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FIH HOCKEY INDIA

ODISHA INDIA'S BEST KEPT SECRET.

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TO CREATE THE OFFICIAL SONG FOR
THE HOCKEY MEN'S WORLD CUP, BHUBANESWAR 2018.

Ab, Bas Hockey!

ONE WORLD,
ONE HEARTBEAT,
ONE SONG.

Nothing says India more than our beloved sport hockey. And nothing is more exciting than the world's biggest hockey tournament happening right here, on our turf. The Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup, Bhubaneswar 2018. It's heartwarming to see the entire nation pledge their heartbeats for hockey. As an extension of pledging our heartbeats, Gulzar Sahab and I have created the World Cup Song. A song that will excite and inspire, as also get you on your feet. Join me in this celebration of hockey--of not just our men in blue, but the spirit of the game, the spirit of universal oneness.

#AbBasHockey
28th Nov - 16th Dec

ODISHA INDIA'S BEST KEPT SECRET.

ODISHA HOCKEY MEN'S WORLD CUP BHUBANESWAR 2018

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Shri Naveen Patnaik
Hon. Chief Minister, Odisha

29001/13/0021/1819

DSPL-161

Only 3.7% households have water connections: CAG

- 77% SCHOOLS, AWCS HAVE WATER FACILITY
- ODF, SAGY HABITATIONS DIDN'T GET PWS FULLY

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Even as it was targeted that 35 per cent of the households in the State were to be given water connections by 2017 under the rural drinking water scheme, only 3.7 per cent households were provided the facility by this period.

The Comptroller and Auditor General(CAG) of India revealed this in a report relating to the general and social sector laid in the State Assembly recently.

According to the report, while 81.41 lakh households were to be given drinking water connections, only 3.01 lakh households, constituting 3.70 per cent, got connections during the targeted period.

Similarly, it was targeted that to connect 1.58 lakh habitations would be covered under the piped water supply (PWS) by 2017, however, only 0.40 lakh habitations were covered, constituting 25.31 per cent of the total. During the period, water facility was provided to 77.37 per cent schools and Anganwadi centres even as all were to be covered, said the report.

In its reply, the State Government said in October 2017 that all targets would be met within a period of two to three years.

The report further revealed that while Panchayati Raj Institutions and local communities have been operating and maintaining 60 per cent of rural water drinking water sources and systems since 2006, the State Government has not transferred funds for maintenance to PRIs.

In reply, the Government stated in September 2017 that funds were not transferrd to PRIs due to lack of manpower and expertise at panchayat level. The reply established the fact of absence of institutional arrangement.

While it was set that all Open Defecation Free (ODF) and SAGY villages would be provided piped water supply on a priority basis, only 633 of 2,129 habitations in 924 ODF villagers 178 of 680 habitations in 27 SAGY were given PWS by June 2017. To this, the Government stated that all uncovered ODF and Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) would be covered with PWS in 2017-18.

'No development happens by laying stones only'

Why this farce before elections, asks Niranjan

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

No development happens anywhere by laying foundation-stones only and by publishing advertisements in media. Proper planning and implementation is needed for this," said PCC president Niranjan Patnaik in a statement on Friday.

He criticised the advertisements being widely published before inauguration of the Jharsuguda Airport and foundation-laying for the Talcher fertiliser project by the Prime Minister claiming that developments of India would start from the eastern region.

He said that in last four years of Modi's rule, no development has been made; only, the BJP and its leaders have prospered. The BJP's income has risen many fold.

Many villages in the country have no roads, no healthcare facilities, no education; and Odisha is lagging far behind in all these. But the Modi Government has spent around Rs 4,344 crore for publicity in four years, Patnaik said.

He said that in 1999, the then NDA Government ordered closure of the Talcher Fertiliser Plant.

After the UPA came to power in 2004, it took steps to revive the plant in 2009 and its Government' decision was announced in 2012. But after Modi came to power, that proposal was withheld.

Now before general elections, Modi, his Cabinet Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and the BJP are trying their best to take credit by laying foundation for the plant.

Odisha people are aware of the facts and would teach them lesson in proper time, added Patnaik.

Abhijit's remarks: House panel to meet today

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The first meeting of House Committee formed by the State Assembly to probe into journalist Abhijit Iyer Mitra's anti-Odisha remarks will be held on Saturday. This was informed by Leader of Opposition Narasingha Mishra, who heads the committee, here on Friday. "The panel will make an inquiry as to whether the criticism by a non-Odia against the legislators over discussions in the Assembly is breach of privilege," said Mishra, adding, "Whether it will be breach of privilege of the House; whether he had made such statement or it will be breach of privilege of the MLAs (will be considered)," he said.

The committee would submit its report to the House, which would take further course of action later

The committee would submit its report to the House, which would take further course of action later, he added.

Speaker Pradeep Amat had on Thursday approved a proposal of forming the House Committee over Mitra's derogatory remarks on the Konark Sun Temple, legislators, Odisha culture and Lord Jagannath.

The committee led by Narasingha Mishra has BJD's Debi Prasad Mishra, Pramila Mallick, Arun Sahoo and Sanjay Dasburma and BJP Legislature Party Leader K V Singh Deo as its other members. The panel would submit its report in the Assembly on first day of its next session.

Bishnu storms Dama's bastion Paradip

PNS ■ PARADIP

State Planning Board Deputy Chairman and Jagatsinghpur district BJD president Bishnu Das, who is adversary of Paradip MLA Damodar Rout in the district politics, visited Paradip for two days on Thursday and Friday and reviewed the local party affairs.

On Thursday, Das was greeted by thousands of party supporters on his way to Paradip at Rahama, Kujang, Zero Point, Atharabanki and, finally, at Paradip. Noted trade union leader Santosh Kumar Pattanaik welcomed him at Kujang and accompanied him to Paradip.

At the entrance of Paradip near Do Chhaki, the leaders garlanded the statute of Utkalgaurav Madhusudan Das at Atharabanki and the Biju Patnaik Babu statue at the Badapadia Bus-Stand besides garlanding the statue of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

Then, Das visited the Viswhakarma Puja Mandaps at Paradip including the one of the Jagatsinghpur District Truck Owners' Association. In night, he made halt at the Jawahar Guesthouse of Paradip Port Trust.

On Friday morning, Das met BJD workers. Local BJD leaders and elected BJD representatives discussed with him about the party affairs and the situation after the expulsion of Damodar Rout from the party.

This was the first visit of Das after Rout was removed from the party. He expects the party ticket to contest from the Paradip Assembly constituency and is confident of winning the seat.

Rahul to visit State in Oct, Nov

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A ICC president Rahul Gandhi would visit Odisha in October and then in November, informed PCC chief Niranjan Patnaik here on Friday.

However, he did not reveal the dates of the Congress president's visit. Obviously, Rahu Gandhi's visits are meant to strengthen the party in the State by encouraging the party leaders to work as per the Congress' broader strategies for the forthcoming 2019 elections.

Gandhi is expected to spell out the electoral strategies to the State leaders. Odisha is a prime target for the Congress during the elections as the party is out of power in the State since 2000.

'No approval yet for Abadha rate chart'

PNS ■ PURI

Hours after a price chart of Abadha (Mahaprasad) of Lord Jagannath was found at the Ananda Bazar inside the temple, Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) chief Pradipta Mohapatra on Friday said the rate chart has not been officially approved.

Mohapatra told reporters, "The rate chart might have been put up by the Suar Mahasuar Nijog. But neither I nor the temple managing committee has given approval to the same. The proposal is still under consideration."

He further said the SJTA had asked the Suar Mahasuar Nijog to prepare a rate chart and submit it for the SJTA's consideration. The chart hoardings, if there are any in the temple, would be removed since no official approval has been given for it, he added.

It may be mentioned that a decision to introduce a Thali system in the Shreemandir was taken at a joint meeting of SJTA and Suar Mahasuar Nijog on September 11 to avoid overpricing of Mahaprasad.

INBRIEF

2 CSPUR DAVIANS CHOSEN FOR WORLD ROBOT OLYMPIAD

Bhubaneswar: Sai Suman Bebarta and Tanvi Mallick of Class-VII of the DAV Public School Chandraseekharpur here have been selected to participate in the World Robot Olympiad in Thailand from November 16 to 18. Their project on Farm-O--Bot was adjudged as 2nd best in the food matters category at the National Championship held at Ahmedabad recently. Sai and Tanvi participated in the under ATL open category with coach Subhadipta Jena. Each was given a memento and a certificate.

VSS NAGAR BODY BRINGS SOIL FOR DURGA IDOL

Bhubaneswar: The VSS Nagar Puja Committee on Friday conducted a puja on the auspicious Sunian Tithi and brought soil from the Kuakhai river for making of idol for the coming Durga Puja. Committee president Artatrana Dalai, VP Nimai Das, general secretary Sital Chandra Mohanty, Pratap Kumar Nanda, Dillip Dashsharma, Shiba Prasad Mishra, Uma Ballav Mishra and many other members visited the riverbank, performed Puja and brought the soil. The puja committee has been performing the ritual since 40 years.

Hockey World Cup: Rahman to create official song

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Grammy and Academy Award winning musician AR Rahman would create the official song for Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup-2018, informed Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Friday.

While ace lyricist Gulzar would write the song, Rahman would perform it live at the Kalinga Stadium here during the opening ceremony of the mega sporting event. It would be Rahman's first performance in Odisha.

The State Government roped in Rahman for composing the song titled "Jai Hind Hind, Jai India".

"Nothing says India more than our beloved sport hockey. And nothing is more exciting than the world's biggest hockey tournament happening right here, on our turf," Rahman said in a statement.

"It's heartwarming to see the entire nation pledge their heartbeats for hockey. As an extension of pledging our heartbeats, Gulzar Sahab and I have created the World Cup song. A song that will excite and inspire as also get you on your feet," added he.

CM Patnaik said: "We are delighted to have Rahman compose the song for the Odisha Hockey World Cup. It will be an honour to have him perform live in Bhubaneswar. He is the voice of India; and now with this song, the voice of India is the voice of the world cup."

"We are also fortunate to have Gulzar Sahab add his poetic magic to the composition. Coming together of these two legends will not only inspire the players but will also get the entire nation together to support this wonderful game unfolding in Odisha at the World Cup," he added. Rahman is also directing the song's video, which would be shot across the hockey heartlands of India. The song is set for release at the Kalinga Stadium inauguration scheduled for early October.

Cyclone 'Daye' weakens into deep depression

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Cyclone 'Daye' weakened into a deep depression on Friday and would further downgrade into a depression, said the Regional Office of the Indian Metrological Department (IMD) here.

The cyclone had hit the coast near Gopalpur on Thursday night between 12.30 am and 1.30 am. Now, it is expected to keep moving on a west-northwestward trajectory, said the IMD.

The cyclone had hit the coast near Gopalpur on Thursday night between 12.30 am and 1.30 am. Now, it is expected to keep moving on a west-northwestward trajectory, said the IMD

The deep depression is currently centred near Raipur in Chhattisgarh.

After the cyclone made its landfall in Gopalpur after midnight, heavy rain was reported in the State, especially in Malkangiri district. No casualties were reported so far though Special Relief Commissioner Bishnupada Sethi said that around 150 marooned people were rescued from different areas of Malkangiri district.

Heavy rain: Several areas marooned in M'giri

- CM ANNOUNCES RELIEF FOR 7 DAYS
- MAJOR RIVERS IN BALESWAR IN SPATE

PNS ■ MALKANGIRI/ BALESWAR

As the cyclonic storm 'Daye' crossed the State triggering heavy downpour in most parts, the water levels increased in major rivers of Malkangiri and Baleswar districts on Friday.

Road communications were disrupted at several places in Malkangiri as water was flowing on roads. Vehicular traffic between Malkangiri and Balimela was affected as roads at MV-11, Korukonda and MV-37 were under water.

The bridges at Kangurukonda and Potteru were submerged, following which vehicular communication was affected between Malkangiri and Motu. Korukonda, MV-37, MV-3, MV-50, Poteru, Kankarkonda and Padia villages in Kalimela block were marooned.

Road communications between Malkangiri and Chhattisgarh was also affected as the Challanguda bridge was submerged.

Water level of the Balimela reservoir increased to 15,015 feet whereas its water retaining capacity is 15,018 feet.

Patients at the Janabai health centre faced hardship as water entered into the hospital.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik sanctioned relief for seven days at Rs 60 per day per person and Rs 45 per day per child below 12 years and directed the district administration to reach out to the affected and extend all assistance.

Similarly, following heavy rainfall since the last 48 hours, the water levels of all major rivers and their tributaries were on the rise in Baleswar district.

The water level of the Jalaka river, flowing through Basta block crossed the danger level at Mathani. Against the danger level of 5.5 metre, the floodwater was flowing at a height of 6.20 metre.

Road communication from Udala to Jayapur and Baleswar was cut off due to overflowing of floodwater on the road at Kainsari.

Besides, road communication to Nilagiri block was also cut off as the floodwater flowed at a height of about 2 feet on the road at Ajodhya.

Due to heavy rainfall in the upper catchments, two gates each of Kala Dam and Sunei Dam were opened on Friday morning. As a result, the floodwater of Swana river entered Kaansa and Kulapala villages.

Besides, the floodwater of the Budhabalanga river also crossed the danger mark at the Baruni bridge. The floodwater was flowing at a height of 7.30 metre against the danger level of 7.21 metre.

The floodwater of he Gangahara river entered the villages of Sirakoili and Gangapura in Remuna block.

SBI Assn triennial meet in Puri tomorrow

TO PASS RESOLUTION ON VARIOUS ISSUES

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State Bank of India Staff Association's (SBISA) 66th Triennial General Council and the Circle Triennial General Council Meeting of the Bhubaneswar Circle would be held on September 23 at Puri, said All India State Bank of India Staff Federation general secretary Sanjeev K Bandlish at a Press meet here on Tuesday.

Bandlish said about 1,500 delegates from the eight SBI Circles in the country and 4,500 members of the Bhubaneswar Circle would participate in the meeting and have discussions on various issues regarding recruitment, rising nonperforming assets (NPAs), wage negotiation and others.

He said that after discussions, a resolution would be passed for the bank's empowerment and management. He further said the association is also going to celebrate its 100 years and is the only bank staff association to celebrate its century celebrations.

He said that though the Eleventh Bipartite Wage Revision is due since November 1, 2017, the Central Government had raised hopes of the employees by insisting on the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) and the public sector banks to conclude the wage revision well before that date. But the bank employees feel demoralised and frustrated over the undue delay in settlement of wage revision, he added.

Among others, All India State Bank of India Staff Federation president VVSR Sarma and SBISA chief secretary Rajesh Kumar Tripathy and SBISA Bhubaneswar Circle general secretary SP Behera were present.

IIT BBS' 7th annual convocation today

SUDARSHAN CHHOTORAY ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bhubaneswar, which has completely shifted to its 850-acre sprawling new campus in Argul, Jatani, would hold its 7th Annual Convocation on Saturday.

Secretary, Department of Science and Technology, Government of India Prof Ashutosh Sharma would attend the event as chief guest while Chairman, Board of Governors of IIT Bhubaneswar Pankaj Ramanbhai Patel would preside over the function and Director of the institute Prof RV Raj Kumar would place his report and award the degrees to the successful students.

The premier institute would confer degrees to 19 PhD, 91 MTech, 69 MSc and 162 BTech students. As this year the decennial year of the institute fully operational from the permanent campus and this year's convocation is the proud moment for its graduating students, their parents, faculty members, staff members and the administration. Besides the degrees, the President of India Gold Medal, Director's Gold Medal and Silver Medals for best academic performance would be given.

Currently the institute has 1,765 students (BTech 1,101, MTech 266, MSC 142, PhD 256) and 129 fulltime faculty members. The institute has grown to have seven schools including three recently updated Mineral, Metrology and Material Science, School of Humanities and Social Science besides School of Earth, Ocean and Climate Sciences.

"Last year, we earned Rs 60 crore by submitting 75 research projects from various agencies; and we are working in various other projects now," said the Director One of the great achievements of the institute is the setting up a Centre of Excellence on Virtual Reality and Argumentative Reality with initial contribution from Sushmita Bagchi and Subrat Bagchi of Rs 2 5 crore. Already, half a dozen projects on virtual reality have started; and the institute is encouraging others to have new startups and incubations from here or elsewhere.

'CAG brings BJD Govt's real face to fore'

BJP to approach court against scams

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The BJP on Friday severely criticized the State Government over various irregularities revealed in the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) report tabled in the State Assembly recently.

"The CAG report has brought the real face of Naveen Patnaik-led BJD Government to the fore. Many irregularities have been revealed in the report. On behalf of people, the BJP would approach the court against all these irregularities." said party spokesperson Pitambar Acharya at a Press conference here.

Acharya said the CAG has written to the Sports and Youth Services department to stop spending on the Biju Yuba Vahini after the department told the former that it would not cooperate in conducting audits into the BYV spending in view of officials remaining busy for the upcoming World Hockey Cup.

Acharya demanded that department secretary give a reply to the public as to how officials don't get time to cooperate with the CAG in conducting audit while they find time in managing the BYV.

He also slammed the Government for providing water connectivity to 3.7 per cent households. He said the CAV revelation of the State losing Rs 155 corre for wrong DPR in PMGSY has brought to the fore the State Government's inefficiency and false allegation of Central negligence.

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NEVER USED BAD WORDS: GOVINDA
13 VIVACITY

Sushma-Qureshi talks called off

India says Pak PM Imran's true face exposed after SPOs killings

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A day after the Modi Government confirmed External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj's talks with her Pakistani counterpart Shah Mehmood Qureshi on the sidelines of the upcoming United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York next week, India on Friday called off the meeting citing Pakistan's complicity in the "brutal" killing of three policemen in Jammu & Kashmir as well as the release of postal stamps glorifying Kashmiri terrorist Burhan Wani.

Accusing Pakistan and Prime Minister Imran Khan of "evil designs" after three policemen were kidnapped and killed by terrorists in Shopian in J&K, India said talks with Pakistan in such an environment would be "meaningless". "The true face of the Pakistan Prime Minister has been exposed in his first few months in office," said Ministry for External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Raveesh Kumar here on Friday. "The latest brutal killings of our security personnel by Pakistan-based entities and the recent release of a series of 20 postage stamps by Pakistan glorifying a terrorist and terrorism confirm that Pakistan will not mend its ways," the MEA Spokesperson said. He noted that "two deeply disturbing developments have taken place" since Thursday's announcement of a meeting between the Foreign Ministers of India and Pakistan in New York later this month. "In view of the changed situation, there will be no meeting between the Foreign Ministers of India and Pakistan in New York," he said.

Eyebrows were raised on Thursday as India confirmed the meeting even though incidents of cross-border killings of Indian security personnel did not stop and Islamabad was seen to be setting the agenda for the meeting rather than the New Delhi. India on Thursday gave green signal to the meeting following Pakistan Prime Minister's September 15 letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking the resumption of dialogue between the two countries. On Friday, the MEA said, "After Imran Khan's letter, we thought Pakistan is moving towards positive changes, a new beginning. But now it seems behind their proposal were evil intentions." India is also furious over the release of 20 special stamps by Islamabad glorifying Burhan Wani — the Hizbul Mujahideen terrorist killed by security forces in 2016 — in the guise of solidarity with Kashmiris.

While agreeing to the meeting after Imran Khan's request, New Delhi had sought to clarify on Thursday that it would be "just a meeting" and "not resumption of dialogue". "Let's distinguish between meeting and dialogue. This doesn't change our stand on terrorism," MEA spokesman a had said day before. He said the Government has agreed to the meeting but no agenda has been set so far.

Police officers pay last respects to colleagues who were killed by terrorists, during a wreath-laying ceremony at a base camp at Shopian, Janmmu & Kashmir on Friday AP

LeT, HM terrorists kill 3 SPOs for refusing to quit police job

KHURSHEED WANI ■ SRINAGAR

Terrorists shot dead three policemen shortly after abducting them from their residences in two villages of south Kashmir's Shopian district on Friday for refusing to obey their diktat to resign from their posts. The killings triggered a spree of resignations of the Special Police Officers (SPOs) even as the officials maintained that no formal resignations have been received.

Sources said four persons, including three policemen, were abducted from Kapran and Batagund villages of Shopian district in the wee hours of Friday. Hours later, bullet-riddled bodies of the three SPOs were recovered from Lumni Wangam village in Shopian.

The fourth abductee Fayaz Ahmad Bhat, who was brother of an SPO, was set free and returned home.

Hollande claim gives Rafale deal new twist

DefMin says Govt had no say in commercial call; Cong accuses Centre of complicity helping private player

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

In a significant development, a French media report quoted former French President Francois Hollande as purportedly saying that the Indian Government proposed Reliance Defence as the partner for Dassault Aviation in the ₹58,000 crore Rafale jet fighter deal and France did not have a choice.

Reacting to Hollande's remark that is at variance with the stand taken by the Indian Government, the Defence Ministry spokesman said on Friday, "The report referring to former French President Hollande's statement that Government of India insisted upon a particular firm as offset partner for the Dassault Aviation in Rafale is being verified."

The spokesperson said, "It is reiterated that neither the Government nor the French Government had any say in the commercial decision."

Dassault Aviation, the makers of Rafale, had chosen Reliance Defence as its partner to fulfill offset obligations of the deal. The Government has been maintaining it did not have any role in selection of the offset partner.

Hollande's remark has escalated the political slugfest over the multi-billion dollar deal. The French media report quoted Hollande as saying, "We did not have a say in this...The Indian Government proposed this service group and Dassault negotiated with (Anil) Ambani group. We did not have a choice, we took the partner who was given to us."

The Congress and other Opposition parties latched on to the report and stepped up their attack on the Modi Government over the deal. The Congress alleged that the Government's "complicity, collusion and conspiracy" to benefit Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "crony friend" has been exposed following Hollande's reported comments. "Cat's out of the Bag!!! Complicity, Collusion & Conspiracy of Modi Govt in denying the PSU, HAL a ₹30,000 crore 'offset contract' to benefit PM's crony friend exposed!" Congress' chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala tweeted.

Congress leader P Chidambaram said, "In the NDA-negotiated Rafale aircraft deal, we have got no aircraft, we have got only lies. What is the new lie that the government will put out in response to Mr Hollande?"

"President (Former) Francois Hollande should also enlighten us how the price went up from ₹590 crore in 2012 to ₹1,690 crore in 2015 per Rafale fighter jet? Escalation of a mere ₹1,100 crore. I am sure the Euro equivalent would not be a problem to calculate," Congress spokesperson Manish Tewari tweeted.

Modi had announced the procurement of 36 Rafale jets after holding talks with then French President Hollande on April 10, 2015 in Paris.

The Opposition has been accusing the Government of choosing Reliance Defence over State-run Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd to benefit the private firm.

PM to visit Odisha today

To lay stone for fertiliser plant, open airport

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

In view of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the State on Saturday, the Commissionerate police have deployed around 15 platoons of police force and 40 police officers in the State capital to provide security during his visit.

Speaking to mediapersons, Police Commissioner Satyajit Mohanty said Prime Minister Modi would arrive at city airport at 8.55 am tomorrow and leave for Talcher by helicopter at 9 am. In view of this, police have made security arrangements as per Blue Book.

Sources said Modi will reach Talcher at 9.45 am and later lay foundation stone for the Talcher fertiliser plant. He would also attend a public meeting in Talcher.

The PM would later leave for Jharsuguda at 11.35 am to inaugurate the much-awaited Jharsuguda airport.

He will also dedicate the new Jharsuguda- Sardega railway line and two coal mines of MCL and NTPC in Sundargarh district to the nation.

"Around 15 platoons of police force and 40 police officers have been deployed for the security of Modi in the city," he said. Mohanty further informed that a contingency carcade plan has also been prepared for patrolling in and around the meeting venues.

SOURCES SAID MODI WILL REACH TALCHER AT 9.45 AM AND LATER LAY FOUNDATION STONE FOR THE TALCHER FERTILISER PLANT. HE WOULD ALSO ATTEND A PUBLIC MEETING IN TALCHER

Satkosia sanctuary DFO shifted

PNS ■ ANGUL

Amid widespread resentment over translocation of the Royal Bengal Tigress "Sundari", the State Government on Friday transferred Angul district's Satkosia Wildlife Sanctuary DFO SMT Rehman.

The 27-month-old tigress (T-412), since its relocation from Bandhavgarh in Madhya Pradesh in June this year, is not comfortable in the Satkosia forest and has been moving the whole forest without creating its own territory.

The tigress has killed a woman of Hatibari of Angul district besides preying on several cattle in the forest villages.

Amicus Curiae visits Shreemandir

Meets Shankaracharya; to meet Gajapati, others today

PNS ■ PURI

Supreme Court-appointed Amicus Curiae Gopal Subramaniam visited the Jagannath Temple here and offered prayers to the deities on Friday.

Later, he called on Jagadguru Shankaracharya Nischilananda Saraswati at the Gobardhan Peeth. Wearing priestly attire and with sandal paste and vermilion on the forehead, Subramaniam was welcomed at the Lions Gate at 5.30 am and led to the shrine's sanctum sanctorum by servitors for darshan of the deities during the Mangal Arati of deities.

After the darshan, he put some money on the tray (Thali) kept by servitors. He visited the side temples in the shrine and viewed gods and goddesses. He too took blessings of Mukti Mandap by donating some money there too. It seemed that Subramaniam's gesture made all present around him happy.

Shree Jaganath Temple Administration Chief Administrator Pradipta Mohapatra, Puri Collector Jyoti Prakash Das, SP Sarthak Sarangi and other officers were present. Later, Subramaniam took a meeting in the temple office where Mohapatra informed him about history, traditions, culture and festivals observed in the shrine throughout a year. The meeting lasted for almost an hour after which Amicus Curiae left for Gobardhan peeth to meet the Shankaracharya.

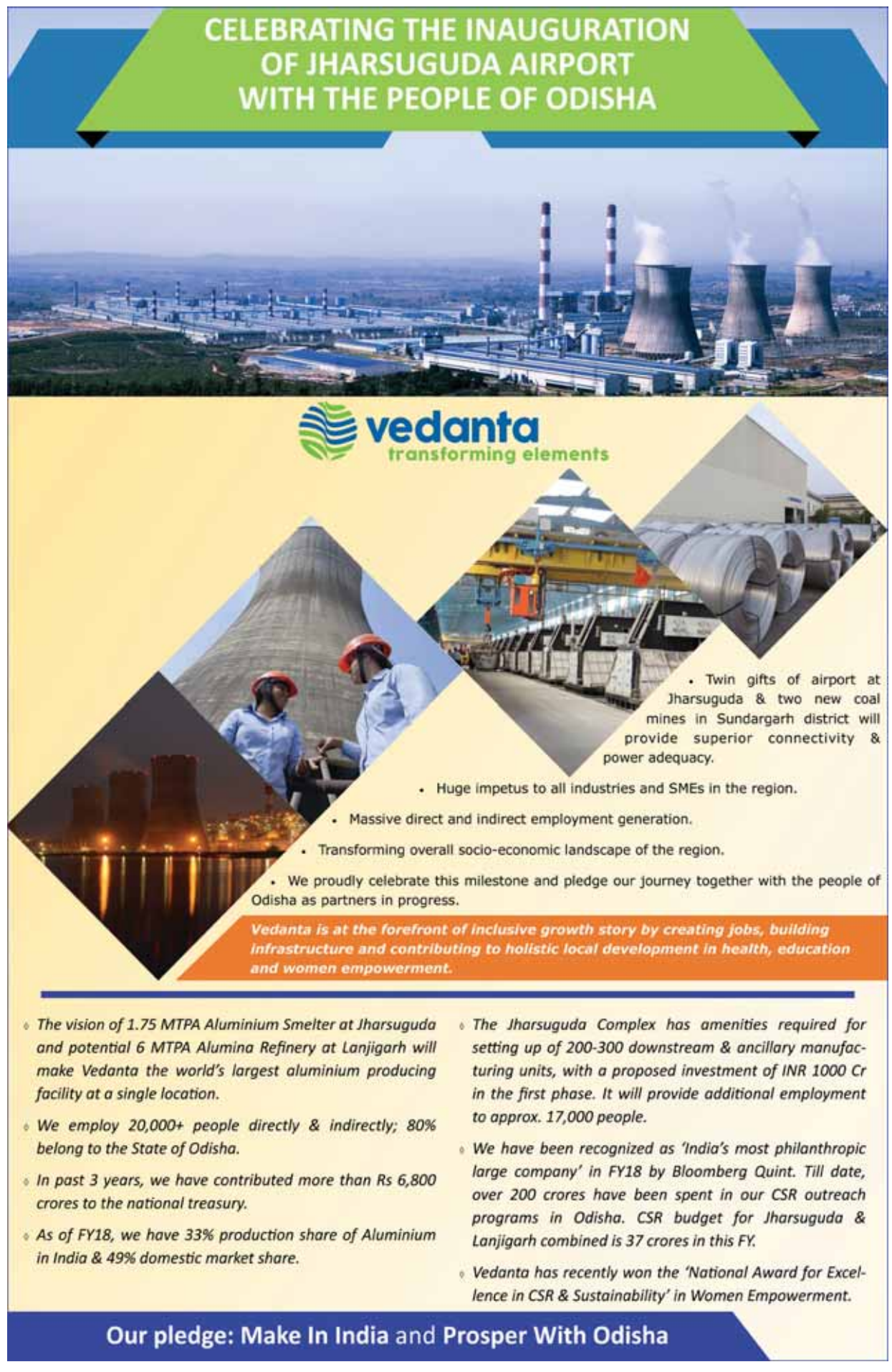
Sources said he paid all respect to the Shankaracharya and held discussions with him on certain issues not revealed to others. But sources said he held talks on the rituals and roles of every sect and the Gobardhan peeth's role in the Shreemandir. The closed-door meeting lasted for nearly an hour beginning from 12 pm.

"Nobody feels empty and squeezed, everybody returns with due honour and prestige. Sanskar (reform), Sikshs (education) Suraksha (safety), Rakshy (defence), Dharma (religion), Moksha (salvation) should be given heed in the Jaganath Temple," Shankaracharya told reporters after the meeting.

Then, Subramanium met the three-member reform committed led by former SJTA chief Suresh Mohapatra and judges of Puri. "Discussions were made basically on old customs, rites and rituals, and laws and traditions of the Shree Jagannath Temple," said Subramaniam.

As per the schedule, the Amicus Curiae would meet Chatisha Nijog members and subsequently hear pleas and grievances of people on Saturday.

He is also scheduled to meet Gajapati Maharaja Dibyasingh Deb and local MLA and MP separately. He is also scheduled to hold meeting with Chief Secretary, Law Minister and Law Secretary in Bhubaneswar.



2019 POLLS IN SUNDARGARH

George in Cong, to foment trouble for Jual

PNS ■ ROURKELA

With the joining of firebrand tribal leader, Biramitrapur MLA George Tirkey in the Congress, the party will definitely be a gainer in the 2019 elections and at the same time it may foment trouble for Sundargarh BJP MP and Union Minister Jual Oram, feel political pundits here.

Taking the present political scenario and the reasons behind the victory of Oram in 2014 into consideration, such an opinion is formed.

Though Oram is a four-time MP of Sundargarh, but for the first time he won in 2014 with a thin margin without any alliance. Prior to that in 1998, 2000 and 2004, he had won when BJP and BJD had alliance. Contesting for the first time without alliance, he had lost in 2009.

Despite the Modi wave, he had managed to win with a thin margin of 18,000 odd votes defeating BJD candidate Dilip Tirkey. Most interestingly, out of seven Assembly segments under the Sundargarh Parliament constituency, Oram was either in the second or third position in five segments, including his home turf Bonai. Only due to the wide leading of 20,000 odd votes in Rourkela segment that he won the last election.

It was also known to all that as Dilip Ray is a popular leader in Rourkela and was contesting in BJP ticket from there, it was a blessing for Oram ultimately. Of course, after winning, Oram had also confessed that it was Ray's support that helped him.

At a time when Oram is already on the back foot, saddled as he is with many negative factors, tribal icon George Tirkey has joined Congress. This will definitely multiply the problems for Oram as tribal votes could be polarised

But now the situation has changed for Oram. First of all, his popularity graph is getting down due to his poor performance and odd statements. For this, he had been in dock on many occasions. Secondly, though he the Union Tribal Affairs Minister, but the fate of the tribals in his home district has not improved. This is just the tip of an iceberg if we consider the situation in all India level.

The other odd factor for him is Ray who is not comfortable in the BJP and has embarrassed the top brass over his criticism of the Central Government for delay in carrying out two important projects promised by the Prime Minister before 2014 election for Rourkela such as the Brahmani bridge and IGH upgradation to a MCH. Besides, there is every possibility for the disgruntled Ray not to contest the 2019 election. Rather, if needed, he may be an instrument for party's debacle in the district.

At a time when Oram is already on the back foot, saddled as he is with many negative factors, tribal icon George Tirkey has joined Congress. This will definitely multiply the problems for Oram as tribal votes could be polarised.

According to sources, Tirkey has joined the Congress under a condition that he gets a ticket for the Sundargarh Parliamentary seat in 2019. Besides, in Sundargarh, the Congress has definitely certain pocket votes for which in 2014, despite the Modi wave and anti Congress wave, its candidate Hemananda Biswal had got 2,69,335 votes while Oram had got 3,40,508 votes. Tirkey has definitely a good rapport in many segments of the district for which he is not only popular but also for last two elections he is being repeatedly sent to Assembly without any brand, as an Independent candidate.

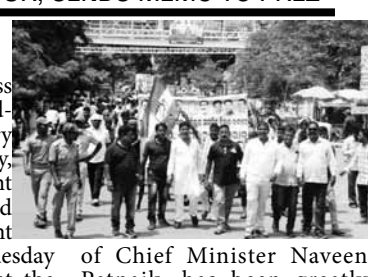
Though he is popular in Biramitrapur, he has also popularity in Raghunathpalli and Rajgangpur segment as a labour leader. It may be noted here that in 2004, Tirkey had fetched a good number of votes contesting Lok Sabha election as an Independent candidate.

So, if Tirkey manages to bag pocket votes of Congress, his own and anti- Oram votes, then definitely it would be an easy sailing for him vis-à-vis Oram in 2019. On the other side, Oram who had won last time with the support of Rourkela and Biramitrapur voters, would not get the same advantage in 2019 as Biramitrapur is Tirkey's home turf where he is very popular and in Rourkela, Oram can't expect the support of Ray as he had in 2014.

Cong slams State, Centre over various scams

HOLDS DEMO IN B'PUR, SENDS MEMO TO PREZ

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR



Hundreds of Congress activists under leadership of AICC secretary Anil Kumar Chaudhary, PCC working president Pradeep Majhi and Ganjam district president Dr Trinath Behera on Tuesday held a demonstration at the RDC (Southern Division) office here in protest against various irregularities committed by the Central and State Governments.

They severely criticised the Narendra Modi Government for the alleged funds irregularities committed in buying of Rafale aircrafts.

Raising accusing fingers at the BJD Government, Congress activists lamented that Ganjam, the home district of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, has been greatly neglected. They slammed the Government for the alleged Omfed and mines scams and incidents of farmer suicides.

In the end, they submitted a memorandum, addressing the President, to the RDC (SD). Among others, Congress district working president Deepak Patnaik, Pitabas Panda, Bijay Sahu, Nagar president Pramod Jena, Parshuram Sahu, Swarup Tripathy and Minati Mishra were present.

IN TWO MORE CASES

Police seek remand of Minister's son

PNS ■ KEONJHAR

SOURCES SAID THAT WHILE ONE CASE IS REGISTERED IN THE GHASIPURA POLICE STATION, THE OTHER IS LODGED IN THE RAMACHANDRAPUR POLICE STATION

Trouble deepened for School and Mass Education Minister Badri Narayan Patra's son Debashis Patra as police on Friday prayed court to take him on remand to interrogate him in connection with two more cases.

Sources said that while one case is registered in the Ghasipura police station, the other is lodged in the Ramachandrapur police station.

Notably on Thursday, Debashis was sent to judicial custody after his bail petition was rejected by the District Judge Court.

He had been produced in court on the charge of assaulting one Satyabrata Jena of village Guhalia under the Ghasipura PS.

He was charged under Sections 147, 148, 427, 323, 294, 324, 325, 307 and 149 IPC and 3(1)(V)(S)SC and ST (PA). He had been nabbed from Tangi by the Keonjhar police and produced in court amid tight security. The next hearing of his case is scheduled for October 3.

PPT helps cyclone-hit vendors

PARADIP: As the Cyclonic storm 'DAYE' triggered heavy downpour accompanied by high-velocity wind in Paradip, the weeklong Viswhakarma Puja celebrations in the PPT township has been disrupted with instances of damages to the Puja Pandals and caving in of structures.Normally, hawkers and street vendors, who come to Paradip not only from the nearby areas but from faraway places, put up makeshift stalls to sell their products during celebrations. But the inclement weather has severely dented their business.

The Paradip Port Trust (PPT) normally allots open spaces to these people by floating tender. The PPT management, however taking a sympathetic view of the circumstances, as a goodwill gesture has decided to refund the money collected from these small stalls and cycle stands, etc. This has given relief to the poor hawkers and stall owners, who were otherwise facing the prospect of losses.

PNS

UU teachers to protest authorities' apathy

To seek Guv's intervention for fulfilment of demands

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Utkal University Teachers' Association (UUTA) has said that it would soon resume its protest against the alleged administrative apathy towards its genuine demands.

A UUTA delegation would meet the Governor, who is the Chancellor of Universities, and seek his intervention regarding fulfilment of the demands. A decision to this effect was taken at the association's general body meeting held here on Thursday.

The association had staged protest for 15 days from July 10 and postponed the stir on July 25 after the Vice-Chancellor, the Registrar and the PG Council Chairman assured them to fulfil the demands by August 31.

The demands include immediate implementation of Career Advancement Scheme (CAS), the 7th Pay Scale Revision Committee recommendations, immediate repair of residential quarters, confirmation of faculty members, advance increment for MPhil/PhD holders, redesignation of Readers, recruitment of Non-Teaching staff, NPS arrears and insurance schemes.

"The university authorities have promised to fulfil our legitimate demands many times. On their assurance, we had postponed our protest till August 31. We will now meet the Chanellor and the Governor and seek his interventions," said association members.

They too alleged that the Vice-Chancellor and other key officials have even marred the day-to-day functions of the university. Hundreds of files are being piled up in the office of the VC and the Registrar for approval and there is no progress on critical issues.

UUTA secretary Prof Kunja Behari Panda hoped that the Chancellor, being a former academician, would definitely intervene in breaking the inertia of inaction of the university authorities. "If needed, I will be on a hunger strike till death from October 2 onwards," he said. The meeting was presided over by UUTA vice-president Prof Maheswar Sahu.

AFTER JHARSUGUDA

Three more airports in offing in State

BHUBANESWAR: After the Jharsuguda Airport, to be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 22, three more airports are in the offing in Odisha. The infrastructures of the three airports are being developed in Jeypore, Rourkela and Utkela at a total investment of over Rs 100 crore. These airports are expected to be operational by 2019, informed Airports Authority of India (AAI) Member (Planning) AK Pathak.

While the airport in Rourkela is likely to be functional by October-November this year, those in Jeypore and Utkela are expected for operations by March 2019, he said.

The Jharsuguda Airport has been built over an area of 909.22 acres at a cost of Rs 175 crore, of which the State Government has contributed Rs 50 crore.

The airport has a total of 1,028 acres of land, which is equal to that of the Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) in Bhubaneswar. The new airport can be developed for management of 20 million air passengers in future. Bigger planes like Airbus 320 and Boeing 737 can land at the Jharsuguda airport, Pathak said. Recently, first trial landing of a Boeing flight of Indian Air Force (IAF) on the Jharsuguda airport runway was successful. The IAF's Boeing-737 flight made first landing on September 11 ahead of the airport's formal inauguration.

Notably, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has granted a 4-C category licence to the Jharsuguda Airport allowing it for operation of bigger planes. *PNS*

EESL holds meet on energy conservation

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Energy Efficiency Services Ltd (EESL) jointly with the International Copper Association India, the Utkal Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Power Tech Consultants organised a conclave on energy conservation here on Thursday.

Power Tech Consultants senior consultant Bibhu Charan Swain, EESL CGM (Tech) SP Garnaik, Gridco former Director (Commercial) RC Mohapatra and ICAI Manager Abhishek Dhupar attended as guests and spoke on the theme 'Achieving Energy Efficiency through ESCO Route'.

Dhupar made presentations on topics like global policies, regulation and standards on motor efficiency and Garnaik spoke on achieving energy efficiency through the EESL's innovative ESCO route. Swain deliberated on importance of achieving energy efficiency through power quality management and harmonies mitigations.

On the occasion, EESL Engineer Nand Kishore Jha also made a presentation on EESL's national motor replacement programme. More than 70 members including representatives of IMFA, Jindal, Nalco, PPL, Linde India Limited, ICAI, EESL, UCCI and CCPPO were present. A question and answer hour was also held.

HELICOPTER FLIGHT

Police plaint lodged against CM

PNS ■ PURI

The Sachetan Nagarika Manch of Puri on Friday filed a complaint in the Arakhkuda police station against Chief

Minister Naveen Patnaik, Brahmagiri MLA Sanjay Dasburma, Ministers Maheshwar Mohanty and Pradip Mahaparathy accusing them of flying over Chilika lake many times in the past.

Manch convenor Priya Darshan Patnaik lodged the written complaint and demanded actions against them.

Earlier, Patnaik had lodged a complaint with the Puri SP Sarthak Sarangi on Tuesday.

As no action was taken, he re-lodged the complaint at the PS.

"If former MP Bijayant Panda is being summoned by police, why the CM and others, who have flown over Chilika many times, would not be booked," wanted to know Patnaik.

₹2L looted in front of bank in B'pur

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

In a daring broad daylight robbery, unidentified miscreants looted Rs 2 lakh from a resident of Ajoyodha Nagar on Thursday. Sources said one Anil Kumar Pradhan had gone to the State Bank of India branch in the medical campus to deposit the money. But due to some reason, he was unable to deposit it. Later, he went to the nearby ICICI Bank to deposit the money.

While Pradhan was about to enter the bank after parking his motorbike, two youths on a motorcycle wearing helmets approached and asked him the way to Chhatrapur. When he was showing him the direction, they snatched the money bag and fled from the spot.

After being informed, Gosani Nuaagaon IIC Kulamani Sethi and other personnel rushed to the spot and scrutinised the CCTV footage installed outside the SBI Bank. Police have ascertained from the footage that the miscreants had followed Pradhan before looting him. A case has been registered in the BNPur police station in the connection, informed BNPur IIC Jaykrushna Patnaik. The incident has sent shockwaves and it is being discussed that looters have again become active in the city.

Students lock Khalikote varsity gate

Demand revaluation of answer sheets

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

Unrest prevailed in the Khallikote Cluster University here on Thursday as students locked the main gate of university in protest against alleged wrong evaluation of semester answer papers.

The students alleged that about 60 to 70 per cent students have got D and F grade in the third semester examination due to wrong valuation by the authorities.

They also alleged that the authorities have knowingly made the students fail as the students' union elections are round the corner.

They also alleged that the students have been given fail marks, i.e 6 and 8, in practical examinations.

Due to the unrest, the Plus Three third and fifth semester examinations were also cancelled.

College Principal Dr TK Satpathy reached the spot and assured the students of appropriate steps following which the students called off the protest. However, he said later that there were no irregularities in in evaluation of answer sheets.

Dr Satpathy also said a notification would be taken out on Saturday for revaluation and students can apply for it.

Similarly, students of Gopalpur College held protest against the wrong evaluation of the semester examination and demanded revaluation.

e-PROCUREMENT NOTICE
Tender Online No. 05 of 2018-19
769-O

1	Name of the Work	Road works for 2018-19 mentioned in column 2 of table of N.I.T.
2	Estimated cost	Specified against each work in column 3 of table of N.I.T. excluding Goods and Services Tax.
3	Earnest Money Deposit	Specified against each work in column 4 of table of N.I.T.
4	Period of completion	Specified against each work in column 6 of table of N.I.T.
5	Class of contractors	Specified against each work in column 5 of table of N.I.T.
6	Cost of Tender Paper	Specified against each work in column 7 of table of N.I.T

Other details for the N.I.T.:

1	Procurement Officer	Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Jagatsinghpur
2	Date & time of availability of bid documents in Portal	24/09/2018 at 11:00 hrs
3	Last date & time for receipt of bids in Portal	03/10/2018 at 17:00 hrs
4	Last date & time of seeking of Bid clarification	01/10/2018 at 15:00 hrs
5	Opening of tender	04/10/2018 at 11:30 hrs at the Office of Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Jagatsinghpur.

Further details can be seen from the Government website: www.tendersorissa.gov.in

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Rural Works Division, Jagatsinghpur

25056/11/0005/1819

DISTRICT RURAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY : BARGARH
NOTICE

Notice inviting Tender for procurement of Sports Materials under BYV made vide Letter No. 2443, Dt 29.08.2018 with last date of submission of tender as fixed on 17.09.2018 is hereby extended to Dt 27.09.2018 up to 5.00 PM.Tender shall be opened on dt 28.09.2018 at 10.00 am in the office chamber of PD,DRDA,Bargarh.Other terms and Conditions made in the original advertisement dt 29.08.2018 shall remain unchanged.

Sd/-
Project Director,
DRDA,Bargarh

EAST COAST RAILWAY
EMPLOYEES GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL SYSTEM

ALL EMPLOYEES OF EAST COAST RAILWAY ARE HEREBY ADVISED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE FACILITY OF **STAFF GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL SYSTEM** BY GENERAL MANAGER / DIVISIONAL RAILWAY MANAGER, WHEN REQUIRED. THE DETAILED TIME TABLE IS AS FOLLOWS :

STAFF GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL AT THE LEVEL OF GENERAL MANAGER

- **Every Wednesday at 1000 hrs.** Applications may preferably be submitted by 1100 hrs of Tuesday at email address dycpoirecor@gmail.com or Fax - 0674-2300031 or Toll Free Number : **18003457126**

STAFF GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL AT THE LEVEL OF	DAY OF GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL
DIVISIONAL RAILWAY MANAGER / KHURDA ROAD	Every Monday 1030 hrs, Applications to be submitted at 1000 hrs of same day.
DIVISIONAL RAILWAY MANAGER / SAMBALPUR	Every Tuesday 1600 hrs to 1700 hrs, Applications to be submitted at 1500 hrs of same day.
DIVISIONAL RAILWAY MANAGER / WALTAIR	Every working day 1530 hrs to 1630 hrs except Wednesday. Applications to be submitted at 1500 hrs of same day.
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/CONTRUCTION	Every working day 1600 hrs to 1700 hrs, Applications to be submitted at 1500 hrs of same day. 5th of every month is also Grievance Day. If it is a holiday, next working day will be Grievance Day.
CHIEF WORKSHOP MANAGER / MANCHESWAR	Every working day 1700 hrs to 1800 hrs.

PR-351/J/18-19
Dy. Chief Personnel Officer, IR & W

PUBLIC NOTICE

General public is hereby informed that our client, **M/s. Muthoot Finance Ltd. (GSTIN 32AABCT0343B1Z7), Registered Office: 2nd Floor, Muthoot Chambers, Banerji Road, Kochi - 682018, Kerala, India CIN: L65910KL1997PLC011300, Ph: +91 484-2396478, 2394712, Fax: +91 484-2396506, mails@muthootgroup.com, www.muthootfinance.com** is conducting Auction of ornaments (NPA accounts for the period up to **30.09.2017**), pledged in its favour, by the defaulting Borrowers, as detailed hereunder. All those interested may participate.

Date of Auction: 26.09.2018

Jajpur Town (OR): MAL-766, 820, 836, 841, 879, 939, 1026, 1114, 1280, 1283, 1381, 1411, 1425, 1430, 1454, 1460, 1468, 1479, 1531, 1618, 1735, 1764, 1765, 1823, 1830, 1892, 1954, 1991, 2014, 2056, 2121, 2135, 2168, 2184, 2355, 2496, MBL-2861, 3278, 3307, 3495, 3584, 3647, 3651, MGL-1190, 1298, 1317, 1318, 1335, 1484, 1485, 1490, 1523, 1540, 1560, 1581, 1601, 1631, 1655, 1657, 1673, 1674, 1730, 1732, 1739, 1745, 1786, 1804, 1820, 1844, 1846, 1863, 1893, 1909, 1943, 1944, 1946, 1967, 1985, 2032, 2033, 2045, 2051, 2056, 2076, 2090, 2098, 2103, 2126, 2174, 2260, 2284, 2311, 2315, 2345, 2357, 2358, 2378, 2382, 2388, 2393, 2405, 2416, 2441, 2463, 2470, 2537, 2583, 2622, 2678, 2724, 2746, 2815, 2851, 2864, 2874, 2882, 2886, 2892, 2900, 2904, 2943, 2958, 2959, 2973, 2992, 3006, 3024, 3033, 3061, 3072, 3081, 3095, 3097, 3098, 3108, 3144, 3178, 3188, 3213, 3235, 3253, 3265, 3289, 3293, 3331, 3356, 3371, 3378, 3383, 3387, 3424, 3439, 3465, 3479, 3484, 3532, 3534, 3537, 3548, 3582, 3596, 3606, 3613, 3614, 3616, 3635, 3660, 3670, 3682, 3693, 3713, 3719, 3737, 3753, 3756, 3757, 3807, 3818, 3823, 3862, 3933, 3985, 3998, 4013, 4027, 4032, 4050, 4063, 4073, 4102, 4119, 4144, 4146, 4208, 4216, 4218, 4231, 4247, 4248, 4269, 4320, 4345, 4352, 4384, 4385, 4392, 4411, 4424, 4432, 4438, 4440, 4444, 4531, 4567, 4575, 4577, 4588, 4625, 4694, 4709, 4761, 4764, 4778, 4782, 4803, 4806, 4817, 4845, 4846, 4860, 4861, 4878, 4897, 4909, 4926, 4940, 4948, 4985, 5000, 5007, 5040, 5051, 5074, 5090, 5093, 5123, 5137, 5160, 5236, 5237, 5238, 5279, 5295, 5331, 5335, 5364, 5365, 5372, 5428, 5446, 5458, 5476, 5479, 5501, 5507, 5530, 5571, 5579, 5580, 5581, 5594, 5600, 5639, 5652, 5653, 5654, 5658, 5679, 5683, 5685, 5702, 5720, 5722, 5732, 5733, 5744, 5756, 5757, 5767, 5786, 5825, 5826, 5850, MOS-19, MSL-12936, 13454, 14652, 14723, 15281, 15904, 16502, 16542, 16656, 16749, 16841, 16845, 16892, 16905, 16975, 17127, 17251, 17305, 17331, 17350, 17356, 17406, 17408, 17417, 17472, 17504, 17526, 17568, 17583, 17595, 17611, 17662, 17663, 17685, 17697, 17727, 17729, 17740, 17749, 17756, 17799, 17811, 17832, 17853

The auctions in respect of the loan accounts shown under the branch head will be conducted at the respective branches.

However, please note that in case the auction does not get completed on the given date then the auction shall be continued on subsequent days thereafter, at this same venue. No further notices shall be issued in this respect.

Kohli & Sobti, Advocates,
A 59A, First Floor, Lajpat Nagar-II, New Delhi - 110024

Note: Customers can release their pledged ornaments before the scheduled auction date, against payment of dues of our client. Customer can also contact Email ID: auctiondelhi@muthootgroup.com or Call at 7834886464,7994452461.

'SURGICAL STRIKE DAY' CELEBRATIONS

Political row erupts over UGC's decision

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/ KOLKATA

A political row broke out on Friday over the University Grants Commission (UGC) communication to universities to observe September 29 as "Surgical strike day" with the Opposition calling it a foul politics while Centre insisting that the moves certainly reflected patriotism and not politics. While Trinamool Congress said they would not follow the HRD Ministry's diktat, former HRD Minister and senior Congress leader Kapil Sibal took a jibe by asking whether the UGC would celebrate November 8 the demonetisation day.

HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar said the UGC directives was not compulsory but an advisory. UGC has asked the universities and the higher educational institutions to celebrate the second anniversary of the surgical strikes on terror camps in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir(PoK).

West Bengal Education Minister Partha Chatterjee criticised the BJP-led Central

Government for trying to "malign and politicise" the Army and said educational institutes will not abide by UGC's directive. Countering him, BJP State president Dilip Ghosh said the TMC Government has made it a practice to oppose each and every decision of the Centre.

Javadekar said the UGC communication reflected "patriotism not politics", and it is not compulsory for the academic institutions to organise any such event. He rejected the criticism by opposition parties as "absolutely ridiculous and false".

Talk sessions by ex-servicemen about sacrifices by the armed forces, special parades

> JAVADEKAR SAID THE UGC COMMUNICATION REFLECTED 'PATRIOTISM NOT POLITICS', AND IT IS NOT COMPULSORY FOR THE ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS TO ORGANISE ANY SUCH EVENT. HE REJECTED THE CRITICISM BY OPPOSITION PARTIES AS 'ABSOLUTELY RIDICULOUS AND FALSE'

by the National Cadet Corps(NCC) and visit to exhibitions are among the prescribed events by the University Grants Commission(UGC) for the celebration. Colleges have been asked to organise parades by the National Cadet Corps (NCC) and lectures by ex-army officers.

On September 29 in 2016, the Indian Army carried out "surgical strikes" on seven terrorist launch pads across the Line of Control(LoC) as a response to an attack on its base in Uri earlier that month. The Army had said its special forces inflicted "significant casualties" on terrorists waiting there to cross onto the Indian territory.

"This is an agenda of the BJP and it is trying to push this agenda by using the UGC ahead of elections. It is a matter of shame that they are using the UGC to achieve their political agenda. We won't abide by the directions of UGC," Chatterjee said at Kolkata.

"We would have understood it had they asked us to observe the day in the name of sacrifices made by our soldiers. We have full respect for our soldiers and their sacrifices." "The Indian Army has always been kept above politics and controversies. But now we are seeing that the BJP is trying to malign and politicise the Indian Army. This is not right and we won't support it," Chatterjee said.

Sibal sarcastically asked whether the UGC would "dare" to celebrate November 8, the day when demonetisation was announced in 2016, as 'surgical strike day'. "UGC directs VC's of all universities to celebrate 29th September as Surgical Strike Day. Is this meant to educate or to serve BJP's political ends?" Sibal tweeted.

"Will UGC dare celebrate 8th November as Surgical Strike Day depriving the poor of their livelihoods? This another jumla!" the former Union HRD Minister said.

Javadekar told reporters in Delhi the ruling BJP differed with the Congress as it only gave advise to institutes to follow a programme while the opposition party made its decisions compulsory when it was in power. "Where is politics? This is not politics but patriotism," Javadekar said, adding that students needed to be informed about the surgical strikes, and military and civil works soldiers do.

He claimed that students and institutes had made suggestions that the second anniversary of surgical strikes should be observed. Asked why it was not commemorated last year, he said a good suggestion can be executed anytime.

No SPO resigned in Jammu & Kashmir, says MHA

Terms reports as 'false propaganda'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry on Friday said no Special Police Officer has resigned in Jammu & Kashmir following the killing of three police personnel by banned terror group Hizbul Mujahideen and termed such reports as "false propaganda" by "mischievous" elements.

The Ministry also said that the terror groups are rattled by the action taken by the security forces against the terrorist groups and as many as 28 terrorists have been neutralized in Shopian alone this year.

28 terrorists have been neutralised this year in Shopian alone where the three policemen were killed on Friday. "Due to pro-active actions of Jammu & Kashmir police, terrorists have been pushed to the corner and are being driven to desperation," the Home Ministry said.

"Reports have appeared in a section of media that some SPOs in Jammu & Kashmir have resigned. The J&K police has confirmed that these reports are untrue and motivated. These reports are based on false propaganda by mischievous elements," the Union Home Ministry said in a statement.

"Jammu & Kashmir has a professional and committed police force which is fully geared up to meet the security challenges, including those related to Panchayat and Urban body elections," the statement further read.

There are over 30,000 SPOs and their services are reviewed from time to time. Some mischievous elements are trying to project that those SPOs whose services are not renewed due to administrative reasons, have resigned. Terrorists are on backfoot in Jammu & Kashmir, the Home Ministry said.

The three policemen were abducted from their homes in south Kashmir's Shopian district and shot dead in cold blood by the Hizbul Mujahideen, the Jammu & Kashmir police said.

Earlier, reports in the Kashmiri media suggested that the killings had triggered panic in the lower ranks of the police department with at least six policemen resigning from service. Two of them issued video messages dissociating themselves from the police ranks.

"My name is Irshad Ahmad Baba and I was working as a constable in the police. I have rendered my resignation...," said one of the SPOs in a video message being widely circulated on social media in Srinagar.

Tajalla Hussain Lone, another SPO, said he had resigned from the police department on September 17 and was issuing the video to put to rest any doubts, and that Hizbul Mujahideen commander Riyaz Naikoo has several times warned local policemen, especially SPOs, to resign from the force, saying that the Government is using them.

CBI defends its chief, terms Asthana's action 'malicious'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid a row between CBI Director Alok Verma and the agency's second-in-command Rakesh Asthana, the public relations wing of the CBI swung into action to defend the chief and malign his deputy. The CBI spokesperson issued a statement terming CBI Special Director Rakesh Asthana's complaint to the CVC against the agency chief of his interference in certain cases as "malicious" and "frivolous". The row between the two officers has raised several eyebrows on the selection of officers, including Verma, as the agency chief and their integrity.

In an unusual move, the CBI issued a statement after reports about Asthana filing a complaint before the Central Vigilance Commission alleging interference in the probes undertaken by the special investigation team under him. The statement comes amid reports that Verma interfered in the investigation of IRCTC tender scam.

This is for the first time that dirty linen is being washed in the open and two top officials are embroiled in allegations of corruption.

"It is unfortunate that baseless and frivolous allegations are being made publicly without proper verification of facts to malign the image of the Director CBI and intimidate the officials of the organisation," reads the CBI statement.

The CVC has sought for certain case files from the CBI on the basis of a complaint filed by the Special Director, CBI, the statement said.

"In its response to the CVC letter, the Chief Vigilance Officer (CVO) of CBI has pointed out that the complaint is an attempt by the complainant to intimidate the officers of CBI who are investigating his role in at least half a dozen cases. The CBI said that the CVC should opine on the maintainability of the complaint and consider it malicious and frivolous in order to protect the integrity of the organisation," the CBI said.

Irrespective of the maintainability of the complaint, CBI has provided most of the files as requested by the CVC and the remaining will be submitted soon.

The CBI also claimed that there is no substance in the media reports that CBI is not cooperating in the enquiry.

The allegation of preventing raids against the accused in the IRCTC case is absolutely false. The investigation of the case has resulted in filing a chargesheet before the designated court. This could not have been possible without the explicit approval of the Director CBI, the agency further claimed.

CBI has pointed out in its letter to CVC that the issue relating to the IRCTC case was raked up earlier also and brought before the Supreme Court on two occasions. The matter was dismissed by the Supreme Court. The petitioners were also in possession of information from highly confidential internal documents, which is a serious offence, it added.

NDA treating people of J&K like 'guinea pigs': Cong

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Hitting out at the Centre over the security situation in Jammu & Kashmir, the Congress on Friday alleged that the NDA Government was playing with the "crown of India" and treating the people of the State like "guinea pigs".

Congress spokesman Abhishek Singhvi alleged that there had been a marked quantitative increase in ceasefire violations, deaths of security personnel, civilian killings, and terror incidents in Jammu & Kashmir since the BJP came to power at the Centre and in the State.

He blamed the Government for the deteriorating security situation in Jammu & Kashmir and cited the abduction and killing of three policemen and the reported resignations by police personnel in the State.

The Home Ministry, however, said on Friday that no policeman has resigned in the state following the killing of the three police personnel by terror group Hizbul Mujahideen and described such reports as "false propaganda" by "mis-

chievous" elements.

"There is a quantitative and qualitative change. The quantitative change is reflected in any of the four parameters — ceasefire violations, death of security personnel, civilian deaths, terror incidents," Singhvi said.

It is "shocking" that 414 jawans have died since the BJP came to power at the Centre and in the State, he said. Singhvi said, "256 civilians have died. As I have said on all parametres there is 100, 200, 300 per cent increase. In the case of ceasefire violations, there is a 500 per cent increase."

He said the UPA had brought the State and its people in the mainstream, but the NDA Government converted that mainstream into "midstream". Singhvi also accused the Government of treating Jammu & Kashmir like a "laboratory experiment" and its people like "guinea pigs".

"The Government has betrayed each and every part of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh," the Congress leader said. He alleged that to all the incidents of violence and deteriorating security situation, there was silence on the part of the Government.

Singhvi alleged that mutilations have been on the rise since 2016 and also cited the recent killing of a BSF jawan who was found with his throat slit.

He also slammed the Government's decision to agree to the meeting between External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and her Pakistani counterpart Shah Mahmood Qureshi on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York.

However, later in the evening, India called off the meeting citing the "brutal" killing of the three policemen in Jammu & Kashmir as well as the release of postal stamps glorifying Kashmiri militant Burhan Wani. Singhvi slammed the Government's Pakistan policy as a 'No Pak policy'.

"It is knee-jerk, it is episodic, it is momentary, it is transient, it depends on the mood of the moment. This Government has no moral right to continue. The Government is playing with crown, with the pride of India," he said.

Bitcoin ponzi scheme: ED attaches property worth ₹42.88 cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) attached immovable properties and bank balances worth ₹42.88 crore derived by accused Amit Bhardwaj and his accomplices in Bitcoin Trading Ponzi scheme under the banner of Variabletech Pvt Ltd Singapore.

These attached properties include six offices of Bhardwaj located at Dubai (UAE) and the flats and bank balances of his two marketing agents Hemant Bhope and Pankaj Adlakha.

The ED probe has revealed that Amit Bhardwaj had started a company at Singapore under the banner of Variabletech Pvt Ltd in 2015 and through its web-site www.gainbitcoin.com, he launched a ponzi scheme of Bitcoin trading.

Bitcoin is a virtual crypto-currency which is popular amongst a section of the investors. Under the said scheme, Bhardwaj, through his team of marketing agents, used to lure the gullible people by asking them to buy Bitcoins out of their investments and then invest these Bitcoins in his gainbitcoin scheme by promising high returns.

Through this scheme, Bhardwaj and his marketing agents were able to collect investments worth about 80,000 Bitcoins. However, instead of paying back the promised returns to the investors in Bitcoins, Bhardwaj offered them returns in his own newly launched crypto-currency token MCAP which had nearly no value on crypto-currency exchanges.

A large numbers of investors in Bhardwaj's firm were cheated in this way, the ED said.

The ED initiated investigation under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 resulting in the provisional attachments of immovable properties and bank balances worth ₹42.88 crore.

Cong: Skill India benefitted people in 'BJP ecosystem'

New Delhi: The Congress on Friday demanded a probe into the Narendra Modi-led Government's much vaunted "Skill India", claiming that the scheme was a massive scam benefiting people within the "BJP eco-system". Citing media reports and RTI replies, Congress spokesperson Abhishek Manu Singhvi alleged that the scheme launched in 2015 to "train 40 crore people" was actually a "shortcut to profitable business for the unscrupulous".

"Skill India Mission has turned out to be a massive scam with people within the BJP eco-system, its cronies, middlemen, touts and mafia pocketing the money for the same and listing ghost beneficiaries. "The mission of skilling has evolved into a mechanism of fast billing for BJP's friends. In the name of making youth employable, Modi Government's Skill Development Ministry seems to have created a shortcut to profitable business for the unscrupulous," said Singhvi.

The Congress also targeted Textile Minister Smriti Irani over the alleged scam. "Irani, who leaves no opportunity to exert her larynx on variety of inane issues, is absolutely mum on the rampant corruption under her watch, why?" asked Singhvi. He also cited the Government-appointed Sharda Prasad Committee that had "criticised the Modi Government for setting an unachievable target of skilling 40 crore youth". "The committee had further found that the Modi Government had been missing its targets over the previous two years as far as skilling the workforce was concerned," said Singhvi, demanding a probe into the scam and recovery of "crores of people's money lost due to these irregularities".

IANS

EC to train its staff in sign language for Lok Sabha polls

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

In a move to make upcoming Assembly and Lok Sabha polls accessible for all, the Election Commission (EC) has decided to train all the electoral officers and staff to get adequately trained in sign language and finger spelling alphabet. During the training session, the election officials will be given training in election related sign languages symbols such as 'election', 'voter identity card', 'address', 'polling booth', polling station, political parties, voter slips with photo, voter guides and other things.

Sources in the EC said that the Commission has directed all the electoral officers and staff to get adequately trained in sign language and finger spelling alphabet. The election watchdog has written to all concerned to hire professionals to receive the training and also provided huge posters of sign language and finger spelling alphabet for the differentially abled to be displayed on all election related premises.

According to EC officials, during the training programme session, the election officials will be provided basic knowledge as well as election related sign languages or finger spelling symbols such as 'election', 'voter identity card', 'address', 'polling booth', political parties, electronic voting machines, voter slips with photo, electronic voting machines. Finger-spelling (or

dactylology) is the representation of the letters of a writing system and sometimes numeral systems, using only the hands. These manual alphabets (also known as finger alphabets or hand alphabets), have often been used in hearing impaired education, and have subsequently been adopted as a distinct part of a number of sign languages.

In a communiqués' to Chief Electoral Officers of States and Union Territories, the EC said, " It may be seen that September 23, has been declared as International Day of Sign Languages by United Nations. Accordingly, the sign language training sessions may be conducted on any working day in the week which is also the "International Week of Deaf".

The EC also made it clear that the training should be conducted by sign language expert with a suitable experience in the subject. "The idea of this exercise is to acquaint the officials with the issues that concern and the questions that are frequently by such voters," said officials of EC.

"During the session, the election staff will be sensitised on the needs of the persons with hearing impairment. Under the programme, a polling scenario will be recreated to enable the officials and staff better understand what is required of them while dealing with voters with hearing disabilities," said EC officials.

Earlier, the EC has provided training to chief electoral officials and deputy electoral officials of states and union territories wherein the officers were acquainted with basic as well as election related sign languages symbols on last week. Besides, information related to basic etiquette while conversing with persons with disabilities was also shared with the Officials of the Commission and they were sensitised regarding the needs of hearing impaired persons. The training was conducted with the help of the Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC) to prepare election officials to communicate with voters with hearing disabilities.

For the hearing impaired, the EC had stated that sign language windows will be provided in all audio-visual training and awareness content of the commission. For the visually-challenged electors, the EC had stated that it would be issuing braille voter identity cards.

Muslim devotees carry 'Tazia' during a Muharram procession, near Jama Masjid in New Delhi on Friday PTI

Enliven your soul at Bangalore meditation pyramids

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The much-awaited, Global Festival of Spiritual Sciences (GFFS) 2018 is being held in one of Asia's largest meditation pyramids, Pyramid International Valley, at the outskirts of Bangalore from September 29 to October 4 where you can have a holistic experience of wellness and spirituality to enliven your soul.

What's even more advantageous is that your queries will be answered by some of the most admired and influential masters and healers in the world in the ambience of the nature, making the entire event —11th edition of GFSS 2018— even more spiritual.

This spiritual festival features gurus like Susan Hough, Jasmuheen, Prof Kaya, Dr Lakshmi Newton and Christiane Muller and many others will be speaking on

topics ranging from the 'Physics of Consciousness' to 'Dream Interpretation & Symbology', from 'Indigenous Wisdom of the Native Medicine Wheel' to 'Connecting Ancient Wisdom with Quantum Physics' to set your soul alight.

The festival will also have activities like Tai Chi, yoga and meditation sessions besides dance performances by Zia Nath, a danseuse and whirling expert and a sound Immersion session by Aurelio, a sound therapist and live music performance by Adam Apollo.

To keep children engaged, the GFSS -2018 will have interesting line up of mindful and fun activities such as Kid's yoga, storytelling, organic gardening, pottery and much more.

"It is a celebration of letting out your negativity and impure thoughts. This year with line-up of global speakers, musicians, and yogis one can learn the power of creating one's own unique vibe," said Pinky Daga, CEO, Thriive Art & Soul, a state-of-the-art holistic wellness portal and organiser of the event.

This festival is open to all individuals coming from different walks of life like students, working people and homemakers.

For those who are new to spirituality, the celebratory aspect makes it less intimidating, explains Pinky Daga. "Masters break down esoteric subjects into their basics. So, even those who've never even heard of spirituality are able to experience it and this begins an inner transformation within them," she added.

3 more terrorists shot in Kashmir, toll reaches 5

KHURSHEED WANI ■ SRINAGAR

Three more terrorists of banned Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT) outfit were killed in a prolonged gun-battle in Sumlar forests of north Kashmir's Bandipora district on Friday taking the toll of terrorists to five. Two terrorists were killed in the initial phase of the encounter on Thursday.

A defence spokesman said that weapons and war-like stores were recovered from the encounter site. The encounter was in progress when last reports came in from the area.

The encounter began on Thursday when a joint team of Army, CRPF and Special Operations Group (SOG) of J&K Police launched a massive operation in the Shokhbaba, Sumlar area of Bandipora. Security sources said that the operation was temporarily suspended through the night in view of darkness after killing of two terrorists in the initial phase.

However, the multi layered cordon remained intact and the search operation was resumed on Friday. They said that during the intense search operation the contact with the hiding terrorists was re-established triggering fresh gunfight. During the ensuing encounter, three more terrorists were killed.

Security sources said that the slain are suspected to be LeT cadre.

Meanwhile, normal life was affected in Capital Srinagar as the authorities disallowed Ashura processions in the main city. The authorities imposed restrictions in the jurisdiction of five police stations in old Srinagar. The Friday congregational prayers were not allowed in Grand Mosque of Srinagar even as the authorities kept senior separatist leader Mirwaiz Umar Farooq under detention at his residence.

Swamy accuses Cong of having hand in glove with LTTE

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

In a disclosure which could have repercussions across the political spectrum in the country, senior BJP leader and Rajya Sabha member Subramanian Swamy stated on Friday that Sonia Gandhi, the then Congress president, P Chidambaram, the then Union Home Minister and Velupillai Prabhakaran, the chief of the dreaded Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were hand in glove with each other.

In a message posted on his micro-blogging platform, Swamy said Chidambaram had sent a message to Prabhakaran during the 2009 battle (which saw the annihilation of the LTTE) to await Indian Navy to come to rescue him. "Navy did come but it was Sri Lankan Navy. Prabhakaran walked out of the jungle into the beach thinking it was the Indian Navy and hence was killed," said Swamy in his posting.

He also said that PC (Chidambaram) had sent the message to Prabhakaran at the behest of TDK (the abbreviation usually used by Swamy to describe Sonia Gandhi) during the final days of the May 2009 war.

He said the Indian Navy ship which was expected to reach the theatre of war did not leave Indian shores because of stiff Opposition from highest authorities. "Prabhakaran could not be informed by the Congress leadership about the change of plan," said Swamy.

Swamy's disclosure comes immediately after the visit of Mahinda Rajapaksa, former president of Sri Lanka to New Delhi at the invitation of Swamy. Rajapaksa, who was the President of Sri Lanka during the civil war of May 2009, had told Prashant Tiwari of *The Pioneer* in an exclusive interview that the Governments of India and Sri Lanka had worked in tandem in the 2009 civil war in the island nation which resulted in the annihilation of the dreaded Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, a terrorist organisation.

> THE AIADMK ON FRIDAY DECLARED THAT IT WOULD LAUNCH A MASSIVE AGITATION ALL OVER TAMIL NADU ON SEPTEMBER 25 TO HIGHLIGHT HOW THE DMK HAD BETRAYED TAMILS ALL OVER THE WORLD BECAUSE OF ITS 'COMPLICITY' IN THE CIVIL WAR

"We had a mechanism during the war (against the LTTE in 2009) called the Troika, where three officials from both sides (India and Sri Lanka) were able to discuss any issue, even in the middle of the night," said Rajapaksa. Experts are of the view that the Troika had played a major role in scuttling the move to save Prabhakaran.

According to Rajapaksa, three high officials from Sri Lanka and India were deputed for regular exchange of information to facilitate proper coordination during the operation against the LTTE terrorists during the month of May 2009. "This was known as Troika System and these officials met even in the middle of the night. What we need is a system like this in our economic cooperation also," Rajapaksa had said.

This is in stark contrast to the claims by the DMK, then an important ally of the UPA Governnment led by Manmohan Singh. Karunanidhi, the then Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu had said that the Centre had told him that the operation by the Sri Lankan Government was only to nab LTTE chief Prabhakaran and India had no role in the military operations.

The AIADMK on Friday declared that it would launch a massive agitation all over Tamil Nadu on September 25 to highlight how the DMK had betrayed Tamils all over the world because of its "complicity" in the civil war.

Karunanidhi in the company of his two wives had staged a "two-hour long fast" at Marina Beach questioning the then Union Government's complicity in the civil war in Sri Lanka and had called it off following assurances from the Centre that it had no role in the military operations. The LTTE had used innocent Tamils as human shields to save the LTTE chief Prabhakaran and his henchmen from the Sri Lankan army.

K P Munusamy , the AIADMK strongman told reporters at Chennai on Friday that the disclosure by Rajapaksa proved that the DMK too was engaged in the killing of Tamils in northern Sri Lanka during May 2009. "The Indian Government was offering military assistance to the Sri Lankan Government in the attack against the LTTE. The DMK is responsible for thousands of Tamils who got killed in the war," said Munusamy.

Cong demands probe into mining lease renewals during Parrikar's last term

PTI ■ PANAJI,

The Congress on Friday demanded a probe into renewal of iron ore mining leases during the previous tenure of Goa Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar.

All India Congress Committee (AICC) secretary A Chellakumar said former BJP Chief Minister Laxmikant Parsekar had revealed that renewal of mining leases, termed illegal by the Supreme Court, was done during the tenure of his predecessor Parrikar.

Parrikar had earlier held the chief minister's post from 2012 to 2014 and he was succeeded by Parsekar. Parrikar, currently admitted in New Delhi's AIIMS for a pancreatic ailment, became Goa's chief minister again in March 2017.

A complaint was filed before the Lokayukta alleging the involvement of Parsekar, the then mines secretary Pawan Kumar Sain and current mines and geology department director Prasanna Acharya in the illegal renewal of 88 mining leases, which were quashed by the apex court on February 7, 2018.

"Today, the truth has come out very clearly. It is not the Congress, it is nobody but their own party's ex-chief minister Laxmikant Parsekar (who) had told (the Lokayukta) very clearly that it is not him but Parrikar who is the cause of looting of ₹1,44,000 crore," Chellakumar claimed.

He sought to know why the State Government was silent over the matter and why no charge sheet had been filed.

The Congress leader said a committee should be formed to investigate Parsekar's allegations.

The former Chief Minister, in a written reply to the Lokayukta last month, had said the policy to renew mining leases was framed by his predecessor (Parrikar) on the instructions of the Goa bench of the Bombay High Court.

"Parrikar had begun renewing the leases and during his tenure, eight or nine of them were already renewed," Parsekar had told the anti-corruption watchdog. "When I took over, I followed Parrikar's track," Parsekar, who was the chief minister of Goa from November 2014 till March last year, had said.

Cong in Goa gives notice for removal of Assembly Speaker

PTI ■ PANAJI

The Opposition Congress in Goa on Friday gave a notice for removal of Assembly Speaker Pramod Sawant.

The party, which has 16 members in the 40-member Assembly, also gave a 14-day notice for convening of a session of the House for undertaking the process of removing Sawant from the post.

The move came days after the party staked claim to form an alternate Government, contending that the BJP-led ruling alliance had lost majority in the Assembly.

The Government is headed by Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar who is hospitalised in Delhi for a pancreatic ailment.

The notice for removal of Sawant was given under "Rule 243 of Rules and Procedure and Conduct of Business of the Legislative Assembly of Goa, read with Article 179C of the Constitution of India," Leader of Opposition Chandrakant Kavlekar said.

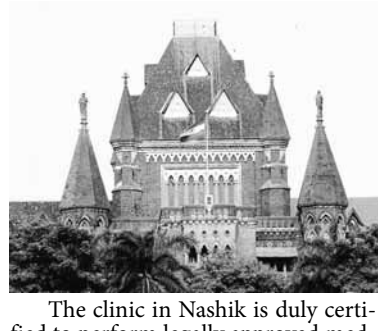
Rule 243 States provision for moving a resolution to ask for permission of the House to discuss about impeachment of the Speaker.

Kavlekar, however, refused to specify on what grounds it wants Sawant to be removed as the Speaker, saying the reasons will be spelt out on the floor of the House.

The legislators said they propose to move the motion to remove Sawant from the office of Speaker of Legislative Assembly at the end of 14 days' notice period.

Bombay HC allows abortion in 30th week as foetus found to have birth defect

PTI ■ MUMBAI



The Bombay High Court on Friday allowed a 33-year-old woman, who is in her 30th week of pregnancy, to undergo an abortion as a medical test had revealed that the foetus has a developmental birth defect.

A division bench of justices A S Oka and A S Gadkari also granted the woman's request to undergo the abortion at a private clinic in Nashik.

On the High Court's direction, doctors at the Government-run J J Hospital here had examined her and approved the abortion at such a late stage, considering the condition of the foetus.

However, the Government had opposed her request to undergo abortion at the Nashik clinic.

She should be directed to undergo abortion at a Government hospital as the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act mandates that the procedure must be performed only at Government hospitals or private hospitals recognised for this purpose by the Government, it said.

In Maharashtra, private clinics and hospitals which perform MTP are required to be certified by civic bodies.

The clinic in Nashik is duly certified to perform legally approved medical termination of pregnancy.

However, the State Government is yet to complete the process of registering and approving private clinics for carrying out abortions in cases where the pregnancy has exceeded 20 weeks, the Government lawyer said.

Advocate Kuldeep Nikam, the woman's lawyer, said she should be allowed to undergo the procedure at the Nashik clinic as the doctors there knew her case history well.

The High Court acceded to the request, saying that she should not be penalised because the State had failed to complete registration of clinics.

The petition said that the woman already has a five-year-old son diagnosed with Down's Syndrome.

She and her husband approached the high court last week seeking permission for abortion, saying that they were already caring for a specially-abled child, and forcing them to continue with the present pregnancy would cause them much physical and emotional trauma.

Giving birth to another child with special needs would impose a financial burden on them as the woman is a housewife and the husband runs a small business, the petition said.

On September 11, the woman's doctor suggested that considering her first child's condition, she should undergo a scan to check if the present foetus had abnormalities.

The scan revealed that the foetus has "Schizencephaly", a rare developmental birth defect characterised by abnormal slits or clefts in the brain.

The condition causes developmental delays. It can also cause seizures and problems with brain-spinal cord communication, the petition said.

The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act permits abortions after 20 weeks only if continuation of the pregnancy poses a threat to the child's or the mother's life.

Six die due to electrocution in Assam village

PNS ■ GUWAHATI

Six persons, including minor children, were electrocuted to death at a village under Rupohi police station in Assam's Nagaon district on Friday even as Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal ordered an inquiry into the tragic incident.

The incident took place at Uttar Khatowal village in Nagaon district when six persons, including children, got down to a fishery to fish and got electrocuted. "A faulty electric high voltage wire got snapped and reportedly electrocuted the villages fishery. The locals intimated this to the local line man of the electricity board. The electricity was cut off initially and the six people got down to the fishery. However, after sometime, all the six persons died due to electrocution," said the police.

Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal ordered an inquiry into the electrocution incident which reportedly killed six people at Rupohihat Legislative Assembly Constituency at Uttar Khatowal village in Nagaon district.

The Chief Minister have asked Additional Chief Secretary and Chairman APDCL Jishnu Barua to enquire into the incident. "The inquiry will primarily be encompassing within its ambit the circumstances leading to the electrocution and submit the report to the government immediately," a statement issued by the Chief Minister's office said.

Meanwhile, the irate mob attacked and vandalized the house of local line man holding him responsible for the incident.

SDRF personnel carry out the rescue operation after six fishermen were electrocuted to death and five fishermen sustained injuries following the fall of a high tension live electric wire into a pond in Nagaon district of Assam on Friday PTI

MUZAFFARPUR SHELTER HOME RAPE CASE

Arrest orders issued against former Bihar Min's husband

PNS ■ PATNA

The Begusarai police is all set to arrest former Social Welfare Minister Manju Verma's husband Chandrashekhar Verma in connection with a case filed against him with Cheria Bariarpur police station last month for possessing illegal arms and ammunitions. An order to arrest him was issued by Begusarai Police Superintendent on Friday.

The SP moved following a directive by the Supreme Court which found the case against Verma serious and a division Bench directed the police to interrogate him.

The arms and ammunitions had been recovered during a search in the residential premises of the couple whose name figured in the infamous Muzaffarpur shelter home rape case. The Minister had to resign when the name of her husband cropped up and the CDR of his phone revealed that he was in constant touch with rape case main accused Brajesh Thakur who was running the shelter home. It was also alleged that Verma had been visiting the shelter home and spending time there.

Manju Verma had stoutly denied the allegations and claimed that her husband visited the shelter home only once that too along with her when she went there in her capacity as social welfare minister.

The sensational case is being investigated by the CBI and now the apex court has decided to monitor it. The Supreme Court also took notice of the firing in remand home at Purnea in which two people died. The bench of Justice Madan B Lokur and Justice Deepak Gupta expressed surprise as to how weapon reached the remand home.

Prez's rule looms large as uncertainity surfaces in K'taka

KESTUR VASUKI ■ BENGALURU

As the political uncertainty added to infighting and has hit the fragile coalition in Karnataka, political pundits feel the President's Rule looms large over the State. The war of words between Chief Minister HD Kumaraswamy, who is struggling to keep the coalition intact, and BJP chief BS Yeddyurappa for the last few days has reached a peak leading to fluid political situation.

In a fit of anger Kumaraswamy had asked the people to revolt (dange) against the BJP for trying to topple his Government but later he said his statement was misquoted. Yeddyurappa too charged JD(S) and Kumaraswamy as commission agents.

The BJP termed the use of the word 'revolt' as "seditious" and appealed to Governor Vajubhai Vala to initiate action against the CM. Soon after the CM's statement, there was a snap protest by a few Congress workers at the residence of BJP state president BS Yeddyurappa. The saffron party has also threatened to take legal action against Kumaraswamy.

In a major development on Friday the JDs has called a legislature party meeting at Hassan on Saturday indicates the political fluidity in the state. Chief Minister who looks hassled went to former chief minister Siddaramaiah to discuss the political situation. The customary cabinet meeting on Thursday according to sources too discussed political situation arising out of operation Lotus threat by the BJP which plans to poach JDs and Congress MLAs. According to sources in the BJP is planning to take some MLAs to resort in Pune or Mumbai. The BJP in the state has also authorised Yeddyurappa to take suitable action if need be to form the government.

The BJP accused chief minister of sedition and sought action over his remark asking people to rise in revolt against BJP for its alleged attempt to destabilise the collation government. The party has also officially lodged a complaint with DGP and said the chief minister has violated section 124(A) and other sections of IPC. Party workers Holding placards and raising slogans against JDs supremo Devegowda and his sons, including Kumaraswamy, protested in Bengaluru.

BJP leader Shobha Karndlaje said the person who was supposed to protect the Constitution and citizens of the country was "provoking" people. Another BJP MP Prahlad Joshi termed the statement as the "most irresponsible and unpardonable offence" and said the chief minister's choice of words displayed his state of mind.

Upset over the alleged toppling game of the BJP, an angry Kumaraswamy had on Thursday warned BJP to be restrained in its speech about Gowda and his family, saying he can even ask people to rise in revolt against it if it continued to disturb Congress-Janata Dal-Secular coalition government headed by him.

Launching a no-holds-barred attack on state BJP chief B S Yeddyurappa, Kumaraswamy had said: "If you dig too much (into our affairs), then we too have many things at our disposal." "Government is in our hand. Don't I have the authority to do whatever I can? I caution him to be careful," he added.

Chief Minister HD Kumaraswamy on Thursday reminded Yeddyurappa on the denotification case. "Do not instigate me to lose my patience. I have my government and can take extreme decision," he said, warning the BJP top leader to stay away from making wild allegations against members of his family and stop attempting to topple the coalition government.

In another development the JDs legislatures have complained to the speaker about BJP's operation lotus and asked the speaker to protect the MLAs from horse trading and poaching.

Disgruntled TRS leader Ramesh Rathod joins Cong

OMER FAROOQ ■ HYDERABAD

In a setback to Telangana Rashtra Samiti, a senior party leader and former MP Ramesh Rathod has quit the party and joined the main Opposition Congress party.

Rathod was angry on not getting the Assembly election ticket from his home constituency Khanapur in Nirmal district.

Ramesh along with his wife Suman joined the Congress party in Hyderabad in presence of AICC secretary RC Kuntia.

Speculations were rife for quite some time that Rathode was on his way out from TRS after his supporters had organized a big protest demonstration in Khanapur and Rathod issued warning to the TRS leader. A tribal leader Rathod and his family was quite influential in the area.

With this he has completed the round of joining all the three major parties in the state. He started his career with the Telugu Desam party where starting from the grass root he worked his up to become party's politburo and was elected to Lok Sabha from Adilabad.

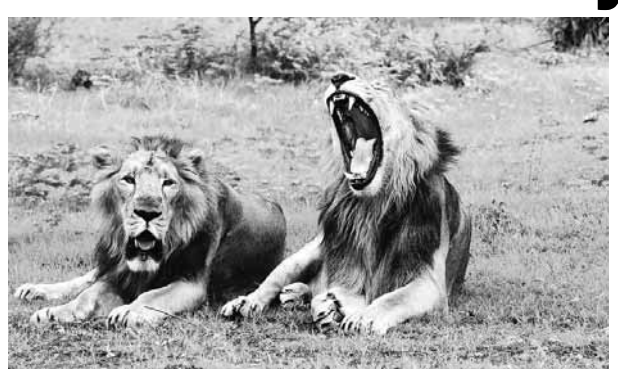
But after his defeat in the last elections he joined the ruling TRS along with another senior TDP leader Tummala Nageshwara Rao and was working hard to cultivate the constituency. However in the list of TRS candidates announced by the Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao he failed to find a place and the ticket was given to Rekha Naik.

Rathod was confident that on Congress ticket will emerge victorious from his constituency and the party will come to power in the next elections.

All big cats died naturally: Guj forest dept

Not a single death due to viral infection

NAYAN DAVE ■ GANDHINAGAR



Amid lots of hue and cry over the deaths of 11 lions in the Gir Forest — the last abode of Asiatic Lions situated in western Gujarat, the State forest department claimed that the deaths of big cats were natural and not a single death occurred due to viral infection or other disease.

Many eye-brows have been raised following deaths of lions in Dalkhania and Jashadhar ranges situated in eastern part of Gir Forest. During 12th to 19th September as many as 11 lions died due to infighting and territorial war, confirms GK Sinha, Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (PCCF) and Head of Forest Force in Gujarat.

Reasons including aging, disease, injury, weakness and infighting for capturing territory are considered as natural in the case of lion's death. Hence the State forest department is considering these deaths of Asiatic Lions as natural. Despite the fact, 11 deaths within a span of eight days would be alarming for the state forest department considering that International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) listed the Asiatic Lions (Panthera leo persica) as endangered due to its small numbers and area of occupancy.

"Basically lion is a territorial animal and stay within its pride. As a result of it whenever the leader of a pride becomes weak, mostly due to aging, strong lions from neighbouring prides try to take his place and attack on the weak lion and his progenies. In such attacks, stronger lion not only kills the weaker one but his cubs also," said the PCCF.

Of the 11 lions died due to territorial war, there were six cubs, two lionesses and three matured lions. As on Friday autopsy reports of eight lions have come and prima facie the experts are of the opinion that all eight big cats died of infighting. Post Mortem reports of remaining three Asiatic Lions are awaited, but mostly the cause of the death likely to be the same.

With a view to curb more deaths of lions due to infighting, the State forest department has shifted five mature lions from Dalkhania and Jashadhar ranges to other places in Gir forest. According to Sinha, deaths of lions due to territorial war were considered as natural phenomena and such incidences are occurring time to time. However, such high death toll within a short span due to infighting was alarming, he adds.

Generally, in one lion's territory up to three lionesses reside and after mating season each lioness would give birth up to four cubs. Gestation period of lioness is around 110 days and in normal circumstances lioness become pregnant after an interval of 20 to 24 months. Of the total newly born lion cubs, only 25 to 30 per cent reach to maturity, while 70 to 75 per cent die due to some or other natural and unnatural reasons.

As per the last census of Asiatic Lions in the eight districts of Saurashtra region, 523 big cats were reported that including 109 mature male, 201 female, 73 sub-adults and 14o cubs (below one year). On and average every year 210 lion cubs born in Gujarat and of these nearly 140 die by the time they reach up to the age of three years. Hardly 70 of them are surviving and reach to maturity. During the year 2017-18 as many as 69 lions died in Gujarat. Of these 51 died due to natural reasons and 18 due to unnatural reasons including accidents, electrocution and other causes.

2 students die in firing; BJP wants CBI probe

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Opposition parties, including the Left and the BJP, staged road blockades in various parts of North Bengal after two students at Islampur in North Dinajpur district died of bullet injuries following clashes with the police.

The students of Daribhit High School in Islampur bordering Bihar were allegedly protesting against the appointment of Urdu and Sanskrit teachers keeping Bengali, History and other departments vacant.

Following clashes on Thursday a number of people including students and some policemen sustained bullet and other injuries, police said. Out of them one student died on Thursday and the other died at Siliguri on Friday leading to massive protest by the locals who said the police had fired at the protesting students.

However district SP Punit Kumar said the police had not fired at the crowd. "There was a skirmish and the police had to use force to control the crowd but there was no firing as per reports coming now." He however said the autopsy reports would give a clear picture as to what led to the deaths.

The SP said some people including "some BJP supporters have been arrested for inciting the crowd."

Meanwhile at least 10 other people were admitted to various hospitals and were undergoing treatment.

While the BJP immediately demanded a CBI investigation into the case and the Left asked for a judicial inquiry from Kolkata Education Minister Partho Chatterjee blamed the right wing parties for creating trouble in the region.

"We know who are creating trouble there. There are reports that the BJP is involved. But we can assure you that no one will be spared and strict action will be taken against those who are responsible," he said adding the district inspector of schools have been suspended for failing to handle the situation.

Congress changes Bengal PCC chief to please Didi?

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

In a move loaded with positive vibes for Mamata Banerjee, the Congress on Friday made some sudden and crucial changes in the Pradesh Congress brass by removing State party president Adhir Chowdhury — a proclaimed anti-Mamata face — and bringing in his place a more accommodative Somen Mitra a septuagenarian leader.

Chowdhury has been made the chairman of the election (campaign) committee while other three senior leaders: AH Khan Chowdhury, a South Malda MP, Shankar Malakar and Deepa Dasmunshi have been made the acting vice presidents of the State unit, sources said.

There was no word from Chowdhury who has been in favour of a Left-Congress, rather than Congress-TMC alliance in the 2019 general elections as — "Mamata Banerjee has ruined our party organisation after we allied with her by engineering defections with blatant use of money and muscle power."

Mitra was the PCC president in 1998. Following serious differences with him Banerjee the then Youth Congress split the party to form her own Trinamool Congress. Since then much water had flowed down the Hooghly with Mitra himself joining the TMC in 2009, winning from the Diamond Harbour MP constituency before quitting that party to rejoin the Congress again.

Chowdhury has earlier went on record saying that there would be no alliance with the Trinamool Congress till he was at the helm.

When asked to comment on whether he too would pursue the same anti-Trinamool policy in respect of electoral alliances, Mitra said he was "none to take a decision on the issue. It is for the high command to take a decision on alliances. When they will ask my opinion about the issue I will give it."

On what his opinion was regarding the longevity of a Congress-TMC alliance if it really became a reality, he said "as of now if we ally with the TMC then definitely we will get some seats from Bengal. But in the long run we will lose organizationally as has been seen through the past experiences when TMC has engineered defections in the Congress."

Mecca Masjid blast case judge to join BJP

MIM, Congress raise red flag

OMER FAROOQ ■ HYDERABAD

A judge who had acquitted all the accused belonging to Hindu extremist groups in Mecca Masjid bomb blast case earlier this year has decided to join the BJP.

In a development, which has created a stir in political and legal circles in Hyderabad former IVth Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge K Ravinder Reddy visited the BJP state office and met the senior party leader and former Union Minister Bandaru Dattatreya.

Party sources said that he had come to the office with the plans of formally joining the party but was asked by the party leaders to wait for sometime.

In his judgment of April 19 he had acquitted all the five accused belonging to Hindu groups including Swami Aseemanand alias Nabha Kumar Sircar, a RSS member citing lack of sufficient proof and submitted his resignation soon after pronouncing the verdict.

Nine people were killed when a bomb exploded in the court yard of Mecca Masjid soon after Friday congregation. Later the CBI and the National Investigation Agency had arrested members of various Hindu groups including RSS, Lokesh Sharma and Devender Gupta.

Ravinder Reddy told the media that he had come to the BJP office to join the party on the invitation of the BJP leaders. "I had come after meeting the BJP President Amit Shah in Hyderabad last week and was also in touch with Bandaru Dattatreya. I had come on their invitation to join the party", he said.

Sources in the state BJP office said that no date was fixed for his formal joining and Dattatreya asked him to wait till a formal communication from the central leadership. Sources said that there was a need for some more discussions with in the party and all the state leaders including state president K Lakshman need to be taken into confidence.

Defending his decision to join the BJP, Ravinder Reddy said, "BJP is a patriotic party free of any dynastic culture. The party is committed to check anti national elements and to work for the national integration", he said. Ravinder Reddy said that he wants to contest the coming Assembly elections preferably from his home district Karimnagar or Medak.

When asked whether his move will not caste aspersions and raise doubts about his judgment acquitting the accused in the Mecca Masjid blast case, he said, "This has nothing to do with the judgment. I discharged my duties as a judge with integrity and honesty and delivered the judgment. I am now retired from service to serve the country and the people".

Though Ravinder Reddy sought to rule out the link between the Mecca Masjid blast case judgment and his decision to join BJP, there was a criticism from different quarters.

Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen president and MP Asaduddin Owaisi said, "We knew where he was going. Now he will be rewarded by the BJP leadership".

Referring to the retired judge's decision to contest the coming assembly elections, he said, "I am sure Aseemanand and his friends will campaign for him and I hope the retired judge will lose his deposit".

Civil Liberties Monitoring committee (CLMC) has demanded the Supreme Court and the High Court to take notice of the strange case of judge Ravinder Reddy and order a fresh hearing of the Mecca Masjid blast case.

Committee general secretary Lateef Mohammed Khan said that during the hearing of the case itself suspicions were expressed that the judge was not of clear mind. "Now this has been vindicated by his decision to join BJP". He alleged that there was a total collusion between the public prosecutor who was a BJP leader and investigators and under pressure from Hindutva organisations the accused were saved in a pre planned Mannar. "This raises a serious question of influence of Hindutva organisations on the lower courts and the Higher courts should take note of it and take action against such judges".

CONG CRIES CONSPIRACY

Mohammed Ali Shabbir, leader of Opposition Congress in Telangana Legislative Council said that the judge joining the BJP exposes the deep conspiracy behind the acquittal of the accused of Mecca Masjid case. "There was a deep nexus behind it. NIA was influenced by the BJP. The prosecutor belonged to the BJP and now the judge after his retirement is joining BJP. This clearly shows that how even the courts are being controlled and influenced. The doors of justice were also being closed for the people". He questioned how the accused could be acquitted even after giving confession to a judge. "I hold the TRS government in the state also responsible. They are in power. Why they did not challenge the lower court judgment in the High Court", he asked.

KERALA NUN RAPE CASE

Bishop Franco Mulakkal held

PTI ■ KOCHI

Bishop Franco Mulakkal, a senior member of the Roman Catholic clergy in India, was arrested on Friday night amid mounting public outrage over allegations of repeatedly raping and sexually assaulting a nun, police said.

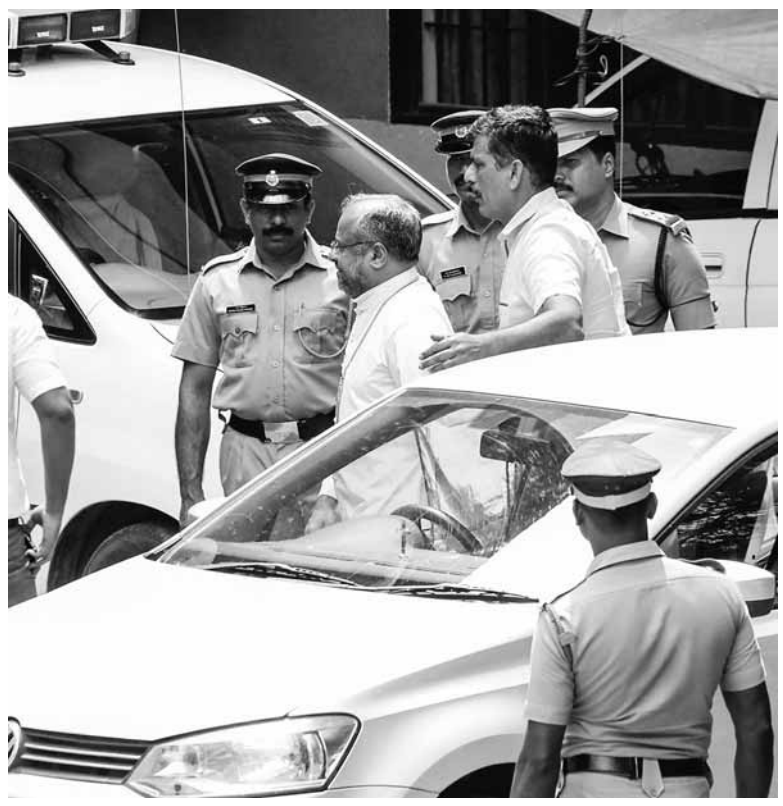
The 54-year old Mulakkal was arrested by Kerala police after intense interrogation here over the last three days.

The development came a day after the Vatican relieved him "temporarily" of all pastoral responsibilities as the bishop of the Jalandhar diocese of the Missionaries of Jesus congregation to which the alleged victim also belongs.

Bishop Mulakkal had been arrested at 8 p and taken for medical examination, Kottayam district police chief Hari Sankar told reporters.

He would be produced in a magistrate court in Pala in Kottayam district tomorrow, Inspector General of Police (Kochi Range) Vijay Sakhare told PTI.

The nun had accused the clergyman of repeatedly raping and having unnatural sex with her between 2014 and 2016, a charge denied by him.



Rape accused Bishop Franco Mulakkal arrives for questioning by the special investigation team of the Kerala police in Thrippunithura on Friday PTI

Kerala CM asks US Keralites to contribute liberally to rebuild State

PTI ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan Friday urged Malayalees in the U.S.A to contribute liberally to rebuild the flood-hit state and said he hoped Rs 150 crore would be raised from them.

Vijayan made the appeal at his first public function in New York early Friday after completion of his medical treatment.

The Chief Minister, who had left for the U.S for medical treatment at Mayo Clinic on September 2, is expected to be back in Kerala on September 24.

Addressing the gathering of Keralites, Vijayan said everyone should cooperate for revamping the state, which had last month witnessed the worst deluge of the century.

He said Keralites willing to contribute should become members of the global salary challenge, which envisages each participant contributing a month's salary for the state.

State finance minister Thomas Isaac will visit the U.S next month to collect the financial assistance, he said.

"Only through your cooperation can a new Kerala be built", he said, adding his government was expecting a contribution of Es 150 crore from the malayalees in US.

At least 493 people had died in the rains and floods during the South West Monsoon.

Chandrababu asked to appear before Maha court on Oct 16 in 2010 case

OMER FAROOQ ■ HYDERABAD

A court in Maharashtra has rejected a petition to recall a non bailable warrant issued against the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and asked him to appear in the court on October 16.

Dharmabad court in Nanded had issued the warrant against Naidu and 16 other leaders of Telugu Desam party in connection with a 2010 case of protest against Maharashtra's irrigation project Babili. They were asked to appear before the court today but only three of them including a former MLA Gangula Kamlakar today appeared. The court granted them bail.

Naidu's counsel G Subba Rao moved a petition to recall the warrant but the judge rejected it and issued a fresh warrant ordering all the accused to appear before him on October 16. On the plea of the counsel that Naidu was not in a position to come judge remarked, "nobody is above law. Be it a Chief Minister or anybody else everybody has to abide by he court order. It is not possible to give special treatment to anybody".

Later the counsel sought some more time. Chandrababu Naidu after consulting the advocate general D Srinivas and other officials had decided not to appear in Maharashtra court and sent a lawyer from Hyderabad to represent him.

Chandrababu Naidu and several leaders of his party were arrested by Maharashtra police on border when they tried to enter the state to protest against Babili project. Naidu was then the lease of Opposition in United AP Assembly.

Choksi moves CBI court to get NBW cancelled

Cites threat to life

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Fugitive jeweller Mehul Choksi, a co-accused in the Punjab National Bank fraud case, on Friday moved the special CBI court here for cancellation of a non-bailable warrant against him claiming he has reasons to believe that his return to India might endanger his life.

On May 22 this year, after taking cognisance of the second charge sheet filed in the ₹12,636-crore PNB fraud case by the CBI, the special court had issued the NBW against Choksi.

Choksi, in an application filed Friday through his lawyer Sanjay Abbott, said his apprehensions over his safety are based upon what transpired during a recent television debate on the fraud.

He told the court that he was "shocked" to watch a debate on a national television news channel where two callers phoned in to share their opinion on the fraud.

The callers, Choksi claimed in the plea, "suggested that a special team be formed to track Mehul Choksi down and shoot him to death once he was brought back to India".

Choksi claimed that the callers said that such treatment would send out a strong message to society and prevent further cases of frauds and fiscal scams.

The fugitive jeweller also claimed that the news anchor concerned and the panelists did not object to the comments made by the caller. Instead, the anchor even laughed at the comments and the same makes it apparent that the anchor and the panelists too "tacitly" agreed with what the callers suggested, Choksi said in the plea.

"From the above two calls made by the callers and the tacit approval given to the same by the news anchor and the panelists, it is clear that the averments made by the applicant (Choksi) in the application filed before this court regarding a threat to his life and the fear of mob lynching is vindicated," the application read.

Choksi also sent some audio and video CDs claiming that they contained the cited footage from the news channel debate.

He has urged the court to make his submission a part of the court records and, in light of the same, to cancel the NBW issued against him.

The special court has now directed the Central Bureau of Investigation to file its reply to the application by October 3 this year, which is the next date of hearing in the case.

This is the second such application filed by Choksi before the special court, claiming a threat to his life and seeking that the NBW be cancelled.

In June this year, he had filed a plea claiming that he had been advised bed rest on account of his ill health following a "heart operation," and he feared that once in India, the probe agencies would not help him secure the kind of medical treatment and supervision he required.

At that time, he had also said that there existed a "trend of mob lynching" in the country presently, and he feared that if he returned to India, he might become a victim of such lynching.

The CBI charge sheet named Choksi, the managing director of Gitanjali group, former PNB MD and CEO Usha Ananthasubramanian, then PNB executive directors Brahmaji Rao and Sanjiv Sharan, and PNB deputy manager Gokulnath Shetty, among others as key accused in the case.

While urging the court to issue the NBW, the CBI had argued that its issuance would allow the probe agency to approach the Interpol for issuing a Red Corner Notice against Choksi, Nirav Modi and some other persons accused in the case.

PM Modi to inaugurate Sikkim Airport on Sep 24

PTI ■ GANGTOK

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Pakyong Airport in Sikkim on September 24, officials said on Friday.

The greenfield airport, located 30 km from here, will put Sikkim on the aviation map of the country.

The Prime Minister will address a public meeting at St Xavier's School ground in Pakyong after inaugurating the state's first airport, the officials said. The Prime Minister is scheduled to arrive at the Bagdogra airport at 4.10 pm on September 23 after which he will board an helicopter from there to fly to Gangtok, the officials said.

The Prime Minister will be received by the Governor of Sikkim Ganga Prasad and state Chief Minister Pawan Kumar Chamling after his arrival in the state, the officials said.

He will stay at Raj Bhawan on September 23 and will inaugurate the Pakyong airport the next day.

The PM's programme at the airport will begin at around 10 am on September 24, a State Government official said Friday, adding, that the PM will then address the people at 10.30 am at the St Xavier's School ground.

From there he will return to the Pakyong airport, board a chopper and fly to Bagdogra.

The Pakyong airport was approved by the Centre in 2008 and was constructed at an estimated cost of ₹350 crore.

The project is being billed as an engineering marvel — it has been built at an height of 4,500 feet in an inhospitable terrain.

Once commissioned, it will be the 100th functional airport in the country.

As on date, Sikkim is the only state in the country without a functional airport.

Low-cost airline SpiceJet has been granted permission to fly to Pakyong from Kolkata under the Civil Aviation Ministry's regional connectivity scheme.

SpiceJet has already conducted a dry run at the airport with one its Bombardier Dash 8-Q400 aircraft successfully landing there on March 5.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Mayawati's move

BSP is only doing what most hard-nosed regional parties will do to prepare for 2019; Congress' woes will mount

It has been a political pity-inducing sight to see Congress leaders floundering over the past 24 hours. First, as they tried to make sense of BSP leader Mayawati's lethal blow to the prospects of a tie-up with them in the Hindi belt by going ahead and unilaterally announcing a pre-poll alliance with former Congressman Ajit Jogi's regional outfit Janata Congress in Chhattisgarh for the Assembly polls due in the State, while simultaneously announcing candidates for 22 Assembly seats in poll-bound Madhya Pradesh too even as the grand old party thought it was in discussions with the BSP supremo on seat-sharing. Subsequently, the Congress veterans' even more pathetic attempts to explain her move as only for State Assembly polls which would not impact plans for a nationwide grand Opposition alliance or *mahagathbandhan* for the Lok Sabha poll in 2019. Really. The penny seems still not to have dropped for the Congress. Indian politics is ruthless, regional parties will sing secularism in one voice with the Congress only till they feel it has the capacity to deliver minority votes and no regional leader of stature will agree to work under the Congress or even with it unless it gets its own house, which is support base, in order. A look at the line-up regional parties willing and/or eager to do business with the Congress and the issue will clarify itself — the only States where the regional parties are willing to take the Congress along is where it has been reduced to a rump and polls five to eight per cent of the vote which could prove very useful in pipping the BJP to the post. Wherever the Congress is the BJP's principal opponent, regional forces know an alliance with the Congress could mean risking their support base getting appropriated by the grand old party as it attempts to build its social coalition of yore.

So, in Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan the BSP is playing hardball, in Punjab, Delhi and Goa, ditto AAP. In Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, on the other hand, where regional parties are the main players and the Congress a bit player, Akhilesh Yadav, Lalu Prasad, Mamata Banerjee and MK Stalin are more accommodative because the single-digit vote share of the Congress in these States does not threaten them; in fact, it could make the difference between scraping through and winning big. Of course, all political understanding is not the preserve of editorial writers and the Congress has enough senior leaders who are well aware of this reality. Some of them have even spoken of resurrecting the long-forgotten Panchmarhi Resolution which spoke of rebuilding the Congress from the ground up, not desperately seeking allies and re-establishing itself as the second pole of national politics given the BJP has already firmly occupied the other pole. But such is the fascination of the current Congress leadership with the heavy on theory light on results Leftist cabal to which it seems to have outsourced its ideological orientation, which is then used to establish the party's 'political line', that the portents for the party seem very ominous indeed. It is hurtling down the same path to irrelevance that the Communists forged for themselves post-Independence when they were seen as the second force in Indian politics to a situation today where their electoral glories are confined to winning JNU students' union polls. The brutal political reality is that the BJP in its current avatar seems to have so spooked Congressmen and Congresswomen that they are behaving like lemmings rushing en masse to the sea.

50 WORD EDIT Audit airlines

Increasing incidents of Indian aircraft running into trouble must ring alarm bells. While flights making emergency landings for a variety of reasons have become a recurring phenomenon, the most recent incident wherein an air pressure mix-up led to Jet Airways passengers' being left bleeding and panic-stricken must prompt a complete audit of all airlines safety practices.

For gender equity

Centre's ordinance criminalising triple *talaq,* whatever its politics, is a step towards achieving gender equality

The Union Government's use of the Ordinance route to criminalise instant triple *talaq* was on expected lines. It was due to the inability of the Rajya Sabha to legislate business, which prevented it from taking up the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill thanks to ruckus in the House and a lack of consensus on the issue, that the Modi Government was compelled to fulfil its promise to Muslim women to bring end to the practice of Muslim men granting instant triple *talaq* to their wives. Neither, however, was opposition to the Ordinance unexpected. As has been the norm, helming the anti-ordinance agitation were Muslim clerics and various Opposition parties who flayed the move for a clutch of reasons. While some accused the Government of "intervening in personal laws" others termed the Ordinance as 'harsh on Muslim women instead of providing them succour'. The Congress smelt political conspiracy and accused the Government of treating the matter more as a "political football" than a matter of justice to Muslim women. But the elephant in the room, as it were, is that the objective behind the move, which is to bring about gender equity, was elided by all.

As regards the argument of Muslim clerics, the problem is that the issue is no longer a matter of 'personal law' or under the aegis of Muslim Personal Law because the Supreme Court had in a majority verdict ruled that instant triple *talaq* is illegal, unconstitutional and not an integral part of the religion of Islam. Further, the apex had asked the Government to bring forth legislation against talaq-e-biddat. The Government was duty-bound to do so, and it did. When opposition in the Upper House stalled the Bill, it resorted to the proclamation of an ordinance. Cut and dried, that is the correct position. As for the objections about the penal provisions being harsh towards Muslim women, as in they would be left uncared for financially while their 'husbands' who have divorced them via triple *talaq* languish in jail, several provisions of the Ordinance have been amended to take care of women in such a situation given the patriarchal structure of Indian Muslim society. To cite an example, provision has been made for providing a sustenance allowance to a victim of illegal triple talaq. Also, only the woman herself or her close blood relatives can file a case thus eliminating the possibility of interference from other parties. The Ordinance further provides for bail to the husband but only after hearing the wife. Besides, opportunities for reconciliation too are kept open provided the woman wants it. This issue goes beyond the boundaries of politics. Gender justice must always trump claimed religious practice. That is the whole point of individual rights and freedoms in the Constitution that assure each individual citizen of India the right not be discriminated against.

Everybody loves a good fascist

An inquiry into the genesis of fascism is perhaps appropriate given the penchant of the Indian political class to use its adjective form as a pejorative for all seasons against opponents without understanding its meaning

PRAFULL GORADIA

In the wake of the arrest of five urban Naxals by the Pune police, Congress chief Rahul Gandhi accused the BJP-led Government of being fascist. This writer doubts if the Congress president knows what fascism means; although he is educated and certainly not an 'anpadh gawar' to use his party leader Sanjay Nirupam's phrase for the Prime Minister.

The expression fascist as a condemnation was first used frequently in Indira Gandhi's time. Her grandson is merely following the tradition set by her. Surely, other Congress leaders know that fascism is not a synonym for despotism though fascists can be despotic and despots fascists. The first is a particular ideology while the latter is a brutal autocracy which was equally a feature of Stalinism exterminating the bourgeois and the kulaks; Nazism mass murdering Jews and white American settlers' brutal treatment of Native Indians.

Fascism is class collaboration as communism is class conflict and capitalism is (accused of) class exploitation. Western Europe was deeply concerned by the Russian revolution of 1917 led by Vladimir Ilych Lenin and felt threatened. One of the reactions was the innovation of a new contrarian ideology, namely, of class collaboration, in order to keep class conflict from taking over society.

Some years ago in the US, there was a celebration to commemorate Swami Vivekananda's birth anniversary. That was an occasion when the secular fundamentalists were provoked to call the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Vishva Hindu Parishad, fascists. A meeting presided over by well-known journalist late Kuldip Nayar was held to dissuade the distinguished Sonal Mansingh from going to Washington to give a dance performance in connection with the celebration. Because, in the view of those at the meeting, the organisers of the commemoration were fascist. What they did not realise was that the word was not the political abuse that they thought it was. Benito Mussolini initiated the fascist movement in March 1919 at Milan and founded the party called Partito Nazional Fascista in November 1921. It ruled Italy for two decades. To recapitulate what fascism was,

the word "fascio" means a bundle or a bunch implying unity. To be effective, the answer had to be something that would prove attractive to the peasants, the workers as well as to their unions. This was discovered in "class collaboration" as represented by fascism.

Prof Alfredo Rocco, Minister of Justice in the Mussolini Cabinet, set forth the gist of this new ideology in the course of a speech at Perugia in 1925. According to him, society does not exist for the individual but the individual for the society. Economic progress is a social interest and all classes of people should combine or collaborate to maximise production. The interests of the employers and the employed are identical. To ensure that this is practiced, there must be a system of state discipline over class conflicts. Strikes and lockouts alike were held to be illegal and punishable by heavy fines, and in certain cases, imprisonment. Wherever possible, the employers and workers in each industry, trade or profession, were organised together in a syndicated association. Where it was not possible to form such syndicates, the unions and the employers' associations remained separate but combined to form guilds to coordinate and ensure cordiality. If collective bargaining could not end satisfactorily, disputes were referred to law courts assisted by experts. This is how class collaboration was conceptualised by the Fascist Party in Italy.

In practice, the economy was toned up by rearmament and public works. Soldiers were recruited in large numbers and so were workers in factories to produce arms. This would bring profits to the bourgeoisie who could then pay the proletariat well. Urban prosperity would increase demand for agricultural produce. What was left of the under-employed youth was absorbed by the armed forces. The promise to the whole nation was foreign conquests which would bring economic surpluses. The Albanian adventure and the invasion of Abyssinia were two efforts to fulfil this promise until, of course, World War II broke out. Another example of the practice of fascism or class collaboration, albeit on a much more limited scale, was in Spain under Gen Francisco Franco. Neither the Italian nor the Spanish experience is widely known in great detail in India. What the members of the Indian intelligentsia are familiar with, however, are the doings of Adolf Hitler and his Nazi Party. It was founded by Hitler and his six comrades in Munich in 1920. The economic deprivation in Germany was much greater than witnessed in Italy. The country paid an exorbitant price for its defeat in World War I. Runaway inflation as well as the world depression ignited by a crash in share prices on Wall Street in New York in 1929 made matters unbearable for Germany. It was widely believed that the initial attraction of the German people towards Hitler and his programme of class collaboration was more or less were on the lines of Mussolini's Italy although on a far grander scale to save the economy and bring prosperity which Germany experienced in some measure in the 1930s before the Nazi racist, authoritarian ideology took over.

Japan is another example of a fascist experiment. With the restoration of the Meiji regime in 1850 and the reforms initiated in 1868, were sown the seeds of ferment and economic progress. The gates of Japan opened and foreign contacts began with industrial development growing, and the number of urban workers increased. By 1922, a Communist Party was founded. In the rural areas, silk farms sprung up and there was a fragmentation of farms. Also, discontent grew among the tenants who worked there. Thereafter came the share market crash which triggered the Great Depression in 1929.The Japanese economy received its share of tremors. One of the remedies to relieve the pains of the economic crisis was expansion through military conquest. The fact that the Japanese population had more than doubled since the Meiji restoration meant that more and more jobs were necessary. The ghost of Karl Marx and the scenes of the Russian Revolution were not invisible to the Japanese mind. War appeared to be a possible panacea which eventually led to the 1941 naval attack on Pearl Harbor, the American base of warships on its Pacific coast. This was followed by the land invasion of British and French colonies in South-east Asia. Just before the Pearl Harbor attack, Defence Minister Gen Tojo Hideki was made the Premier. The war moulded all classes of the Japanese people into one. This was an experiment of fascism in Asia.

So much for fascism and its smaller as well as grander variations. But what is its ugly connection with politics in India? India is not Europe. 2018 is not 1920. Communism is dead. There is poverty here but no Great Depression sparked by a financial collapse of the Wall Street kind on the horizon. The Indian ethos has no record of imperialism and, therefore, no promise of foreign conquests would be credible. If an attempt is being made to compare minorities in fascist states and Muslims of India, it is ridiculous and perverse. No one in their right mind has accused Muslims of betraying India, not even the BJP, whose only contention has been that there has been appeasement of the Muslim community's clergy and its whims. All in all, to call anyone a fascist in India is to talk nonsense.

(The writer is a well-known columnist and an author)

POINT**COUNTER**POINT

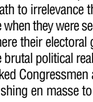
People are now heard saying that the country's *chowkidar* is a thief. This is what the people in Rajasthan and elsewhere feel.
—Congress president
RAHUL GANDHI

I think that the desperation of the clown prince is to attract attention to himself at the cost of the Prime Minister's name.
—Union Minister
SMRITI IRANI

Subsidy sops must stop

The very bane of public policy has been the Government's interference in subsidising goods and services. Subsidies must be replaced with direct cash transfers

UTTAM GUPTA



The Modi Government has revolutionised the way subsidies are disbursed to beneficiaries by leveraging technology, especially the use of direct benefit transfer (DBT) on the Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile platform. This has made a dent on pilferage, and gargantuan resources, thus saved, are being used for development and enhanced funding of welfare schemes for wider and deeper coverage. But large-scale pilferage still continues. This happens in ways that even escape the radar of our ever alert Prime Minister.

At the fundamental level, it can be sourced to the very existence of controls in sectors, such as food, fertilisers, petroleum, oil and lubricants (POL), and power, which continue to guzzle huge amounts despite savings *via* DBT. Here, a question arises: How do controls lead to pilferage?

Take, for example, food and fertilisers. To make these affordable to the poor, the Government controls their maximum retail price (MRP) at a low level, unrelated to the cost of production and distribution. The differential amount is reimbursed to manufacturers/agencies as subsidy. Whereas, 80 per cent of the population gets food at a subsidised rate, as regards fertilisers, all farmers have access to these at low MRP.

Among POL in the case of LPG, even as oil marketing public sector undertakings (PSUs) sell at full price, beneficiaries receive subsidy in their account. However, kerosene is sold to them at low (subsidised) price. Retail prices of petrol and diesel are *de jure* decontrolled, but *de facto*, the Government controls them by issuing *diktat* (albeit unwritten) to PSUs, which account for over 90 per cent of the sales.

When the Government orders manufacturers/suppliers to sell products at a price lower than what it costs, it is obliged to fully compensate them for the shortfall. This is where the rub lies. Assured of full neutralisation, they won't have an incentive to cut cost and work efficiently. They are even tempted to claim higher cost or even make fictitious claims.

Under the National Food Security Act (NFSA), wheat is given to the beneficiaries at two rupee per kilogram as against the much higher cost of supplying it at ₹25 per kg. The latter includes MSP of ₹17 per kilogram paid to the farmer and eight rupee per kilogram as handling and distribution charges, reimbursed to the handling agencies, such as the Food Corporation of India (FCI). The charges are given on 'actual' basis.

These subsume inefficiency and irregularities committed by agencies — this was pointed out by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG). The 'loaders' getting away with monthly salary in lakhs could easily pass muster under a cost-based mechanism. In 2016, there were reports of disappearance of food stocks in Punjab causing a loss of over ₹20,000 crore to the exchequer.

In the 2000s, in fertilisers, the UPA Government contracted for import of gas — fuel used in manufacture of urea — at an 'inflated' price knowing that the resultant higher cost of making fertilizers would be fully reimbursed under new pricing scheme (NPS). It had also imported urea at high price which went up to an exorbitant ₹50,000 per tonne (2008-09) against then MRP of only ₹4,830 per tonne. In a year in the early 90s, payment was made but not even a grain of urea came.

There were irregularities in payment to manufacturers too. Under the retention price scheme (RPS) — earlier incarnation of NPS — some units were allowed inflated retention price. There were even allegations of gold plating — a euphemism for showing capacity lower than actual to get higher RP. Since, the same system continues even today, it is not easy to prevent inflated payments.

There is no rational basis to keep urea MRP at an exceptionally low level — a mere 1/4th to ⅓ of the production cost. Yet, this was a golden goose available to dubious traders to mint money by selling to chemical factories at high price. True, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has brought in mandatory neem coating of urea and claimed that this has stopped diversion. However, considering that there are 600 million bags to be policed, this seems to be too good to believe.

In petrol and diesel, lack of competition allows oil PSUs *viz* Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd, to get away with a high price based on import parity principle plus fortuitous benefit of import duty. For LPG and kerosene, they enjoy complete monopoly as private entities are barred from selling subsidised stuff.

In power sector, inflated tariff charged by independent power producers (IPPs) easily pass muster in the name of subsidised supplies made to the farmers and poor households. There are instances of inflated fuel price (*via* 'over-invoicing' of coal imports) getting accommodated in the tariff, eventually paid by the exchequer. As in fertilizers, here also instances of gold plating have come to light.

This loot of national resources needs to be stopped. But this can't be done merely through administrative cleaning up. To do this, the Government should go for policy reforms with focus on removing pricing and distribution controls. The control on MRP must go and subsidy to the poor should be given directly. With this, the very basis for entities claiming inflated cost will disappear. Instead, they will be forced to cut cost and increase efficiency to stay afloat. While benefiting all consumers, this will reduce subsidy outgo and help fiscal consolidation. When will Modi crack the whip?

(The writer is a freelance journalist)

Barriers to universal financial access

As we near the goal of universal financial access, there is a need to bridge the inequality gap. Ensuring financial literacy and subsequent inclusion can unleash the untapped potential at the bottom of the pyramid, leading to a less-cash economy

BINDU DALMIA

The World Bank Group has put forward an ambitious global goal to reach Universal Financial Access (UFA) by 2020, as financial literacy and financial inclusion has now become the topmost priority for policymakers, regulators and development agencies, globally. The UFA goal is that by 2020, adults who currently aren't a part of the formal financial system, must have access to a bank account to transact money, which becomes the basic building block to manage their financial lives.

The Prime Minister's Dhan Jan Yojana achieved a remarkable feat by bringing 80 per cent of the population into mainstream banking. But subsequently, most accounts have remained passive, with an average of three transactions a year. This because around 76 per cent of India's adult population does not understand even basic financial concepts.

For increased economic participation, the spread of financial literacy is the primary enabler of financial inclusion — both are twin pillars in mitigation of poverty. Only by working jointly on both aspects can we herald the next revolution of prosperity and growth for India in the 21st century by enhancing scope for banking, insurance, mutual fund industry and housing for all. All four services are interlinked to financial inclusion, as also are growth propellers of the economy, which have their own multiplier effect in adding close to a percentage point to the gross domestic product (GDP). This can happen only when people are financially literate and begin to make informed investment choices.

However, financial literacy, the first prerequisite for financial inclusion, is where India lags behind as most women remain financially illiterate. As International Monetary Fund (IMF) chief Christine Lagarde said: "It's now a proven fact, when women do better, economies do better." There exists an ocean of untapped opportunities in India to expand the scope of financial inclusion and financial literacy for women across all demographic strata, albeit, the spread of literary cannot be confined to being gender-specific.

My passion towards this transformation stems from deep-rooted convictions based on my working life's experience since I began my career in the late 70s. I was the guinea pig of my experiments with money, and through sheer trial and error at an early age, I succeeded in transforming simple wages to savings, and savings to assets. Again, there was no genius to the idea but just the magic of disciplined savings and the compounding power of money. The skills of compounding money is now a science, a learning that must begin by including it in school curricula so that successive generations grow into disciplined investors and ethical borrowers.

Thereafter, financial literacy must be imparted to the millennials who comprise 34 per cent of our population, and who, research shows, are credit-oriented and spend more on lifestyle. So, they need to learn the discipline and risks of living life beyond their income. The middle aged are securely married women and are educated, yet are uninitiated in finance — just because they find its vocabulary too difficult to comprehend. Then, there are divorcees and widows, comprising 12 per cent of the population, who need to be initiated, as most are under-literate on personal finance. Let's remember that the ultimate goal of every one of us is to own a secure asset in the form of home ownership along with building on a savings corpus, which provides dignity and insulates from future shocks.

Financial literacy is one of the most serious issues in the US, as also globally for women. Women earn 25 per cent less than men, and spend an average of 11.5 years out of the workforce. Individuals must be competent to make decisions not only about assets but also about debts. And debt is pervasive across all income strata and stands at alarmingly increased levels, even 10 years post 2008 economic crisis. This means that we failed to learn from the perils of over-leveraging. Today, credit is lavishly available and institutions that promote credit to the exclusion of savings, place the poor in deeper bondage, as credit alone cannot save the poor from poverty.

As Finance Minister Arun Jaitley expressed: "If we have growth only on the basis of 31 per cent credit off take, history will record it as growth due to indiscriminate lending." While the incidence of indebtedness (IOI), which is a proportion of households having outstanding debt, today stands at an average of 47.4 per cent, average savings per annum per saver households was reportedly as low as ₹17,488 according to the 2018 pan-India National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) survey. With an abysmally low ability to save and rising levels of debt, how long will it take for the rural poor to climb out of poverty?

The Government consequently has a major role to play in policy formation so as to mainstream the marginalised into creating an eco-system conducive to inclusion. The objective of the financial literacy and financial inclusion committee is to attempt to spearhead a financial revolution borne of Niti Aayog's prioritisation which is in sync with the global priority accorded to financial inclusion and financial literacy unanimously by the World Bank, the European Union, G-20, and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

The goal is to enable shared prosperity and bring down poverty by changing investment habits of people, and also secure in knowing that gradual asset creation is within their reach too.

DISPARITIES CAN BE ADDRESSED THROUGH INCREASED OUTLAYS IN EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING, IN PRIORITISING FINANCIAL LITERACY, AND BY INCREASING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE JOB FORCE

An example of how rapidly financial literacy can spread and lead to financial inclusion is by demistifying complicated banking jargon by dumbing down financial vocabulary, and thereafter, disseminating learning and getting the masses to get operational in much the same way educationally illiterates in rural India could take to the working of smartphones, and enjoying the WhatsApp feature. This must be done through Government-accredited programmes disseminated through tele-learning, and use of mobile phones to penetrate the spread of financial literacy.

Even the US Department of Education reports that 38 million American adult women possess literacy skills below a "basic" level. Also, OECD studies show that women have lower financial literacy levels than men in both developed and developing countries. Since women live longer than men and have shorter working lives in paid employment, they have lower average incomes from which they save for old age. With increasing life expectancy, there is a need to provision for increasing and inflationary cost of healthcare; women need to be sufficiently financially literate to be future-ready for any contingencies.

By being forbidden from inheritance in many patriarchal societies, though laws are changing, women own lesser property. And they have been excluded from decision-making on deployment of family earnings since millennia, as it has been deemed the sole prerogative of the '*karta*' or the head of the family in India.

Deepening financial literacy and subsequent inclusion would unleash the hugely untapped potential at the bottom-of-pyramid leading to a reduction in the cash economy, as more money finds its way into the banking ecosystem. That would also inculcate the savings discipline and increase capital formation, and this in turn, would release the availability of adequate credit to foster entrepreneurial spirit of the masses, as more people are enabled through the formal financial infrastructure and freed from dependence on unscrupulous money-lenders.

Thus far it's a slow progress, as India has climbed by just one rank to become 130 out of 189 countries in the 2018 United Nations Human Development Index (HDI). The increase in rankings is a quantum leap by 50 per cent since 1990, which reflects that the strides taken by the Government have been successful in lifting millions out of poverty — per capita gross national income increased by 266 per cent. However, there still remains a huge gap of inequality as the gains of equitable economic development are yet to percolate to the base of the pyramid.

Those disparities can only be addressed through increased outlays in education and vocational training, in prioritising financial literacy, and by increasing women's participation in the job force, which is at an abysmal 27 per cent currently. Melinda Gates, co-Chairperson of the Gates Foundation once said: "When women have money in their hands and the authority to choose how to spend it, they grow in confidence and power by taking control of their economic future."

(The writer, an author & columnist, is Chairperson, Committee on Financial Inclusion and Literacy for Women, Niti Aayog)

Emerging flavour in retail business

To woo customers at food courts, retail biggies are experimenting with cuisines and pricing. This may lead to a change in the business environment

TUSHAR MANCHANDA

In a world of intense competition, the Indian economy has been accelerating growth better than most economies across the globe. This makes India a lucrative zone for top global firms to invest in the wake of generating economic rents. Various MNCs have already availed the benefits of the new FDI policy. Retail giants, like Wal Mart and IKEA, have been aggressive in their approach towards investment. Retail stores have to compete not only with their peer incumbent retailers but also with e-commerce players. In an emerging market, the pre-eminent way is to adopt a business plan that has been successful in a developed economy. As a matter of fact, mega-retailers in India have been reshaping their infrastructure to accommodate a restraunt within their structure. A routine perspective would conclude this as a new methodology to attract customers. However, there's a lot more to be unveiled from the unfolding changes in the business landscape.

The US economy has seen turbulent times, which prompted retailers, like Costco, to initiate a restaurant at their retail outlets. The food court at a Costco store offers a variety of products, like a hot dog and a 20-ounce bottle of soda for just $1.5, a slice of pizza for $1.99 and full giant 18-inch pizza for a whopping $9.95. The $1.5 hot dog has been priced the same since 1991 and is considered a loss leader for the company. The 18-inch delicacy that Costco sells for $9.95 is one of the least priced pizzas in the US, compared to other economical vendors, like Sam's Club. Similarly, the Swedish home furnishing behemoth IKEA has restaurants in all their stores across the globe. Their signature dish 'meatballs' is known to be the best sofa-seller.

In the Indian market, Reliance Industries Ltd offers food items at a distinguished price at their wholesale mart called Reliance Market, which vends all delicacies at a flat rate of nine rupee each. Their vast menu includes Indian items like vada pav, samosa, bread pakoda, tea and a couple of other items like veg mayo roll, pizza, vegetable puffs, chocolate balls, cupcakes and doughnuts. This brings us to a dilemma that if these food courts are not generating significant profits, why are companies not curbing operations in these domains?

Drilling deeper, it was observed that core products like a $1.5 hotdog and soda combo at Costco, the iconic meatballs at IKEA and the nine rupee menu at Reliance market, have negative profitability for the company. The rationale behind these products is not just to increase footfall. The food products served at these stores tend to elevate serotonin levels, which enhances the mood of an individual. Once the consumer is satiated, it is more likely that he/she will be convinced by the staff, thereby adding to the sales. Customers are poised to shop as soon as they step into the store, and after some time they feel demotivated and tired. This becomes the right time to strike the customers with food as it makes them stay longer in the store. This, thus, increases their average shopping time.

But a different aspect has been observed based on the consumer's psychology. Food assists retail companies to position themselves as the 'most economical shopping option' in the mind of a customer. They deliberately take a hit in the form of losses from the food court. Intention is to give a new reference standard to the customers to compare prices of goods. A potential buyer perceives the store to be the most economical one as the food sold is really inexpensive. Further, these stores focus more on private label brands as they ramp up profitability. This not only enhances sales but also shields against the smashing losses by food courts. The concept is far cheaper and economical than advertisements. Topping it all, these stores offer food to customers with the same zeal even if they don't buy anything. This because subconsciously, a relationship is under development with the customer through the food table. Over a period of time, there's a high potential for the relationship to transfigure into cash.

From a long-term strategic perspective, it is discerned that these companies have been successful in cross-selling products to the customer. Initially opened as a home furnishing store, IKEA has been consistent in garnering more and more revenues from the food court — in 2016, IKEA reported around $1.6 billion revenues *via* food court from a total of $36 billion. Similarly, Costco has come forth as one of the largest pizza chains in the US with more than 400 stores. Times have changed. A lot of customers come to these stores just to visit the food court, thereby increasing the revenue.

With IKEA's foray into the Indian market, the retail landscape of the country is bound to change. IKEA has come up with local vendors for its Hyderabad-based store. Instead of selling signature meatballs, the Swedish company is focusing more on local food like Biryani, Idli, among others. A large restaurant with a seating capacity of about 1,000 people in the centre of the massive 400,000 sq feet store accentuates aspirations of the retailing giant. This has been done to reposition brand for Indian customers as they seem to be more thrilled with *desi* touch. Local foods give them a sense of belonging which accompanies in the formation of a healthier relationship with the customer. In the near future, if these companies hold back prices in the food courts, we can presume huge restaurant chains to materialise in the Indian market.

(The writer is student at Great Lakes Institute Of Management, Chennai)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ALLAYING INSECURITY

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Right note" (September21). It augurs well that Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat has, among other burning issues, including cow vigilantism, clarified the Sangh's stand on Indian Muslims' status with the heartening message "if Muslims are unwanted, there is no Hindutva".

This will allay fear of sorts lingering on the community's mind even as his invocation of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's words underscores the monotheistic view as they say *"sab ka maalik ek hai"*.

But above all, what matters most is the emphatic translation of the words into action, failing which his sage advice will fall on stony ground.

Azhar A Khan
Rampur

FALSE ASSURANCE

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Right note" (September21). It is hard for the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) to reconcile its goals and compulsions. Its attempts at openness and restructuring are futile. RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat's claim that the organisation keeps away from politics is belied by the *diktats* given to its political arm, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

His claim that Hindutva does not exclude Muslims is falsified by the absence of Muslims in leadership positions in both the RSS and the BJP.

It is intriguing that Bhagwat speaks of a Hindu *Rashtra* and the Constitution in the same breath and finds no inconsistency. If the RSS is really against caste discrimination, as stated, it should repudiate the religious texts that sanctify caste. It is no secret that the RSS draws its leadership from the upper castes.

G David Milton
Maruthancode

BETTER FUTURE

Sir — This refers to the article, "An opportunity India must not miss" (September 21) by Sanjib Pohit & Pradip Biswas. Union Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari recently announced that the Government plans to exempt electrical vehicles (EVs) and other alternative fuel cars from requiring permits. This argurs well for minimising operating costs.

As a result, the vehicle market will be encouraged to work in this field and new entrepreneurs will come into play. As the fourth-largest consumer of natural oils, India is now realising that Biodiesel vehicles and EVs are the only oxygen for keeping transportation alive towards a healthy future. We must tap on this.

Shivam Srivastava
Ujjain

Indian banking system needs better administration

This refers to the editorial, "Repairing banks" (September 20). Banks must not be made scapegoats for soft policy for disbursement of macro-credits which fraudsters have taken advantage of. Public sector banks (PSUs) act in accordance with the guidelines of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) which in turn follows the policies of the Government. If I instruct a watchman to keep the main gate of my house ajar, it will be injustice to hold him solely responsible for any theft.

It is a shame that bad loans of Indian banks crossed a whooping ₹87,300 crore in 2017-18 fiscal, topped by scam-tainted Punjab National Bank which is reeling under more than ₹14,000 crore scam allegedly perpetrated by Nirav Modi and associates.

To common knowledge, it is the common man who is made to pay through the nose in the name of penalty for keeping less than what banks mark as minimum balance. It is mainly economic constraints that make the people unable to keep minimum balance in their bank accounts. It is reported that our banks have collected an astronomical ₹5,000 crore from customers for non-maintenance of minimum balance in their account in 2017-18. This consists mostly of, so to speak, the hard-earned money of the people. It is the lack of minimum balance on the part of the administration to adopt a policy of letting bank frauds go abroad and penalising the masses.

Sujit De
Kolkata

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

So far as the shell companies are concerned, in the first phase, we have struck off around 2.26 lakh companies, which were not only non-compliant firms but also most of them were bogus. More than 400 companies were working from a one-room set up in the second phase, we have already struck off around 55,000 companies and more are on the anvil

PP Chaudhary, Union Minister of State for Corporate Affairs

BUZZ FROM GOVT

Indian branding is continuously innovating and digital branding has become as important if not more than conventional branding. Branding in India across sectors has been continuously evolving and is creating the right noise to reach their TG. Superbrands India will continue to mine out the top brands in India doing exceptional branding and honor them with Superbrands seal

Amitabh Kant, CEO, NITI Aayog

Market crash wipes out ₹5.6L cr investor wealth

MORE THAN 450 STOCKS HIT THEIR 52-WEEK LOW LEVELS ON FRIDAY

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

As the equity market plunged for the fourth day in a row, where the BSE benchmark index plummeted over 1,100 points in afternoon trade Friday, investor wealth witnessed an erosion of a whopping ₹5.6 lakh crore in four days.

The 30-share index cracked 1,127.58 points, or 3 per cent, to hit an intra-day low of 35,993.64 on Friday. It, however recovered most of the losses within minutes of the fall.

There were wild swings in the market, with the BSE Sensex finally settling at 36,841.60, down 279.62 points or 0.75 per cent.

"Nifty and Sensex were down due to widespread selling that was seen in the financial services sector as credit risk emerged post-ILFS firesale and concern over its interest repayment. Yes Bank added fuel as RBI trimmed the CEO's term," said Mustafa Nadeem, CEO, Epic Research.

In four days, the index has lost 1,249.04 points.

Following the weak sentiment, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies slumped ₹5,66,187.15 crore to ₹1,50,70,832 crore on Friday.

From the 30-share pack, 17 stocks ended with losses led by YES Bank, which crashed 28.71 per cent, dragging the benchmark index.

Shares of housing finance firms fell sharply Friday, with Dewan Housing Finance tumbling 42.43 per cent.

"Housing finance companies nosedived on the basis of rumours of liquidity crunch which caused the stocks to fall up to 50 per cent. However, the stocks are fundamentally sound, but herd mentality had caused the sudden panic in these stocks, however, they have recovered from their day's low," said Jimeet Modi, Founder & CEO of Samco Securities & StockNote .

On BSE, 2,106 stocks declined and 586 advanced, while 148 remained unchanged.

More than 450 stocks hit their 52-week low levels Friday.

Sensex dips over 1K points, regains some

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The BSE Sensex tumbled about 280 points to close below the 37,000-mark on Friday after investors were jolted by an over 1,000-point plunge in afternoon trade.

The 30-share benchmark, which opened on a strong footing, suddenly tanked 1,127.58 points, or 3.03 per cent, to hit a low of 35,993.64 at 1309 hours, before staging an equally sharp recovery.

The fall came on the back of a massive selloff in NBFCs, led by DHFL which skidded over 50 per cent on fears of a liquidity crisis.

The Sensex finally ended lower by 279.62 points, or 0.75 per cent, at 36,841.60. This is its lowest closing since July 25, when it had finished at 36,858.23.

Yes Bank was the worst performer on the index, losing a whopping 28.71 per cent. The Reserve Bank on Wednesday curtailed the term of its founding CEO Rana Kapoor and asked the private sector lender to look for his replacement by January 2019.

The broader Nifty too suffered a mid-session plunge and ended at 11,143.10, down 91.25 points.

The indices closed with losses for the third straight week. The Sensex lost a hefty 1,249.04 points, or 3.28 per cent, while the NSE Nifty fell 372.10 points, or 3.23 per cent, during the week.

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) remained net sellers and offloaded equities worth ₹2,184.55 crore while domestic institutional investors (DIIs) made purchases worth a net ₹1,201.30 crore on Wednesday, provisional data showed.

Fitch ups India's growth forecast to 7.8% for FY19

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Fitch Ratings Friday upped India's growth forecast for the current fiscal to 7.8 per cent, from 7.4 per cent projected earlier.

In its Global Economic Outlook, Fitch, however, flagged tightening of financial conditions, rising oil bill and weak bank balance sheets as headwinds to growth.

"We have revised up our forecast for FY2018-2019 growth to 7.8 per cent from 7.4 per cent on the back of the better-than-expected 2Q18 outturn. India's growth likely peaked in 2Q18 (April-June) though," Fitch said.

The Indian rupee (INR) has been the worst-performing major Asian currency so far this year.

"And despite the central bank's greater tolerance for currency depreciation, interest rates have been raised by more than anticipated," the global rating agency said in the report.

Fitch also forecast inflation picking up to the upper part of the central bank's target band (4 per cent, plus-minus 2 per cent) within the forecast horizon on relatively high demand-pull pressures and INR depreciation.

The upward revision in growth forecast comes in the backdrop of GDP expanding 8.2 per cent in April-June quarter, higher than Fitch's expectation of 7.7 per cent.

Business Corner

'ATAL BIMIT VYAKTI KALYAN YOJNA' ROLLED OUT

Considering the change in employment pattern and the current scenario of employment in India which has transformed from a long term employment to fixed short term engagement in the form of contract and temping, the ESI Corporation has approved a Scheme named "Atal Bimit Vyakti Kalyan Yojna" for Insured Persons (IP) covered under the Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948.

NLCIL INSTALLS RO DRINKING WATER PLANT

As part of its CSR initiatives, with an aim to provide clean drinking water to the out patients and inmates ofthe National Institute of Siddha,Tamilnadu, NLC India Ltd. installed a1000 LPH Capacity ROplant at Institute premises,Tambaram Sanatorium,Chennai.

INDIAN OIL OBSERVES SWACHCHHTA HI SEWA

Indian Oil is observing Swachhta Hi Seva (SHS) 2018 Campaign" from September 15thto October 2nd 2018. The fortnight- long campaign focuses on a cleanliness drive as a part of the 150th birth year celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi. During the campaign, various Swachhta activities will be undertaken through Shramadan/Gift of Labour, by more than 20,000 employees across various units of IndianOil.

NAFED HOLDS 61ST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

61st Annual General Body Meeting (AGM) of National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED) was held at New Delhi on Friday. On this occasion, Nafed also launched its updated Website, Mobile App., Quarterly News Letter Vol-I. VR Boda, Chairman of NAFED apprised the members of the One Time Settlement reached by NAFED with Lender Banks and thanked to Prime Minister, Finance & Agriculture Ministers and other Ministries and their officials, members of General Body and Managing Director of NAFED for their contribution in this behalf which culminated in its charismatic revival.

HDFC BANK We understand your world

Department For Special Operations
IInd Floor, Indian Express Building, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi - 110002

POSSESSION NOTICE (FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY)

(As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002)

Whereas, the Authorised Officer of HDFC Bank Ltd., under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(2) read with rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a demand notice dated 09.05.2018 calling upon the borrower **M/s Hitech Grain Processing Pvt Ltd Borrower / Mortgagor, Mrs. Asha Mittal, Mr. Naresh Mittal, Mr Vipul Mittal Director / Guarantor** to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being **Rs. 29,38,38,936.55 (Rupees Twenty Nine Crore Thirty Eight Lakh Thirty Eight Thousand Nine Hundred Thirty Six and Paise Fifty Five Only)** and interest thereon w.e.f 06.05.2018 together with future interest and charges thereon within 60 days of the receipt of the said notice. The borrower(s) / Guarantor(s)/ Mortgagor(s),having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s) / Mortgagor(s), and the public in general, that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 9 of the said Rules, on this **20th day of September, 2018** at Noida.The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets. The borrower(s) / Mortgagor, in particular, and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of **HDFC Bank Ltd,** for an amount of being **Rs. 29,38,38,936.55 (Rupees Twenty Nine Crore Thirty Eight Lakh Thirty Eight Thousand Nine Hundred Thirty Six and Paise Fifty Five Only) and interest thereon w.e.f 06.05.2018** and interest thereon as aforesaid together with expenses and charges etc.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

S. No.	Description of the Property	Date & Time of Possession
1.	All that pieces and parcels of Property being Plot No. 39, Block B, admeasuring 6156 Sq Mtrs, in Sec-1, Noida, Dist-Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P-201301, which is bounded as under- On or towards North by- Plot No. B-38, On or towards South by- Plot No. B 34 & B 40, On or towards the East by- 27.12 meter wide road, On or towards the West by- Plot No. B-35, together with all the buildings and structures thereon and all the plant, machinery, equipments and accessories attached to the earth or permanently fastened to anything attached to earth.	24.09.2018 Time 11.00 AM onwards

Note: The above notice be also considered as 30 days notice for sale under rule 6,8 and 9 of the Act.

Place: Noida (Uttar Pradesh), Date : 20/09/2018 **Authorised Officer, HDFC Bank Ltd.**

Office of Municipal Council Bahadurgarh

RE-Tender Notice

Municipal Council Bahadurgarh invites e-tenders for Development Works in various placed in Bahadurgarh city having Job no. 759 to 769 on the website **http://etenders.hry.nic.in.** Tender can be download and submission from dated **21/09/2018** and will be closed online on dated **01/10/2018, 06:55 PM.** Tender will be opened on **03/10/2018, at 11:00 AM** onwards. Detailed terms and conditions can be seen on the website **http://etenders.hry.nic.in.**

CONDITION:-

(i) Details regarding terms and conditions including the tender documents are available on the website **http://etenders.hry.nic.in** and also in Office of Municipal Council, Bahadurgarh.
(ii) Contractors/firms and L and C societies will have to register by themselves on website **http://etenders.hry.nic.in.**
(iii) The Payment for Tender Document Fee and EMD Amount submission can be made by eligible bidders/contractors online directly through Debit Cards & Internet Banking in Axis Bank Bahadurgarh A/c no. 627010100005371 (IFSC Code : UTIB0000627) in favour of Executive Officer, Municipal Council Bahadurgarh and Proof of the same will be submitted by bidder along with online technical bid. Manual submission not required.
(iv) Please see the Terms and Conditions and Eligible Criteria in DNIT Document

Sd/- President **Sd/- Municipal Engineer**

RO NO. 71996 Dt. 21-09-2018

Centre favours additional cess under GST to help Kerala

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley has proposed additional cess on select commodities under GST to raise funds to help Kerala tide over the damages caused due to floods, a state minister said on Friday.

The proposal of levy of cess is expected to come up for discussion at the GST Council meeting on September 28.

"Kerala welcomes the suggestion of hon'ble FM for a national level cess on selected commodities for a specified period to help such states. GST Council to discuss," Kerala Finance Minister Thomas Isaac said in a tweet.

Isaac was of the view that GST should be made flexible to take care of "unforeseen urgent demand for resources as in the case natural calamities".

The issue regarding additional cess for funding rehabilitation activities in flood-hit Kerala was discussed on Thursday during a meeting of Isaac with Jaitley.

Isaac has also pressed for additional funds from the Centre to rebuild the state, which is estimated to have suffered a loss of ₹20,000 crore (as per a preliminary estimate) due to the floods.

The Government may have to amend the GST law to permit imposition of a new cess in the new indirect tax regime.

Sebi imposes ₹35-L fine on Falcon Tyres

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Sebi on Friday slapped a fine of ₹35 lakh on Falcon Tyres for not providing the information sought by the regulator in a matter related to preferential allotment of shares of the firm.

In April 2012, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) issued various summons to Falcon.

One of the summons sought the balance sheet of Falcon for the financial years 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12. Another summon directed the company to confirm whether it signed any deed of assignment with three other entities — Suncap, Regus and Salputri — for assigning a loan of ₹144.04 crore to itself.

In an order, Sebi said Falcon was informed to furnish required documents, but it had sought extension of time.

According to the order, despite multiple time extensions being granted to the firm, it failed to file its reply which depicts an approach to not cooperate with the investigation.

"Thus, for not complying with the summons for supplying information/ documents sought by the IA (investigating authority) during the investigations, it is held that Falcon has violated... Sebi Act," the regulator said.

Noting that Falcon is "liable for monetary penalty", Sebi slapped a fine of ₹35 lakh on the firm.

In a separate order, the regulator imposed a penalty of ₹4 lakh on Excel Castronics' non executive director Payal Jayeshbhai Madiyar for disclosure lapses.

In August 2014, the holdings of Payal in Excel Castronics increased from 3,91,532 shares to 4,20,762 shares, which is 5.167 per cent of the share capital of the company.

Govt. of Bihar

BIHAR STATE POWER TRANSMISSION CO. LTD., PATNA
(Regd. Office – Vidyut Bhawan, Bailey Road, Patna)(Contact No– 0612-2504655, M No- 7763817701, Fax No– 0612-2504655, Email ID – ce.trans664@gmail.com)
(GST No. :- 10AAFCB2393H1Z1, CIN – U40102BR2012SGC018889)
(Department of Project-I of BSPTCL)

2nd Tender Extension Notice for (NIT) NO.- 86/PR/BSPTCL/2018, PR No-6542

Due date for submission & opening of Online tenders for NIT No.86/PR/BSPTCL/2018 for (i) Construction of 220/132KV (2x100 MVA) GSS at Korha with SAS and Residential Quarters(Additional Scope) (ii) Addition/augmentation of 160MVA 220/132 Transformer at 220/132/33KV GSS Kishanganj (New) on turnkey basis under State Plan (Published in Daily Newspaper on all India bases) is extended as follows:-

Last date of online sale of Bid Document/Request of bid/bid documents up to 15.00 Hrs. on 05/10/18
Last date of online submission of tender up to 16:00 Hrs on 05/10/18
Date of opening of Techno-Commercial Bid (Part-I) 16.00 Hrs onward on 06/10/18

Date of opening of price part: To be notified after Technical Bid Evaluation **(www.eproc.bihar.gov.in)**
The tender documents are available at website **www.eproc.bihar.gov.in** Tender fee (Cost of BOQ) to be paid through e-payment mode only. Tender documents must be accompanied with EMD in form Bank Guarantee/ DD in favour of "Accounts Officer, BSPTCL"failing which the tender shall be summarily rejected.

1. Eligibility Criteria Tender documents, etc are available in downloadable from at websites **http://www.eproc.bihar.gov.in**
2. "Bid Processing Fee is mandatory to be paid through online mode i.e. Internet Payment Gateway (Credit/Debit Card), Net Banking, NEFT/RTGS".
3. "Bid along with necessary online payments must be submitted through e-payment portal **www.eproc.bihar.gov.in** before the date & time specified in the NIT. The department doesn't take responsibility for the delay/ Non submission of Tender/ Non Reconciliation of online Payment caused due to Non-availability of Internet Connection, Network Traffic/ Holidays or any other reason".

Chief Engineer (Project I)

E-tendering introduced in BSPTCL for tenders above Rs. 25 lacs. For registration logon to www.eproc.bihar.gov.in and eProcurement Help Desk First Floor, M/22, Bank Of India Building, Road No-25, Sri Krishna Nagar, Patna-800001 at 0612-2523006, Mob:9939035696

"विवादों के निष्पादन के लिए लोक अदालत का लाभ उठायें, परस्पर सहमति से न्यायिक निर्णय प्राप्त करें, समय एवं खर्च की बचत करें"

PR. No. 8831 (Ni Ni) 2018-19

अवैध शराब एवं मादक द्रव्य के सम्बंध में शिकायत टॉल फ्री नं. 18003456268 या 15545 पर करें।

BIHAR STATE POWER TRANSMISSION CO. LTD., PATNA Govt of Bihar
(Regd. Office – Vidyut Bhawan, Bailey Road, Patna)(Contact No– 0612-2504655, M No- 7763816743, Email ID – ceproject2bsptcl@gmail.com)
(GST No. :- 10AAFCB2393H1Z1, CIN – U40102BR2012SGC018889)
(Department of Project-II of BSPTCL)

2nd Tender Extension Notice for (NIT) NO.- 41/PR/BSPTCL/2018, PR No-5843

Due date for submission & opening of Online tenders for NIT No. 41/PR/BSPTCL/2018 for Construction of 220/132/33 KV, (2x160 + 3x50) MVA, GSS Asthawan (Dist.- Nalanda) including Residential Quarters with Construction of 02 Nos. 220 KV Line Bays & 06 Nos. 132 KV Line Bays at remote ends under State Plan on turnkey basis (Published in Daily Newspaper on all India bases) is extended as follows:-

Description of work	Estimated Cost(Rs.)	EMD (Rs.)	Completion period
Construction of 220/132/33 KV, (2x160 + 3x50) MVA, GSS Asthawan (Dist. - Nalanda) including Residential Quarters with Construction of 02 Nos. 220 KV Line Bays & 06 Nos. 132 KV Line Bays at remote ends on Turnkey Basis under State Plan on turnkey basis.	109.46 Cr.	1.00 Cr.	18 Months from NOA.

Last date of online sale of Bid Document/Request of bid/bid documents:	**Up to 05/10/2018, 15:00 Hrs.**
Last date of online submission of tender:	**Up to 05/10/2018, 16:00 Hrs.**
Date of opening of Techno-Commercial Bid (Part-I)	**On 06/10/2018, 16:00Hrs. onward**

1. Eligibility Criteria Tender documents, etc are available in downloadable from at websites http://www.eproc.bihar.gov.in
2. "Bid Processing Fee is mandatory to be paid through online mode i.e. Internet Payment Gateway (Credit/Debit Card), Net Banking, NEFT/RTGS".
3. "Bid along with necessary online payments must be submitted through e-payment portal www.eproc.bihar.gov.in before the date & time specified in the NIT. The department doesn't take responsibility for the delay/ Non submission of Tender/ Non Reconciliation of online Payment caused due to Non-availability of Internet Connection, Network Traffic/ Holidays or any other reason".

Chief Engineer (Project II)

E-tendering introduced in BSPTCL for tenders above Rs. 25 lacs. For registration logon to www.eproc.bihar.gov.in and eProcurement Help Desk First Floor, M/22, Bank Of India Building, Road No-25, Sri Krishna Nagar, Patna-800001 at 0612-2523006, Mob:+91-7542028164. While participating in e-tendering process, the contractor shall have to get them registered to get user ID, Passwords and digital signature. This will enable them to access the Website: www.eproc.bihar.gov.in only.

विवादों के निष्पादन के लिए लोक अदालत को लाभ उठायें
परस्पर सहमति से न्यायिक निर्णय प्राप्त करें
समय एवं खर्च की बचत करें

PR No. 8892(Ni.Ni.) 2018-19

अवैध शराब एवं मादक द्रव्य के संबंध में शिकायत टॉल फ्री नं. 18003456268 या 15545 पर करें

GOVT. OF MAHARASHTRA
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
PUBLIC WORKS DIVISION SOLAPUR.
Sat Rasta, Near Karigar Petrol Pump, Solapur - 413003
e-mail-solapur.ee@mahapwd.com Phone No. 0217/2312310

E-TENDER NOTICE NO. 23 FOR 2018-2019 (Online)

Sealed online B-1 e-tenders for the following work are invited by the Executive Engineer, Public Works Division , Solapur (Telephone No. 2312310) from the Contractors Registered with Government of Maharashtra Public Works Department in appropriate class.

Sr. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (In lack)
1	Repairs to Barshi Solapur Road S.H. 204 KM 37/200 to 64/800 Dist-Solapur.	**Rs. 70.00 Lack**
2	Repairs to Tandulwadi Musti Dhotri Walsang Achegaon Tilatigate Kanabas Bankalgi Sanjwad to join road S.H. 213 MDR 44 KM 22/00 to 43/00 Dist-Solapur	**Rs. 65.00 Lack**
3	Repairs to Alur Bhurikawathe Wagdari Shirwal Akkalkot Jeur Karajagi Mangrul Tadwal Mundhewadi SH 211 road KM 176/500 to 221/00 Dist-Solapur	**Rs. 80.00 Lack**

NOTED:- Details of Tender documents will be available and downloaded online directly from the Government of Maharashtra e-tendering website **http://mahatenders.gov.in** & **http://mahapwd.com** as under.
Above Tender Notice is displayed on P.W.D. website **www.mahapwd.com From date 21/9/2018.**

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Public Work Division, Solapur.

DGIPR/2018/2019/3105

We must create global quality brands: NITI CEO

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As Indian companies take gigantic strides in penetrating global markets with the country having one of the highest growth rates in major economies, India must create globally recognisable super brands.

"It is a great challenge to India with our tremendous potential, to create awareness and acceptance of Indian brands globally. While India has had success in creating global awareness for Yoga, Bollywood and Cricket, which are great examples of global brand building, we need many more efforts to popularise Indian brands to become global consumer brands. I think perfection, passion, resources and excellence are a must to create brands at the global level," Amitabh Kant, chief executive officer (CEO) of NITI Aayog said. He was speaking at Superbrands Awards Event in New Delhi.

Superbrands India pays tribute to exceptional brands across sectors including FMCG, Auto, Healthcare, Logistics, Cement and Retail among. This year 56 brand received Superbrands awards.

"Indian branding is continuously innovating and digital branding has become as important if not more than conventional branding. Branding in India across sectors has been continuously evolving and is creating the right noise to reach their TG. Superbrands India will continue to mine out the top brands in India doing exceptional branding and honor them with Superbrands seal," Geetanjali Anand,CMD Superbrands India said.

Superbrands India is a licensee of Superbrands Worldwide, that operates in 86 countries. It was launched in India in 2002 by Anmol Dar, and has stood its ground as the most respected arbiter of branding through the years.

Superbrands status is given to a brand through a rigorous research and selection process with an impeccable reputation of fairplay. Entry to the Superbrands programme is strictly by invitation.

The brands selected are awarded the Superbrands Awards Seal, which can be used to symbolize their superbrand status. Research by Nielson has found that consumers are 74% more likely to purchase products or services displaying the Superbrands Awards Seal.

The Superbrands Coffee Table book, is brought out once in every 18 months and is the only platform designed to tell the compelling stories and render case histories of these outstanding brands that have been selected for superbrand status. The organisation believes that people gain a greater appreciation of the discipline of branding and a greater admiration of the brands themselves through the coffee table book.

REC launches IRNSS VTS MODULE-U TRAQ

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ramakrishna Electro Component Pvt Ltd Group (REC) on Friday launched VTS (Vehicle Tracking System), under UTRAQ brand, which is one of kind Module that will run on Indian Satellite. UTRAQ is an endeavor to replace the currently in use GPS application that is working on US Satellites. UTRAQ is owned by Ramakrishna Electro Component & manufactured by Shanghai Mobiletek.

The launch event was attended by Antrix (a commercial arm of ISRO) Executive Director (operations) Suma DR, Shanghai Mobiletek Managing Director Ms Sherry Xu, along with Ramakrishna Group Chairman Satish Luthra.

This module is IRNSS compliant for VTS application. IRNSS is Govt of India initiative under ISRO. IRNSS User Receiver module is integrated with front-end chipset and embedded high performance ARM9processor from leading chipset manufacturer. It has internal S RAM, UART, USB, CAN and 10 Bit ADCs.

U-TRAQ launched two models L100 & L110. These are GPS receivers Modules based on IRNSS supported by GAGAN/NaviC signals, designed using L5 and S bands. But in our U-TRAQ GPS receiver Modules are designed for two RF bands:L5 frequency and L1 frequency, L5 frequency which is NaviC Frequency and L1 frequency which is GPS/GLONAS frequency. Where L100 has dual band patch antennas connected to two RF inputs of the board which receives the signals from the satellite. And L110 designed for use with external Antenna.

Commenting on the launch of UTRAQ, Managing Director, Rama Krishna Electro Pvt. Ltd. (REC), Shivang Luthra pointed out that it will be changing the way of conventional tracking that is done in the past. We are providing customers with various features of working with L5(IRNSS) band and L1 (GPS and GNSS) band. Major change we are anticipating is that the VTS industry will be changing their designs as in the coming year it will be mandatory from GOI to use IRNSS device.

RBI announces norms for co-origination of priority sector loans by banks, NBFCs

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank on Friday announced guidelines for co-origination of priority sector loans by banks and NBFCs with a view to enhancing flow of funds to the sector at competitive rates.

As per the norms issued by the RBI for all scheduled commercial banks (excluding Regional Rural Banks and Small Finance Banks) and Non-Banking Financial Companies - Non-Deposit taking-Systemically Important (NBFC-ND-SIs), the sharing of risks and rewards between these entities should be in a manner that enables appropriate alignment of respective business objectives, as per their mutual agreement.

The co-origination arrangement should entail joint contribution of credit by both lenders at the facility level.

"Based on the respective interest rates and proportion of risk sharing, a single blended interest rate should be offered to the ultimate borrower in case of fixed rate loans. In the scenario of floating interest rates, a weighted average of the benchmark interest rates in proportion to the respective loan contribution, should be offered," it said.

It is envisaged that the benefit of low-cost funds from banks and lower cost of operations of NBFC would be passed on to the ultimate beneficiary through the blended rate/weighted average rate, it said.

"In this regard, banks/NBFCs shall provide all the information like loan details including interest rate and other charges, details of risk sharing arrangement, etc., as and when called for by the Reserve Bank of India," it said.

As per the co-origination model whereby bank is not financing MFIs (micro finance institutions) and NBFCs for on-lending to ultimate borrower rather both of them join at each under-writing and loan level thereby sharing the loan amount in agreed percentage.

"The bank can claim priority sector status in respect of its share of credit while engaging in the co-origination arrangement. However, the priority sector assets on the bank's books should at all times be without recourse to the NBFC. Further, the loans extended by foreign banks under the co-origination framework shall be restricted only to loans qualifying as priority sector assets," it said.

With regard to grievance redressal, it said, any complaint registered by a borrower with the NBFC/bank shall also be shared with them; in case the complaint is not resolved within 30 days, the borrower would have the option to escalate the same with the concerned Banking Ombudsman/Ombudsman for NBFCs.

Irdai raises minimum driver insurance cover to ₹15 lakh

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Insurance regulator Irdai has raised the minimum insurance cover for owner-driver to ₹15 lakh for a premium of ₹750 per annum, a move to provide some succour to road accident victims.

Currently, the capital sum insured (CSI) under this section for motorised two-wheelers and private cars/commercial vehicles is ₹1 lakh and ₹2 lakh, respectively.

However, a few general insurers have been offering add-on covers under package policies with higher CSI over and above the stipulated on payment of additional premium.

The regulator directed all general insurers to provide a minimum CSl of ₹15 lakh under Compulsory Personal Accident (CPA) cover for owner-driver under Liability Only to all classes of vehicles at the premium rate of ₹750 per annum for annual policy.

This rate will be valid until further notice, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) said in a circular.

"A higher CSI may be provided over and above ₹15,00,000 through Optional Covers under Liability Only and under Section lll of Package Policies/ Bundled Covers on payment of additional premium at the option of the insured," it said.

This move by the regulator of enhancing the capital sum insured ofc Compulsory Personal Accident Cover for owner – driver to ₹15 lakh is a step in the right direction, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance MD and CEO Tapan Singhel said.

"I believe it's important to have an appropriate personal accident cover, for an effective financial support to the policyholders and their family members if she/he is disabled or succumbs to injury due to an accident. This will address the issue of underinsurance to some extent. We as a company support and welcome this move," he added.

Insurers may start issuing such covers effective from the date of receipt of this circular even while ensuring that the filing for these is done under File and Use Guidelines on or before October 25, 2018, the circular added.

Rupee firms up by 17 paise to 72.20 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee continued its bullish trend for the second day, rising 17 paise to end at 72.20 against the US dollar on sustained selling of the American currency even as local equities witnessed a high volatility.

The domestic currency hit an intra-day high of 71.70 before giving back early strong gains swayed by domestic stock volatility.

The Indian unit briefly touched a low of 72.48.

Although, forex market reacted muted to the 'escalation' in the US-China trade conflict with no meaningful safe haven bid for the dollar as investors adopted a "wait and see" approach ahead of China's possible retaliation to the latest round of US tariffs.

The dollar's weakness against some currencies overseas on easing trade war concerns also supported the recovery momentum.

The home currency has recovered a healthy 78 paise in the last two sessions after plunging to life lows early this week.

The Indian currency has witnessed a massive plunge in the recent past due to rising trade and current account deficits in the wake of rising crude oil prices.

The benchmark 10-year sovereign yield, however, inched up to 8.08 per cent.

Meanwhile, it was an exceptionally volatile day for Indian bourses which witnessed their biggest intra-day crash in the recent past before wiping out some of the losses after a huge fall in mortgage lender DHFL stock triggered a knee-jerk sell-offs in non-banking financial companies and jolted investor sentiment.

The flagship Sensex ended 279 points lower at 36,841.60, while broader Nifty shed 91 points to 11,143.10.

On the energy front, crude prices were mixed after falling in the previous session as US President Donald Trump urged OPEC to lower crude prices ahead of its meeting in Algeria this weekend.

Benchmark brent crude futures were at USD 79.53 a barrel in early Asian trading.

Extending its recovery momentum, the rupee opened with solid 53 paise gains at 71.84 against Tuesday's close of 72.37 at the inter-bank foreign exchange (forex) market on sustained dollar unwinding by exporters and banks.

It strengthened to hit an intra-day high of 71.70 before giving away its strong gains largely reacting to stock market volatility.

After drifting to a session low of 72.48, the local unit finally managed to pull back towards the tail-end trade and settled the day at 72.20, showing a gain of 17 paise, or 0.23 per cent.

The Financial Benchmarks India private limited (FBIL), meanwhile, fixed the reference rate for the dollar at 71.8489 and for the euro at 84.6830.

In the cross-currency trade, the rupee also gained further ground against the Japanese yen to close at 64.06 per 100 yens from 64.42 earlier.

The home unit, however, fell back against the British Pound to finish at 95.28 per pound from 95.07 and also dropped against the euro to end at 84.96 as compared to 84.50.

On the global front, the dollar was trading slightly higher against other currencies while the Japanese yen was lower as investors eyed trade war tensions.

The pound slumped amid Brexit uncertainty after the eurozone manufacturing PMI came in lower than expected.

Against a basket of other currencies, the dollar index is up at 93.69.In forward market, premium for dollar declined due to sustained receiving from exporters.

The benchmark six-month forward premium payable in January 2019 moved down to 113-115 paise from 115-117 paise and the far-forward July contract also eased to 271.50-273.50 paise from 273-275 paise.

Govt to increase duty incentives for exports of milk products

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government has again decided to increase duty benefits for exports of milk and certain milk products under MEIS scheme to boost their overseas shipments, an official said.

Earlier in July, the Government enhanced the duty benefits to 10 per cent under the Merchandise Export from India Scheme (MEIS) for certain agriculture and dairy sector items.

"Now, it has been decided to increase export incentives on milk and certain milk products from 10 per cent to 20 per cent for about four months up to January 12 next year under MEIS," the government official said.

The 28 items covered under the enhanced incentives include cheese, whole milk, skimmed milk, milk and milk food for babies, condensed milk, yoghurt, butter milk and whey.

The Department of Revenue has made additional financial allocation of ₹21.40 crore to meet the expenditure to be incurred on these incentives.

"Notification in this regard will be released soon by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)," the official added.

The move assumes significance on account of milk crisis in Maharasthra. Milk growers had strongly protested in some parts of Maharasthra due to fall in milk prices amid huge supply.

Commerce and Industry Minister Suresh Prabhu had earlier taken up the matter with his finance counterpart and had written for increase in export incentives from 10 per cent to 20 per cent.

Although the commerce ministry had sought ₹57.04 crore for whole of the year but the Department of Revenue allocated only ₹21.40 crore.

I-T officials conducting survey since Sep 19: Jet Airways

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Crisis-hit Jet Airways on Friday said income tax officials are conducting a survey of its premises since September 19 and the shares plunged six per cent on the bourses.

The airline, battling with financial woes, is already under the lens of Sebi and the corporate affairs ministry for various violations, including alleged corporate governance lapses.

On Wednesday, sources said the I-T Department is inspecting the books to ascertain whether there have been falsification of accounts, suspicious dealings and other possible violations.

In a regulatory filing Friday, the carrier said I-T officials are conducting a survey of the premises of the company since September 19.

"The company is fully cooperating with the authorities and responding to the queries by the income tax authorities," it said.

As part of the survey operation, tax sleuths only visit the business premises of a firm and check their books of accounts.

The scrip tumbled 5.96 per cent to close at ₹229.70 on the BSE.

On Wednesday, sources said the I-T Department is inspecting the books to ascertain whether there have been falsification of accounts, suspicious dealings and other possible violations.

In Mumbai, Minister of State for Corporate Affairs P P Chaudhary said the government would do "whatever is required" after completing inspection of books of Jet Airways.

Last month, the corporate affairs ministry ordered an inspection of "books and papers" of Jet Airways.

"The inquiry is not yet concluded. The inspection (of books) has not been completed... Once it is completed the government will do whatever is required," he told reporters on the sidelines of an event in Mumbai.

He also noted that inspection of books and papers is a normal routine work.

To a query on whether the ministry was looking to expand the scope of inquiry as Income Tax Department is also carrying out a survey at the premises of Jet Airways, the minister said once the investigation is complete, the necessary findings would be recorded by officials concerned.

On the alleged money siphoning over ₹5,000 crore by the airline's promoter Naresh Goyal, he said that would be "subject matter of Sebi" but did not elaborate on the issues.

Earlier this year, Sebi sought information from Jet Airways following a complaint of alleged fraudulent practices.

In May, the airline informed stock exchanges that in April the regulator sought views of the statutory auditors and the audit committee on certain allegations.

Canon eyes robust growth in India, explores opportunities in new segments

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Japanese imaging products major Canon is expecting a robust growth in India, one of its top five markets for DSLR cameras, on account of its entry into newer segments and introduction of advanced technologies, a top company official has said.

The company is exploring new opportunities in business segments like security cameras through its group firm Axis Communications and in health sector with its range of diagnostic medical imaging solutions.

"Canon Inc, Tokyo is expecting very rapid growth of the Indian market in terms of photography backed by population growth and economic growth and future development of the photo industry. Our expectation to Indian market is quite significant," Yoshiyuki Mizoguchi, Group Executive - ICB Products Group, Canon Inc, told.

Presently, India is among top five markets for Canon along with the US, China, Japan and Germany.

Canon India, which is eyeing a turnover of ₹13,500 crore in annual sales by FY 2020, is expecting a sustained growth in both B2B and B2C segments.

According to Canon India President and CEO Kazutada Kobayashi, the group is already present in the rapidly growing security camera market through group firm Axis Communications, which is gradually expanding its portfolio here.

"We are covering more high end products... Quality wise, we are a leading player in the world," Kobayashi said.

Canon is also exploring opportunities in semiconductor business in India.

Sebi issues revised KYC norms for foreign portfolio investors

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Markets regulator Sebi Friday issued revised KYC norms for foreign portfolio investors, wherein resident as well as non-resident Indians have been permitted to hold non-controlling stake in such entities.

Two circulars pertaining to KYC (Know Your Client) requirements and eligibility conditions for FPIs have been issued.

These norms have been put in place weeks after a panel suggested various changes to the guidelines proposed earlier, amid concerns in certain quarters that overseas funds might face difficulties in ensuring compliance.

NRIs, OCIs (Overseas Citizens of India) and RIs (Resident Indians) have been permitted to hold non-controlling stake in FPIs. There would also be no restriction on them to manage non-investing FPIs Sebi-registered offshore funds as well as registered investment managers, according to the regulator.

These entities would be allowed to be constituents of FPIs subject to certain conditions. If single and aggregate NRI/OCI/RI holding is below 25 per cent and 50 per cent, respectively, of the assets under management in the FPI, then such entities would be permitted to be constituents of the FPI.

According to Sebi, FPIs can be controlled by Investment Managers (IMs) which are controlled and/ or owned by NRI, OCI, or RI. In this regard, the conditions include that the investment manager is appropriately regulated in its home jurisdiction and registers itself with Sebi as non-investing FPI.

Among others, a non-investing FPI can be directly or indirectly owned or controlled by a NRI, OCI or RI.

"The restriction that NRI/ OCI/ RI should not be in control of FPI shall also not apply to FPIs which are 'offshore funds' for which no-objection certificate has been provided by the board in terms of mutual fund regulations," Sebi noted.

Existing FPIs and new applicants would be given two years from the date of the new norms coming into force or date of registration, whichever is later. In case of temporary breach, a time period of 90 days would be given to ensure compliance.

The watchdog said that FPIs under category II and III have to maintain a list of beneficial owners and the same has to be provided to it.

Further, additional KYC documentation requirements for beneficial owners have been done away with for government-related entities that come under Category I FPIs.

Beneficial owners are the natural persons who ultimately own or control an FPI. The FPIs have been categorised into three classes based on their risk profile.

US sanctions Chinese military for buying Russian weapons

AFP ■ WASHINGTON

The United States hit a Chinese military organisation with punishing financial sanctions for buying Russian fighter jets and missiles as it stepped up pressure on Moscow over its "malign activities". It was the first time the Trump administration targeted a third country with its CAATSA sanctions, designed to punish Russia for its seizure of Crimea and other activities.

The State Department said it was applying the 2017 legislation against the Equipment Development Department of the Chinese Ministry of Defence for its purchase of Russian Sukhoi Su-35 fighter jets and S-400 surface-to-air missiles.

At the same time, the State Department also announced it was placing 33 Russian intelligence and military-linked actors on its sanctions blacklist under the CAATSA rules.

"The ultimate target of these sanctions is Russia," a senior administration official told journalists, insisting on anonymity. "CAATSA sanctions in this context are not intended to undermine the defense capabilities of any particular country. They are aimed at imposing costs on Russia in response to its malign activities."

CAATSA, or the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act, was passed in 2017 as a tool that gives the Trump administration more ways to target Russia, Iran and North Korea with economic and political sanctions.

With regard to Russia, CAATSA arises from the country's "aggression in Ukraine, annexation of Crimea, cyber intrusions and attacks, interference in the 2016 elections, and other malign activities," the State Department said.

"We will continue to vigorously implement CAATSA and urge all countries to curtail relationships with Russia's defense and intelligence sectors, both of which are linked to malign activities worldwide," it said. The

senior official said EDD and its director, Li Shangfu, were hit with sanctions because of the purchases made from Rosoboronexport, Russia's main arms export entity already on the CAATSA blacklist for its support of the Assad regime in Syria.

The sanctions freeze any of EDD's and Li's assets in US jurisdictions. They restrict EDD's access to global financial markets by blocking foreign exchange transactions under US jurisdiction or any transactions in the US financial system.

The Russians named for CAATSA blacklisting have all been named previously under other US sanctions regimes. They include private paramilitary contractor PMC Wagner, and Russian Defense Ministry procurement group Oboronlogistika, and KNAAP, Russia's largest aircraft manufacturer.

They also include 25 Russians and three Russian companies who were indicted over the past year by Russia collusion investigator Robert Mueller for their involvement in political meddling and hacking during the 2016 election.

In addition, the chief of the Russian military intelligence body GRU, Igor Korobov, and deputy chief Sergey Gizunov, were also hit with the CAATSA sanctions.

Russia: US playing with fire by imposing new sanctions

Moscow: The US' latest batch of sanctions targeting Russian businesses and China undermine global stability and are akin to playing with fire, officials here said on Friday.

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov's comments came after Washington on Thursday imposed a new batch of sanctions, hitting 33 of Russia's most high-profile citizens with ties to the Kremlin.

Ryabkov said the sanctions were aimed at Russian defence organisations, politicians and businessmen.

"It would be good for them to recall the notion of global stability, which they recklessly upset by whipping up tensions in Russian-US relations," Ryabkov said in a statement cited by TASS news agency. "It's foolish to play with fire, because things could get dangerous."

"We've been keeping a close eye on how the US applies it sanctions against our country. This seems to have turned into some sort of national sport, with yesterday's anti-Russian measures becoming the 60th since 2011.

"Every new round of sanctions shows that our enemy's previous attempts to pressure Russia have failed to yield any result. Numerous US blacklists duplicate each other more and more. That's funny, but this is true," the minister said. ***IANS***

China protests, warns of consequences

Beijing: An "outraged" China on Friday lodged a diplomatic protest with the US for imposing punitive sanctions on its military unit for buying Russian weapons, warning of "consequences" if the sanctions are not revoked.

The US State Department said on Thursday that the purchases of Russian Sukhoi Su-35 fighter jets and S-400 surface-to-air missiles by China's Equipment Development Department (EDD) of China's Ministry of Defence violated US sanctions on Russia.

Both the EDD and its director, Li Shangfu, have been named in Thursday's sanctions. It is the first time the Trump administration targeted a third country with its Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act of 2017 (CAATSA), designed to punish Russia for its seizure of Crimea and other activities.

Reacting to the US move, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said, "China is strongly outraged by this unreasonable action of the US and lodged stern representations".

"What the US has done gravely violated the basis norms governing the international relations and harmed the state-to-state and military-to-military relations between the two sides," he said. ***PTI***

Trump drops civil tone, slams Kavanaugh accuser credibility

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Abandoning his previous restraint, President Donald Trump challenged by name the woman accusing his Supreme Court nominee of sexual assault on Friday, declaring that if the alleged attack was so terrible she would have reported it to law enforcement.

Trump's change in tone — and apparent shift in tactics — came as Christine Blasey Ford's lawyers negotiate with the Senate Judiciary Committee on the terms for her possible testimony next week in a dramatic showdown over her accusation that threatens Judge Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation.

Trump tweeted, "I have no doubt that, if the attack on Dr. Ford was as bad as she says, charges would have been immediately filed with local Law Enforcement Authorities by either her or her loving parents. I ask that she bring those filings forward so that we can learn date, time, and place!"

The President previously had avoided naming Ford or plainly casting doubt on her account. Ford alleges Kavanaugh sexually assaulted her more than 30 years ago when they were teenagers. Kavanaugh has denied the allegation.

The accusation has jarred the 53-year-old conservative jurist's prospects for winning confirmation, which until Ford's emergence last week

had seemed all but certain. It has also bloomed into a broader clash over whether women alleging abuse are taken seriously by men and how both political parties address such claims with the advent of the #MeToo movement — a theme that could echo in this November's elections for control of Congress.

In another tweet, Trump, who was in Las Vegas for various events, wrote: "Judge Brett Kavanaugh is a fine man, with an impeccable reputation, who is under assault by radical left wing politicians who don't want to know the answers, they just want to destroy and delay. Facts don't matter. I go through this with them every single day in D.C."

Ford is willing to tell her story — but only if agreement can be reached on "terms that are fair and which ensure her safety," her lawyer said Thursday. She said Ford needs time to make sure her family is secure, prepare her testimony and travel to Washington.

UNGA address: US Prez to focus on protecting American sovereignty

United Nations: President Donald Trump will talk about protecting US sovereignty, expanding relations with countries that share similar values and call for a halt to the spread of weapons of mass destruction during next week's gathering of world leaders at the UN General Assembly, his top diplomat to the UN has said.

Trump will participate in a number of UN General Assembly (UNGA) events and bilateral meetings from September 24-27. Trump will also hold bilateral meetings with Secretary General Antonio Guterres, President of General Assembly María Fernanda Espinosa Garces, leaders of South Korea, Egypt, France, Israel, Japan and the UK.

Trump is "looking forward to talking about the foreign policy successes the US has had over the last year and where we are going to go from here. He wants to talk about protecting US sovereignty," and expanding relations with countries that share similar values, US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley said.

Haley cited the example of US decisions to exit UN's Global Migration Compact and Paris Climate Change Accord, saying "all of these things that we felt like were mandating things on the US, those aren't things we want to be involved in. We really value sovereignty of the country."

May demands EU respect in Brexit 'impasse'

London: British Prime Minister Theresa May on Friday issued the European Union (EU) with an ultimatum to come up with an alternative plan for Brexit and treat the UK with respect in the negotiations.

Her televised statement from Downing Street came after a day of upheavals in Salzburg at Austria, during which European Council Head Donald Tusk announced that the UK's Brexit plans were unworkable.

May hit back at the EU leaders for rejecting her plan with no alternative at this "late stage of negotiations", saying it was "not acceptable". "I will not overturn the result of the referendum nor will I break up my country," a defiant British PM said.

"Yesterday Donald Tusk said our proposals would undermine the single market. He didn't explain how in any detail or make any counter-proposal. So we are at an impasse," she said.

Her statement further noted: "Throughout this process I have treated the EU with nothing but respect. The UK expects the same, a good relationship at the end of this process depends on it.

"At this late stage in the negotiations, it is not acceptable to simply reject the other side's proposals without a detailed explanation and counter proposals. So we now need to hear from the EU what the real issues are and what their alternative is so we can discuss them. Until we do, we cannot make progress."

She said the two sides were still "a long way apart" on two big issues: the post-Brexit economic relationship between the UK and EU, and the "backstop" for the Irish border, if there is a delay in implementing that relationship.

The two options being offered by the EU for the long-term relationship — for the UK to stay in the European Economic Area and customs union or a basic free trade agreement — were not acceptable, she said. May said the first option would "make a mockery of the referendum", while the second would mean Northern Ireland would be "permanently separated economically from the rest of the UK by a border down the Irish Sea."

Reiterating her Brexit stand of "no deal is better than a bad deal", May said the best outcome would be to leave with a deal and the UK had put forward a third way — her Chequers plan, which Tusk rejected on Thursday on the ground that it would undermine the single market. ***PTI***

Shia Muslims attend a procession to mark Ashoura in Karachi on Friday AP

5 people, 3 of them infants, stabbed at day care centre in NY

New York: Police say three infants and two adults were stabbed at an overnight day care centre in New York City. All are in critical but stable condition. Authorities say the stabbings happened just before 4 am Friday at a home in Queens. They said a three-day-old girl and a one-month-old girl were stabbed in the abdomen, and a 20-day-old girl suffered cuts to her ear, chin and lip. Police said the father of a child at the centre and a woman who worked there were also stabbed.

A 52-year-old woman was found in the basement of the home in the Flushing neighbourhood. Police say she had slashed her own wrist and is in custody at a hospital. Police say a butcher knife and meat cleaver were found at the scene. A motive hasn't been determined. It isn't clear whether the day care center was licensed. ***AP***

At least 126 dead in Lake Victoria ferry disaster

Nairobi: The death toll in a ferry capsize in Lake Victoria climbed to 126 on Friday, as Tanzanian rescue workers pressed on with the search to find scores more people feared drowned.

The MV Nyerere may have been carrying as many as 200 passengers — double the ferry's capacity — when it capsized close to the pier on Ukara Island on Thursday, according to reports on state media.

Witnesses reached by *AFP* said the ferry sank when passengers rushed to one side to disembark as it approached the dock. The death toll rose to 126 by mid-afternoon Friday, according to Tanzania's transport Minister.

"We are sad to report there are 126 dead," Isack Kamwele told state television, adding that a further update would be provided at 6pm local time.

Mwanza governor John Mongella had earlier said the number of survivors was 40, but it was unclear whether any new survivors had been found since rescue operations resumed with police and army divers on Friday morning. ***AFP***

GLOBE TROTTING

VIETNAMESE PRESIDENT TRAN DAI QUANG DEAD

Hanoi: Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang died on Friday at the age of 61 after a serious illness, state media reported. "President Tran Dai died at 10:05 am on the 21st of September at the military hospital,"the official *Vietnam News Agency* reported Friday.

PARDON REPORTERS: UN CHIEF TO MYANMAR

United Nations: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Friday said he hoped that Myanmar's Government will pardon two Reuters journalists who were sentenced to seven years in jail after they reported on massacres in Rakhine state.

'MOON'S N DIPLOMACY DANGEROUS GAMBLE'

Seoul: South Korean President Moon Jae-in has embarked on a "dangerous gamble", analysts said, after he secured only minimal concessions from Kim Jong Un to reboot the North's nuclear negotiations with Washington.

MOST NATIONS TO MISS CHRONIC DISEASES TARGET

Paris: More than half of all countries will likely fail to hit the UN target of reducing premature deaths from a quartet of chronic diseases by a third before 2030, researchers said on Friday. Cancers, heart and blood-vessel disease, diabetes, and chronic respiratory disease combined to kill 12.5 million people aged 30 to 70 worldwide in 2016, they reported in a major study.

Dozens of ex-graft convicts to run in Indonesia elections

Jakarta: Dozens of Indonesians who served jail time for corruption are set to run for public office, the country's electoral agency said Friday, as the world's largest Muslim-majority nation kicks off campaigning at the weekend.

The ex-convicts are among more than 8,000 people vying for seats in parliament and regional councils with 186 million registered voters eligible to cast a ballot in national polls on April 17.

Election campaigning starts from Sunday. Indonesia is riddled with corruption at all levels of society and its House of Representatives is widely viewed as one of its most graft-riddled institutions.

However, the Supreme Court ruled last week that 38 people previously convicted of graft could run for office, despite their criminal records. The decision came after Indonesia's electoral agency tried to block their eligibility.

"We were actually against this, but since the Supreme Court gave them the green light to run, there's nothing we can do," General Elections Commission head Arief Budiman told AFP on Friday. ***AFP***

Sharing is contagious: Study

New York: While we have always heard that sharing is caring, a new study has shown that an individual's tendency to be generous depends on how much people around him or her are sharing.

The findings showed it is not that people, who like to share, choose to live with those having same habits. Rather, they adapt their own sharing tendencies so as to match that of the group they currently live in.

In other words, sharing, being contagious, is driven by local group norms and behaviour and not individual generosity.

"We were surprised to find

that people do not have a stable tendency to cooperate and are instead influenced by those around them," said Coren Apicella from the University of Pennsylvania.

"If you find yourself surrounded by selfish people, you don't necessarily have to find a new crowd, but by being generous yourself, you can get others to be generous as well," added Kristopher Smith, from the University of Pennsylvania.

The study, published in Current Biology, is based on Hadza hunter-gatherer people in Tanzania — also one of the last populations left on the planet.

During the study, the team visited 56 camps in Tanzania over six years. They asked nearly 400 Hadza adults to play public goods game where, instead of money, they were asked to consider sharing straws of honey, their favourite food.

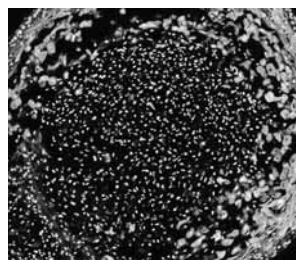
Each person started with four straws, which they could put toward the whole group or not. The honey straws contributed to the group got tripled. ***IANS***

1st human oesophagus created in lab using stem cells

New York: In a first, US scientists have used stem cells to grow human oesophagus — known as the food pipe — in the laboratory, an advance that will enable personalised disease diagnosis, regenerative therapies.

A team from the Cincinnati Children's Hospital in Ohio successfully generated fully formed human oesophageal organoids — tiny version of an organ produced in vitro in three dimensions — using pluripotent stem cells (PSCs).

PSCs are master cells that can potentially produce any cell or tissue the body needs to repair itself. The oesophageal organoids grew to a length of about 300-800 micrometres in



about two months.

"Disorders of the oesophagus and trachea are prevalent enough in people that organoid models of human oesophagus could be greatly beneficial," said lead investigator Jim Wells, from the hospital.

"In addition to being a new model to study birth defects like oesophageal atresia, the organoids can be used to study diseases like oeosinophilic oesophagitis and Barrett's metaplasia, or to bioengineer genetically matched oesophageal tissue for individual patients," he added.

In the study, published in journal Cell Stem Cell, team focused on the gene Sox2 and its associated protein — known to trigger oesophageal conditions when their function is disrupted.

The scientists used mice, frogs and human tissue cultures to identify other genes and molecular pathways regulated by Sox2 during oesophagus formation. During critical stages of embryonic development, the Sox2 gene blocks the programming and action of genetic pathways that direct cells to become respiratory instead of oesophageal. The Sox2 protein inhibits the signalling of a molecule called Wnt and promotes the formation and survival of oesophageal tissues.

Conversely, absence of Sox2 during development process in mice can result in oesophageal agenesis — a condition in which oesophagus terminates in a pouch and does not connect to stomach. Those tests showed bioengineered and biopsies tissues were strikingly similar in composition, team said. Cincinnati Children's scientists have previously used PSCs to bioengineer human intestine, stomach, colon and liver. ***IANS***

New nano-filter cleans water 100 times faster: Scientists

Canberra: Australian scientists said on Friday they have developed a nano-filter that can clean contaminated water 100 times faster than the current technology, pointing to better access to the crucial resource worldwide.

The filter removes oils and heavy metals including lead from water via an alloy that combines gallium-based liquid metals with aluminium, helping to absorb the contaminants with aluminium oxide compounds, RMIT University said in a statement about the innovation that also involved researchers from the University of New South Wales, reports *Xinhua* news agency.

Water contamination remains a significant challenge globally, with one in nine people without access to clean water close to home, and heavy metal contamination "causes serious health problems and children are particularly vulnerable", RMIT researcher Ali Zavabeti said.

"Our new nano-filter is sustainable, environmentally-friendly, scalable and low cost," said Zavabeti, whose team's findings were published in the Advanced Functional Materials scientific journal.

"Previous research has already shown the materials we used are effective in absorbing contaminants like mercury, sulphates and phosphates.

"With further development and commercial support, this new nano-filter could be a cheap and ultra-fast solution to the problem of dirty water." ***IANS***

SHORT CIRCUITS

VARUN SHARMA

Since I was a kid, I have admired Govinda sir and it was nothing less than a dream come true to dance with him on-screen for the song *Chotey bade* from the forthcoming comedy movie *Fryday*. I never thought that he will become my Bade and me his Chote.

HARD KAUR

A large part of my struggle was because I was a girl, an Indian girl, to be more precise. People couldn't believe I could be a rapper and I was asked to prove myself just because it was so male-dominated. I have always worked on breaking away from all the stereotypes. I worked hard to prove people wrong.

DJ SHAAN

When I heard Celina (Sharma), this song (*Say yes*) just had to happen. I was astonished by the maturity in her voice. For someone so young, she has definitely put a lot of hard work in her singing career already which drove me towards making this song with her.

DAMIEN CHAZELLE

I wanted to know about the first moon landing and what it felt like to be the man who put the first footprint on the moon. It's (*First Man*) an emotional story of Neil Armstrong who's trying to be a father and a husband while undergoing this cosmic journey in space.

LAUREN DIAGLE

You're sitting there with these awards and it's a beautiful. But everything that was happening in my ears was like, 'Oh my gosh, how do I maintain this responsibility, how do I uphold this level of expectation?'

THE MAN WHO STEPPED BACK

Actor GOVINDA is quite content in his undefined space, having traversed genres and establishing himself as a true entertainer. As he attempts a comeback with comedy yet again, he tells SAIMI SATTAR he swears by his mother's mantras — never get tired or use bad words

Gone are the bright orange, skin-tight trousers, multi-coloured shirts and blazers that were inspired by the hues of the sun. Dressed in a formal black three-piece, the only hint of the flashy Govinda of yore are the shiny, black, pointed shoes that have a self pattern consisting of squares. And there is a marked change in the man. One can see the exasperation in his face when he realises that having spoken non-stop for three hours, he would need to continue the exercise for at least another half-an-hour. However, the irritation does not filter down to his attitude – a far cry from the tales of tantrums and unprofessional behaviour that was whispered about earlier.

The actor is straightforward, greets you warmly with a something special for each individual and is philosophical about his take on life in the industry and outside. "You are a very good soul," he announces just as I begin to settle down. The pronouncement, he says, was prompted by the fact that he had eyed me patiently waiting my turn on the side.

The Virar ka Chokra, as he was popularly referred to at one time, has travelled a long distance from his humble origins and tough times while reinventing himself often – from an action hero to a romantic to one with impeccable comic timing – the last being where he found his mojo. And he credits it all to his mother. "She told me that you can't fashion idols from dry earth and that thought worked. The wet earth is connected to nature. If you connect your art to nature, you can find a lot of new characters. You can see heroes around you and you feel that it would be amazing to see them on the silver screen. If you close your fist or your mind, you can't express yourself. If you close your ear, then you can't say the truth. To begin with we need to open our minds, hearts, thoughts and keep the doors open," says the actor philosophically, looking out in the direction as if trying to recall a long forgotten story.

The actor, who with his string of comedies – *Raja Babu, Coolie No 1, Hero no 1, Partner, Saajan Chale Sasuraal* and more — was at one time practically considered a stress-buster by corporate India. "If I am the source of entertaining people and taking away their stress, I don't mind. But as far as a tag is concerned, it can change if someone does a strong film that compels people to accept them in a role. Akshay Kumar was a fighting hero, then he started doing comedies and now he has rebranded himself as someone who does nationalistic films," he explains.

An actor, who had a phenomenal 14 releases in 1989, 11 in 1988, nine in 1990 and 1994, seven in 1997, six each in 1992, 1995, 1998, 2000, most of which were blockbusters or close to it, Govinda has not been seen very often. His last outing an action film, *Aa Gaya Hero,* in 2017 failed to create much of an impact on the box office. So it is with two comedies, *Rangeel Raja* and *Fry Day,* a genre that he is best known for, that Govinda returns to the big screen. "These are family entertainers but at the same time they are tied to love and have an element of comedy. They will convey many messages in a funny manner. They will definitely have an indirectly serious side to it. Unlike the comedy in contemporary films, which is very direct, this is more subtle. *Mujhe shobha nahin deta woh,*" says the 53-year-old who likes Ranvir Singh among the newer lot for his comic timing and acting.

Besides comedy, it was his flair for dancing with gay abandon that set Govinda apart from the other heroes. Recalling the video of a university professor who was imitating his steps at a marriage, he chuckles. "He was dancing with his family during a marriage without a clue that it would become viral. Of the people who imitate me including actors, he comes the closest. *Pahunche huen baap hain woh,*" he says with a laugh which is reminiscent of the many films that he has acted in.

That's the effect he has had on people with his laugh-out-do-it-loud demeanour. A warmth which translated into a genial workspace where he worked with several hit *jodis* whether it was his pairing with Shakti Kapoor in 42 films "which made people roll with laughter", Kader Khan (41 films) or his heroines like Neelam and Karishma Kapoor (10 each). But did any of his friendships extend beyond the movies? Whatever was written about then, Govinda has now detached himself from all the speculation over his equations with people, men or women. "I couldn't understand the system of friendship — *vidhi, taur tariqe nahin samajh me nahin aate (*I do not understand the rulebook of social grace and manners). I just kept working. I couldn't afford time for cultivating relationships. Everyone in my family was struggling at that time. How we could move ahead in life was the struggle that I was faced with. We were trying to extricate ourselves from the tough times. So I had no time. My mother had made me promise at a very young age when I was 13 that I could not get tired or use bad words for anyone. That's all I did and do," he says, dispelling doubts that he had regrets in an industry considered punishing if you fell from its grace.

> 'IF I AM THE SOURCE OF ENTERTAINING PEOPLE AND TAKING AWAY THEIR STRESS, I DON'T MIND. BUT AS FAR AS A TAG IS CONCERNED, IT CAN CHANGE IF SOMEONE DOES A STRONG FILM THAT COMPELS PEOPLE TO ACCEPT THEM IN A ROLE'

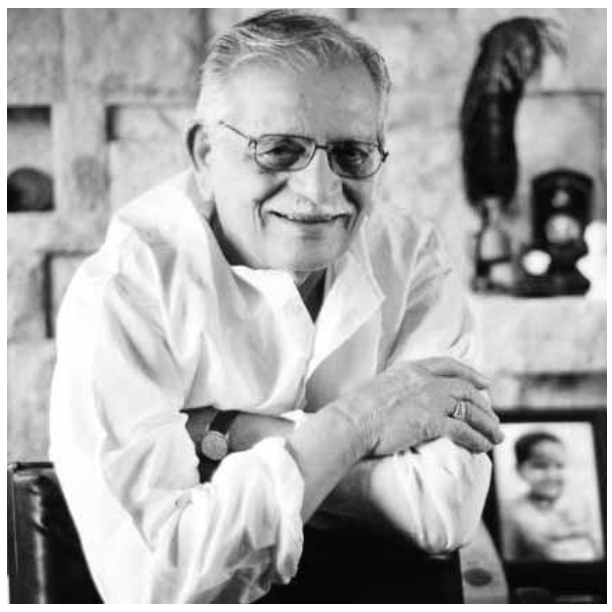
Another place where he briefly dabbled and then made a quiet exit was politics. He contested elections against Ram Naik who was considered invincible and won the Lok Sabha seat in 2004. "The way politics works, you should continue in it only if you understand it well. There is always action and reaction there. One should stay away if one does not have the courage to tolerate things. At that time, mummy had passed away and I was the father figure of a family where everyone was very young. I did not want to impose my burden on the others. If I had continued to do that, it would have been very selfish for they were suffering because of me and the environment," says the actor.

His closeness to his family, especially to his mother, who he invokes several times during the course of the conversation, is apparent. "She is divine. She kept the family together she sacrificed her entire life for the family." And he does not forget his journey, which was tougher as compared to youngsters today. "Now they can showcase their talent even through mobiles. There are more options available. There is no need for films or even Doordarshan to show that they can act like that or I look like this. Earlier we used to spend hours outside a producer's office and then you had to dance in their office. Then they looked you up and down and told us to lose weight. Now the world's best facilties are available on the phone. You have the theatre in your palm and can watch the movie as many times as you want. When I was young, just to watch a movie, *dande khaane padte the. Ram Ram*," he guffaws.

But there are other places too that have witnessed a change, content for instance. "It is very nice. With the web, a new medium has been found where you can follow your heart. The content is extremely modern and westernised. It will cut down the political part of the art," he says as he signs off.

Maestros set tone for hockey

AR RAHMAN and GULZAR have together created the official song for the Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup Bhubaneswar 2018



Grammy and Oscar winning composer A.R. Rahman, along with celebrated lyricist-poet Gulzar, has created the official song for Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup Bhubaneswar 2018.

The Odisha government roped in Rahman for composing the song titled "Jai hind hind, jai India", which is penned by Gulzar.

"Nothing says India more than our beloved sport hockey. And nothing is more exciting than the world's biggest hockey tournament happening right here, on our turf," Rahman said in a statement.

"It's heart-warming to see the entire nation pledge their heartbeats for hockey. As an extension of pledging our heartbeats, Gulzar sahab and I have created the World Cup song. A song that will excite and inspire, as also get you on your feet," added the music maestro.

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said: "We are delighted to have Rahman compose the song for the Odisha Hockey World Cup. It will be an honour to have him perform live in Bhubaneswar. He is the voice of India and now with this song, the voice of India is the voice of the world cup.

"We are also fortunate to have Gulzar sahab add his poetic magic to the composition. Coming together of these two legends will not only inspire the players but will also get the entire nation together to support this wonderful game unfolding in Odisha at the world cup."

The fourteenth edition of the prestigious hockey competition is scheduled to take place from November 28 to December 16.

Rahman is also directing the song's video, which will be shot across the hockey heartlands of India. The song is set to release at the Kalinga Stadium inauguration scheduled for early October. Rahman will also perform it live at the opening ceremony on November 27.

—IANS

Anushka's 'sweet' gift for Varun in Kolkata

Anushka Sharma and Varun Dhawan's camaraderie is there for everyone to see. The champion actors have also become friends while working on the much awaited *Sui Dhaaga - Made in India.* Anushka and Varun travelled to Kolkata for the promotions and Anushka surprised Varun by gifting him sweets from her favourite sweet shop in the city. Naturally Varun was thrilled.

"Anushka loves Bengali sweets and she always orders from a particular shop specialising in traditional and gourmet Bengali confectionaries. She bought *rabdi*, baked *rasgulla* and other traditional sweets for Varun and personally gifted him. Anushka has been fond of Varun for the professional actor and co-star that he is and wanted to give this as a sweet gesture to him. Varun was thrilled with Anushka's gift and feasted on them. He thanked Anushka for the sweets and the amazing co-star and friend that she has become," says a source from the event team in Kolkata.

Sui Dhaaga - Made in India is set to release on September 28.

Happy-go-lucky girl

Actor SHRADDHA KAPOOR is riding high on the success of *Stree* and is ready with her next, *Batti Gul Meter Chalu*

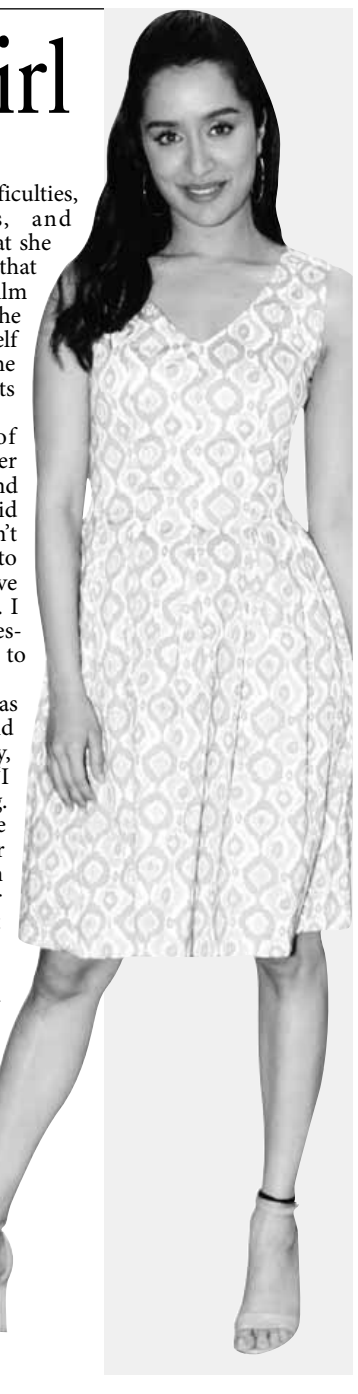


Photo: Pankaj Kumar

She's sitting pretty on the success of *Stree* and is looking forward to *Batti Gul Meter Chalu.* She hardly cares for the lows in between and is still gushy about savouring a *gulaab jamun.* And disregarding the grammar of public appearances, she chooses to have one then and there. But then Shraddha Kapoor sparkles only because she is easy-going and enjoys her work in the moment. "I've never focussed on results. Hits and misses are not in your hands. When a movie succeeds, it feels great. At the same time, I can't be complacent about it. I think it was really difficult when my first two films didn't do well. Even after that it was never a cake walk and that's when I understood that one should not be dependent on how a movie turns out. One should only focus on how hard you work and how best you can be at what you're doing. Take every chance you get in life. I find it shocking yet amazing that *Stree* has become a blockbuster," the actor told us.

Playing the happy-go-lucky Nauti in *Batti Gul Meter Chalu,* the 31-year-old actor said she is glad it comes after *Stree.* "There was some kind of mystery which was created for my character. For Nauti, there is no such type of mystery. She is very vocal and a fun person to be with. I think it's so fascinating that with each film, you get to play a different character and I had a great time playing Nauti," the actress said. Shraddha, who is up for experimenting with all genres and roles, said, "As an actor, I want to try all kinds of roles. I do not want to be boxed in even if it means taking risks. My whole idea is to actually to get out of my comfort zone and make a determined effort. I want to be a part of really memorable films."

Each film has its own difficulties, challenges, preparations, and demands. The actor said that she wouldn't classify things like, "that film would be easier or this film would be more difficult." She wants to keep improving herself and wants to do better than she was doing yesterday. She wants to put her best foot forward.

Shraddha, daughter of Shakti Kapoor, who is better known for his villainous and comic roles in Bollywood, said that family references didn't work for her at all. "I had to audition everytime and have also faced so much rejection. I have not actually had a quintessential star kid debut. I had to earn my part," added she.

And for somebody who has gotten linked to co-stars and industrywallahs consistently, she feels each is to his own. "I feel that our society is evolving. Nowadays so many people are getting married in their later years. Living in is legal even in India. One must do whatever makes one happy and not subscribe to anybody's expectations."

As for her co-actor Shahid Kapoor with whom she has done her second film, she says, "It's really nice to be back again. When you know someone, there's a comfort zone that comes in, and he's a fantastic actor, sincere and gives his everything to whatever he does. It was really nice working with him again," Shraddha shared.

ENCOUNTER 20 MINUTES

'MANTO IS AN IDEOLOGY'

Director NANDITA DAS shares how important it is to speak up and why the writer is still relevant. By CHAHAK MITTAL

The Partition of 1947 wasn't just a passing event in the history of India and Pakistan. It is a memory that is still fresh in the conscience of those who had witnessed it. And for those who haven't, there have been a number of stories and documentaries that tell the tales of that brutal period.

Writer Saadat Hasan Manto's stories are among those that remind the people of the two nations about the struggles of those times.

It took Nandita six years to complete *Manto*, and finally get it on the screens. But what is it that took so long? "Now when I watch it again I feel even more than this could have also been done," she says. "When you have to dig deep like this, you need time to bring all the fine details to the fore. I wanted to be true and authentic to today's period. I wrote many drafts and took help from many people," she says.

She created a Lahore in India and searching for locales that fit the bill was a difficult process. "It has all been very challenging but also enriching. I believe that Manto is not just a film but an ideology. We can see whatever is happening around the world and that we are being divided on the basis of caste, religion, gender and nationality. And Manto through his stories had already depicted such discrimination and issues which we have been increasingly forgetting today. This was my reason for making the film," says the filmmaker.

Addressing the issues of today through the film, the subject of which is as relevant in the contemporary world as it was in post 1947 India, was the "right thing to do instead of being didactic and polarising about it."

There were nervousness and second thoughts about making a film on such a controversial character as Manto but Nandita believes, "Controversy is just a term. He wasn't a 'controversial' character, he was just ahead of his time. Today there are journalists and artists like us, who also feel a bit scared about hurting sentiments while expressing themselves. We make sure that we don't step on someone's shoes or offend somebody. Various kinds of censorships have emerged today including self-censorship. People have stopped speaking what they feel. But in an era like the 1940s, Manto was a person unafraid and *'bebaak'* who didn't think twice to fight for the truth and he wasn't even a journalist or activist. He was a writer and for him, there was no difference between passion, work and life. What you believe in is what you do."

Nandita feels that celebrating such people is very important as is bringing them back into people's minds to make people realise that such an inspirational character existed and that *'itna darr darr ke jeene ka koi matlab nahi hai'* (no point of living with fear)."

As inspiring as the subject of the film is, it was important to be made by someone who didn't put him on a pedestal and instead treated him like a human being with flaws and insecurities. A realist himself, he wouldn't have wanted to be shown in a glorified light, the director believes.

Talking about religion and caste, how do such films bring about a change in people's mindsets?

"Films don't create any revolution. We are influenced by all the things we are surrounded by, books we read, films we watch, people we meet, and experiences that we have witnessed. All such things slowly get absorbed in us and then we are able to understand the world around us. Hence, my core values must be the same since the last 30 years but I am not the same person as I was 30 years ago. Why am I changing after all? Because of all these experiences that I'm gaining. I have been impacted by quite a number of films. But this doesn't mean that it will make the whole world change overnight," says she.

It was back in 2012 that she felt that a film on Manto has to be made. She says, "I started reading about it in 2012 — Manto's stories and works. I felt that 'Wow... what a person he was.' He hails from such an old era, but through his words it feels like he's talking about today. His approach was so modern. When I started researching I felt *ki iss insaan par toh ek film zaroor bann ni chahiye,* (a film should definitely be created on such a person). Co-incidently, I received an invite for some event in 2013 from Lahore and I felt this could be great chance to meet the family of Manto in Pakistan."

AS INSPIRING AS THE SUBJECT OF THE FILM IS, IT WAS IMPORTANT TO BE MADE BY SOMEONE WHO DIDN'T PUT HIM ON A PEDESTAL AND INSTEAD TREATED HIM LIKE A HUMAN BEING WITH FLAWS

His family has been supporting her since 2013 to make the film. She met them and discovered that his daughters, who were very young then didn't remember much. It was Razia, Manto's sister-in-law, who told her a number of things which she felt she "couldn't have had found in any other book or story even though I read a number of them written by him. I wanted to know more about their relationship and Safia, Manto's wife's, as well."

Despite the support from his family, the director was nervous when screening the film for them. "When this film was shown here for the first time, I really wanted to invite the family and show them what their parents were. I was really nervous because it's a very personal thing for them as also the movie shows Manto in a very grey character. As a child, it is difficult to understand your parents and their relationship. I had sent them the script because I didn't want any false factual elements. Also there is a huge problem between both the countries in terms of getting a visa but to my surprise, the authorities have also been very helpful," she says.

Two of Manto's daughters, the husband of the youngest daughter, and another person called Saeed Ahmed, who had helped her through the years via emails and calls had come for the screening. When all the four of them came out of the theatre, Nandita was "relieved to see their expressions." The middle daughter had almost broke down. It was a "moving experience" for her.

In this age of biopics, sports films or even films based on historical events, Bollywood is increasingly shifting towards realism. "Suddenly biographies have become the flavour of the season," she says. "When in 2012 I started working on the film, it wasn't the same. Honestly, I wasn't even thinking of it as a biopic. My mind just had Manto, the idea not the person. We want to spread the Manto revolution through this film. It is not really a biopic. He was a well-known writer and personality. People waited for his columns and essays. It is a journey of a writer through those times and how the world viewed such people. Even today there are many Mantos alive, they just don't get enough recognition. Some of them might be killed, or in jail or must have been silenced and we don't even know. This is to remind that there have been people who spoke their minds — fearlessly, unstoppably. For us they have kept that freedom and democracy alive," she says.

Recreating someone's story and bringing them alive again involves the efforts of a number of people. Did she also encounter in her journey some people who were not related to Manto in any way but had known him? The answer is yes, she did. She shares, "I met Intezaar Husain, who was a writer at that time. I met him in Lahore. He passed away recently. He told me some fun anecdotes about Manto, which his family hadn't known about. Meeting people is just a part of gaining knowledge but at the end of the day it is all internalised and it is my subjective interpretation of the way I have imagined his world."

Indeed, since Manto has penned a number of biographical sketches, poems, more than 300 short stories, and radio commentaries, going through that material and combining it in a 120-minute film was definitely an arduous process.

Celebrities including Rekha, Imtiaz Ali, Deepti Naval, Shabana Azmi and others attended a special screening of the film starring Nawazuddin Siddiqui as the Indo-Pakistani, Urdu author Saadat Hasan Manto.

Photo: Pankaj Kumar

CELEB TALK 10 MINUTES

'We just wanted to make a love story'

ABHISHEK BACHCHAN says the deletion of three scenes from his latest film *Manmarziyaan* did not affect the story

Actor Abhishek Bachchan has defended the decision of the makers to delete three scenes from his latest *Manmarziyaan* and said the sequences did not impact the story anyway.

The scenes in question featuring Abhishek and Taapsee Pannu smoking had upset a certain section of the Sikh community, following which they were omitted from the film.

When asked about the issue, Abhishek said, "Each individual is allowed to react the way they have, and they want to. It's their personal opinion. For me, it's not a big deal. My film isn't about anyone smoking, I have no problem cutting that out if someone has taken objection to it."

The actor stressed that the intention of the makers was not to hurt anyone.

"The intention of the makers is not to upset any community or ruffle any feathers. We just wanted to make a nice love story and that's what the film is about. If by cutting out one or two shots if it's going to placate someone and make them feel better, I've no problem doing that."

Abhishek was in conversation with journalist Mayank Shekhar at the Jagran Cinema Summit here.

When asked if the move sets a bad precedent, the actor said one has to look at the issue in totality.

"You have to look at why and who is objecting, what's the purpose behind the objection. If that's genuine, look into it genuinely and address it... You need to ask who's the loser here? In the situation like we are in right now, it's the exhibitors."

The actor said so many people down the cinema chain would stand to lose money if one sat on their "ego" over certain scenes.

"If there is an objection or a protest, a cinema hall might get vandalised, shows of the exhibitors might get cancelled and that person is going to lose money. If you say it's a bad precedent, please underwrite all the loses that people down the chain are going to face. I'll stand by you.

"That's my industry as well and I've got to think about that. Those one or two shots aren't going to change the story, so take it out. If it's changing the narrative or the reason why I'm making the film, then no. Like in '*Udta Punjab*'... But here, I'm not going to sit on my ego for three basic shots, which might affect the exhibitors."

Photo: Pankaj Kumar

—PTI

Sharing is contagious, says study

People do not have a stable tendency to cooperate and are instead influenced by those around them

While we have always heard that sharing is caring, a new study has shown that an individual's tendency to be generous depends on how much people around him or her are sharing. The findings showed it is not that people, who like to share, choose to live with those having same habits. Rather, they adapt their own sharing tendencies so as to match that of the group they currently live in. In other words, sharing, being contagious, is driven by local group norms and behaviour and not individual generosity.

"We were surprised to find that people do not have a stable tendency to cooperate and are instead influenced by those around them," said Coren Apicella, University of Pennsylvania.

"If you find yourself surrounded by selfish people, you don't necessarily have to find a new crowd, but by being generous yourself, you can get others to be generous as well," added Kristopher Smith, from the University of Pennsylvania. The study, published in Current Biology, is based on Hadza hunter-gatherer people in Tanzania — also one of the last populations left on the planet. During the study, the team visited 56 camps in Tanzania over six years. They asked nearly 400 Hadza adults to play public goods game where, instead of money, they were asked to consider sharing straws of honey, their favourite food.

Each person started with four straws, which they could put toward the whole group or not. The honey straws contributed to the group got tripled.

The results revealed that Hadza individuals living in certain camps were consistently more generous than others were. Moreover, individuals behaved differently over time, modifying their behaviour to match the norms of the camp they were currently living in.

—IANS

TIPS & TRICKS 10 MINUTES

Drink it your way

In popular imagination, whisky is paired best with old men and cigars. But that is far from the truth, says ROHAN BHARADWAJ, APAC ambassador of Grant's whisky

Whisky has this incorrect, outdated and old fashioned image of being consumed by lanky old men and purists in cigar rooms. Instead the drink is being consumed by well-travelled millennials of all genders. Exposure to different cultures and information is the key reason for the way the younger generation is drinking this alcohol, assumed to go best with ice and water, in cocktails too. In the US, women now make up to 37 per cent of consumers and almost a third of whisky drinkers in the UK. Even in India, women have shown a rise in the consumption of the alcohol, be it in the form of a cocktail or on its own.

You don't really have to be well-travelled as access to global cultures, eating habits and drinking trends are now so easily available on the internet for us to play around with. The privilege of having information has exposed millennials to trends from around the globe and it would be correct to say that we are now more experimental with our choice of what goes into our bellies. We in India are now opening up to drinking whisky in cocktails, mixers like apple juice and ginger ale which was not the case just a decade ago. This is definitely encouraging.

While hosting a tasting event at a golf club in India, I introduced the Grant's & Ginger Ale cocktail to veteran whisky drinkers only to find them pleasantly surprised. None of them had tried it before as most of them enjoyed their whisky with water and ice. Now I'm not saying that is not the correct way of drinking whisky but their reaction and surprise on how well whisky goes with ginger ale was just as refreshing as the drink itself.

A crucial reason why the alcohol is being experimented with is also because the consumers are more discerning and open to experimentation with their food and drink choices. Access to different cultures has opened up people to variety, be it in their choice of fashion, living standard or drinks and food.

You go to any bar in India and you will see an equal number of whisky cocktails being served along with vodka and gin.

It is a base spirit with a wide range of flavours that makes it possible to pair it before, with and after dinner as well. Depending on where the whisky comes from, it can have a flavour profile, ranging from sweet to spicy to earthy smoky notes.

It goes well with seafood, cheese, chocolates, sushi and a varied range of Indian delicacies. For instance, whisky with just a few drops of water, goes very well with a lot of tandoori food as it balances the smokiness and acidity extremely well.

WHISKIES OF SCOTLAND

Whisky is produced all over Scotland but most of the brands that we see at bars come from four major whisky-producing regions - The Highlands, Speyside, Islay and The Lowlands. Each region produces a different style and character of whisky.

Speyside, which is the undisputed centre for Scottish whisky, has fruity and sweet characteristics. Think of icons like Glenfiddich which is renowned all over the world for its pear, apple and toffee notes.

Highland whiskies are more full-bodied, nutty and spicy in character. This is a big whisky-producing region, so there is a range of varietals. Think of notes of honey, spice and heather. If you go to northern Highlands you're very likely to find whiskies which would give you lovely top notes of peat but an underlying oakiness and fruitiness to your whisky.

Lowlands are not one of the biggest whisky producing regions in Scotland but produce a unique type. Most are very easy on the palate.

Think of the elegant floral notes with a balance of citrus, honey and cereal topped up with a very smooth and mellow finish.

Islay: Often the victim of incorrect pronunciation, it is actually pronounced as 'eye-lah.' Peat is the characteristic of this beautiful part on the west of Scotland. Islay malts are more pungent, heavily peated compared to your speyside or highland whiskies with notes of smoke, brine, and hint of seal salt that intrigues your palate.

There is no set way of drinking whisky and I encourage people to enjoy it the way they like, especially in a cocktail or a mixer like Ginger Ale and Apple. For me, it is the most versatile hard drink out there that offers a wide range of flavours. Balancing the flavours with the right mixture in a cocktail can make the varied notes stand out.

My cocktail choice depends upon the time of the day, the occasion and the place I am at. If I'm home just on a day-off relaxing with my friends, we make sure we buy some ginger ale from the local shop and it's time for G&Gs (Grant's & Ginger ale) over some ice.

It really is a great afternoon-evening drink to beat the hot and humid conditions and best enjoyed with friends because it is so simple to make and yet so delicious. If at a bar post 11 pm (which does happen frequently with my kind of job), I love my Grant's old fashioned or a Grant's Blood and Sand.

ARSENAL, CHELSEA START WITH WIN

Aubameyang scores brace while Willian nets stunner to lead English giants off to winning start

AP ■ LONDON

Chelsea maintained its perfect start to the season when Brazil forward Willian scored in a 1-0 Europa League victory at PAOK Thessaloniki on Thursday.

Two goals from Ever Banega and Wissam Ben Yedder led Sevilla, the most successful team in Europa League history, to a 5-1 thrashing of Standard Liege while Eintracht Frankfurt opened its campaign by upsetting Marseille 2-1.

Arsenal, with former Sevilla coach Unai Emery now in charge, defeated Ukraine's Vorskla 4-2 thanks to a double from Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang and AC Milan edged past Dudelange of Luxembourg 1-0.

Sitting atop the Premier League with five wins from five games, Chelsea rested Eden Hazard after the Belgium playmaker registered a hat trick in a 4-1 win against Cardiff on Saturday.

Chelsea manager Maurizio Sarri made five changes to his starting line-up against PAOK and his dominant team should have scored a hatful of goals.

The out-of-form Alvaro Morata wasted several chances after captain Willian had finished off a speedy counter-attack in the seventh minute following good work from Ross Barkley.

"We played very well, were in control of the match, and it would have been difficult for anybody to play against us this evening," Sarri said.

Also in Group L, BATE Borisov of Belarus won 2-0 at Hungary's Vidi.

SEVILLA ON FIRE

Sevilla shook off two recent defeats to rout Standard Liege 5-1 in its opening group-stage match of the Europa League football championship.

Back in action in a tournament they have won five times, the Andalusians on Thursday seized control from the outset at Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan Stadium and opened the scoring in the eighth minute on a curving free kick by Ever Banega into the top-right corner of the goal.

But Sevilla's intensity dropped after French midfielder Ibrahim Amadou left the game with an injury in the 15th minute, ceding territory and giving up the equalizer in the 39th minute on a goal by Malian midfielder Moussa Djenepo.

The home side, however, responded with two scores on either side of halftime.

Franco Vazquez fired a left-footed blast off the upright and into the goal in the 41st minute before Wissam Ben Yedder, who tallied 10 goals for Sevilla in last-season's Champions League, scored on a cross from Brazilian defender Guilherme Arana in the 49th minute.

Ben Yedder then made the score 4-1 in the 70th minute when he scored after Banega had gained possession of the ball deep in Standard Liege's territory.

Banega then became the second Sevilla player to score a brace in the 74th minute when he converted a penalty that had been awarded for a foul by Zinho Vanheusden on Vazquez.

AUBAMEYANG'S JOY

Aubameyang opened the scoring for Arsenal against Vorskla in the 32nd minute when he converted an Alex Iwobi cross.

Danny Welbeck headed in a center from Henrikh Mkhitaryan before Aubameyang made it 3-0 with a precise shot from outside the area.

Substitute Mesut Ozil added the fourth goal from close range but Vorskla reduced the arrears thanks to captain Volodymyr Chesnakov and Vyacheslav Sharpar.

For Emery, the Europa League is familiar territory, after he guided Sevilla to its three straight titles earlier this decade.

Also in Group E, Sporting Lisbon scored twice in the second half to sink Qarabag 2-0.

OTHER GAMES

It was a case of David vs Goliath when seven-time European champion Milan took on Dudelange, the first team from Luxembourg to reach the Europa League group stage.

Dudelange did well to keep out Milan until Gonzalo Higuain struck the only goal of the game in the 59th minute.

Also in Group F, Olympiakos and Betis drew 0-0.

Substitute Luka Jovic struck one minute from time as German Cup winner Eintracht Frankfurt came back from a goal down to defeat last year's Europa League runner-up Marseille 2-1 in a game played behind closed doors in France.

Marseille went ahead in the third minute at the Stade Velodrome as Florian Thauvin crossed from the right for Lucas Ocampos to score.

Frankfurt equalized in the second half through Lucas Torro before Jovic's late winner.

In the other Group H match, Lazio defeated Apollon 2-1.

Rangers, managed by former England midfielder Steven Gerrard, recovered from conceding a first-minute goal to draw 2-2 at Villarreal, while Rapid Vienna beat Spartak Moscow 2-0 in the other Group G game.

In Group I, Genk defeated Malmo 2-0 and Besiktas eased past newcomer Sarpsborg 3-1.

In Group A, Bayer Leverkusen rallied from two goals down to win 3-2 at Ludogorets Razgrad in Bulgaria.

In a matchup between the champions of Scotland and Norway, Celtic beat Rosenborg 1-0. Also in Group B, Fredrik Gulbrandsen scored a minute before the end to give last year's semifinalist Salzburg a 3-2 victory at Leipzig.

SINGLES

TEJA RESIGNS AFTER DRONACHARYA SNUB

CHANDIGARH: Miffed at being dropped from the list of Dronacharya award nominees because of a past case of indiscipline, national compound archery coach Jiwanjot Singh Teja on Friday tendered his resignation. "I have resigned as Indian archery team coach," a disgruntled Teja said. Stating that "gross injustice" was meted out to him, Teja said he was not demanding the award but wants a transparent process in the selection of the candidates. He said that the case of alleged indiscipline against him and the one-year ban from Archery Association of India that followed were things of the past and he had been cleared of these charges long ago. Teja said he had been wronged in this case since he was not at fault for the incident for which he was punished. "It is like branding me as as a thief. This is gross injustice. I will knock the doors of the Prime Minister and the President," he said.

BRAZIL RECALL JESUS FOR FRIENDLIES

RIO DE JANERIO: Manchester City striker Gabriel Jesus has been recalled by Brazil for friendlies against Saudi Arabia and Argentina in October. Coach Tite announced his squad on Friday, with three new faces: Bordeaux defender Pablo, Hannover midfielder Wallace, and Barcelona striker Malcom. He also brought in under-21 goalkeeper Phelipe to give him international experience. The friendlies will be in Saudi Arabia on Oct 12 and 16. Jesus didn't score in Brazil's six-game campaign at the World Cup until the quarterfinal against Belgium. He wasn't summoned for Tite's first squad after Russia, for friendlies against the United States and El Salvador. Brazil won both. Jesus has scored once for Man City in five appearances this season.

INDIA SHINES AT TRACK ASIA CUP CYCLING

NEW DELHI: India secured three Gold medals, three Silver and a Bronze on the opening day of the 5th Track Asia Cup Cycling here on Friday. Bilal Ahmed Dar opened India's tally with a Silver in Point Race of 15km in junior men category, winning 19 points. While Venkanpa S Kengalgutti bagged Bronze. Mayuri Lute won the country's first Gold medal in the women junior 500 metre. She outclassed Thailand's Kanyarat Hnokaew by clocking 37.538s with a speed of 47.95 km/hr. In the women elite 500 metre time trial category, India's M Sonali Chanu (37.140s) had to be contend with Bronze. *Agencies*

India's campaign end in quarters

PTI ■ CHANGZHOU

Top shuttlers P V Sindhu and Kidambi Srikanth lost their quarterfinal matches on Friday, drawing the curtains on India's campaign at the one million dollar China Open BWF World Tour Super 1000 tournament here.

After Srikanth was ousted 9-21, 11-21 by reigning world champion Kento Momota of Japan, third seed Sindhu went down fighting 11-21, 21-11, 15-21 to World No 6 Chen Yufei of China in a hard-fought contest, which lasted 52 minutes.

Sindhu had beaten the 20-year-old Chen four times in their last six meetings but on Friday she couldn't curb her errors or find a way to break her opponent's superior game plan.

In the opening game, Chen opened up a 6-3 lead. The Chinese produced some stunning strokes to grab a 11-5 lead with a powerful return which the Indian had no answers.

After the break, Sindhu took two points but there was a weak return at the net and another stroke went out. Sindhu's errors, coupled with Chen's superb placements, saw the Chinese move to 15-7.

Chen dictated the pace and punished any error from the Indian, who went out a few times. Eventually the Chinese sealed the game with a sharp smash.

After the change of ends, Sindhu tried to engage her opponent in rallies by varying the pace and it worked, as she led 6-1.

However, mental fatigue seemed to affect her judgements as Chen showed good reflexes and unleashed quick and precise strokes to narrow the lead to 5-6.

Chen shot a few shots wide, allowing Sindhu to make it 10-6. But she twice hit the net before a thunderous smash earned her a 11-8 advantage at the break.

The Indian extended the lead to 15-10. She tried to boost herself by celebrating each point and eventually roared back to contest when her rival hit long again.

In the decider, Chen stepped up the pace after an initial burst of points from Sindhu to lead 7-4. Chen maintained the three-point advantage at the breather.

Chen returned with a barrage of strokes on Sindhu's backhand and, aided by the Indian's errors, moved to a 14-8 lead.

Sindhu showed signs of recovery, pocketing four straight points, which included a crucial video referral, but she hit wide again as the score read 16-12 in Chen's favour.

In the end, Sindhu hit a long shot followed by a return at the net, giving Chen five match points and she sealed it with another powerful smash.

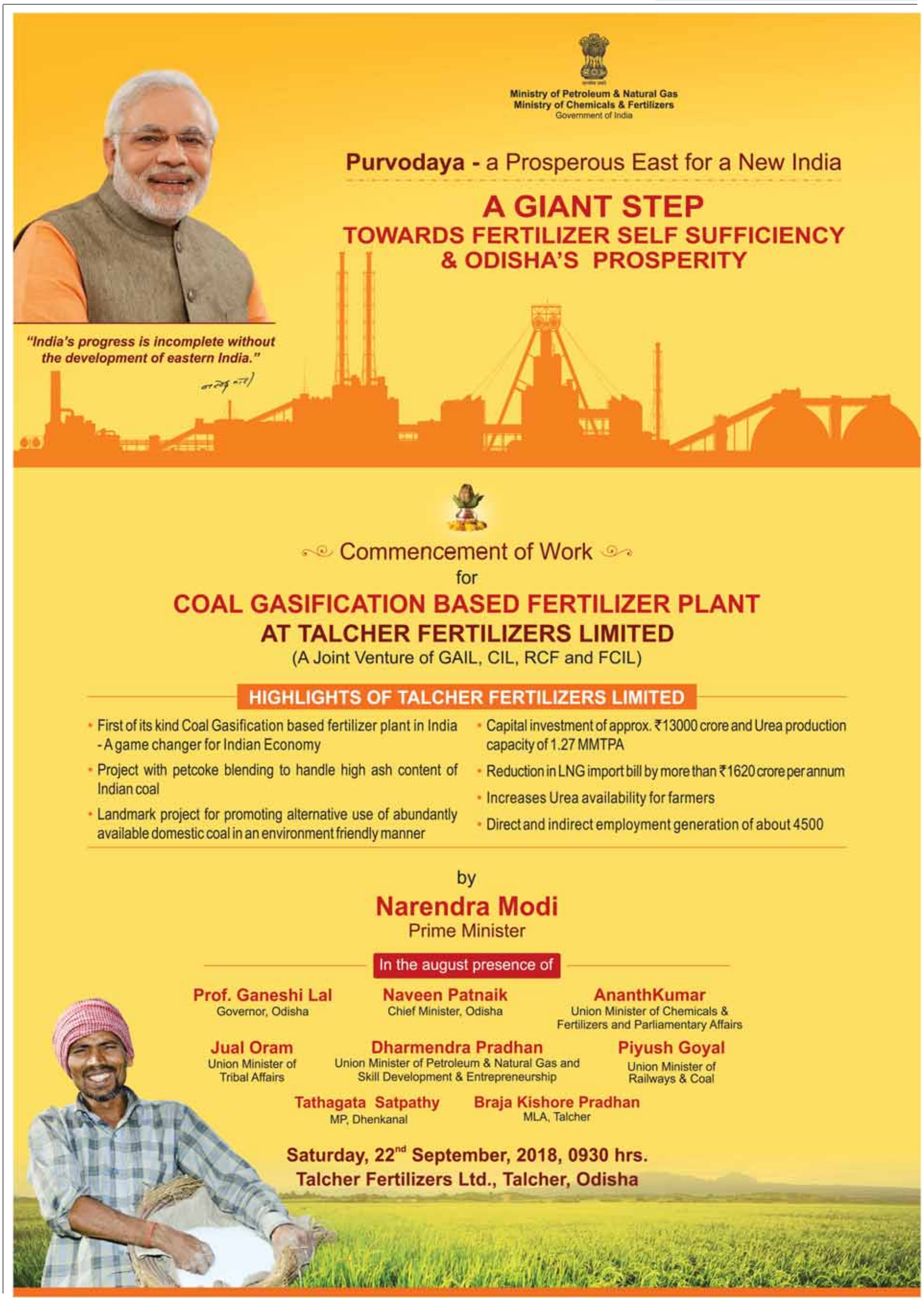
Earlier, Srikanth, who had a 3-7 head-to-head record against Momota, couldn't find a chink in Momota's armour and went down without a fight against the world No 2 in a lop-sided contest.

Srikanth had lost to Momota at the Malaysia Open and Indonesia Open in June and July respectively.

The Indian was no match for Momota, who has been in sensational form since making a comeback after serving a one-year ban for visiting an illegal casino.

Srikanth lagged 1-5 initially. He recovered to 4-5 with three straight points, but couldn't put up a fight as Momota surged to a huge 19-6 lead before pocketing the first game.

The second game was no different as Momota moved from 4-3 to 13-3 with nine straight points. He continued to dominate the proceedings to seal the contest without much effort.



Jadeja makes roaring comeback

Left arm spinner picks four to dismantle B'desh for 173

PTI ■ DUBAI

Ravindra Jadeja made a roaring return to limited overs cricket with a four-wicket haul, helping India dismiss Bangladesh for 173 in a Super Four match of the Asia Cup here on Friday.

The all-rounder, playing his first ODI since July 2017, broke the backbone of Bangladesh batting with his accurate left-arm spin and ended with impressive figures of four for 29 in 10 overs.

Bangladesh batsmen faltered again, having come a cropper in the run chase against Afghanistan on Thursday night. The seasoned pace duo of Bhuvneshwar Kumar (3/32) and Jasprit Bumrah (3/37) too made life tough for the opposition. The saving grace for Bangladesh was the 66-run stand for the eighth wicket between Mehidy Hasan Miraz (42 off 50) and captain Mashrafe Mortaza (26 off 32) before the team was all out in 49.1 overs.

Bangladesh, who lost to Afghanistan less than 24 hours ago and had to take the 90-minute journey from Abu Dhabi to Dubai, paid the price for reckless batting.

They lost their openers Liton Das (7) and Nazmul Hossain Shanto (7) by the sixth over.

From 15 for two, the experienced pairing of Shakib Al Hasan (21) and Mushfuqir Rahim had a task of rebuilding the innings but the former fell to a loose shot off Jadeja. The star Bangladesh all-rounder, having hit Jadeja for two boundaries in the 10th over, went for another one but his sweep went straight into the hands of Shikhar Dhawan at square leg.

Jadeja, who was playing Vijay Hazare Trophy in Delhi but got a last-minute call-up to join the national team here in the wake of injuries to Hardik Pandya, Axar Patel and Shardul Thakur, grabbed the opportunity with both hands.

He removed Mohammad Mithun in typical fashion for his second wicket, darting the ball into the middle stump to trap him in front of the stumps, reducing Bangladesh to 60 for four in the 16th over. In his next over, the wily spinner sent back Rahim, leaving Bangladesh in deep trouble.

Mahmudullah (25) and Mossadek Hossain (12) batted sensibly, sharing a 36-run stand for the sixth wicket. They could have added a lot more if Mahmudullah had not got a rough call from the umpire in the 33rd over. He was adjudged leg before wicket off Bhuvneshwar but replays showed he got bat on ball before it hit his pads. Bangladesh could not review the questionable call as they had already used up their review.

Much to their relief, Mortaza and Miraz stitched a much needed partnership to give their bowlers something to bowl at.

Mortaza, who is well past his prime, and Miraz entertained the crowd with some clean hitting. The skipper smashed two straight sixes off Bhuvneshwar in the 47th over before getting caught at short fine leg.

Shahidi's 97 help Afghans pile 257

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Hashmatullah Shahidi (97) missed out on his maiden ODI hundred by just three runs after skipper Asghar Afghan hit a combative 67 off 56 balls as Afghanistan scored a fighting 257 for six against Pakistan in a Super Four match of the Asia Cup, here on Friday.

Shahidi needed a boundary off the last ball to complete his century but Hasan Ali denied him the milestone with a incoming yorker which the left-hander could not put away.

With his skipper Asghar, Shahidi shared a match-changing 94-run stand for the fourth wicket.

Shahidi shifted gears with ease after largely remaining patient in his unbeaten and career-best knock which came off 118 balls. He was bowled off a no ball when he was on 76 in the penultimate over.

Five of his seven boundaries came during the last 14 balls of the Afghan innings.

Asghar had joined left-handed Shahidi at the crease after left-arm spinner Mohammad Nawaz (3/57) removed the top three Afghan batsmen — Mohammad Shahzad (20), Ihsanullah (10) and Rahmat Shah (36).

In his 67-run knock, Asghar showed both aggression and patience and Shahidi was determined, holding one end tight.

Asghar chose right deliveries to go for big shots, hitting five sixes and two fours.

Shahidi and Asghar were tested by the Pakistan pace duo of Hasan Ali and Usman Khan but they refused to be intimidated by the raw pace.

They were sensible in defending and leaving the balls which moved after pitching outside off stump. They kept the scoreboard ticking with pushing and nudging the ball around.

Breakthrough not coming, Pakistan captain Sarfraz handed the ball back to Nawaz but Asghar creamed off 11 runs from his over, hitting a four and six, to end the long boundary drought.

Both the batsmen completed their half-centuries in the 40th over, bowled by young left-arm pacer Shaheen Afridi.

With few overs left, Asghar started hitting each everything thrown at him and was bowled by Afridi after being dropped by Haris Sohail in the 42nd over.

Earlier on Thursday, Afghanistan beat Bangladesh to emerge as table toppers from group B.

NEED BETTER PREPARATIONS FOR NEXT ENG TOUR: DRAVID

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Rahul Dravid, the last captain to lead India to a series win in England, says the current side faced unusually tough conditions in the recently concluded five-match rubber and the batsmen must prepare better before embarking on the next English tour.

"Lets just be honest first. The conditions in England were not easy for batting. I think batsmen of both teams struggled. If you take out Virat Kohli from the equation, it was not an easy series for the batsmen. I have played in England quite a bit, the conditions can be tough but it is rare to find five Test matches which had conditions as tough as the one they found," Dravid said.

"As I said, we need to look ahead. The next time we go there, we have to be better prepared for these kind of conditions and try and replicate conditions as best as we possibly we can. It was tough out there. Lets face it," said the Indian batting great.

The 1-4 series loss in England was India's third in a row with batsmen letting the team down innings after innings.

The performance left the Indian fans seething, and coach Ravi Shastri added fuel to the fire by calling the current team the best travelling side of the last 15-20 years, even though the results painted a different picture. India's lack of preparation ahead of the series was also heavily criticised.

He said India losing 1-4 was a case of missed opportunity.

"India surely had their moments. They played some very good cricket in what I thought were pretty difficult conditions, especially for the batsmen. They were competitive for most part of the series but I am sure the team looks at it as an opportunity missed. They would feel, having played so well in certain parts of Test matches, they were not able to finish off games.

"Still there are some positives to take from the series. Our bowling and fielding, especially catching, went on very good but like I said the team would feel it had its chances and unfortunately it did not work out."

Talking about the ongoing Asia Cup in UAE, Dravid said India need to focus on all teams and not just Pakistan.

"Afghanistan is doing well, I don't know why we are only focusing on Pakistan. Bangladesh too are doing well. Afghanistan also are a force to reckon with. If I was in the team I would not just be focusing on Pakistan. We are playing very good white ball cricket but we have to be careful of other teams too," Dravid concluded.