behind the carpet exhibition.

"I started by NGO Passages in 1998, the core motivation behind which was the realisation that when a woman at home falls sick, everything collapses around her. We started addressing women's issues as an awareness platform," the oral surgeon said.

However, even for a medical practitioner, the dearth of conversations around breast cancer was alarming.

"There wasn't one other person in my age group who I could ask for guidance," Khubchandani said, adding that the NGO's focus soon shifted to raising awareness about breast cancer.

"I started looking out for ways how women can be empowered. I also penned a helplinebook *Whispering Hope* for those diagnosed with it. It touches on the

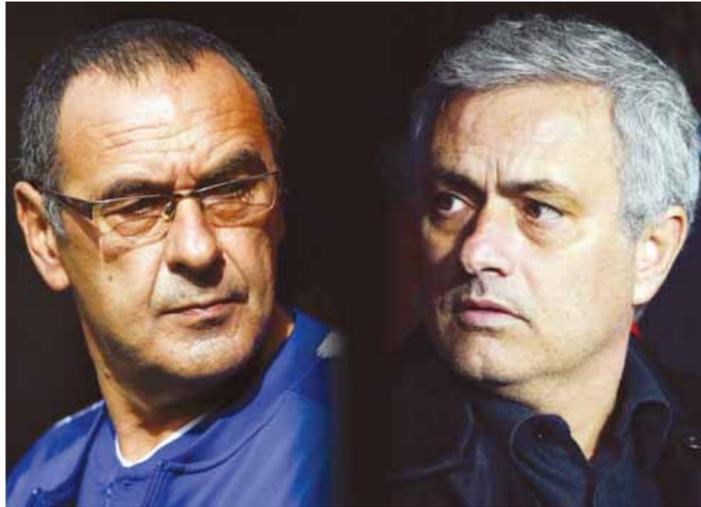


process of treatment, nutrition, and finding courage," she said.

The NGO, which pays for the treatment of many cancer patients, soon felt the need for funding, leading to the set-up of Mumbai-based gallery, Art and Soul in 2003. Now most of the fundraising comes from art events. —JANS

Once a Blue- Mourinho returns to Stamford Bridge

Struggling to find form this season, Jose's Manchester visit Chelsea for high voltage clash; City play host to Burnley; Liverpool face Huddersfield



Chelsea's manager Maurizio Sarri, left, Manchester United's boss Jose Mourinho; (right) Liverpool's forward duo of Mohamed Salah and Roberto Firmino celebrates after scoring



PL

AGENCIES ■ LONDON

All eyes will be on Stamford Bridge on Saturday when Jose Mourinho returns to face the club he managed twice in his career.

Mourinho goes back to Chelsea's home ground in charge of Manchester United and still under pressure following a poor start to the season. The Portuguese coach saved a possible 'match-ball' when his side fought back from 2-0 down at home to Newcastle United to win 3-2 thanks to an injury time goal from Alexis Sanchez.

Defeat to Newcastle would almost certainly have cost Mourinho his job, but Alexis' late goal now sets up a fascinating encounter against a Chelsea side that is currently second in the Premier League and level on 20 points with league leaders Manchester City.

New Chelsea boss Maurizio Sarri has implemented a free-flowing attacking style of play that his players are clearly enjoying and that contrasts with Mourinho's conservative approach.

Although the London-based club perhaps lack a truly world class centre forward, with Alvaro Morata and Olivier Giroud guilty of missing chances, they have Eden Hazard in outstanding form as rumours over his future don't seem to be affecting the Belgian international.

The game sees some fascinating individual

battles with French international midfielders N'golo Kante and Paul Pogba on opposite sides, while Chelsea goalkeeper Kepa Arrizabalaga and his Manchester United counterpart are currently second and first choice in the Spanish national team.

More than anything, the game will be about contrasting styles: Chelsea's willingness to attack and to get their full backs into advanced positions and Mourinho's instincts to defend. However, the Newcastle game showed that one thing is clear - when Manchester United do attack, they do it well.

Two weeks ago Mourinho had no alterna-

Chelsea vs Man Utd
Live from 5:00pm IST
STAR SPORTS SELECT 1



Premier League

tive other than to throw his players forward and they responded by saving his job. Could he spring a surprise at Stamford Bridge or will he revert to defensive type?

Saturday also sees Manchester City in action as they entertain an improving Burnley. Kevin de Bruyne could return in some capacity for Pep Guardiola's side after suffering a knee injury earlier this season.

Liverpool travel to face a Huddersfield side who are without a win this campaign, while on Sunday, Arsenal look to make it 10 consecutive wins under Unai Emery as they entertain Leicester City.

There is a south-coast derby between sixth place Bournemouth and Southampton which should provide goals and a tense London derby between West Ham and Tottenham Hotspur.

Newcastle United will hope that Brighton can provide their first win of the campaign, while Cardiff City also aim to claim their first triumph since returning to the top-flight at home to Fulham.

Wolves entertain Watford, whose bubble has burst spectacularly after winning their first four matches of the season.

Everton look to consolidate their improvement under Marco Silva at home to Crystal Palace, who need to recover some of the form they showed at the start of the season in order to calm a few nerves.

Barcelona and Real scrap for revival

AFP ■ MADRID

Real Madrid and Barcelona cannot avoid heading into next week's Clasico under pressure but each have two games to lift the mood at least, ahead of the pivotal clash at the Camp Nou.

Eight games into La Liga and both Julen Lopetegui and Ernesto Valverde are feeling the heat, forced to defend poor runs that have seen their teams manage a combined total of two wins from their last 10 games.

Madrid's slump feels the more entrenched, given they are without a goal in 360 minutes, discounting injury time, and three of their last four matches have ended in defeat.

While Barca can point to their riveting win at Wembley over Tottenham, and then a point gained in Valencia, Madrid have endured successive setbacks away to CSKA Moscow and Alaves.

They have two home games to clear the fog, and winnable ones too, against Levante in La Liga on Saturday before Viktoria Plzen visit on Tuesday in the Champions League.

A pair of victories, and just as importantly, some goals, would earn Lopetegui much-needed breathing space.

He is already being asked about his future in the same job he sacrificed Spain and the World Cup for in June.

"A coach does not think about this, we are in October," Lopetegui said after Alaves' first league win at home to Real Madrid since 1931.

"The only positive is we are close to the top of the league, the most important thing now is to recover the injured players and then calmness will come by winning games and scoring goals."

Injuries have certainly not helped. Marcelo and Isco are both expected back against Levante while Gareth Bale has been training again this week, albeit on his own. All three would provide an attacking boost.

Karim Benzema is struggling with a hamstring strain but the forward might anyway be less missed.

Seven games without a goal have seen calls grow louder for Mariano Diaz to be given a chance and Lopetegui may now be able to oblige, without the unwanted dig at the Frenchman's confidence.

Lopetegui is also right to draw comfort from the table, as Barcelona's stumbles mean his team are only two points off the top, where Sevilla are the surprise front-runners.

Barcelona vs Sevilla
Live from 12:15am IST
SONY SIX NETWORK



Lionel Messi celebrates after scoring AP



LaLiga

INDIA MAUL OMAN 11-0 IN OPENER

Competition starts with Pak clash: Harendra

PTI ■ MUSCAT

Indian men's hockey team chief coach Harendra Singh says his team has shrugged off the disappointment of the Jakarta Games and is looking forward to the keenly awaited contest against arch-rivals Pakistan in the Asian Champions Trophy here on Saturday.

Title holders India started the tournament with a runaway 11-0 victory over hosts Oman, while former champions Pakistan will take on South Korea in their first fixture.

"The competitive part of the tournament starts with the match against Pakistan," said Harendra, who admitted the dejection within the squad when they failed to defend the Asian Games title in Jakarta.

"After the semi-final loss in the Asian Games, the mood was not good for a few days. The disappointment of not winning the Gold is still playing on the minds of the players somewhat, but we cannot keep thinking of the past," he said. India, however, managed to secure Bronze with a win over Pakistan.

"We are now focused on this tournament and the side is shaping

India vs Pakistan
Live from 10:40pm IST
STAR SPORTS 2



well. Nine of our players scored goals against Oman in the first outing here. A victory here in the Asian Champions Trophy will be a good path for the World Cup just over a month away. This tournament is close of the World Cup, we need competitive matches and we are getting them," he said.

Pakistan Skipper Rizwan Senior insisted that his team is not thinking about the India game yet.

"Our first priority is to make a winning start against Korea on Friday. They have made about eight changes in their team and since we don't know too much about what these new players bring to the team, we have to be quite cautious against them," he said.

But yes, India-Pakistan matches are always good for the audience and this will be the first time the two teams will be playing in Muscat so naturally the excitement is high among hockey lovers here. Hopefully, we will live up to the expectations and ensure it will be a thrilling match."



Indian players celebrate after scoring against Oman in the Asian Champions Trophy clash. India will next face Pakistan in the second match Hockey India

PTI ■ MUSCAT

Young striker Dilpreet Singh scored a hat-trick as India launched their title defence with a runaway 11-0 victory over hosts Oman in the Asian Champions Trophy.

After being denied in the first quarter, India opened the scoring through Lalit Upadhyay's goal in open play in the 17th minute.

Three more goals followed in the second quarter of the match played on Thursday night as Harmanpreet Singh (22nd minute) sounded the board with a low drag-flick, followed by Nilakanta Sharma (23rd minute), who flicked in during a goalmouth scuffle and Mandeep Singh (30th minute), who capitalised on a pass

from the right flank.

Having started with two forays into the Indian circle in the first quarter, Oman wilted under pressure in the second half.

Dilpreet scored three goals (41st, 55th and 57th minute) and was adjudged Man of the Match, while Gurjant Singh (37th minute), Akashdeep Singh (27th minute), Varun Kumar (49th minute) and Chinglensana Singh (53rd minute) also made entries on the score-sheet.

Elated at his first Man of the Match performance for the senior national team, Dilpreet credited his teammates for creating opportunities.

"It was not just an individual effort. My teammates created the



Hero Asian Champions Trophy

openings for me to score the goals," he said.

Oman team's coach Tahir Zaman said he expected India to go all out, but was upset at the errors by his defenders.

"We gave away four or five goals that should not have been there. We were playing against Asia's highest-ranked team. Our target was to sustain and absorb the pressure that was expected from India," said Zaman, a former Pakistan captain.

"Despite the highly skilled opponents, our team did well to create some scoring opportunities in the first quarter. But the difference in quality became evident as the game proceeded," he added.

Win-or-bust for Vettel in Texas

AFP ■ AUSTIN

Sebastian Vettel will take a win-or-bust approach to this weekend's title showdown at the United States Grand Prix, the German driver told reporters on Thursday.

Speaking ahead of Sunday's race in which he will make a last-ditch bid to stop Lewis Hamilton beating him to a fifth title triumph, the German said he plans to be as "aggressive" as possible.

Fellow-four-time champion Hamilton of Mercedes will take the championship if he outscores Vettel of Ferrari by eight points.

"I think it's simple for us," said Vettel. "We're quite some points behind so we have to focus on winning and then see what the others are doing."

"It's quite straightforward for us, to be honest. I always try to win and I think you have to be aggressive to win, and of course you need to find the right balance."

"You never try to do something silly or not to finish, because that way you can't win." I know what it takes, I know what to do, so in that regard it's fairly similar, but for sure we know that we need to take a bit more risk because we are not in a position to manage the gap in the championship, because we don't have a gap."

Looking back on recent races in the championship, he said it was clear that Mercedes had been superior.

"It's pretty obvious, you just have to look at the points," he said. "For us, unfortunately, some of the



Sebastian Vettel poses during a photo ahead of US Grand Prix AP

Bajrang leads India at Wrestling Worlds

PTI ■ BUDAPEST

Asian Games Gold medalist Bajrang Punia will be India's best bet for a medal in the World Wrestling Championship as a 30-member team seeks a strong performance in the flagship event beginning here on Saturday.

Already a Bronze winner at the 2013 World Championship, Bajrang has come a long way in last five years, establishing himself as a force to reckon with in the 65kg category.

He was ignored for the prestigious Khel Ratna Award last month but he has left behind the snub and trained hard to have a shot at bettering the colour of his 2013 medal.

Considering the ease with which he won Gold at the Commonwealth Games and the Asian Games, Bajrang will be one of the medal favourites. The only Indian to be seeded at this championship, Bajrang will compete on the second day of the championship on Sunday.

With Russia's Illya Bekbulatov, a Silver medal winner at the 2018 European championship pulling out, Turkey's top seed Selahattin Kilicisallayan would be the one to watch out for in the 65kg category.

"We have had very good training sessions since the past couple of weeks followed by quality sparring. We also had the chance to take a good look at the opponent wrestlers and I am confident that we will not fall short on the mat," said



Bajrang Punia celebrates after win PTI/File Picture

Bajrang.

Vinesh Phogat would have been another strong medal contender in the women's 50kg but an elbow injury ruled her out. Her cousin Ritu Phogat will now present India's challenge. It remains to be seen how Olympic Bronze medalist Sakshi Malik performs here as she has been struggling for some time.

Post her Rio Olympics high, she has not got

the desired results. The mentally fragile grappler barely managed to win a Bronze at the Gold Coast CWG and returned empty-handed from Jakarta Asian Games.

"We have been sparring regularly and the mood in the squad is really great and positive. The sparring with wrestlers from other countries has also helped us and we are ready for the challenges but we will put up our best efforts saved for the bouts," said Sakshi.

The bouts will begin on Saturday in four men's freestyle categories and the most prominent Indian wrestler to take the mat would be Jitender, who was drafted in the 74kg category after celebrated but struggling Sushil Kumar pulled out.

Also in action would be Sonba Tanaji Gongane (61kg) Pawan Kumar (86kg) and Sumit (125kg).

Freestyle chief coach Jagminder Singh is confident that the Indians will put up a spirited fight. "All the boys have put in that extra bit. The acclimatization and arriving here in advance have helped the wrestlers to not only helped to adjust but the optimized training sessions have ensured our grapplers are in all in good shape. We have prepared well and are confident we can create history at this Championships," he said.

Sushil Kumar remains India's lone Gold winner at the World Championships, where India has so far managed to win only seven medals.