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SEVERAL MYTHS

**WORLD 12**  
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CHANDIGARH, TUESDAY APRIL 2, 2019; PAGES 16 ₹2



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## JOB HOGS VOTERS' MINDS

Employment top priority in Bihar, MP, Telangana, Chhattisgarh: ADR survey

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

In a worrying sign for the BJP, despite its thrust on making nationalism as its main poll plank, unemployment has emerged as the key issue for voters in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana and Chhattisgarh.

A survey conducted by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) shows that more than half of the respondents list employment as their top priority and they ranked the NDA Government's performance in this area at an abysmal 2.15 on a scale of 5.

The ADR survey shows 58.84 per cent voters pitching for jobs/employment for youth in Chhattisgarh; 50 per cent voters wanting jobs in Bihar; 70 per cent in Telangana and 61.91 per cent in Madhya Pradesh. For them, employment is the major issue and they expect political parties to do something concrete.

As per reports, the Modi Government has failed to deliver on the employment front. In January, the Modi Government had withheld the release of the National Sample Survey Office Periodic Labour Force Survey that pegged joblessness at a 45-year high of 6.1 per cent during 2017-2018.

In March, it was reported that a survey by the Labour Bureau on the number of jobs created under the Micro Units Development & Refinance Agency (MUDRA) would not be made public for another two



### VOTERS PRIORITIES AHEAD OF POLLS

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- As per reports, the Modi Government has failed to deliver on the employment front. In January, the Modi Government had withheld the release of the National Sample Survey Office Periodic Labour Force Survey that pegged joblessness at a 45-year high of 6.1 per cent during 2017-2018
- According to the survey, employment, better law and order, and better roads are major concerns of urban voters



months, until after the elections. The Modi Government had earlier also withheld the 6th annual employment-unem-

ployment survey by the Labour Bureau, which showed India's unemployment rate in 2016-17 was the highest in four years at

3.9 per cent. The Chhattisgarh Survey Report stated that voters' priorities were neglected by the

Government. According to the report, employment, public transport and better roads were top priorities for voters and the Government performed "below average" on all three. The survey shows better job opportunities (58.84 per cent), better public transport (38.41 per cent) and better roads (37.78 per cent) are the top three voters' priorities in the State.

The survey shows that the Government performance on these three voters' priorities was below average. In rural areas, the concerns were employment, availability of water and electricity for agriculture and the Government performed below average.

According to the survey, employment, better law and order, and better roads are major concerns of urban voters. "The Government's performance on urban voter priorities of better employment opportunities (2.22), better law and order/policing (2.20) and better roads (2.12) was rated below average.

In addition, the Government has performed poorly in providing public transport (2.18) and drinking water (2.52)," the report said. The survey reported that the previous BJP Government in Chhattisgarh, led by Raman Singh, performed "poorly and underwhelmingly" on almost all Governance parameters, including employment, public transport, agricultural infrastructure and law and order.

## Rahul spurned alliance invite, alleges Kejriwal

CHANDAN PRAKASH ■ NEW DELHI

Scotching speculation about the possible alliance between the AAP and the Congress, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday said Congress president Rahul Gandhi refused to forge an alliance with his party for the Lok Sabha polls in Delhi.

Talking to reporters on the sidelines of an event out of the national Capital, Kejriwal said the Congress chief had refused his request to "join hands with the AAP" during a one-to-one meeting recently.

However, the official communication from the Congress High Command in this regard is yet to be made public.

Rahul had earlier said at a public meeting that there would be no truck with the AAP in Delhi. Moreover, the issue of alliance with the AAP had virtually wedged differences in the Delhi Congress with one group led by former Delhi Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit vehemently opposing any tie-up and another front led by former Union Minister Ajay Maken advocating for the Cong-AAP embrace.

Asked about Sheila's remarks that Arvind never approached her for an alliance, the AAP chief said, "We have met Rahul. Sheila is not that important leader."

Kejriwal's comments on Sheila "not an important leader" sparked a row with the Congress leaders hitting out at



the AAP chief saying the Delhi Chief Minister may not have the respect and honour Sheila has earned in the public life.

Dikshit's former cabinet colleague and party spokesperson Ramakant Goswami hit out at the AAP for opposing policies and principles of the Congress despite "pleading" with it for an alliance.

The three-time former Delhi Chief Minister who was appointed president of Delhi unit of Congress has so far effectively repulsed attempts for an alliance of her party with the AAP, although she said Rahul would take a final call.

Kejriwal has been urging the Congress to forge an alliance in Delhi to prevent the BJP repeating its stellar performance in the Capital.

Recently, in a meeting with Rahul, senior Congress leaders including Sheila, three working presidents Devender Yadav, Rajesh Lilothia, Haroon Yusuf,

former Delhi Congress presidents JP Agarwal and Tajdar Babar opposed an alliance with the AAP.

A senior party insider of the Congress said the decision was taken considering its long term repercussions in Delhi and adjoining States. "The main question is how the party will face the AAP in Assembly elections after coming together in parliamentary election. Even if alliance happened, the Congress was not getting much politically, rather it could lose its base drastically," he said.

The Congress could win any Lok Sabha seat in the 2014 elections in Delhi. The talk of alliance was fuelled by the fact that the sum of votes polled for the Congress and the AAP was more than that of the BJP.

Kejriwal had even roped in NCP supremo Sharad Pawar TMC chief Mamata Banerjee to persuade the Congress chief to stitch an alliance with the AAP.

### CAPSULE

#### POSITIVE PROGRESS, SAYS CHINA ON BANNING AZHAR

Beijing: China on Monday claimed that "positive progress" has been made on designating Pakistan-based JeM chief Masood Azhar as a "global terrorist" by the UN and accused the US of scuttling its efforts by taking the matter directly to the Security Council, setting a "bad example".

#### CONG GIVING TERROR TAG TO HINDUS: MODI, SHAH

Wardha: In a two-pronged attack on the Congress over the "Hindu terror tag", Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP chief Amit Shah on Monday accused the Opposition party of trying to defame the community, saying it is a "sin" to link peace-loving Hindus to terrorism.

#### 20 TREMORS HIT ANDAMAN IN A SPAN OF 11 HOURS

New Delhi: Twenty medium intensity earthquakes hit the Andaman & Nicobar islands in a span of 11 hours on Monday, according to the National Centre for Seismology. All the tremors were of magnitude between 4.5 and 5.5, the NCS said. The first quake with a magnitude of 4.9 occurred at 5.14 am, followed by another with a magnitude of 5, a couple of minutes later. The last jolt was recorded at 3.44 am with a magnitude of 4.8, it said.

## Swarm of Pak F-16s beats hasty retreat as IAF scrambles jets

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid heightened tension between India and Pakistan post Pulwama terror attack on February 14, the IAF on Monday scrambled its jets in Punjab after radars saw an unusually large Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) along with a flight of at least four F-16 of Pakistan Air Force coming close to the international border in Punjab. The swift action forced the Pakistani jets to retreat deeper into their territory.

Giving details of the incident, sources here said the UAV and the F-16s flying on the Pakistani side started com-

ing close to the border around 3am when the Indian radars picked up the movement. Not willing to take any chances in the current scenario, two SU-30s and two Mirage jets were scrambled by the IAF to ward off any threat. Faced with such swift response, the Pakistani jets opted to back off and a possible confrontation was avoided, they added.

Earlier on February 27, four Pakistani F-16s had intruded into the Indian airspace in Rajouri in an effort to target military installations. The IAF had then scrambled its Mirage and MIG-21s to chase away the Pakistani jets.



## FB offloads Cong, BJP-RSS propagandist pages

Cong loses 687 pages, a/cs; IT firm working for BJP too faces heat

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Social media giant Facebook on Monday said it has removed a number of pages and accounts linked to individuals associated with an IT cell of the Congress and an Indian IT firm that propagated pro-BJP and pro-RSS contents.

Besides, Facebook has also removed 103 pages, groups and accounts on its platform and Instagram for engaging in similar behaviour as part of a network that originated in Pakistan.

While the Facebook removed 687 pages and accounts linked to the Congress as it cracked down on fake accounts and spam, the social media giant also discovered spam activities carried out by Silver Touch, an Indian IT firm which runs the pro-BJP and RSS page "The India Eye".

It removed 15 pages, groups and accounts linked to the firm. These accounts, it said, were part of a coordinated networks and were removed not based on content or fake news but for "inauthentic behaviour" and for pushing spam.



"They posted about local news and political events, including topics like the Indian Government, the upcoming elections, the BJP and alleged misconduct of political opponents including the INC," said Facebook head of Cybersecurity Policy Nathaniel Gleicher.

The Facebook in a statement said these account owners used a combination of authentic and fake accounts to share their content like local news and political events, including topics like the Indian Government, the upcoming elections, the BJP and alleged misconduct of political opponents including the Congress.

Gleicher said Facebook has removed 687 Facebook pages and accounts — the majority of which had already been detected and suspended by its auto-

word from the party over the action against the pro-BJP pages by Facebook.

"When an enquiry was carried out, it was found that those individuals were linked to Congress IT cell. The Congress is desperate therefore resorting to these types of dubious means to claim support but people are sure of what they have seen of the Narendra Modi Government," Prasad said.

With ensuing general elections, the Centre had warned social media platforms of strong action if any attempt was made to influence the country's electoral process through undesirable means.

Facebook, which has been facing flak globally for instances of user data breach, has been ramping up efforts to ensure that its platforms (that includes WhatsApp and Instagram) aren't misused to spread misinformation, especially ahead of polls in India.

It has recently started providing details of political ads on its platform in a bid to enhance transparency. It is also strengthening its team of fact checkers and deploying technology tools to flag fake news.

## NDA's Thushar Vellappally to take on Rahul in Wayanad

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

BJP president Amit Shah on Monday announced that Thushar Vellappally of the Bharat Dharma Jana Sena (BDJS), a BJP ally in Kerala, will be the NDA's candidate against Congress chief Rahul Gandhi in Wayanad.

Thushar was the candidate for the party in Thrissur, but the NDA decided to pit him against Rahul to give the Congress chief a tough fight.

"I proudly announce Shri Thushar Vellappally, president of BDJS, as NDA candidate from Wayanad. A vibrant and dynamic youth leader, he represents our commitment to development and social justice. With him, the NDA will emerge as Kerala's political alternative," Shah tweeted.

Thushar is the son of Vellappally Natesan, general secretary of the influential Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yagam, which works for the welfare of Ezhava community, a backward caste with sizeable population in the State.

## Army destroys 3 Pak posts after BSF man, girl die

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

The Indian Army on Monday destroyed at least three posts of the Pakistan Army and inflicted critical injuries to large number of Pakistani soldiers along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch sector shortly after a BSF officer and a minor girl succumbed to injuries in "unprovoked" ceasefire violation by the Pakistan Army in Poonch sector.

Meanwhile, in another successful operation, the joint teams of security forces early on Monday eliminated four terrorists in Lassipora area of Pulwama district. In the Pakistan shelling, 13 civilians and four BSF person-

nel sustained splinter injuries. Despite heavy shelling, local police teams safely evacuated injured residents from forward areas of Mankote.

Eyewitness reports claimed civilian areas which were 7-8 km from LoC were targeted by the Pakistan Army using heavy calibre of weapons.

Martyred BSF officer was identified as Inspector T Alex Lalminlin, while minor girl was identified as five-year-old Sobia Shafiq, daughter of Mohd Shafiq.

Ground reports said, "Pakistan Army targeted civilian areas in Shahpur, Qasba, Guntariyan, Keerni, Mankote and Poonch since early morning."

## Star Sapna to woo Delhiites to back BJP

SAPNA SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Popular Haryanvi singer-dancer Sapna Chaudhary has been listed as a star campaigner for the BJP in the Lok Sabha elections in constituencies with sizable population of jats and Poorvanchalis, such as South and North-East Delhi parliamentary seats.

However, ending all speculation over her possible candidature for Lok Sabha elections, Delhi BJP leaders confirmed that Sapna will not join the party. "Sapna will campaign for us, she is a regional superstar and can easily get connected with Jats and Purvanchalis," said a BJP leader.

Sapna had met Delhi BJP chief and North East Delhi MP Manoj Tiwari on Sunday evening, according to a party source.

## Besides polls, weather too turns up heat on voters

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Voters in large parts of the country will have to face scorching heat as the polling season progresses. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has said that average maximum temperatures from April to June are likely to be warmer by half a degree Celsius in several places in central and northwest India. Temperatures are expected to be near normal in the rest of the country, the IMD added.

The US-based forecaster AccuWeather too predicted that the heatwave was expected to intensify starting first week of April.

According to private forecaster Skymet, presently most parts of Maharashtra, Gujarat, west Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Delhi and NCR are observing heatwave conditions with maximum temper-



atures exceeding 40 degrees C. The highest (44.5 C) was recorded in Madhya Pradesh's Khargone city on March 30. "The April to June season average maximum temperatures are likely to be warmer than normal by 0.5 degree Celsius over most of the meteorological subdivisions from

central India and some subdivisions from northwest India. Near normal maximum temperatures are likely in the remaining subdivisions," the IMD said.

The seasonal average minimum and mean temperatures over west Rajasthan are likely to be above normal by more

than 1 degree C. Above normal heatwave conditions are likely in the core heatwave (HW) zone during the season (April to June).

In fact, since the last two to three days, heatwave has covered majority parts of the country, except eastern and north-eastern States. These areas are

presently under the influence of weather systems and have been observing rain and thundershower activities, keeping the temperatures under check.

According to IMD, a heatwave is declared when the temperature touches 40 degrees Celsius in the plains and continues for two to three days or is above 4.5 to 6.5 degrees Celsius above normal.

The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) report found that 2018 was sixth warmest year since 1901 and the average temperature over India was "significantly above normal". The country's average season mean temperatures were also "above the average" with the winter season (January-February, +0.59 degree Celsius) being the fifth warmest since 1901 and the pre-monsoon season (March-May) the seventh warmest, the MoES report said.

# SAD 'formally' announces five candidates

Chandumajra from Anandpur Sahib, Rakhra from Patiala, Guru from Fatehgarh

**PNS ■ CHANDIGARH** on Monday decided to field its tried and tested soldiers for the May 19 electoral battle in Punjab. Formally announcing the names of five candidates while releasing the first list,

Khadoor Sahib	: Bibi Jagir Kaur
Jalandhar	: Charanjit Singh Atwal
Patiala	: Surjit Singh Rakhra
Fatehgarh Sahib	: Darbara Singh Guru
Sri Anandpur Sahib	: Prem Singh Chandumajra

SAD president Sukhbir Badal on Monday maintained that the candidates for the remaining five parliamentary constituencies the party contests in alliance with the BJP will be announced shortly.

SAD contest elections in a pre-poll alliance with the BJP in Punjab. As per the seat sharing arrangement between the two, SAD contests on 10 out of total 13 Lok Sabha seats, while BJP fields its candidates on three.

The party had already declared the candidatures of Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee's (SGPC) president Bibi Jagir Kaur and Lok Sabha's former Deputy Speaker Charanjit Singh Atwal from Khadoor Sahib, and Jalandhar (reserve) respectively.

However, the official announcement was made by the party chief on Monday along with the names of former Cabinet Minister Surjit Singh Rakhra for Patiala, and retired IAS officer Darbara Singh Guru for Fatehgarh Sahib (reserve). The party has decided to

SAD's Rajya Sabha MP and former Union Minister Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa was the one who made the first move against the party's current state of affairs.

Unhappy with the party's current leadership and the direction towards which the SAD is moving, Dhindsa had resigned from all party posts.

Citing health reasons for the same, Dhindsa had also made it clear that neither he, nor any member of his family would contest 2019 polls. SAD is reportedly considering to field Dhindsa's son and former Finance Minister Parminder Singh Dhindsa from Sangrur Lok Sabha seat.

Despite recent Dhindsa's advice of "not contesting from Sangrur on Akali ticket", his son and sitting Lehra Gaga MLA Parminder Dhindsa has reportedly agreed to contest.

What went against the SAD is the fact that the three parliamentarians, who have cut apart from the party are the ones who were calling the shots in their respective areas. Dhindsa, the next in hierarchy to Akali patron and former Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal, enjoys a massive support in Sangrur segment.

Brahmpura, once known as Majhe da Jarnail, have a stronghold over the state's Majha region. In fact, the trio of Sekhwan, Ajnala and Brahmpura were considered as "Akali's powerhouse" in

Majha region.

Ghubaya hailed from the Rai Sikh community having a stronghold in the Ferozepur constituency. Ferozepur has nearly 15 percent of Rai Sikh population who have been playing a crucial role in deciding their representative in the Lower House. It is believed that the Rai Sikh community have more influence than its numbers.

The seat was won by former Lok Sabha Speaker Balram Jakhar, a Jat, in 1980. But after 1989, the seat turned a fortress of Rai Sikhs electing Bahujan Samaj Party's Mohan Singh Phalianwala in 1996, SAD's Zora Singh Maan in 1998, 1999 and 2004, followed by SAD's Ghubaya in 2009 and 2014.

Now, with Ghubaya already hitting the campaign trail expecting to get Congress ticket to re-contest from Ferozepur, SAD is mulling to field party chief Sukhbir Badal considering the reserved constituency a "safe seat" for the party. Earlier, party was planning to shift Harsimrat to Ferozepur from Bathinda.

Facing a resounding defeat in 2017 state assembly polls finishing third after ruling the state for a decade, SAD is taking the 2019 Lok Sabha elections as a question of prestige. The issue of sacrilege has already done much harm to the party, and now it is banking on "Narendra Modi" to win the elections.

## INBRIEF

### BBMB GENERATES 8.12 PER CENT MORE ENERGY

**Chandigarh:** Bhakra Beas Management Board has surpassed generation targets of 9425 million units fixed by the Central Electricity Authority for the financial year 2018-19 by 8.12% by generating 10190 million units of energy. This feat was achieved despite reduced inflows in the river Satluj and Beas as well as low water levels in BBMB reservoirs during summer of 2018 and also during most of the filling season from May 21 to September 20. DK Sharma, Chairman, BBMB congratulated all the employees of BBMB for their untiring efforts to maintain excellence in irrigation and power sectors.

### IIT ROPAR HOLDS RESEARCHER CONNECT WORKSHOP

**Ropar:** The Indian Institute of Technology-Ropar in association with British Council organized the first "Researcher Connect Workshop" in India from March 29-April 1. The Researcher Connect Workshop was implemented in partnership with the Career Development and Corporate Relations Centre (CDCRC) at Indian Institute of Technology-Ropar towards addressing the development of excellent communication skills for international, multicultural contexts for researchers in India. The workshop at IIT Ropar was facilitated by Sandy Sparks from the University of Warwick and Dr. R. Poornima from British Council. The modules covered at IIT Ropar included knowing the audience, writing effective abstracts and emails, academic writing, and persuasive proposals over a period of four days.

### 700 SELECTED IN BANK EXAM FROM TRICITY

**Chandigarh:** The result of Bank PO, clerk, specialist officer exam conducted by IBPS has been declared. IBPS, is a Pune based recruitment body which conducts exam for the selection of Probationary Officer (PO), SO and CLERK for all 21 Public Sector Banks like Bank of Baroda, PNB, Canara Bank except SBI. RK Mahajan Director of Sector 15 Based AAA-BRIGHT ACADEMY said, students from the tri-city have performed very well this year. Out of 10000 candidates appeared from tricity more than 700 students have qualified Bank PO, SO and CLERK exam.

### WOMEN CAR RALLY HELD

**Chandigarh:** "Empowering the women and taking care of their health is indeed the need of the hour and this has been well focused by the PHD Chamber through the women car rally," said Kirron Kher, MP Chandigarh while addressing the prize distribution ceremony of the PHD Chamber Women Car Rally 2019 held here. The car rally started from Delhi on March 30 and reached Chandigarh via Dehradun. Its theme was "Wheeling Women to Power-Promoting Menstrual Hygiene. Rajeev Talwar, President, PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry said, the chamber has emerged as the leader amongst all national chambers as it is the only one conducting a professional Women car rally of more than 700 kms through challenging terrain.

## CHANDIGARH HOUSING BOARD

8, Jan Marg, Sector 9-D, Chandigarh, Ph. : 0172-4601826

### PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby notified for the General Public that the following person(s) have applied for Permission for the Sale/Purchase of Dwelling Unit in their names under Regulation of the Chandigarh Housing Board (Allotment, Management and Sale of Tenements) Regulations 1979:-

Sr. No.	Name of the applicant (Proposed Transferee) Sh./Smt./Ms.	Name of the allottee/Transferee (Transferor) Sh./Smt./Ms.	D.U. No.	Cat.	Sector
1.	Sh. Jatinder Kumar S/o Sh. Late Amar Chand	Sh. Kirpal Singh Ahluwalia S/o Sh. Sanjiv Singh Ahluwalia	3009	LIG	47-D Chd.

In case anybody has any objection for the Sale/Purchase in respect of the above said Dwelling Units, he/she may submit the objection, if any, in writing within 15 days of the publication of this notice before the undersigned along with documentary evidence, if any.

SECRETARY,  
CHANDIGARH HOUSING BOARD,  
CHANDIGARH

## CHANDIGARH HOUSING BOARD

8, Jan Marg, Sector 9-D, Chandigarh, Ph. : 0172-4601826

### PUBLIC NOTICE

Before Secretary, CHB Exercising the Powers of the Estate Officer, UT Chandigarh

Subject : Mutation / Transfer of ownership right in respect of Dwelling Unit No. 2943 of ONE ROOM FLAT (EWS) in Sector 49, Chandigarh on the Basis of Sale Deed in the name of Sh. Sanjeev Bhatia S/o Sh. Gulshan Lal Bhatia from the name of allottee/transferee Sh. Suresh Kumar S/o Sh. Mannu Ram

It is hereby notified for the information of the general public and all concerned that the Dwelling Unit No. 2943 of ONE ROOM FLAT (EWS) in Sector 49, Chandigarh stands in the name of allottee/transferee Sh. Suresh Kumar S/o Sh. Mannu Ram. Now Sh. Suresh Kumar S/o Sh. Mannu Ram has sold the above said dwelling unit to Sh. Sanjeev Bhatia S/o Sh. Gulshan Lal Bhatia vide Sale Deed Executed and registered in office of Sub-Registrar Chandigarh on 28.03.2019. Sh. Sanjeev Bhatia S/o Sh. Gulshan Lal Bhatia has requested this office for transfer the above said Dwelling Unit in his name on the basis on sale deed.

If anybody has any objection upon the mutation of the said property in favour of applicant, he/she may submit the objection in writing to the undersigned within 15 days of the publication of this notice, failing which, the ownership of the said dwelling unit shall be transferred in favour of above said claimant(s)

SECRETARY,  
CHANDIGARH HOUSING BOARD, CHANDIGARH

## CHANDIGARH HOUSING BOARD

8, Jan Marg, Sector 9-D, Chandigarh, Ph. : 0172-4601826

### PUBLIC NOTICE

Before Secretary, CHB Exercising the Powers of the Estate Officer, UT Chandigarh

Subject : Mutation / Transfer of ownership right in respect of Dwelling Unit No. 5138 of Category I in M.H.C. Mani-Majra, Chandigarh on the basis of Sale Deed in the names of Sh. Karandeep Jain S/o Sh. Dharmpal Jain and Smt. Deepa Jain W/o Sh. Karandeep Jain from the name of allottee/transferee Sh. Sushil Grover S/o Sh. Laxmi Grover and Smt. Kamlesh Grover W/o Sh. Sushil Grover.

It is hereby notified for the information of the general public and all concerned that the Dwelling Unit No. 5138 of Category I in M.H.C. in Mani-Majra, Chandigarh stands in the name of allottee/transferee Sh. Sushil Grover S/o Sh. Laxmi Grover and Smt. Kamlesh Grover W/o Sh. Sushil Grover. Now Sh. Sushil Grover S/o Sh. Laxmi Grover and Smt. Kamlesh Grover W/o Sh. Sushil Grover, have sold the above said dwelling unit to Sh. Karandeep Jain S/o Sh. Dharmpal Jain and Smt. Deepa Jain W/o Sh. Karandeep Jain vide Sale Deed Executed and registered in office of Sub-Registrar Chandigarh on 29.03.2019. Sh. Karandeep Jain S/o Sh. Dharmpal Jain and Smt. Deepa Jain W/o Sh. Karandeep Jain have requested this office for transfer the above said dwelling unit in their names on the basis on sale deed.

If anybody has any objection upon the mutation of the said property in favour of applicant, he/she may submit the objection in writing to the undersigned within 15 days of the publication of this notice, failing which, the ownership of the said dwelling unit shall be transferred in favour of above said claimant(s)

SECRETARY,  
CHANDIGARH HOUSING BOARD, CHANDIGARH

## CHANDIGARH HOUSING BOARD

8, Jan Marg, Sector 9-D, Chandigarh, Ph. : 0172-4601826

### PUBLIC NOTICE

Before Secretary, CHB Exercising the Powers of the Estate Officer, UT Chandigarh

Subject : Mutation / Transfer of ownership right in respect of Dwelling Unit No. 3147-1 of LIG Category in Sector 45-D, Chandigarh on the Basis of Sale Deed in the name of Sh. Tushar Sen S/o Late Sh. Sanat Sen from the name of allottee/transferee Smt. Pooja Bajaj W/o Sh. Dinesh Bajaj.

It is hereby notified for the information of the general public and all concerned that the Dwelling Unit No. 3147-1 of LIG Category in Sector 45-D, Chandigarh stands in the name of allottee/transferee Smt. Pooja Bajaj W/o Sh. Dinesh Bajaj. Now Smt. Pooja Bajaj W/o Sh. Dinesh Bajaj has sold the above said dwelling unit to Sh. Tushar Sen S/o Late Sh. Sanat Sen vide Sale Deed Executed and registered in office of Sub-Registrar Chandigarh on 27.02.2019. Sh. Tushar Sen S/o Late Sh. Sanat Sen has requested this office for transfer the above said Dwelling Unit in his name on the basis on sale deed.

If anybody has any objection upon the mutation of the said property in favour of applicant, he/she may submit the objection in writing to the undersigned within 15 days of the publication of this notice, failing which, the ownership of the said dwelling unit shall be transferred in favour of above said claimant(s)

SECRETARY,  
CHANDIGARH HOUSING BOARD, CHANDIGARH

# Country will be free of Cong on May 23: Hry CM

**PNS ■ KATHAL / GURUGRAM**

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal on Monday said that the country will be free of Congress on May 23 when the counting of votes of the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections will take place.

While addressing election rallies in Kathal and Gurugram districts, the Chief Minister charged Congress president Rahul Gandhi with misleading the people with his Garibi Hatao slogan which is being used by the opposition since past 70 years.

Manohar Lal said that the Congress had been giving Garibi Hatao slogan since the tenure of Jawaharlal Lal Nehru. The slogan passed through the regimes of Indira Gandhi, her son Rajiv Gandhi and now his son Rahul Gandhi was giving the same slogan, he said.

The slogan continues even today because no work had been done to eradicate poverty

by the Congress all these years, the Chief Minister said adding the Congress had been all through misleading the masses.

In his election rally in Kathal, Manohar Lal said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the chowkidar of the Country and he is the chowkidar of Haryana.

Attacking the INLD, Manohar Lal said that during their regimes there was bidding for jobs. Now the jobs are being provided on merit, he added.

He said that loans were being disbursed to eligible youth within one hour and many had availed the benefit of bank loans. The BJP government had introduced a number of schemes for the women, including free cooking gas cylinders to poor women under the Ujjwala Scheme.

He said that as chowkidar of Haryana neither he was indulging in any corrupt practice nor allowing anyone else to harass others through corrup-

tion.

Later, the Chief Minister addressed another rally in Kukrela village in Gurugram district under the "Connect to People" campaign and praised the Prime Minister for the all round development of the country.

He said that due to anti-satellite missile tested by India four days ago, the country had joined the elite club of China, the US and Russia. All the developments are taking place due to the futuristic policies of the Prime Minister, Manohar Lal added.

He said that the world leaders acknowledge the role of Narendra Modi in international affairs.

The entire world respects the Prime Minister and stands by the country due to the effective leadership provided by Modi, he added.

The Chief Minister at the end of his speech called upon the people to raise the slogan of Abki Baar Modi Sarkaar.



Hamirpur MP Anurag Thakur campaigning in his constituency riding on the shoulders of two party workers on Monday  
Pioneer Photo

# Badals politicised SGPC for personal gains: Brahmpura

**PNS ■ TARN TARAN**

Shiromani Akali Dal (Taksali) president and Khadoor Sahib MP Ranjit Singh Brahmpura on Monday visited the historical Gurdwara Darbar

Sahib Tarn Taran to express his anguish and pain after the alleged attempt of kar sewa and office bearers of the Gurdwara management committee to demolish the historical darshani deodi of the Gurdwara on the night of March 30.

Brahmpura termed the incident as "very unfortunate,

shocking, painful and a sin committed by the responsible members of Gurdwara management in the garb of night and approval of SGPC".

"These kind of sacrileges are taking place since the Badal family has taken full control of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee

(SGPC). Badals have politicized

SGPC for personal and political gains," he alleged. Coming down heavily on the Badal family, Brahmpura alleged that the Badals use SGPC to make some deals, "and I also suspect some kind of deal behind this incident as well because the demolition work of the deodi

started at night to avoid public wrath".

SAD (Taksali) senior vice-president and former MP Dr Ratan Singh Ajnala said that his party would explore all legal options before it to get a criminal case registered against the persons involved in the work of demolition of the deodi.

"We shall explore options to get a case registered in this regard, but as the courts of law take longer time to decide such cases, I demand that persons behind the demolition of historical deodi be summoned to Akal Takht Sahib and excommunicated from the panth," he said.

# India has highest number of heart patients in world: Dr Bali

**PNS ■ CHANDIGARH**

India may soon turn into world capital of coronary artery diseases, renowned interventional cardiologist Dr H K Bali, Chairman Cardiac Sciences, Paras Superspecialty Hospital Panchkula, said here pointing out that of the estimated population of 1.30 billion in India, about 45 million people suffer from heart ailments (coronary artery disease).

Talking to reporters at a press meet about Panchkula's first center of Excellence for Cardiac Sciences along with other specialists, Dr Bali said heart disease has escalated among the younger generation with a significant risk in both males and females. Number of young Indians are suffering from coronary artery disease, owing to their poor lifestyle,



and if this continues the future looks even more dangerous. Sharing his experiences of more than 30 years in cardiology with 15000 cardiac interventions, he added that till a decade ago, the doctors hard-

ly came across young patients with heart problems. "Now, we get many cases where people in the 25-35 age group are diagnosed with heart disease," he said.

He gave details about the

cardiac health facilities available at Paras Super specialty Panchkula to help people live healthy.

**Never Ignore These 11 Symptoms:**

- ◆ Chest Discomfort -pain, tightness, or pressure in your chest.
- ◆ Nausea, Indigestion, Heartburn, or Stomach Pain.
- ◆ Pain that Spreads to the arm.
- ◆ Dizziness or sudden drop in blood pressure.
- ◆ Pain or pressure in the center of your chest that spreads up into your throat or jaw.
- ◆ Breathlessness on brisk walking or climbing stairs.
- ◆ Excessive Snoring or Obstructive Sleep apnea.
- ◆ Sweating for no obvious reasons.
- ◆ Irregular Heart Beat.
- ◆ Long lasting cough with

white on Pink mucus - signs of early Heart Failure.

◆ Swelling in Legs, Feet & Ankles.

**Top 10 Ways to Reduce Your Risk of Heart Disease:**

- ◆ Don't Smoke.
- ◆ Know your Risks - Hypertension, Diabetes & Cholesterol
- ◆ Maintain Healthy weight.
- ◆ Exercise Regularly.
- ◆ Eat less saturated fat, more fruits, green vegetables & more fiber.
- ◆ Get your Lipids Checked and Avoid Trans Fats.
- ◆ Avoid/ consume Alcohol in Moderation.
- ◆ Go for annual Preventive Health Packages.
- ◆ Manage your Stress by Yoga, Meditation.
- ◆ Know your Homocysteine levels.

# Honest Govt is our biggest feat: Haryana CM

NISHU MAHAJAN ■  
CHANDIGARH

As he carries out whirlwind tour of the state these days canvassing for the general elections, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal exudes confidence of winning all 10 Lok Sabha seats in the state and a clear majority in the country with Narendra Modi returning as the Prime Minister again.

Riding the Narendra Modi wave in 2014 general elections, the saffron party had emerged as a major gainer in Haryana where it had managed to win 7 seats and later that year, created a history by attaining absolute majority on its own in the State Assembly polls.

While the political observers opine that the 2019 election may not be a repeat of 2014 where Modi wave had decimated the Congress, Manohar Lal, who is shouldering the responsibility of leading the party's charge in Haryana, is hoping to build on recent victories of his party in Jind bypoll and civic body polls to dislodge the opposition in ensuing Lok Sabha polls.

A non-Jat Manohar Lal, who heads the BJP Government in Jatland-Haryana, asserts that party's poll agenda is development.

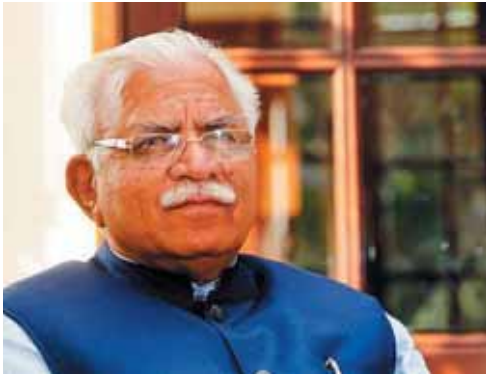
"The BJP Government has worked hard at the Centre and in the state. We have fulfilled the promises we had made to the people of Haryana before coming to power. We are now seeking people's support for the development works we have carried out during our regime," says the Chief Minister.

At a time when political parties are sewing up alliances setting a stage for multi-corned electoral battle in Haryana, Manohar Lal, whose saffron party, will go it alone in the ensuing Lok Sabha polls, says, "There is no challenge in front of the BJP in the state."

The performance of political parties in the Lok Sabha polls, would also determine, to a large extent, their future in the State Assembly polls which are due to be held later this year.

BJP has completed over four years of tenure in Haryana and the Chief Minister, during his roadshows and election rallies, is focusing on listing out his government's achievements besides sticking to the issue of national security and nationalism.

Former RSS Pracharak, Manohar Lal enjoys a clean image but has been severely



criticized by opposition over his government's failure during violent Jat quota stir, dera followers' violence at Panchkula, violence during Baba Rampal's arrest in the state.

In an interview with *The Pioneer*, the Chief Minister talks about party's poll agenda, strategy and other issues. Excerpts from the interview

**It has been more than four years of BJP's regime in Haryana now. What do you think have been the major achievements of your government so far?**

In our four-year term, we have been able to give transparent and honest government to the people of Haryana. This is our greatest achievement... Through e-services today, we have brought the government schemes easily accessible to the general public. Following the principle of Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas, we resolve to ensure all round development in the state.

**How do you see the last four years of your tenure? What gives you the biggest satisfaction in this period as a CM?**

As CM, I had the opportunity to lead the public and the four-year term was full of satisfaction. However, there is still a lot to be done... There is a satisfaction that what we said or promised, was done. In these four years, Haryana has touched the new stages of development. The upliftment of all sections of the society has always been my government's priority. Various sections of society like farmers, women, youth... all are satisfied with the government's work.

**Now as Lok Sabha polls have been announced, what will be BJP's election agenda?**

The BJP's electoral agenda is only development... The BJP Government has worked at the Centre and in the state.

we are confident to win all the 10 seats. The main opposition parties—Congress and INLD—are still struggling with infighting. The Congress leadership has no vision of any kind. After the recent defeats, the Congress leaders are themselves refusing to contest the Lok Sabha election. The other parties do not have any existence in the state.

**What are your views on BJP's election prospects at national level under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi?**

Today, Prime Minister Narendra

Modi's charismatic leadership is not only appreciated in the country but also around the world. We are confident that with absolute majority, Modi will again become the Prime Minister of the country.

**You have been conducting roadshows, holding public meetings and interaction sessions with people since last year. How is the response among people about BJP's governance model in Haryana?**

There is a wide discussion of the BJP's governance model in Haryana. People often meet me and tell me how their children were working hard for years but did not get any job... But, there are job opportunities now and people are availing it. The life of people is being facilitated through e-services. We ensured canal water to 1350 tail-end in Haryana and are committed for the welfare of farmers. Our happiness lies only in the happiness of our people.

**You have said that corruption has reduced drastically in your term. What contributed to this phenomenon, never seen in the earlier regimes?**

In the previous regimes, the leaders were only interested in gaining power by forming the government. But, our purpose is not to gain power but to serve the people. When we came to power, we tried to close all the doors of corruption. We have provided a transparent and graft-free system. Even prestigious research agencies of the country have stated that corruption in the state has decreased. This is a major suc-

**Haryana will be witnessing a multi-cornered electoral fight this time. There is BJP, Congress, INLD, JJP, AAP and BSP-LSP alliance in Haryana. Who do you think will be party's main challenger?**

There is no challenge in front of the BJP in the state. So

cess of ours...

**What kind of obstacles did you face, if any in governance? Is the mindset of the bureaucracy and people changing and are they accepting the winds of change blowing in the state?**

There was no difficulty of any kind... We have been able to achieve various milestones and it is because we have overcome the difficulties together (bureaucrats and people's representatives). For instance, when we talked about transparency in jobs, some people had thought that it could not happen... But, today, everyone acknowledges the fact that we have been able to do it.

**What are the challenges before Haryana at this juncture? How do you plan to overcome them in the remaining period of your term as Chief Minister?**

Regionalism of the previous governments and politics of discrimination had pushed the state far behind that of others. The state has immense potential and we are on the path of progress in terms of development. It is a challenge to complete all development works in the remaining period. However, I have confidence in my team (government functionaries) and together, we will be able to complete our various works.

**The opposition parties in Haryana have accused the BJP of not delivering on its polls promises made in 2014. Accusations related to mining scam, failure to generate employment, land scams among others have been made against your government. Your take on this**

The work of opposition parties is to blame us. And, they will continue to do so... We are accountable to the public and the people are happy with our policies. The majority of the election promises that we had made in the 2014 State Assembly elections, have been completed. We have so far managed to give around 64000 government jobs. As far as allegations made related to various scams, the opposition has not been able to prove it till date.

**The state had witnessed violent Jat agitation in 2016, which has allegedly divided the Jats and non-Jats in the state. How do you look at the entire scenario?**

The entire Haryana is

one... There is no scenario like Jat and non-Jat in the state. Without any discrimination, the government is also undertaking development works in the entire state.

**Several Jat leaders have announced to boycott the BJP in the Lok Sabha polls over the issue of non-fulfillment of their demands including reservation. Will this affect BJP's poll prospects? Your take on this.**

The government has accepted all the demands including reservation of Jat community. There should not be any such thing as boycott... If there is any demand then they can meet me anytime. I am always ready to work for the society.

**Haryana Assembly polls are also scheduled to be held this year. What is the roadmap of your government and party's strategy in view of Assembly elections 2019?**

Like the Lok Sabha election, our road map for assembly elections is very clear. Assembly elections will also be fought on the issue of development. We have fulfilled the promises we had made to the people of Haryana before coming to power. For the first time, the government schemes have reached the common people in the state. Be it providing of jobs or carrying out development works... We believe that like the Lok Sabha elections, we will get more seats in assembly elections too.

**Stagnation in agriculture and stagnation in farmers' income is a phenomenon which is there in several parts of the country. Your take on this**

The income of agriculture sector and farmer is complementary to each other. The previous governments considered only a measure of debt forgiveness for farmers. But, today our Central and State Government is focusing on both agriculture output and farmers' welfare. In this regard, we have implemented various schemes. The Central Government has facilitated income security to farmers by fixing the MSP of six crops. In 2019, the Government had made its vision clear to the farmer by announcing a financial assistance of Rs 6000 per year.

The State Government has also implemented measures for farmers' welfare by giving water till tail-end in Haryana.



## IS IT CHAULTALA VS CHAULTALA IN HISAR?

**Chandigarh:** While Hisar MP and Jannayak Janta Party leader Dushyant Chautala is likely to contest from his current parliamentary seat again in 2019 general elections, speculations are rife that another family member from Chautala clan is likely to be fielded against him by the Indian National Lok Dal. While the INLD members are keeping cards close to their chest on probable candidates, some leaders have floated the name of INLD secretary general Abhay Chautala for the Hisar parliamentary seat. Abhay Chautala, former Leader of opposition in Haryana Assembly had earlier said that winning candidates will be fielded from all 10 Lok Sabha seats in Haryana. He had also hinted at fielding his sons Arjun and Karan for the electoral battle and said that people are demanding it. INLD had last year split and its splinter group, JJP was formed.

## NO PROTEST AGAINST CANDIDATURE OF FARIADABAD MP, SAYS KALRAJ MISHRA

**Chandigarh:** Senior BJP leader Kalraj Mishra, who is Lok Sabha election in-charge for Haryana on Monday claimed that there is no protest against the candidature of Faridabad MP Krishan Pal Gurjar. Mishra, while talking to the mediapersons in Rohtak said, no protest had happened on March 24 in Faridabad during Vijay Sankalp rally. A person had raised objection but he also said that Modi should be our next Prime Minister. So, there is no protest, he added. Notably, protest and sloganeering against Union Minister and Faridabad MP Krishan Pal Gurjar marked the BJP's first Vijay Sankalp Yatra meeting held near Prithla village of the district on March 24 (Sunday). After this, posters were also put up against his candidature from the seat. Gurjar is the frontrunner to get BJP's ticket from Faridabad. He had made his Lok Sabha debut in 2014, when he defeated four-time Congress MP Avtar Singh Bhadana by record 4.6 lakh votes.

## HARYANA CEO URGES YOUTH TO REGISTER THEMSELVES

**Chandigarh:** Panels have been put up on 867 buses to generate awareness among public about getting their voters' card made and cast their vote in Haryana. Chief Electoral Officer, Rajeev Ranjan said the class X and class XII students who are appearing in re-appear examination, their hall ticket would bear the message of importance of voters' card and casting of vote. Ranjan directed the officers of Higher Education Department to include students' organizations in the campaign of getting voters card made. He also urged the youth to get themselves registered as voters and take active part in letter writing competition on topic "What is the importance of Voting in Lok Sabha and Assembly elections. The last date for sending the letter for this competition is April 30. Cash prize of Rs 31,000 would be given to the winner securing first position in the competition, while cash prize of Rs 21,000 would be given for securing second position. Similarly, two cash prizes of Rs 11,000 each would be given for third position and consolation cash prize of Rs 500 each would be given to 30 persons.

## ORDER PROBE INTO MISAPPROPRIATION OF RS 6.6 CR SEIZED BY KHANNA POLICE: SAD TO CEC

**SAD** on Monday asked the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) to order an independent probe into the alleged misappropriation of Rs 6.6 crore from a Christian priest, saying that this seemed to have happened with the connivance of the Congress party and its leaders and could be used to influence voters. SAD leaders including Daljit Singh Cheema, Sikander Singh Maluka and Charanjit Singh Brar, along with the legal cell member Arshdeep Cler submitted a memorandum in this regard to the Punjab CEO S Karuna Raju to be forwarded to the CEC for action. Giving details, Cheema said that the recent multi-crore recovery by Khanna police had been exposed by Father Anthony Madasserry who had made it clear that Rs 16.32 crore had been seized by the Khanna police but the authorities had only shown a recovery of Rs 9.66 crore. "We have reason to believe that the remaining Rs 6.6 crore has been misappropriated at the instance of the Congress party and would be used to influence voters. The Election Commission needs to take strong notice of this and order an independent probe to ensure this money is not misused against their political rivals by the Congress party in the forthcoming parliamentary poll," said Cheema.

## GOVT FAILED TO CURB CRIME IN PUNJAB: MANUKE

**AAP** MLA from Jagraon Sarvijit Kaur Manuke on Monday blamed the Capt Amarinder Singh Government for the deteriorating law and order situation in Punjab. Referring to Mullanpur incident wherein a youth fired at a young girl in broad daylight and then left her grievously injured, Manuke said that it was reflective of the law and order machinery going out of control in the state.

## Harsimrat urges youth to highlight SAD's 'good work' on social media

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Emphasising the need to use the social media to counter the "false propaganda" of the rival parties, the Union Minister and SAD MP from Bathinda Harsimrat Kaur Badal on Monday admitted that not using the platform might be one of the party's weaknesses.

"During (the) meetings with party workers in the last few days, I have got feedback that we need to highlight (our work) more on social media. Our political opponents are into promoting false propaganda against us with the use of money power and having a full-fledged team," said Harsimrat in a video message posted on her official Facebook page.

"Working at the ground level has been the Akali Dal's strength, but we do not want to showcase it. But, in today's social media era, maybe it is the weakness of the Akali Dal," she added.

Harsimrat urged the youth to use to social media to highlight the "good work" done by her party and expose the alleged wrongdoing of political opponents.

"I want to request all the youth, brothers and sisters (that) wherever they see good work done by the Akali Dal and wrongdoing of political opponents or you witness any injustice being done with anyone, then you can make a video of that and share it on social-media platforms or you can also share with me on social media," she said in her post.

The Union Food Processing Minister accused the Congress Government in Punjab of stalling all the development work initiated by previous SAD-BJP regime.

## SIT to probe death of female Punjab Drug Inspector

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Punjab Police has set up a special investigation team (SIT) to probe the female drug inspector Neha Shourie's murder case.

The SIT, headed by IGP Rupnagar Range V Neeraja, comprise of SAS Nagar (Mohali) Senior Superintendent

of Police (SSP) HS Bhullar, Rupnagar SSP Swapan Sharma, Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Jagwinder Singh, and Assistant Drug Controller (under Punjab Health Department) Sanjeev Garg.

A 40-year-old female drug inspector Shourie, posted at Kharar Drug and Food Control

Lab was shot dead after a chemist shop owner Balwinder Singh barged into her office and opened fire at her. Singh, who tried to escape from the spot after the incident, was caught by the crowd outside the office and later committed suicide by shooting himself with a pistol.

Initial investigations have revealed that the accused ran a

chemist shop in Morida, and the woman drug inspector had cancelled his license.

The SIT has been asked to carry out expeditious and thorough investigations into the murder of the deceased, including all the facts and circumstances leading to the incident, conduct enquiry into the issue of arms license to accused

Balwinder Singh (deceased) and the role of different agencies or officers in the issue of arms license to the accused.

Besides, it would investigate the sale of weapon by the concerned arms dealer and look into any other relevant connected issue to the incident as well as the circumstances leading to it.

## Withdraw 'directions' to act' against its leaders, demands SAD

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) on Monday demanded withdrawal of instructions of Punjab Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) whereby the latter has directed the police to take action against prominent Akali leaders and workers who blocked roads during a dharna protest in 2017.

SAD leaders, including Daljit Singh Cheema, Sikander Singh Maluka, and Charanjit Singh Brar, along with the legal cell member Arshdeep Cler submitted a memorandum in this regard to Punjab CEO S Karuna Raju to be forwarded to the CEC for action.

Briefing the CEO about the issue, Cheema and Maluka registered SAD's strong protest against any attempt to politicise the post of Punjab CEO.

SAD delegation pointed out to the CEO that he had "unfairly" issued directions to the Police Department to take action against prominent Akali leaders who blocked roads during a dharna protest in 2017.

"This protest occurred after a dastardly attack on Akali leaders and workers at Makhlu following rejection of their nomination papers in the Local Bodies elections. False cases were registered against the senior Akali leadership and workers," said the delegation.

Cheema said that it was pertinent to mention that during the model code of conduct, the Election Commission was bound to act as a custodian of the rights of all political parties and any directions issued by Punjab CEO in a one and a half year old matter while acting on a politically motivated RTI would directly affect the ongoing campaigning process in the State.

Maluka demanded withdrawal of instructions saying that such instructions could be misused by the Congress Government to harass the opponents and to arrest them to take advantage at the time of polling.

"Instead, the Commission should restrain the police from acting on such old and frivolous cases," he added.

## Punjab CEO appoints officer to monitor noise pollution

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Electoral Officer Dr S Karuna Raju on Monday appointed Punjab Pollution Control Board environment engineer Kuldeep Kumar to monitor the issues related to compliance of norms of Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000 during ensuing period of Model Code of Conduct.

Punjab Chief Electoral Officer Dr S Karuna Raju said that the Election Commission of India (ECI) has issued detailed instructions regarding use of loudspeakers or any sound amplifier for publicity by candidates during Lok Sabha Elections 2019.

"There should be no use of loud speakers, public address system or loudspeaker or any sound amplifier between 10 pm and 6 am... Use of such sound system, whether fitted on vehicles of any kind whatsoever or in static position, were prohibited for public meeting, general propaganda during the specified hours," read the instructions.

Dr Raju said that the loudspeakers, being used beyond the given hours, would be confiscated along with all apparatus connected. "Political parties candidates or any other persons using loudspeakers on moving



vehicles, including but not restricted to trucks, tempos, taxis, vans, three wheeler scooters, cycle rickshaws, etc shall intimate registration identification number of those vehicle to the authorities granting permission to use loudspeakers and such registration identification numbers of the vehicles shall be indicated on the permits granted by the authorities concerned," he added.

"Any vehicle, on which a loudspeaker is used without the said written permit, shall be confiscated along with the loudspeaker and all the apparatus used," he added.

Dr Raju said that all political parties, candidates and even other person using a loudspeaker either on a mov-

ing vehicle or at a fixed place shall intimate the Returning Officer and local Police authorities, in writing.

CEO has directed that it should be ensured by the concerned authorities of state pollution control board that decibels of the sound generated by loud speakers or amplifiers does not exceed the permissible limits in industrial area by 75 decibel during day time and 70 decibel during night time, in commercial area by 65 decibel in a day time and 55 decibel during night time, in residential area by 55 decibel in a day time and 45 decibel during night time and in silence zone by 50 decibel in a day time and 40 decibel during night time as fixed under relevant law or

guidelines prevailed in the state.

## ECI'S MOBILE APPS TO HELP CITIZENS

**Chandigarh:** To ensure electoral participation of the techno-savvy youth besides simplifying poll-related works and bringing its functioning in tune with the changing times, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has gone for multiple initiatives in IT sphere.

These novel initiatives involve starting of many mobile voter friendly apps, websites as well as helpline which can be used by candidates and political parties to submit mandatory filings or statements or request being extremely helpful to the citizens.

**Suvidha App:** A single window system for both candidates and political parties to apply for permissions before conducting meetings, rallies, etc, and can also be done through the Android app, with the ECI's directions to give permissions within 24 hours once candidates or parties make a request

**CVIGIL:** It enables users to provide time-stamped, evidence-based proof of the model code of conduct or expenditure violation, having live photo or video with auto location data.

Any citizen can lodge a complaint through the app, which would be investigated by the flying squad and returning officer then takes the decision.

**Voter Helpline:** App provides convenience to all citizens for finding their names in electoral roll, submitting online forms, checking application status, filing complaints and receiving reply on their mobile app besides knowing contact details of booth level officers, electoral registration officers and district election officers, by using voter helpline mobile App or through www.nvsp.in portal or by calling 1950 helpline number. Services through SMS can also be availed by citizens by sending SMS without any cost to 1950 and all forms, results, candidate affidavits, press notes, voter awareness and important instructions are available through the app

**PwD App:** It enables the Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) to request for new registration, change in address, change in particulars and mark themselves as PwD through the use of mobile application by simply entering their contact details, and the booth level officer is assigned to provide doorstep facility. PwDs can also request for a wheelchair during polling.



# IT dept seizes Geelani's Delhi house

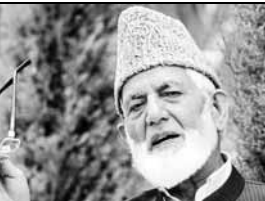
PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Income Tax Department has attached a house of hard-line Kashmiri separatist Syed Ali Shah Geelani located in the national Capital in connection with an over ₹3.62 crore tax evasion case against him.

The attached flat is located in south Delhi's Khirki Extension locality in Malviya Nagar. A Tax Recovery Officer (TRO) of the department sealed the house as Geelani allegedly failed to pay ₹3,62,62,160 income tax for assessment years 1996-97 to 2001-02, an order said.

The department has

The attached flat is located in south Delhi's Khirki Extension locality in Malviya Nagar. A Tax Recovery Officer (TRO) of the department sealed the house as Geelani allegedly failed to pay ₹3,62,62,160 income tax for assessment years 1996-97 to 2001-02



Various agencies have tightened the noose around terror sympathisers ostensibly working at the behest of Pakistan and are suspected to be engaged in fuelling terror in J&K in conjunction with terror affiliates of the Pakistan Government and the Army combine

undertaken the action under section 222 of the Income Tax Act (assessee deemed in default of tax payment) and "prohibited and restrained" the Hurriyat Conference leader from transferring the asset to anyone.

An order to attach the

property was issued on March 29 by the department.

TRO is the enforcement wing of the IT department and deals with cases of wilful defaulters. The authority is empowered to attach an asset and subsequently auction it to realise the tax dues.

In March, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) slapped a penalty of ₹14.40 lakh on Geelani in a 17-year-old case of illegal possession of foreign currency worth \$10,000 in alleged contravention of foreign exchange law.

The foreign currency,

equivalent to about Rs 6.90 lakh, had also been confiscated by the ED in 2002 as part of an order issued under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) on March 20.

This currency was seized during an Income Tax raid at Geelani's residence in Srinagar's Hyderpora area in 2002.

Various agencies have tightened the noose around terror sympathisers ostensibly working at the behest of Pakistan and are suspected to be engaged in fuelling terror in Jammu & Kashmir in conjunction with terror affiliates of the Pakistan Government and the Army combine.

# Army Chief to visit US to boost military ties

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In an effort to further strengthen military-to-military ties, Army Chief General Bipin Rawat will hold wide ranging discussions with the US top brass during his four-day visit there beginning on Tuesday.

Both the Armies now hold regular joint exercises here and in the US annually besides exchange of officers to promote better relations. His visit comes against the backdrop of growing strategic and Defence ties between the countries increasing manifold over the past few years.

Moreover, the US has emerged as one of the biggest weapon suppliers to India in the last two decades with India recently signing deal with a US firm for 72, 400 Sig Sauer assault rifles worth over Rs 700 crore for frontline troops guarding the Line of Control (LoC) with Pakistan and Line of Actual Control (LAC) facing China.

The rifles will be acquired on fast track basis and likely to be inducted within a year. Also, the arms exports

Both the Armies — India and US — now hold regular joint exercises here and in the US annually besides exchange of officers to promote better relations



The Army Chief led delegation will interact with senior military hierarchy of the US Armed Forces with an aim to take forward the military to military cooperation. The Army Chief will also visit the US Military Academy at West Point and the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Rawat is an alumnus of the college

from the US have crossed the ten billion dollar mark in last few years and the US keen to have joint ventures with Indian companies to manufacture weapons here.

Given this scenario, the Army Chief led delegation will interact with senior military hierarchy of the US Armed Forces with an aim to take forward the military to military cooperation. The Army Chief will also visit the US Military Academy at West Point and the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth,

Kansas, officials said here on Monday. Rawat is an alumnus of the prestigious college.

Rawat will interact with General Joseph F Dunford, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and General Mark A Milley, Chief of Staff of the US Army to discuss military cooperation issues of mutual interest.

The visit to US aims to give impetus to the military ties and enhance strategic engagements. The functional experience gained during the visit shall further enhance India-US relationship, they said.

# Zika virus: US relaxes advisory against travelling to India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

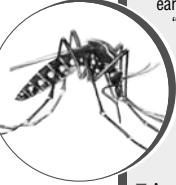
The Centre for Disease Control (CDC), a US health protection agency, has relaxed its December 2018 travel advisory to India over Zika outbreak, especially for pregnant women. Earlier, the CDC had cautioned pregnant women to not travel to India as there was an ongoing outbreak in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.

On Monday, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) issued a statement saying that its March rebuttal to CDC's earlier advisory has led the international agency to say the status of Zika outbreak has changed to "current or past transmission but no current outbreak" from the earlier status given to all south Asian nations — "ongoing outbreak".

According to the CDC website, the advisory now states, "India has reported past or current Zika virus transmission. We do not have accurate information on the current level of risk. There may be delays in detection and reporting of new outbreaks."

"Because Zika is a cause of severe birth defects, CDC recommends pregnant women and couples trying to become pregnant within the next three months work with their health care providers to carefully con-

The Indian Council of Medical Research in an statement said its March rebuttal to Centre for Disease Control (CDC)'s earlier advisory has led international agency to say the status of Zika outbreak has changed to "current or past transmission but no current outbreak" from the earlier status given to all south Asian nations — "ongoing outbreak"



According to the CDC website, the advisory now states, India has reported past or current Zika virus transmission. We do not have accurate information on the current level of risk. There may be delays in detection and reporting of new outbreak

As many as 159 cases of Zika were reported in Jaipur during October-November. In Madhya Pradesh, 130 cases were reported during the same period, whereas in Ahmedabad the number of cases were two

sider the risks and possible consequences of travel to areas with risk of Zika. If you travel, you should strictly follow steps to minimise exposure to and prevent mosquito bites."

The ICMR adds that Zika virus strain isolated in Rajasthan matches with the one in Brazil, which saw a massive outbreak in 2016. It further clarifies that though preliminary studies done on strain in Rajasthan do suggest that the mutation causing birth defects (microcephaly) was absent there but "further characterisation of the strain is required as microcephaly has several

attributable cases.

Also, the ICMR has said that a study was being rolled out in Madhya Pradesh among Zika-positive pregnant women to understand the outcomes of pregnancy and to know the occurrence of neurological complications, including microcephaly. A similar study, ICMR said, has been rolled out in Rajasthan as well.

As many as 159 cases of Zika were reported in Jaipur during October-November. In Madhya Pradesh, 130 cases were reported during the same period, whereas in Ahmedabad the number of cases were two.

# SSC paper leak case: SC OKs declaration of re-exam results

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday allowed the Staff Selection Commission (SSC) to declare the result of a re-examination of SSC Combined Graduate Level (CGL) 2017 held last year. A Bench of Justices SA Bobde and S Abdul Nazeer said that injunction granted on August 31, last year on the declaration of result for SSC CGL, 2017, would not continue on a re-examination conducted on March 9, 2018.

The top court said that lakhs of unemployed youths have suffered because someone from the organisation was corrupt. It also set up a high powered committee comprising Nandan Nilekani, a co-founder of tech giant Infosys, and renowned computer scientist Vijay P Bhatkar to suggest reforms for conducting of competitive examinations fairly by Government bodies. **PTI**

# ITBP command activated at Leh to counter China build-up

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) on Monday operationalised its strategic command at Leh in the Ladakh region of Jammu & Kashmir after moving it from Chandigarh as part of a plan to counter the ever-increasing Chinese military build-up in the Tibetan Autonomous Region.

The North West frontier of the ITBP, headed by an Inspector General of Police-rank officer equivalent to a Major General in the Army is tasked to guard the 3,488-km India-China border in peace times. It has now been made operational from Ladakh from Monday, officials said.

The Indian tricolour and the paramilitary's flag were unfurled to herald the new



move and the frontier will be operating from the existing premises of the ITBP sector headquarter, they said.

ITBP Director General SS Deswal has sanctioned more infrastructure including buildings and logistics for the new command. The DG is expected to visit the formation some time

A decision to the effect was taken in January this year to shift the command from Chandigarh to Leh, which are separated by a distance of 960 km

Location of the ITBP and the Army in the same region will resolve the coordination issue between the two forces

The new ITBP frontier will have command of about 12 battalions (12,000 personnel) deployed along the Chinese border that runs along Jammu & Kashmir, a move intended to increase the presence of the troops on the icy, blizzard-prone mountainous border

officer and the shift is expected to facilitate a better interaction between the two forces in terms of strategic and defence planning.

The Army, which carved out a separate Corps in Leh after Jammu and Srinagar following the Kargil incursion in 1999, has been demanding operational control over the ITBP. The proposal has been rejected by the Government.

Location of the ITBP and the Army in the same region

will resolve the coordination issue between the two forces.

The Union Home Ministry had first mooted the proposal for this strategic move in 2015 but it did not materialise.

The new ITBP frontier will have command of about 12 battalions (12,000 personnel) deployed along the Chinese border that runs along Jammu & Kashmir, a move intended to increase the presence of the troops on the icy, blizzard-prone mountainous border.

# 2019 Elections Battleground LOK SABHA

## Paramilitary forces exempted from code of conduct



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) has exempted a host of agencies under the Union Home like paramilitary forces, NIA, IB, CBI and other security agencies from Model Code of Conduct and allowed them to procure operationally required items through open tender or Government e Marketplace (GeM) portal.

The move comes after Joint Secretary in the Union Home Ministry Piyush Goyal in a letter to the Election Commission

of India NOC (No Objection Certificate for MHA/CAPFs, NSG, Assam Rifles, Intelligence Bureau, CBI-CFSL and other security organisations for procurement of operationally required items through open tender.

In a recent letter to Union Home Secretary Rajiv Gauba, Election Commission Secretary Avinash Kumar said it has no objection from Model Code of Conduct angle with regard to procurement of any item by the security agencies under the Home Ministry.

## EC seeks report on Yogi's 'Modi ji ki sena' remarks

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) on Monday took cognizance of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath referring to the Indian Army as 'Modi ji ki sena'. The district magistrate of Ghaziabad has been asked to furnish a report in this regard.

The report will be submitted to the office of Chief Electoral Officer of Uttar Pradesh which has sought the details after taking cognizance of media reports in this regard.

"Congress ke log aatankwadiyon ko biryani khilate the aur Modi ji ki

sena aatankwadiyon ko goli aur gola deti hai. (Congress would feed 'biryani' to terrorists, while Modi's army gives them bullets and bombs). This is the difference. The Congress people use 'ji' to refer to Masood Azhar to encourage terrorism," Adityanath said at an election rally in Ghaziabad on Sunday.

The Chief Minister was campaigning for sitting MP and Union Minister VK Singh. The EC had on March 19 asked political parties to "desist" from indulging in

any propaganda involving actions taken by Defence forces during their Lok Sabha poll campaigns.

The fresh advisory came days after the poll panel asked parties and their candidates against using pictures of Defence force personnel in their campaign material. "...Parties/candidates are advised that their campaigners/candidates should desist, as part of their election campaigning, from indulging in any political propaganda involving activities of Defence forces," it said.

The poll body said the new advisory was in continuation to its earlier one on use of pictures of Defence personnel in campaigning.

## EC: VVPAT order will delay results SC asks 21 parties to file reply in a week

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

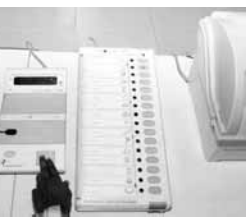
The Supreme Court on Monday granted time to 21 political parties time till April 8 to respond to the stand of Election Commission of India that verification of 50 per cent of Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trails (VVPAT) in all constituencies will delay counting.

The Election Commission (EC) has filed counter-affidavit in the matter pointing out logistical difficulties in carrying out 50 per cent verification of VVPAT. According to the EC, this will delay the announcement of results by at least six days.

"It is therefore submitted 50 per cent VVPAT slip verification in each Assembly segment of a Parliamentary Constituency or Assembly Constituency on an average shall enlarge the time required for counting to about 6 days. It is also relevant to mention that in many Assembly Constituencies, there are more than 400 polling stations, which will require about 8 to 9 days to complete the VVPAT slip count," stated the affidavit filed by the poll panel.

This has come in response to a PIL filed by leaders of 21 Opposition political parties, demanding counting and cross verification VVPAT in at least 50 per cent (randomly chosen) of all polling stations within each Assembly Segment/Constituency.

The petition also challenges the decision of ECI to verify VVPAT of only one randomly selected booth of a constituency. The petitioners say



the Court in 2017 that VVPAT will be used 100 per cent in future elections. However, the decision taken by the EC in July 2018 was to verify VVPAT of a randomly selected polling station from a constituency.

That this will account only for 0.44 per cent of the votes polled. This guideline defeats the entire purpose of VVPAT and makes the same "ornamental" without actual substance, they state.

Last week, the Bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi had required the Commission to reply whether it is possible to increase the VVPAT sample survey in every assembly segment. The Commission has explained that the VVPAT slip is displayed to the voter through a transparent window in the Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) for about seven seconds after the casting of vote. The EC had informed

are: N Chandrababu Naidu (TDP), Sharad Pawar (NCP), KC Venugopal (INC), Derek O'Brien (TMC), Sharad Yadav (LTD), Akhilesh Yadav (SP), Satish Chandra Mishra (BSP), MK Stalin (DMK), TK Ranga Rajan (CPI(M)), S Sudhakar Reddy (CPI), Manoj Kumar Jha (RJD), Arvind Kejriwal (AAP), Farooq Abdullah (NC) K Danish Ali (RJD), Ajith Singh (RLD), M Badruddin Ajmal (AIUDF), Jithin Ram Manji (Hindusthani Awam Morcha), Ashok Kumar Singh (JVM), Khorrum Anis Omar (IUML) Prof. Kodanadram (Telangana Jana Samithi), and KG Kenye (Naga Peoples Front).

## HACKED LAST MONTH, BJP WEBSITE BACK



The BJP website that was hacked almost a month back has come back with much better design, user-interface and navigation capabilities. The portal went into the "maintenance" mode on March 5 when hackers hit it, wiping out the data. The message on the BJP website read: "We'll be back soon! Sorry for the inconvenience..." If you open it now, the message reads: "Welcome to the world's largest political party."

## Cong questions Amit Shah's assets info, demands action

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday accused BJP president Amit Shah of providing "false information" related to his property in the affidavit filed by him for Gandhinagar Lok Sabha seat and demanded that the Election Commission direct the Returning Officer to initiate action against him.

Congress spokesperson Manish Tewari alleged Shah in his affidavit has "undervalued"

his assets which is "very serious" as it is against the provisions of the Representation of the People Act. Referring to a plot in Gandhinagar, the Congress leader claimed that as per the Government guidelines the market value of the plot comes to Rs 66.5 lakh, but Shah had declared its value at Rs 25 lakh.

There was no immediate reaction available from the BJP or Shah's office on the charges. "We would like the Election Commission to take cog-

nizance of this matter and direct the Returning Officer of Gandhinagar to take appropriate action under the law. Because this is no ordinary candidate, this is the president of the BJP and an alleged false declaration on an affidavit is a serious issue," he told reporters.

Tewari alleged that when there is a laid down process, by which a clear market value of the property can be declared, the president of BJP for some reason has decided to declare only

less than half its market value.

He also claimed that Shah's assets have seen a jump of 300 per cent from 2012 to 2019, growing from Rs 11.79 crore to Rs 38.81 crore. "At least, for some, 'achche din' have come, even if they have not come for 125 crore Indians," he said referring to the BJP's poll slogan for 2014 elections.

He said Section 125-A of Representation of the People Act clearly says that "a candidate who fails to provide full infor-



mation or provides false information or conceals any information, will be punishable with fine and/or imprisonment."

# Stalin washes off anti-Hindu blot

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Taken aback by the aggressive posture of Hindutva elements in the BJP and the Sangh Parivar that the DMK is an anti-Hindu organisation, party chief MK Stalin on Monday made a strategic change in his approach to religions, especially the Hinduism.

"There is an attempt by certain political and social groupings to portray the DMK as an enemy of the Hindus. But this is absolutely wrong as we are not against any religions. We, in DMK, follow what the party founders C N Annadurai and my late father Kalaingar (M Karunanidhi) had taught us. They told us to follow the dictum of one God and one community. This is what we are doing even today," declared the DMK leader while campaigning in Vellore district.

Stalin's declaration comes at a time when the social media is agog with his speech made at Tiruchi where he declared that Sanatana Dharma was the biggest threat faced by the country than that from Pakistan and China. The speech has



including Anbumani in the Cabinet," claimed Stalin.

Meanwhile, the DMK fielded Udhayanidhi Stalin, son of M K Stalin to campaign against Anbumani Ramadoss, the NDA candidate contesting at Dharmapuri Lok Sabha constituency. In a no-bar holds attack on Anbumani, the scion of the DMK family asked the people of Dharmapuri not to believe the promises made by the former as he has failed in implementing any of the offers he had made in 2014.

"He has not visited the constituency regularly. Though he had promised to resolve the water crisis in the district, the situation continues to remain the same," charged the film actor son of Stalin.

Anbumani is facing challenge from the DMK's DNV Senthil Kumar at Dharmapuri who hails from a leading Vanniyar family of the district. Though the DMK has declared that it was against caste and religion, the party has been careful in selecting and fielding candidates from the dominant community in the constituencies from which the party is contesting.

## BSP announces 2nd list of six candidates



**Lucknow:** The BSP on Monday announced its second list of six candidates for Lok Sabha Polls in Uttar Pradesh.

While Amar Chandra Jauhar has been given ticket from Shahjahanpur (SC), Nilu Satyarthi will be party candidate from Mishrikh (SC), a party statement said.

Manoj Agarwal has been fielded from Farukhabad, Nisha Sachan from Akbarpur, Pankaj Singh from Jalaun (SC) and Dileep Kumar Singh from Hamirpur.

The BSP, which is contesting on 38 Lok Sabha seats (of the total 80 seats) after entering into an alliance with the Samajwadi Party, had on March 22 declared its first list of 11 candidates.

The party in its earlier list gave ticket to former JD(S) leader Kunwar Danish Ali from Amroha, besides announcing Haji Fazulrahman as its nominee from Saharanpur, Malook Nagar from Bijore and Girish Chandra from Nagina. **PTI**

# TMC is BJP's Trojan Horse in Bengal: CPM

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

BJP and the Trinamool Congress conspired together to demolish the impact of Left-democratic parties from Bengal, State CPI(M) secretary Dr Suryakanto Mishra has said.

Attacking the two parties, calling one the proverbial Trojan Horse of the other, Mishra, also a politburo member, said, "TMC is the Trojan Horse of BJP," in the Opposition camp, urging people to identify their hidden camaraderie "or else you will have to repent the way you have been for the past eight years" of the Mamata Banerjee rule.

Attacking the BJP for its "nefarious designs" to deconsecrate the Constitution of India by robbing it of its "secular democratic" ethos Mishra said "if it comes for the second time the very future of the secular democratic republic enshrined in our Constitution will be at stake."

On who brought the BJP in Bengal and who was behind

the saffron party's steady emergence, the senior Left leader and a former State Minister said, "the TMC had first tried to bring the saffron menace directly to Bengal through an alliance. But when the people under the Left leadership rejected that move she (Chief Minister) took a circuitous path by trying to communally divide Bengal, the way she did all these years" — by propping one community much to the chagrin of the other.

"It is the TMC that has to answer the proliferation of Sangh in the State, it is for the Trinamool to explain the import of a political culture in this State which had never been present since the Independence," Mishra said adding the "Chief Minister will have to answer to the people for her misdeeds."

For the BJP he said despite its meteoric rise and undue importance in the media the party "will never be able to survive in Bengal as the region is basically secular and Left minded with impact of the renaissance culture."

# Shocking as Yogi terms Army Modi's Sena, tweets Mamata

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday launched a blistering attack on her Uttar Pradesh counterpart Yogi Adityanath for tagging the Indian Army with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Hours after the UP Chief Minister attacked the Congress for treating terrorists with Biryani while "Modi ji's army feeds them with bullets and bombs," Banerjee retorted saying the remark had shocked her.

"It is shocking to hear the UP CM saying that the Indian Army is the 'Modi Sena,'" Banerjee tweeted adding the Yogi's statement had only insulted the Army. "Such blatant personalisation and usurping of our beloved Indian Army is an insult and a humiliation," she said.

"We are proud of our Army. They belong to all. They are a great asset of our nation and not a cassette of the BJP," Banerjee said adding people of this country "must stand up and reject this state-

ment."

Another Trinamool leader Firhad Hakim said "this proves how the Modi Government is politicising the Army to win elections. They are not only politicising the Army but also using it for their narrow end. This will only evoke hatred from the people of India.

Meanwhile in an unrelated and unprecedented development the Chief Electoral Officer of Bengal was literally forced to leave the venue of a meeting between Special Police Observer for the State Vivek Dubey and opposition parties when a delegation of the BJP refused to speak to the in front of the CEO accusing him of "playing a partisan game."

Expressing no-confidence on State CEO Aariz Aftab the Bengal BJP delegation led by senior leader Mukul Roy "refused to take part in a discussion with Dubey in presence of the CEO as we had no doubt that whatever we bring to the notice of the Police Observer will be related to the TMC or the State Government in two minutes if he remains present in the meeting."

# Tej Pratap launches Lalu Rabri Morcha

Urges mother to contest from Saran

**Patna:** In fresh trouble for Lalu Prasad's RJD, his mercurial elder son Tej Pratap Yadav on Monday urged his mother Rabri Devi to contest from Saran Lok Sabha seat in place of the father of his estranged wife and threatened to contest as an Independent if his request was not heeded.

The maverick MLA and former Minister spoke while announcing the formation of a parallel outfit Lalu Rabri Morcha which he insisted was not separate from the RJD and pointed towards photographs of his parents besides younger brother Tejashwi Yadav who has in the recent past emerged as the partys de facto leader.

Saran is the seat of my father Lalu ji and mother Rabri ji. I urge my mother, with folded hands, that she herself enter the fray from there. If this does not happen I will contest as an independent and make my best efforts to win it, a furious Yadav told reporters here.

Chandrika Rai, the partys MLA from Parsa seat falling under Saran, was announced as the party candidate from the Lok Sabha seat last week. BJP has named sitting MP Rajiv Pratap Rudy as its nominee on the politically important seat.

Rai's daughter Aishwarya had tied the knot with Yadav in May last year though the latter moved a divorce petition within less than six months of the marriage.

After the announcement of his candidature, Rai had sought to downplay speculations that the development could enrage his volatile son-in-law and said



he is one of the star campaigners of the party. He will not do anything that is detrimental to the interests of the RJD.

About his own candidature, Rai had said I am a six-term MLA from Parsa and hence competent enough to fight this seat which is valuable to our party. Rabri Devi may have chosen not to contest this time as she would be very busy with campaigns across the State.

Notably, Saran was won by Prasad in 2009 his last shot at the hustings before conviction in a fodder scam case four years later left him disqualified. Rabri Devi was fielded from the seat in 2014 but she lost to BJPs Rajiv Pratap Rudy. Prasad has represented Chapra, the name by which the parliamentary segment was previously known, a number of times.

Yadav, who has been pressing the candidature of two of his loyalists Chandra Prakash from Jehanabad and Angesh from Sheohar announced that the duo would be fielded by his Morcha from the respective seats.

Replying to a query, he shot back what action can the party take against me. The RJD leadership has to realize that there is widespread resentment against the NDA Government in Bihar which we have to harness. We must not end up angering the people. **PTI**

# Speaker accepts rebel Cong MLA's resignation from K'taka Assembly

**Bengaluru:** Karnataka Assembly Speaker K R Ramesh Kumar on Monday accepted the resignation of rebel Congress MLA Umesh Jadhav, who is taking on party veteran Mallikarjun Kharge as the BJP candidate from Gulbarga constituency in the coming Lok Sabha elections.

The Congress had petitioned the Speaker seeking disqualification of Jadhav along with other party rebel lawmakers Ramesh Jarkiholi, B Nagendra and Mahesh Kumathali under the anti-defection law.

"I am convinced that the decision (by Jadhav) has been taken of his own volition without being under duress or without falling for all allurements," Kumar said in his order.

The ruling came as a big relief to Jadhav as there was

uncertainty over his political future with the Congress seeking disqualification under the anti-defection law.

On March 25, the speaker had conducted a public hearing too giving the voters of Chincholi, the Assembly constituency Jadhav represented, a chance to express their views on his decision.

Even before the order could come, Jadhav joined the BJP on March 6 at Kalaburagi the day Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed a gathering in the town.

Jadhav was upset with the Congress against the alleged dominance by Kharge, Congress leader in the Lok Sabha, and his son Minister Priyank Kharge in the region.

He was against Priyank Kharge getting ministerial berth ahead of several senior

Congress leaders including himself.

The four MLAs had kept the party on tenterhooks for several weeks, defying its whip twice to attend the Congress Legislative party meetings on January 18 and February 8 and had skipped the early part of the Assembly budget session.

During the political turmoil that engulfed the state in January, following BJP's alleged attempts to topple the Congress-JD(S) coalition Government by poaching their MLAs, the four MLAs had gone incommunicado and were said to be camping in Mumbai, with a plan to jump ship to the saffron party.

After they refused to fall in line, the Congress had petitioned the Speaker to disqualify them under the anti-defection Law. **PTI**

# With 123 companies of Central forces, Assam prepared for polls: DGP

**Guwahati:** A total of 123 companies of Central paramilitary forces are currently deployed in Assam and the state is prepared for the three-phase Lok Sabha elections, Director General of Police Dr Kuladhar Saikia said.

"Thirty three companies of paramilitary forces have recently been sent to the state. Ninety more such companies have also been in Assam for quite sometime," Saikia said.

"Our own Assam Police force is engaged for ensuring free and fair polls in the state. We are prepared for all the eventualities. We are ready to handle any situation," the DGP told a press conference here.

The 14 Lok Sabha constituencies of Assam will go to

polls on April 11, 18 and 23.

Saikia said those engaged in the National Register of Citizens (NRC) related duty have not been pulled out for poll security work.

The DGP said he is in constant touch with his counterparts in the neighbouring states for maintaining law and order along the inter-state borders.

Saikia said, "Patrolling by security forces was intensified in the border posts and railway stations."

The DGP said vulnerable pockets were identified on the basis of law and order situation and repoll ordered during past elections.

Patrolling by security forces has been intensified in those areas. **PTI**

# Two brothers go missing from home in J&K's Kishtwar

**PTI ■ JAMMU**

Two minor brothers went missing in Kishtwar district of Jammu & Kashmir, police said on Monday and sought help of the general public in tracing them.

Mohammad Ramzan (14) and his brother Faizan (10) have been missing from their residence in Kuchaal since on Wednesday, a police official said.

He said their father Ghulam Mir informed the police about the missing of his children and accordingly a case was registered and investigation was started.

"Anybody having any information regarding the missing boys may kindly contact police," he said.

# Manipur's Kuki militants to cast vote through postal ballots

**Imphal:** The Election Commission on Monday notified that cadres of Kuki militant groups who signed Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement with both the Centre and the Manipur government will cast their votes in postal ballots.

To exercise their franchise, the cadres also must reside in their designated camps and their names feature in the voters' list, the office of the state chief electoral officer (CEO) said in a statement here.

They would have to collect the postal ballots from assistant nodal officers or nodal officers.

The Suspension of Operation (SoO) agreement — a pact to ensure peace in the Kuki dominated areas in

Manipur — was first signed by the state and the Centre with two militant groups of the community in 2008. Since then, agreement is being renewed periodically.

Kuki militants are members of two major conglomerates — the Kuki National Organisation (KNO) and the United People's Front (UPF) who were demanding a separate Kuki State out of Manipur.

Many cadres of the KNO and the UPF are currently putting up at designated camps set up by the Government in different Kuki-dominated areas in the State.

Polling for two Lok Sabha seats of the State — Outer Manipur and Inner Manipur — will be held on April 11 and 18 respectively. **PTI**



A woman casts her vote at a demo electronic voting machines and checks on Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail or VVPAT during an election awareness drive by district administration amongst the tea garden labourers ahead of Lok Sabha polls in Jorhat on Monday **PTI**

# BJP blames SKM for backing out from pre-poll alliance in Sikkim

**Gangtok:** The BJP on Monday hit out at the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) for backing out the alliance between the two parties for inexplicable reasons a few days after making a firm commitment on the issue.

"We were ready to accommodate most of the demands by the SKM leadership to sew up an alliance with us for Sikkim Assembly and Lok Sabha polls, but P S Golay led-party chickened out at the last minute without giving any reasons," a senior BJP leader, who was involved in talks with the SKM leadership, told PTI on the condition of anonymity.

He said that the SKM's withdrawal from a pre-poll

alliance in Sikkim has embarrassed the BJP no end as it had gone public about it on a commitment given by Golay himself following a meeting with BJP's North-East and Sikkim incharge Ram Madhav in Delhi in the first week of March this year.

The SKM leadership, however, took an about turn after reaching Sikkim and reneged on alliance with the BJP without citing any reason, the BJP leader said.

Ruing at the missed opportunity to oust the 25 year-old Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) from power, he said that the SKM will be held "squarely responsible" if the Pawan Kumar Chamling gov-

ernment returns to power for a sixth term in Sikkim.

The BJP leader said that his party was undaunted with setback to fructify an alliance with the SKM and said that it will aim to make its presence felt in political waters of Sikkim.

He said that the BJP has put up candidates on 12 assembly seats and the lone Lok Sabha seat with an aim to open its accounts at the hustings.

Elections to the 32 Assembly seat as well as the sole Lok Sabha constituency in Sikkim will be held simultaneously on April 11 next.

The SKM and SDF are contesting on all 32 Assembly seats. **PTI**

# Bombay HC refuses to interfere with release of biopic on PM Modi

**Mumbai:** The Bombay High Court on Monday refused to interfere with the release of the Vivek Oberoi-starrer biographical drama on Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

A bench of Chief Justice Naresh Patil and Justice N M Jandam noted that the Election Commission (EC) has already issued a notice to the makers of the film 'PM Narendra Modi' over allegations of breach of the model code of conduct in view of the Lok Sabha elections.

"The Election Commission has already taken note of the issue and shall deal with it," the court said.

The bench disposed of a

Public Interest Litigation filed by Satish Gaikwad, national president of the Republican Party of India (I), who said the film, if permitted to be released for public viewing, would violate the model code of conduct imposed by the EC.

The plea questioned the timing of the film's release and said if released, it was likely to earn the Prime Minister electoral mileage.

The petitioner urged the court to pass orders ensuring that it is not released this Friday, April 5, as scheduled.

The EC, however, told the court that it had already sought replies from the filmmakers. **PTI**

# NPP will continue to oppose Citizenship Bill, says Conrad

**Tura:** National People's Party supremo and Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma on Monday said the party will continue to oppose the Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB).

"Meghalaya was the first state in India to oppose the Bill and raise its objection. We took the initiative to unite different political parties of Northeast and made our voice heard in Delhi and ensured that the CAB was not introduced in the Rajya Sabha," he said while campaigning for the NPP candidate in the Lok Sabha polls in the state.

He claimed that the NPP is the only party that can unite the voice of the region and made it heard in Delhi. **PTI**

Conrad asked the people to vote for the NPP as "NPP is the party of the Northeast."

The NPP chief on Monday flew to three different locations in North Garo Hills and East Garo Hills (Rongrong Abema, Mangsang and Chibonga respectively) to campaign for his sister Agatha, the NPP candidate for the Tura Lok Sabha seat.

Former Meghalaya chief minister Mukul Sangma is the Congress candidate for the Tura Lok Sabha seat while the BJP has fielded Rikman G Momin.

He alleged that the Congress party is propagating a wrong notion that NPP will partner with BJP and will ensure that the CAB is passed

in the Lok Sabha.

The NPP chief said, "We will remain true to our commitment promised to the people of Northeast and will never allow any bill that would hamper the interest of our people."

Conrad claimed that the NPP has "fulfilled" its promise made in the 2018 election with education as its top priority.

"We had promised education policy and we brought out the policy well ahead of completion of one year. For over four decades the education department had to work without any policy or direction, we have scripted a direction to move forward to ensure better educational facilities in Meghalaya," he said. **PTI**

# Voters will punish Cong for coining Hindu terror: Modi

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Tearing into the Opposition "Mahaghatbandhan" in Maharashtra, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said the people in the country had made up their mind to "punish" the Congress for coining the term "Hindu terror" and "insulting" the majority community in the eyes of the world and ridiculed NCP chief Sharad Pawar for his decision not to contest the Lok Sabha polls.

Kicking off the BJP's Lok Sabha poll campaign at Wardha in eastern Maharashtra, Modi came down heavily on Pawar and Rahul Gandhi and said the Congress and its ally NCP would not be pardoned by the people by the latter's act of linking terrorism to Hindu community.

In perhaps the most vicious attack launched against the Congress, Modi said: "For the sake of vote bank politics, the Congress and NCP can go to any lengths. It was the Congress that coined the term 'Hindu terror' and created a slur on the crores of people in the country. Tell me were you not deeply hurt when you heard the term 'Hindu ter-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Chief Minister of Maharashtra Devendra Fadnis (L) and BJP candidate from Wardha constituency Ramdas Tadas (R) during an election rally ahead of the Lok Sabha polls in Wardha on Monday. PTI

ror"? There is not even an incident in the country's thousands of years of history. Even British historians have mentioned that Hindus ever indulged in terror acts. Who has defamed the 5,000 years of country's culture. Can the Congress that coined the term 'Hindu terror' be pardoned? Can the Congress-NCP alliance be pardoned?"

Accusing the Congress of having committed the sin of insulting the Hindus and defaming the country's mainstream, Modi said: "The Congress has tried to show the Hindus in a poor light interna-

tionally. Let them run them as much as they can, but the Congress will never be pardoned — a thing even Congress is realising that the Country has made up its mind to punish it". Slamming Rahul Gandhi for his decision to contest the second from Kerala's Wayanad, Modi said: "The realisation of impending defeat has forced the leaders to flee the poll scene. Having linked terrorism to Hindi, they do not have the guts now to contest the elections where majority (Hindus) lives and they have chosen to contest from places where minority is majority".

# 4 terrorists killed in Pulwama gunfight

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

In another successful operation, the joint teams of security forces, early Monday morning, eliminated four terrorists in Laspipora area of South Kashmir's Pulwama district.

According to the police, it was a combined group of proscribed terror outfits Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) and Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT).

This is the third big operation in the last two weeks in which security forces have achieved major success.

According to police, "It was a clean operation and no collateral damage happened during the encounter. However, in the initial exchange of fire, three army jawans and one policeman also sustained injuries. Their condition is now stated to be stable", official sources said.

Since January 2019, around 66 terrorists have been eliminated by the security forces across the Kashmir valley.

Out of this, 21 killed terrorists were members of Jaish-e-Mohammad terror outfit.

According to Jammu & Kashmir police spokesman, "the operation was launched in the Laspipora area of Pulwama on the basis of credible input about the presence of terrorists in the area".

"During searches, terrorists



Kashmiri villagers carry body of terrorist Aqib Ahmed Kumar during his funeral procession in Hillow village, Srinagar, on Monday. PTI

fired upon the search party. The fire was retaliated leading to an encounter", the police spokesman said.

In the ensuing encounter, four terrorists were killed and the bodies were retrieved from the site of encounter.

According to police, the killed terrorists have been identified as Zaffar Paul, son of Mohammad Ahsan, resident of

Dangerpora Shopian, Tauseef Ahmad Yattoo, son of Abdul Aziz, resident of Gudbug, Pulwama, Aqib Ahmed Kumar, son of Bashir Ahmad, resident of Hellow Shopian and Mohammad Shafi Bhat, son of Ghulam Mohammad, resident of Sedow Shopian".

Police spokesman said, these terrorists were wanted by law for their complicity in a

series of terror crimes including attack on security establishments and civilian atrocities.

As per police records, Tauseef had a long history of terror crime records and several terror crime cases were registered against him including FIR No. 281/2016, 509/2016, 19/2018 registered in P/S Pulwama and 33/2018 registered at P/S Litter. He was

involved in conspiring and executing many terror attacks in the area.

Similarly, Zaffar was involved in many terror crimes cases which include FIR No. 290/2017, 307/2018, 13/2019, which were registered against him in Police Station Shopian. Aqib Ahmad and Mohammad Shafi were also involved in terror crimes in the area.

# Mizoram civil society body call for poll boycott

**Aizawl:** An umbrella organisation of major civil societies and student associations in Mizoram on Monday decided to boycott the April 11 election to the lone Mizoram Lok Sabha seat and organise a State-wide indefinite bandh from April 8, sources in it said Monday.

The NGO Coordination Committee said that a decision was taken earlier to boycott the Parliamentary polls if special polling booths are established at Mizoram-Tripura border Kanhmung village.

"The NGOCC opposed the establishment of special polling stations at Kanhmung by the election department and the state government officials," a statement issued by the committee and signed by NGOCC Secretary Lalhmachhuana said.

The EC is setting up 15 exclusive polling booths in the village for Bru refugees from Mizoram who are housed in six camps in neighbouring Tripura. The step had been taken in the November 2018 Mizoram assembly polls too.

Appeals would again be made to the authorities to ensure that Bru voters housed in the relief camps in North Tripura district should exercise franchise in their respective villages where they were enrolled as voters and indefinite bandh be organised from April eight to pressurise the authorities, the statement said.

The NGOCC appealed to all the commercial and private vehicle owners requisitioned for transportation of central armed police force (CAPC) and state police personnel as also for use by polling officials not to allow their vehicles for the election purposes.

The Bru community in the Tripura relief camps have refused to return to Mizoram for years despite several repatriation efforts. PTI

# Outfit claims Faesal's resignation not accepted by Govt, demands probe

**Jammu:** A Dogra outfit on Monday claimed that the Government has not accepted the resignation of Shah Faesal from Indian Administrative Service though he has floated a political party after announcing his decision to quit in January, and demanded a high-level probe into the "delay".

"Even after more than three-and-a-half months, Shah Faesal's resignation has not yet been accepted by the Government," the outfit Team Jammu's Chairman Zorawar Singh Jamwal told reporters here.

Singh said that Faesal tendered his resignation from civil services on January 9 this year

and had launched his party — Jammu Kashmir People's Movement.

"But his resignation has not yet been accepted for the reasons best known to the administration whereas resignation of another IAS officer Farooq Shah was accepted within a week's time and order issued in this regard," he said.

Alleging that some Government employees were promoting Faesal actively participating in political activities, Jamwal demanded a probe into why his resignation has not been accepted yet.

When contacted, officials refused to comment on the issue. PTI

# I-T officials seize huge amount of cash in TN

Seizure linked to Durai Murugan

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

The Income Tax raids at the residence and business premises of DMK treasurer, Durai Murugan, have snowballed into a political controversy on Monday as the Income Tax department disclosed that huge amount of unaccounted money was seized from a local party activist who is linked to Durai Murugan.

The cash, packed in small bundles, marked with numbers of wards and divisions, was kept concealed at a cement

godown located in the residential premises of DMK's Katpadi town panchayat secretary Seenivasan, at Karigiri Salai, in Pallikuppam in Vellore district.

According to a statement from the I-T department, "The cash shifted from Kingston College (Durai Murugan Educational Trust), Vellore, to a cement godown in the night between 29th and 30th March due to botched up operation by the State Police and revenue authorities was found by I-T team."

Friday night saw the DMK local workers holding a demonstration blocking the team from IT Department entering the residence of Durai Murugan. It was only after the

arrival of Murugan at the scene the officials were allowed to check the residence.

Durai Murugan's son Kathir Anand is the DMK candidate from the Lok Sabha constituency of Vellore. Friday night and Saturday morning saw sleuths of the IT department and officials of the flying squad deployed by the election Commission swooping down on Durai Murugan's residence and on the engineering college owned by him.

RS Bharati, the legal wing head of the DMK met the Chief Electoral Officer of Tamil Nadu and lodged a complaint with him alleging that the raids at Durai Murugan's residence and business premises were part of political vendetta.

# HM terrorist behind failed fidayeen attack on CRPF convoy held

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

The Jammu & Kashmir police on Monday claimed to have arrested a Hizbul Mujahideen terrorist behind failed fidayeen attack on a CRPF convoy near Jawahar tunnel, Bahihal on March 30.

The arrested terrorist has been identified as Owais Amin, a resident of Shopian. After triggering the explosion, he had managed to flee away from the spot.

A Santro car, loaded with explosives, hit a bus of CRPF at Tethar, Bahihal while the Convoy was moving from Srinagar to Jammu. As a result, the CRPF Bus, No. HR66-8067,

suffered minor damage and the CRPF personnel, travelling in the bus, had a narrow escape.

Addressing a press conference here in Police control room, late Monday evening, DGP Police Dilbagh Singh said, "on Sunday evening at about 2030 hours at Upper Gund (Banihal) one person namely Owais Amin S/O Mohd Amin Rather R/O Vehil, Chhatta Waran, Shopian was apprehended by joint Mobile vehicle Check Post (MVCP) of Army and J&K Police who was trying to sneak to valley".

"He was having injuries and burn marks when he was apprehended from a tipper moving towards the Kashmir valley".



Photo released by ISRO, Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) C-45 lifts from Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota on Monday. PTI

# Police officials who handled Pollachi sexual harassment case transferred by TN Govt

**Chennai:** The Tamil Nadu Government on Monday transferred police officials who had handled the Pollachi sexual harassment case, including a Superintendent who revealed the identity of the woman victim.

The case relates to a four member gang woman allegedly trying to strip a woman inside a car near Pollachi, over 500 km from here, recording the act and blackmailing her using the visuals. The victim, who managed to free herself, later lodged a complaint with the police.

A total of eight persons have been arrested in connection with the case. The Government had last month transferred the investigation of the case to the CBI from the state's CB-CID, which had earlier taken up the probe from the local police. PTI

According to a Home Department order, Coimbatore SP R Pandiarajan and DSP, Pollachi sub-division, R Jayaram, have been transferred with "immediate effect." Further, A Natesan, Inspector, Pollachi East police station, has also been transferred, it said.

The order allocated no postings to them, virtually putting them in the waiting list.

Sujit Kumar IPS, Deputy Commissioner, Traffic, Coimbatore City, has been posted in place of Pandiarajan while KG Sivakumar, DSP, District Crime Records Bureau, Ooty will replace Jayaram.

Earlier, there was a public outrage after Pandiarajan revealed the name of the victim during a press meet, with civil society groups demanding action against him. PTI

# Farmer held with 14 lion claws in Gujarat's Amreli

**Ahmedabad:** A farmer has been apprehended with 14 claws which he had removed earlier in February from a dead lion in the Tulshishyam Range of Gujarat's Gir Forest, senior official said on Monday.

The farmer, identified as 45-year-old Vashram Dhapa of Pachapachiyia village in Khambha taluka from Amreli, was nabbed Sunday from his farm in nearby Sonariya based on a tip-off, DT Vasavada, Chief Conservator of Forests, Junagadh Wildlife Circle said.

In February, a lion, aged between five to nine years, was found dead in the Tulshishyam

range Gir East division by forest staff. Fourteen of its claws were missing. We had then formed a special team to nab the person responsible," Vasavada said.

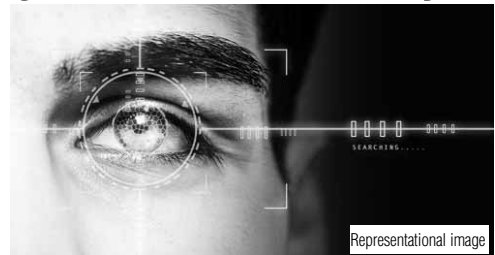
"We zeroed in on Dhapa who has confessed that he had removed the claws and hid them near his farm in Sonariya. We have recovered all 14 claws," he informed. He added that, as of now, it had not been established whether Dhapa killed the lion for its claws but the angle was being pursued. "Claws are worn by some people as pendants. We are probing if Dhapa had a connection to gangs dealing in such items," he said. PTI

# Tech to diagnose dementia by tracking eye

**Gandhinagar:** Scientists at IIT Gandhinagar have developed a technology that can non-invasively diagnose dementia by tracking a person's eye movements, much before the symptoms appear.

With a significant rise in ageing population, neurodegenerative disorders are becoming a serious health issue. While dementia cannot be cured, its progression can be delayed if diagnosed early.

"By the time symptoms of dementia are detected, it is too late — Alzheimer's disease kicks in and it can not be managed. But if dementia is caught early, we can delay the progression of Alzheimer's," said Uttama Lahiri, Associate Professor of Electrical Engineering, at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Gandhinagar.



Her team, which included Ritika Jain and Valay Patel, developed the 'MindEye' project that can track a person's eye movement, quantifying gaze in terms of reaction time and correct fixations, in response to visual stimuli presented on computer monitor.

"We present a stimulus -- dots appearing at certain portions of the screen at certain angles. People with dementia

"We have handed the technology over to the industry and a larger clinical trial is under way in Kolkata and Gujarat," Lahiri said.

About 1,600 people have been screened already, she added.

The researchers used standard tests — long questionnaires that a patient answers with the help of a psychiatrist — to validate their results.

The results were presented this month at the Faculty of Old Age Psychiatry Annual Conference held in the UK.

Existing tests methods to diagnose dementia in patients have several shortcomings. During their research, Lahiri found that uneducated people in old age homes have difficulty answering the questionnaires, making it harder to give a correct diagnoses. PTI

### SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that a female namely **Chandni, W/o Sohail, R/o H.No. 2070-71, Gali Haji Kayamuddin, Choti Baradari, Hauz Qazi, Delhi** has been missing since 22.03.2019. In this regard a case vide **DD No. 1A, dated 23.03.2019, has been registered at P.S. Hauz Qazi, Delhi.** Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the missing female but no clue has come to light so far. The description of the missing female is as under:

**Name:** Chandni, **Gender:** Female, **Age:** About 26 years, **Height:** 5', **Complexion:** Shallow, **Face:** Round, **Build:** Medium, **Hair:** Black colour.

If anyone has any information regarding this missing female, kindly inform SHO/ Hauz Qazi, Delhi.

E-mail : [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
 Ph. : 011-24368638, 24368641  
 Fax : 011-24368639

SHO  
P.S. Hauz Qazi, Delhi  
DP/6157/CD/19 Ph. No.: 011-23212482, 23210414

### New Okhla Industrial Development Authority

Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida-201301 (U.P.)  
 Website : [www.noidaauthorityonline.com](http://www.noidaauthorityonline.com)

#### E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tenders are invited from eligible contractors/firms for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened / downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website: [www.noidaauthorityonline.com](http://www.noidaauthorityonline.com) & <http://etender.up.nic.in>. Please ensure to see these websites for any changes /amendments & corrigendum etc.

A(1)	28/SPE/PE (PH-1)/E-T/2018-19	Supply of Labour and Machinery for cleaning and Desilting of drain from Sabdeep Paper Mill to Harola Sec-4, 19, 27, 28, 29, 37, 38, 40, 41 to Sec-51 Irrigation Drain, Noida.	3621568.00
(2)	57/SPE/PE (PH-1)/ET/18-19	Supply of Insecticides used for Vector Control in Noida.	3122000.00

The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 09/04/19 upto 5.00 PM. Pre - qualification shall be opened / downloaded on dated 10/04/19 at 11.00 AM.

**(S.C. Mishra)**  
**Sr. Project Engineer (Public Health)**  
**Sector-39, Noida**

CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

## The Wayanad gamble

Rahul Gandhi is looking to maximise the Congress' national tally by going south, not betraying Amethi as a lost cause



It would be too naive to interpret Congress president Rahul Gandhi's decision to contest from Wayanad in Kerala as a thoughtless, hasty move. Neither is he abandoning his homestead of Amethi — though the BJP would very much like you to believe that — nor is he betraying the few alliances he has managed to stitch up with that amorphous entity called the *mahagathbandhan* by taking on the Left. There are now apprehensions that the Congress is not serious about the Lok Sabha election or stopping the Modi juggernaut and

is using it to just shore up its footprint as a truly national party than be subservient to the federal front. The truth is a layered gambit. And in the end, given that the southern States share 120 seats among them, the party does want to put up a strong fight in winning the elections and be a major political entity in doing so.

First, Rahul has realised that in the personality sweepstakes that this election has been reduced to, a Balakot-armoured, space-faring Narendra Modi has found his beat in the popular pulse of North India, riding a swell of Hindu pride that's no longer dependent on Ayodhya. But Modi has not been able to penetrate the South with such ease, perhaps because these States are helmed by territorial strongmen, who are believed to be in sync with local aspirations, and partly because people here have a far more inclusive idea of India than the 'new India' peddled by the Modi army if not himself. Rahul has actually fared well in opinion polls in these parts. So, by positioning himself as a claimant to national relevance from the South, where it is easier for him to explain his idea of India, he could indeed create a polar opposite in the elections that could work in his favour. Second, Wayanad is a strategic choice because it sits on the juncture of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala and Rahul's campaign here will have some cascading effect in the three States as well, where the party has a more respectable presence compared to the North. Third, the farmers' distress has been most palpable in this drought-hit region and, therefore, sets the right pitch for Rahul to lead a crusade on core livelihood issues. It is also a minority-dominated district and he wants to be seen as the protector of those pushed out of the mainstream discourse. Besides, the South, Karnataka to be precise, has a legacy of loyalty to the Gandhis whenever they have faced their severest challenge and all of them were metaphorically reborn in crucial verdicts. Indira Gandhi contested from Chikmagalur and won after her debacle post Emergency while Sonia Gandhi resurrected her political worth from Bellary despite a fierce campaign mounted by the BJP's Sushma Swaraj. So if he can give the southern States a coordinated voice in the national discourse, then chances are that the Congress' seat tally might improve enough to help it bargain better in power games. For howsoever the Opposition front might complain about being sidelined as power brokers rather than the king, fact is, at this point, the Congress still has the better national recall value and some heartland States in its kitty. So both cannot do without each other.

Even if the Congress were to give up seats in Delhi or settle for just two in Uttar Pradesh, would AAP or SP-BSP be able to make good in other States? The Congress has a better chance of solidifying its scoreline if it focusses on States that are easier to turn around. Both Rahul and Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi are caught between the devil and the deep sea. They can either help prop up the Opposition by becoming their B-team and risk losing their voteshare further or consolidate and grow in the long-term. And though the return may be delayed in the latter option, it is worth the investment of building a pyramid from the base. In fact, Priyanka has been vocal about the endangered species status of the Congress, calling out party workers over organisational weaknesses and insisting upon booth-level connect for 2022, the UP Assembly election. Wayanad seems to be the eject parachute that will keep them sailing on an emergency jetpack of improved tallies.

## End of the road?

With US-backed Kurdish forces claiming IS territory, its reign may come to an end. But the outfit is still dangerous



As the Kurdish forces of the Syrian Democratic Front (SDF) moved into Baghuz, the last stronghold of the Islamic State (IS), a small town located on a bend of the Euphrates river, reports emerged that sounded eerily similar to events that occurred in Berlin towards the end of the Second World War. Thousands of refugees, mainly women and children, many of the kids fathered by IS fighters, left the city. This created a huge problem for several Western Governments as many refugees were

citizens who now wanted to return. The case of Shamima Begum, a British citizen and her new-born baby, made headlines when the UK rescinded her citizenship and during the vocal debate on whether to take her child back or not, the new-born baby unfortunately died in the heat, dust and unhygienic conditions of a refugee camp. That is another debate and one that Governments in the West will have to ponder about, as will India, where tens of brain-washed youth have traversed all the way to the Levant to rape, pillage and kill 'infidels'. The big question is whether this signifies the end of IS. The loss of Baghuz means it has lost the last shred of real estate that it owned. But just because IS does not have any territory or a population under its control, and most importantly money, the kind it made from trading crude oil as well as through kidnapping and even the slave trade using Yazidi women, does not mean that it is over. The IS ideology survives as do many of the group's leaders such as Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, sheltered by friendly tribespersons in Iraq and Syria. Post regime-change Iraq is still a den of corruption and long-standing tribal and religious schisms papered over in the Saddam-era continue to fester. And while Bashar al-Assad's forces have with Russian help ousted many of the forces inimical to the regime in Damascus, much of Syria is still a mess. With US President Donald Trump unwilling to keep more boots on the ground, things could still go haywire.

More importantly, much of what IS achieved was with the internet and using modern communications and media tools to disseminate its information. This led to promoting 'lone wolf' attacks such as those made with trucks in Berlin and Marseilles. This is unlikely to end, even though social networks have cracked down on such pages. Pro-IS propaganda still exists online and recorded audio messages by leaders like al-Baghdadi are available on the internet, imploring supporters to stay active. Without money and material, IS might have been defanged for now but the poison glands are still producing venom. To ensure that the fangs don't re-emerge, Governments must remain vigilant.

# Busting several myths

The NIA's failure to present even an iota of evidence in the court in the Samjhauta Express blasts case has battered its reputation. There is no proof of funding either



SANDHYA JAIN

The collapse of the Samjhauta Express bomb blasts case against anti-conversion crusader Aseemanand and his "co-conspirators", Lokesh Sharma, Kamal Chauhan and Rajinder Chaudhary, on the March 21 Samjhauta Express Case, has trounced attempts by a previous regime to establish the bogey of "Hindu terror." Aseemanand allegedly mentored people seeking revenge for attacks on Hindu temples (Akshardham, Gujarat; Raghunath Mandir, Jammu; and Sankat Mochan Mandir, Varanasi). The National Investigation Agency's (NIA) failure to present even an iota of evidence in the court has battered its reputation. Aseemanand has already been acquitted in Hyderabad's Mecca Masjid and Ajmer's dargah blast cases. Living among tribals in Dangs, Gujarat, his ability to inspire terror attacks with trifling amounts like ₹25,000 and ₹40,000 seems laughable; no other sums are attributed to him.

The NIA case revolved around Sunil Joshi, who was murdered in December 2007 in Dewas, Madhya Pradesh. As no credible corroborative evidence was forwarded, the case collapsed once Aseemanand withdrew his confession, claiming it was coerced. As his plea of innocence before one judge clashed with his confession before another judge, special judge Jagdeep Singh upheld the forced confession plea. The shoddy probe thus helped those behind the killing of 68 people on the night of February 18-19, 2007, to get away scot-free.

Interestingly, the US Department of the Treasury informed the 1267 committee of the UN Security Council that Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT) was behind the attacks and that Fazeel-A-Tul Shaykh Abu Mohammed Ameen Al-Peshawari; Arif Qasmani; Mohammed Yahya Mujahid; and Nasir Javaid had carried out train bombings in India. The 1267 committee stated on June 29, 2008, that these people were financed by proclaimed offender Dawood Ibrahim. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) registered an FIR and Safdar Nagori of the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) admitted in October 2008 that the Samjhauta blasts were executed by SIMI activists with the help from LeT from Pakistan. The judge observed that the NIA did not follow these leads. Survivors reported that some people had got off the train midway but this line of investigation was totally neglected.

In 2010-11, the investigators began to pursue the "Hindu terrorists" theory. Aseemanand "confessed" in January 2011 that on February 16, 2007, he met Sunil Joshi and Bharat Rameshwar at Balpur and was told to expect some "good news"; Joshi later told him that his (Joshi's) men were behind Samjhauta and other incidents. Even *prima facie*, this does not suggest Aseemanand's involvement in any conspiracy.

In NIA vs. Naba Kumar Sarkar @ Swami Aseemanand and others, Aseemanand denied



confessing any crime to convict Abdul Khaleem in Chanchalguda Jail, Hyderabad. The judgement agreed that this was unlikely as Aseemanand was in solitary confinement. It noted that while the "confession" said Indresh Kumar, Pragna Thakur, Bharat Rameshwar and others also attended meetings (denied by them), the NIA had not charged them as co-accused.

According to the retracted confession, in March 2006, Sunil Joshi met Aseemanand at Shabridham and asked for money to purchase a SIM card and pistol from Jharkhand and received ₹25,000. However, the NIA failed to prove that the SIM card or pistol was used to execute the Samjhauta Express blast. Besides, as the judgement observed, no material evidence was recovered from places associated with the alleged conspiracy, namely, Thakurghar, Shabridham and Balpur Mandir; instead the NIA took Aseemanand to unrelated places like Daman.

The prosecution claimed that Lokesh Sharma, Rajinder Chaudhary, Kamal Chauhan and Amit Hakla came to Old Delhi Railway Station from Indore on February 18, 2007, and stayed in railway dormitories but offered no evidence in this regard. There was no evidence (train tickets/reservations or other records) to establish that the accused people travelled from Indore to Nizamuddin station and then to Old Delhi Railway

“ THERE WAS 'NO CONCRETE ORAL, DOCUMENTARY OR SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE' REGARDING MOTIVE TO INDULGE IN THE CRIME; NOTHING TO SHOW HOW AND FROM WHERE RAW MATERIALS FOR MAKING BOMBS WERE PROCURED; WHO COLLECTED THE MATERIAL; WHO ASSEMBLED THE BOMBS; WHO PLANTED THE BOMBS IN THE TRAIN ”

Station. Similarly, they allegedly escaped to Jaipur by train and then travelled to Indore by bus; but no evidence was furnished to support their journey.

The prosecution claimed that the bombs were transported in two suitcases, whose covers were stitched by tailor Iqbal Hussain of Kothari Market, Indore. Suitcase covers of two unexploded bombs were recovered from the crime scene. However, the NIA did not bother to conduct a Test Identification Parade (TIP) to establish if any of the accused people had got the covers stitched at the said shop. More glaringly, the report of the finger print expert was not matched with the fingerprints of the suspects or accused people to get vital clues.

The prosecution claimed that the accused people were trained in Bagli Forest area in 2006. Sand samples from the alleged site were reportedly taken in December 2012 from a pit created at the time of training. The judgement observed that it was highly improbable that any pit would remain in the same condition after more than six years, especially when the site was a hill slope; soil erosion and weather wear and tear would change the complexion of the site.

More pertinently, scientific literature states that after six months, RDX turns into Nitrite; after the explosion, RDX would turn into carbon in the shape of ash. Hence, the prosecution's claim of finding "traces of RDX"

in the alleged sand samples collected from Bagli Forest area suggests that the investigating agency "went whole hog in order to create fake evidence to ensure false implication of the accused... by any means, whether scientific or not and that, too, with a totally irrelevant piece of evidence". Lt Col Prasad Shrikant Purohit is accused of providing the RDX in this and other "Hindu terror" cases; this verdict may help him.

Thus, after five years of investigations and seven years of trial, the NIA failed to furnish any evidence regarding any agreement to commit the crime among the accused people. There was "no concrete oral, documentary or scientific evidence" regarding motive to indulge in the crime; nothing to show how and from where raw materials for making bombs were procured; who collected the material; who assembled the bombs; how and from where technical know-how was arranged; who planted the bombs in the train.

Above all, there is no evidence regarding the funding of this gigantic exercise. The NIA built its edifice on extracted confessions revolving around the culpability of the deceased Sunil Joshi. Little wonder the judge bemoaned the "gaping holes in the prosecution evidence"; this is a blistering indictment of the NIA.

(The writer is Senior Fellow, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library; the views expressed are personal)

## SOUNDBITE

We have seen in recent times how the dignity of the RBI was diminished. Sanctity of these high offices must be maintained.



TMC chief —Mamata Banerjee

Priyanka is fantastic... (I would) love to work with her... I am talking to her for something. I am not going to say what it is.



Director —Joe Russo

China is in close communication with various parties and has made positive progress on Masood Azhar. The US knows that very well.



Chinese official —Geng Shuang

Education must lay the foundation for developing a society that is strongly grounded in ethics and moral values to ensure peace in life.



Vice President —M Venkaiah Naidu

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### China must mend ways

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "US move on Azhar" (March 29). After Beijing used its veto to stall the sanction committee's unanimous decision to designate Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar a global terrorist, its double-speak became abundantly clear. On the one hand it maintains a firm stand on terror, on the other, it seeks to promote Pakistan.

Already, China's inconsistent policy on terror has drawn the ire of the US, the UK, France and other European countries. Before stonewalling repeated attempts to bring extremists to book, China must set its own house in order. Repeated human rights violations on Uighur Muslims in Xinjiang have been reported. This is humiliating and must be condemned.

It's high time that China falls in line to support the resolution at the Security Council instead of remaining a stumbling block to declare Azhar a terrorist with unconvincing defence.

KR Srinivasan  
 Secunderabad

### The need to be wary of jingoism

With poll dates nearing, things are really heating up. If Prime Minister Narendra Modi's crafted speeches in the initial stages of the high-profile election campaign are anything to go by, we can safely say that there's going to be more of jingoism, bellicosity and sabre-rattling against a well-argued discourse on bread-and-butter issues of politics from the side of the ruling BJP. It can be argued that the BJP and the Prime Minister have made hyper-nationalism their campaign pitch as they cannot run the risk of running their narrative on below-par performance indicators on the economic front. The plank of national security suits the party to divert people's attention away from the economic situation, visibly blighted by unemployment and farmer distress. It is an undeniable fact that an overarching appeal of Hindutva nationalism has diminished passion for secularism and social justice.

The virulent nationalism represented by the Hindu right, of which the BJP is a principal and prominent part,

### Protect the protectors

Sir — This refers to the article, "Return our green cover" (March 28) by VK Bahuguna. It is shameful that instead of rewarding the forest dwellers for their outstanding contribution towards protecting the forests, efforts have been made to jeopardise their symbiotic

relationship with the ecology. The Bishnoi tribe of Rajasthan, for example, follows rules as prescribed by their guru. Felling trees and killing animals are treated as crimes under their purview. The Bishnois are rightly called the first environmentalists of India. They build water storage tanks that can store rain water for humans and animals. They bury the deceased instead of

following their religious tradition to cremate the dead. They do this to avoid wastage of firewood and air pollution. To minimise the use of trees, they use cow-dung cakes as fuel for cooking. They only collect dead wood. Further, this tribe has been fighting court cases against poachers, no matter how big the suspect may be. Indeed, the environment and the lives of forest dwellers

improved in less than three per cent of the total forest cover in India where traditional inhabitants became managers of their forest land. The need is to improve upon the Forest Act, 1927 and implement it soon so that it can be extended to the remaining 97 per cent of our forests.

Sujit De  
 Kolkata

### There will be no takers

Sir — In times when the Congress' political fortunes have reached a low, it isn't surprising that it has come up with the Nyuntam Aay Yojana scheme. What is astounding is that the plan is being backed by some eminent economists, who have thrown their sacred principles to the winds and rushed to back this idealistic scheme that would only make this nation a country of idlers and beggars. No self-respecting Indian would like to receive alms and, therefore, this scheme is an insult to their dignity.

Shivansh  
 Via email

Send your feedback to:  
 letterstopioneer@gmail.com



**FIRST COLUMN**

## Journey towards sustainability

The energy revolution looks much more attainable, undeterred and above all promising than it has ever seemed so. But challenges need to be addressed, say **MEGHA JAIN** and **AISHWARYA NAGPAL**

Undeniably, financial volatility and climate change are considered to be the twin prime catalysts for alteration in the global ecology that can profoundly impact businesses and society alike. It has been universally acknowledged that in the last one decade, corporate sourcing of renewables holds the potential to churn substantial surplus investments in the renewable energy sector. With the right framework in place, it can enable not just the acceleration of energy transition but shift the world closer to achieving the ambitious Paris Agreement goal.

While on the one hand, 2018 drew to a close with a hotly-contested 'Katowice Climate Package' finalised at COP24, which established a set of guidelines to make the Paris Agreement operational by 2020, on the other, the findings of a May 2018 report by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) has startled most of us as it indicated that corporate sourcing occurs only in roughly one-third of the countries across the world (ie about 75 countries), even as most Governments are yet to adopt specific policies to nurture such demand. The said report also hinted towards tremendous potential that still remains to be tapped by the rest of the world.

Against this backdrop, it will be worth mentioning that a coalition of companies, committed to 100 per cent internal energy sourcing from renewables by 2050, has come into existence and is popularly known as RE100. The alliance works as an international NGO and has global presence with offices located in London, New Delhi and New York. RE100 initiative is led by the Climate Group in association with the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP). Placing renewables at the core of corporate strategy, the existing 155 members (as of November 2018) are generating demand for 188 terawatt hours (TWh) of renewable power yearly, which is comparable to the 23rd biggest economy power consumption all over the world.

In such a small span of time, RE100 members' commitments envelop more than 140 markets globally. Till now, big corporate houses like Sony, Facebook, H&M, Infosys, Tata Motors and Mahindra Holidays among others, have pledged to rely 100 per cent on renewable power in their overall setup by joining RE100. Some other groups like Google, Apple, Jupiter Asset Management and Wells Fargo among others have already met their 100 per cent renewable electricity target. Of course, India is striving to attain the RE objective, which offers enormous prospect for investors and corporates to create a level-playing field for the growth of India's renewable sector. Let's dig deeper to understand the complete rationale behind the RE100 setup.

The RE installation sourcing can be pursued either through corporate Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) or self-generation via direct investments. Going ahead, it is most likely that growth will come through PPAs and captive production as no fresh renewable energy capacity is coming under REC because the industry has decisively moved towards tariffs and determined competitively through bids, thus leaving no scope for RECs. Even in the current market scenario, the enforcement of RECs is not so strong and needs a lot of reforms before its true realisation. Thus, it is envisaged that to fulfill the dream, the need is for greater investment and as RE prices go down, more and more companies may adopt RE financing.

**Way forward:** While financing of utility-scale RE projects by well-established RE developers has improved substantially over the years, corporate sourcing of RE has nuances that need to be sorted out to ensure a better spread. This, as and when it happens, will create volumes that will result in financing that may tap help debt capital markets, both in terms of gathering required capital to put up the projects and refinancing of some assets with access to a larger pool of funds outside the banking system. Issues have been many. Take, for example, Apple's publication of green bonds, dedicated to financing clean energy projects across its global business operations. Clearly, the need is also to spread awareness regarding the number of corporates, who have financed some of their RE assets.

Since the entire process of transformation involves multiple patrons, backward and forward linkages need to be strengthened in advance. Also, a step forward could be to ensure an energy market structure that allows for direct contracting between companies and renewable energy developers. Last but not the least, the process of environmental stewardship and benchmarking remains incomplete until these RE100 companies amalgamate disclosure, awareness, management and leadership together.

(The writers are Senior Research Fellows, Faculty of Management Studies, University of Delhi)

**POINTCOUNTERPOINT**

**CONGRESS PEOPLE WOULD FEED BIRYANI TO TERRORISTS, WHILE MODI'S ARMY GIVES THEM BULLET OR BOMB. THIS IS THE DIFFERENCE.**  
 —UTTAR PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER  
 YOGI ADITYANATH



**YOGI'S COMMENT IS HIGHLY CONDEMNABLE. THIS IS A CLEAR WAY OF INTIMIDATING THE VOTERS AND CREATING A FEAR PSYCHOSIS IN THEIR MINDS.**  
 —CPI LEADER  
 D RAJA

# Footprint for a fintech hub

Though it's almost next to impossible for India to become cashless in the immediate future, we can at least give it a shot. A start has to be made by changing people's mindset



MOÏN QAZI

The financial industry that serves the lower income segment has gone through distinct transformations in recent times — from social banking to microfinance; to financial inclusion; and now to technology-driven financial services or 'fintech'. The last represents the potent intersection of finance and technology, has changed people's lives and transformed the business landscape forever. It has enabled us to trade dollars for bits and bytes. For the millennial — those for whom the internet, mobile phones and plastic cards are a fact of life — cash is now quaint and transactions are mostly via digital tools. Banking is fast moving to a paperless and real-time era. While bank branches will always be there, banks are gradually becoming 'invisible' in how they deliver services.

Today, India is the world's second biggest fintech hub with 2,035 start-ups operating in this sector, according to India Fintech Report 2019. India's digital payments market is set to grow to \$500 billion by 2020 and to \$1 trillion by 2023. Industry research has projected that \$1 trillion or 60 per cent of India's retail and SME credit will be digitally disbursed by 2029. The year 2018 was particularly significant for financial technology and financial services ecosystem in the country. With \$2.34 billion being raised across 145 deals, fintech finally unseated e-commerce from the top.

The fintech sector comprises mobile payments, money transfers, crowdfunding, loans and asset management among others. It is creating highly sophisticated intellectual property assets in advanced risk management and artificial intelligence that has the potential of leapfrogging India in the global digital economy and demolishing most barriers to accessing financial services like distance, cost and paperwork. It is expected to bring diversity in banking, broaden its spectrum and ensure that banking no longer remains black and white.

Fintech stands for financial technology or an application used for the financial sector. It comprises multiple technologies like Artificial Intelligence, virtual reality, blockchain, cloud-based software, machine learning — all of which provide a powerful and revolutionary *mantra* to financial institutions to power themselves with limitless reach. Fintech offers an array of benefits:

- Financial flows can be accurately tracked, resulting in safer and speedier transactions and less corruption/theft.

- Suppliers can get useful insight from the transaction patterns of the clients. This helps them design products that are better suited to customers' needs.

- Firms can use financial histories to develop products that are tailored to the customers' needs.
- Providers can instantly relay account information of clients and use them to develop automatic reminders. It also provides helpful default options via mobile phone menus, making it easier for consumers to track and monitor their accounts. Further, clients can also sign up for services quickly on their own.

- Direct deposits (including wages and social assistance) allow money to "bypass" the client's pocket, thus helping users save rather than spend and often gives more financial authority to women within the family.

The phenomenal footprint of data, thanks to

CONSUMERS WILL ADAPT THE DIGITAL PLATFORM AND EMBRACE NEW TECHNOLOGICAL OPPORTUNITIES ONLY WHEN THEY ARE CONVINCED THAT THEY WILL RESOLVE EXISTING ISSUES IN THE ECONOMY. THUS, WE HAVE TO ADDRESS REAL PAINS, NOT JUST OFFER BENEFITS. TRUST MUST BE EARNED AND SUSTAINED THROUGH CONTINUOUS REINFORCEMENT



smartphone or data-connected mobile phones, is a blessing for people with limited credit-access account. It provides an unprecedented opportunity of bringing people with limited credit-history into the formal mainstream. Various research studies have shown that even simple and easily accessible variables from digital footprints can be analysed to produce alternate credit profiles.

The digital world offers both major opportunities and challenges. Technology and infrastructure are only a part of the picture. Appropriate regulations and consumer protection safeguards are of paramount importance. Sparse population, inconsistent network coverage, insufficient capital for building new business models, lack of trust and of comfort with technology and literacy needed to fully use these services, can stand in the way of success, particularly in connecting remote communities.

While ground-breaking technology and innovative business operations provide several fresh business opportunities, new risks, too, are there. Challenges related to implementing digital financial services are not just operational and technical. Loss of privacy is the most dangerous. Despite all efforts to create ample safeguards, they remain inevitable. For the financial inclusion industry to be able to fully capitalise on the benefits of digital financial services, it is essential that accompanying risks are understood and addressed adequately. Though these issues can't be eliminated, they can be mitigated. We need to keep in mind the concerns of security, affordability and safety.

Although it's impossible for India to become a cashless economy in the immediate future, the country can, of course, look forward to becoming one. Making India cashless is like treating multiple chronic societal diseases with

one injection. However, there are several challenges peculiar to our country that may constrain a full-scale digital transition in the foreseeable future.

To start with, India has 438 languages, with each having multiple dialects and different scripts. Further, India has to contend with geographical and cultural divide of a great magnitude. The aversion of the 'other India' to digital finance has more to do with its aversion to everything that has to do with technology. This stems from a lack of trust. It is also partly on account of low technical literacy of consumers. Women often face additional barriers: Less access to mobile phones, lower literacy and numeracy levels, less confidence in using technology and restrictions on travel or social interaction. Furthermore, villagers' value personal relationships — particularly when it comes to money.

Migrating from a cash-based economy to a digital one demands a recast of mindset. In fact, the last mile of digital highway is not infrastructure but skills of the users. Equally critical is the smooth functioning of the last mile touch point. Making gadgets available will not help unless we bring about a change in the overall outlook of the people. This aspect requires much thinking on the part of motivators to pull the consumers into this new space. The issue is a lot more nuanced than what we see today. Nuances change from culture to culture and consumer segment to consumer segment.

Changing the financial framework, too, may not be enough. Consumers will have to walk an extra mile if they want to reap benefits of new financial tools. The new revolution will have better chances of success if driven less by financial punditry and more by empathetic governance. People take to new technologies when they see clear benefits; have

greater confidence in the markets and services; find it convenient; and can afford it. The painful reality is that providers, too, often focus on short-term incentives at the expense of long-term consumer trust and loyalty.

Consumers will adapt the digital platform and embrace new technological opportunities only when they are convinced that they will resolve existing issues in the economy. Thus, we have to address real pains, not just offer benefits. Trust must be earned and sustained through continuous reinforcement. How secure is it? How long will it take to get one's money back? Are there any hidden fees? The key is to offer digital financial services in an empathetic way and to understand the development needs of the community to drive adoption.

The central bank has rightly been espousing a cautious approach in addressing concerns around consumer protection and law enforcement. The key objective of the regulator has been to create an environment for unhindered innovations by fintech, expanding the reach of banking services for the unbanked population, regulating an efficient electronic payment and providing alternative options to the consumers.

There have been two highly significant developments in this space. The first is the Personal Data Protection Bill, 2018, which specifies that a private entity must seek user consent before collecting personal data. A user can also choose to remove consent at any point while availing a service. The second is the Ombudsman Scheme for Digital Transactions (OSDT) for redress of complaints regarding digital transactions.

(The writer is Member, NITI Aayog's National Committee on Financial Literacy and Inclusion for Women)

# Ukraine election no laughing matter

Is Zelensky just a stalking horse behind which Kolomoysky can take control of Ukraine away from Poroshenko? Not necessarily. The two men may have a pragmatic alliance but their own separate agenda



GWYNNE DYER

Unlike comedian Alec Baldwin, who is famous for his impersonation of US President Donald Trump on *Saturday Night Live*, comedian Volodymyr Zelensky is famous for playing the anti-President, an accidental hero who sweeps into the presidency of Ukraine and cleans up all the corruption. He used to play it for laughs and now, he's playing it for real.

Zelensky had been leading the opinion polls for the Ukrainian election that was held on March 31, with 25 per cent of the vote, well ahead of incumbent president Petro Poroshenko (12 per cent) and former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko (18 per cent). (She's the one who used to wear

her hair in braids wound up around her head.) With no one expected to secure a majority, a runoff with the leading two candidates, Zelenskiy and Poroshenko will be held on 21 April. Baldwin will never be the US president, but there's a good chance that Zelensky will be the Ukrainian president.

What a heart-warming story, I hear you murmur. Humble comedian plays even humbler high-school history teacher Vasyl Holoborodko, whose classroom diatribe against the corruption of Ukrainian politics was secretly filmed by a student. It goes viral on the internet and humble teacher is instantly elevated into the presidency by a grateful public.

The story gets even better. In real life, *'Servant of the People'*, the TV show about the teacher-turned-President, plays on the country's biggest television channel, *1+1*, and is a nation-wide hit. Then the guy playing the teacher, comedian Volodymyr Zelensky, decides that he has a chance of working the same miracle in real life. So he puts himself up for the presidency and lo! The public agrees.

This is not art imitating life; it is



life imitating art. But if you are a nasty old cynic, who suspects the worst about people's motives, then you are probably right, at least in this case. Zelensky is not just a simple comic who got lucky.

A little background. Ukraine is one of the less fortunate post-Soviet countries, with ageing heavy industries, few natural resources and barely a third of Russia's per capita income (in terms of purchasing power parity). It has been mired in a low-intensity war with Russian proxies in its eastern provinces

for the past five years and has lost Crimea to Russia for good.

You might think that in these circumstances, political debate would concentrate on ending the war and raising popular living standards but the war is barely mentioned and the main economic debate is about 'corruption'.

That debate would make sense if it was really about cleaning up an extremely corrupt political system dominated by the 'oligarchs' (who also control most of the media). In practice, it is mainly a struggle

between rival oligarchs, using accusations of corruption to target each other when in fact they are all corrupt albeit by definition.

Poroshenko, a leading oligarch who won the election after the 2014 revolution, was at daggers drawn with Ihor Kolomoysky, the second-richest man in Ukraine, from the beginning of his presidency. In 2016, he nationalised Kolomoysky's PrivatBank, the largest bank in the country, and Kolomoysky went into self-imposed exile in Israel while fighting Poroshenko's actions in the courts and the media.

It was at this time that Kolomoysky and Volodymyr Zelensky, already a successful comedian with his own production company, began developing the TV series about the accidental president and it went on air on Kolomoysky's *1+1* channel two years ago. It was an instant runaway hit and now Zelensky is the leading candidate for the real presidency.

Is Zelensky just a stalking horse behind which Kolomoysky can take control of Ukraine away from Poroshenko? Not necessarily. The two

men may have a pragmatic alliance but their own separate agenda. But it is noteworthy that Zelensky showed up at Kolomoysky's birthday party last year and was introduced as 'our president'.

That large numbers of Ukrainians should fall for a fake maverick (who doesn't even offer much in the way of concrete policies) is a measure of their disappointment with the status quo of rule by oligarchs behind a facade of democracy. Russia's relative prosperity is mostly due to its oil but it also owes much to the fact that Vladimir Putin has brought its oligarchs under control. In Ukraine, their rivalries still dominate everything. There is not much reason to believe that Ukraine will finally turn the corner in this election and escape from the miseries and failures of its first three decades of independence. On the other hand, it's not getting any worse either and for the moment the war in the east seems encysted and confined. Hope dies last and maybe Zelensky will surprise us.

(The writer's new book is *Growing Pains: The Future of Democracy and Work*)



FOREIGN EYE



## SETTING A GLOBAL STANDARD IN LEADERSHIP

Unexpectedly faced by an appalling atrocity, Ardern has shown exemplary leadership skills. Her instinct was to trust her humanity and the humanity of others. By quickly moving to meet, embrace and comfort the bereaved, by wearing the *hijab*, by taking swift action on gun control and by refusing to acknowledge the killer, she brought out the best in her fellow citizens. (The Guardian editorial)





CaffeinePunch

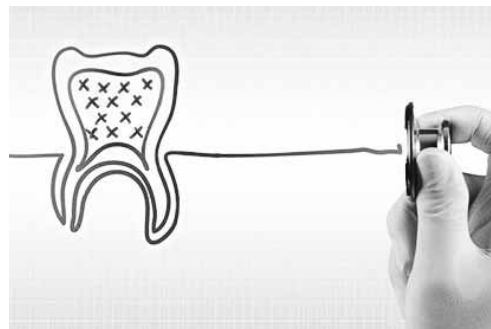
Finding it hard to concentrate? A study, published in the journal Consciousness and Cognition says that just looking at something that reminds us of coffee can cause our minds to become more alert and attentive



DOCYARD  
DR KEERTHILATHA M PAI

Dean, Professor, Oral Medicine and Radiology

MANIPAL COLLEGE OF DENTAL SCIENCES,  
MANIPAL ACADEMY OF HIGHER EDUCATION



Keep gums in tip top condition

Gum related problems occur when good oral hygiene is not maintained. This leads to plaque build-up, which is a thin sticky layer of bacteria that accumulates on the teeth. Over time, if not taken care of plaque will eventually irritate your gums causing redness with bleeding, swelling, and soreness. If the condition worsens then the gums tend to move away from the teeth, opening gaps putting your teeth at greater risk for infection.

Yet, many people choose to ignore bleeding gums when they brush and floss, or even while eating, thinking it is a normal, common occurrence. The main concern about gum disease is that many people are not aware that they have it, as it can be symptomless.

**Myth 1:** There is a commonly held view that bleeding gums are a part of everyday life and can be ignored.

**Fact:** If you notice bleeding from your gums, it is always best to consult with your dentist or doctor to determine the cause. The good news is that, most of the time, it is easily preventable - part of it you can do yourself through sound oral hygiene measures, coupled with regular dental check-ups.

**Brushing too hard can cause bleeding gums, but this could also be a sign of gum disease - Gingivitis. It is also recommended to change your toothbrush every three months**

**Myth 2:** Gum disease occurs to those who have cavities and have poor oral hygiene

**Fact:** The reality is that people of any age group can experience gum bleeding. Gum disease affects many people all over the world, with around 50 per cent of adults experiencing Gingivitis during their life.

**Myth 3:** Brushing too hard can cause gum bleeding

**Fact:** Brushing too hard can cause bleeding gums, but this could also be a sign of gum disease - Gingivitis. It is also recommended to change your toothbrush every three months.

**Myth 4:** Do gums grow back after receding?

**Fact:** While receding gums don't grow back on their own, you can talk to your dentist or periodontist about the number of treatments available to correct the issue and prevent it from getting worse

TIPS

**Choice of toothpaste:** If you struggle with bleeding gums, you may want to consider a toothpaste that can neutralise the plaque found around the gumline.

**Floss daily:** Flossing is one of the most important ways to help prevent bleeding gums and maintain good oral health.

**Avoid Tobacco:** Tobacco use can damage your gums, and can also make you far more likely to develop gum disease.

**Maintain a healthy lifestyle and balanced diet**

**Regular dental check-ups can prevent cavities and gum bleeding**

WHEN TO SEE A DOCTOR?

See a dentist if gum bleeding does not improve within seven to 10 days. Your doctor may also check for vitamin deficiencies that could cause gum bleeding. If you don't have gum disease, but still suffer from bleeding gums, don't ignore the problem for it may also be caused by bleeding disorders, leukemia, Vitamin K deficiency, medications, hormonal changes during pregnancy, wrong selection of toothbrush, poorly fitted dentures, medical issues, stress, tobacco products and sores or lesions.

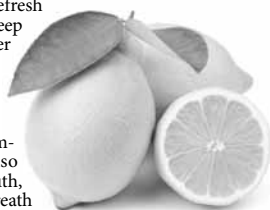
SUMMERCoolERS

**LEMON:** The lemon is a species of small evergreen tree. Citrus fruits like lemons are high in vitamin C, a primary antioxidant that helps protect cells from damaging free radicals. Vitamin C may reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease and stroke, and lower blood pressure.

Vitamin C found in lemons may help reduce skin wrinkling, dry skin from aging, and damage from the sun. Some people drink lemon water as a daily morning laxative to help prevent constipation. Drinking warm or hot lemon water when you wake up may help get your digestive system moving.

Lemons can also be used to prepare lemon water which helps you stay hydrated and refresh in the scorching heat. Keep a pitcher of lemon water ready to drink throughout the day.

It also helps to freshen your breath. Lemon is thought to stimulate saliva and water also helps prevent a dry mouth, which can lead to bad breath caused by bacteria.



Nephrologists tell you the warning signs and foods to avoid to keep your kidneys healthy

FOR HEALTHY KIDNEYS

Globally acute and chronic kidney disease is now recognised as a major medical problem and in several countries it is now among the top five causes of death. In India, kidney disease is ranked as the eighth leading cause of death. Kidneys are very important parts of the body that perform critical functions such as regulating the acid content, potassium, and salt content. Along with producing Vitamin D and balancing the body's fluids, kidneys also perform waste removal of the body.

It is true that early signs of kidney diseases are not easily attributable. But that is not the reason to stay ignorant of the most common symptoms. While the best way to know if there is any issue with the kidneys is to get tested by a doctor, it is still highly recommended to look out for the following most commonly observed symptoms of kidney diseases:

**Fatigue and lack of concentration:** Build up of toxins and impurities in the blood can be the result of a severe decrease in kidney function. This can exhaust people and can make it hard to concentrate. Anaemia is another complication of kidney disease, which can cause weakness and fatigue.

**Trouble in sleeping:** When the kidneys do not filter properly, toxins stay in the blood rather than leaving the body through the urine. This can make it difficult to sleep. Also compared with the general population, sleep apnoea is more common in those with chronic kidney disease.

**Dry and itchy skin:** Advanced kidney diseases, when the kidneys are no longer able to keep the right balance of minerals and nutrients in the blood are often accompanied by mineral and bone diseases and dry and itchy skin can be a sign of that.

**Increase in tendency to urinate:** The increasing urge to urinate, especially at night can be an indicator to kidney diseases. When the kidney's filters are damaged, it can cause an increase in the tendency to urinate. But sometimes it can also be a sign of a urinary infection or enlarged prostate in men.

**Blood in urine:** While healthy kidneys typically keep the blood cells in the body when filtering wastes from the blood to create urine, the damaged kidney filters can "leak" out the blood cells into the urine. In addition to being a sign for kidney diseases, blood in the urine can also be indicative of tumors, kidney stones or an infection.

**Foamy urine:** Excessive bubbles in the urine indicate presence of protein in the urine. It can be a sign of kidney issues.

**Persistent puffiness around the eyes:** Due to damage of kidney's filters, the protein of the body happens to leak into the urine. Puffiness around the eyes can be due to the fact that the kidneys are leaking a large amount of protein in the urine, rather than keeping it in the body.

**Swollen ankles and feet:** Decrease in the function of kidney can lead to sodium retention, causing swelling in your feet and ankles. However, swelling in the lower extremities can also be a sign of heart disease, liver disease and chronic leg vein problems.

**Poor appetite:** It is a general symptom for so many diseases. But that does not cancel the possibility of it being a potential symptom of kidney diseases as the build-up of toxins resulting from reduced kidney function can be one of the causes.

In view of rising burden of kidney disease, there is an urgent need to make people aware not only about the symptoms for preventive measures but also about the advanced treatment now available. The writer is Dr Vikram Kalra, Additional Director, Nephrology and Renal Transplantation, Aakash Healthcare



LOOK OUT FOR

There is a link between inflammation, chronic disease and certain foods.

There are food which have antioxidants, these antioxidants neutralises from radicals and protect the body. Most of these foods are good for kidney health.

**Garlic:** It lowers cholesterol and reduce inflammation. You can add it to the vegetables, lentils and spinach.

**Onion:** It contain Quercetin, a powerful antioxidant, that can help to reduce heart disease and provide protection against certain cancers. Onions also contains Chromium, which helps in carbohydrate, protein and fat metabolism.

**Cauliflower:** It contains Indoles, Glucosinolates and Thiocyanates, they help liver neutralise toxins that can damage DNA. It is also packed with Vitamins C, folate and fibers.

**Cabbage:** It contains phytochemicals, which neutralises free radicals and hence protects against cancer and foster cardiovascular health. They are a good source of Vitamin C, K,

B6, folate and fibers. Cabbage are low in potassium, hence good for patients with kidney disease.

**Red bell pepper:** They are rich in Vitamin A, C, B6, folate and fibers. They are low in potassium and rich in antioxidant - lycopene.

**Apple:** They are high in fiber and anti-inflammatory compound. Potassium content is low in apple, which is good for patients having kidney disease.

**Red Grapes:** They contain flavonoids which are anti-oxidants and is cardio protective and reduces formation of blood clots. Resveratrol, found in grapes improves blood flow by stimulating nitric oxide.

**Fish:** It contains high quality protein and anti-inflammatory fat, omega-3. Omega-3 helps lower LDL cholesterol (bad cholesterol) and raises HDL cholesterol (Good cholesterol)

**Olive Oil:** Mono unsaturated fat and polyphenols in olive oil are antioxidant and anti-inflammatory

The writer is Dr Umesh Gupta, Senior Consultant & Director, Nephrology, Aakash Healthcare Super Speciality Hospital

STAY AWAY

Being the most important part of human body, we compromise it with some of our common habits

**Painkiller addiction:** To counter your body pains, people take NSAID (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) which affects kidney. Doctors advise to reduce the doses and stuck to recommended dosage only.

**Processed foods:** One of the studies has warned that the consumption of junk and processed food cause damage to kidneys, cause heart diseases in long run and also triggers diabetes, digestive problems, weakness, fatigue, and abnormal blood sugar level.

**Less drinking water intake:** Intake of adequate drinking water, cleanses the toxins from your body and keep you safe from kidney problems as painful kidney stones

**Alcohol intake:** Excess alcohol intake doubles the risk of

chronic

kidney disease and if, heavy drinkers are smoker too then the chance of kidney diseases increase five times than people who don't drink or smoke.

**Missing night sleep:** Taking less sleep during night hours, increases the working hour of Kidney and disturbs its overall kidney function.

**Eating foods with high sugar level:** It is advisable to avoid sugar concentrated food items, if your blood sugar level gets more than 180mg/dl, then kidney starts flushing out sugar into urine. It indicates sugar is causing damage to your kidney.

**Too much red meat:** Intake of high amount of red meat (pork) increases the protein level in our body that generates acids in the blood that is harmful for kidney and cause acidosis.

The writer is Dr Sunil Prakash, Senior Consultant & Director, Nephrology & Renal Transplantation, BLK Super Speciality Hospital

DadiKaKehna

Parts of Central and South India are already reeling under the temperatures well over 40 degrees C. It won't be long before North comes to a boil as well. ROSHANI DEVI shares tips to prevent heatstroke



One of the most important things to keep in mind to prevent a heatstroke is to remain hydrated all the time. Drink plenty of water. If the nature of your work keeps you outdoors, carry a bottle of water with you.

Peak sun hours are from 10 am to 4 pm. Try and avoid going out during this time.

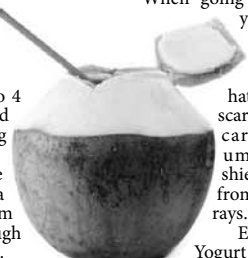
Onions are great to prevent a heatstroke. Eat them in any form, though raw would be best.

The juice of coriander or basil leaves are also very effective in keeping the body cool. Drink coconut water a couple of times in a day.

Wear light fabrics that allow your body to breathe can keep you cool. Cotton is the best options. Lighter shades do not absorb heat and helps to keep the body cool. Wear loose fitting clothes.

When going out, cover your head with a wide-brimmed hat, cap or a scarf. One can carry an umbrella to shield himself from the sun's rays.

Eat healthy. Yogurt is a great cooling food and easy to digest. Eat more fruits that are high in water content. Drink at least two glasses of buttermilk. Stay away from hot and spicy foods.



TIPTOP

People who wish to live longer must reduce their sitting time and replace it with just 30 minutes of physical activity, according to findings of a recent study published in the American Journal of Epidemiology. The results highlight the importance of movement - regardless of its intensity or amount of time spent moving - for better health. Studies indicate that about one in four adults spends more than eight hours a day sitting.

Adults who sat for long stretches at a time - an hour or more without interruption - had a greater risk of early death than those who were sedentary for the same total amount of time but got up and moved around more often. Thus, even short bursts of activity - of just a minute or two - can provide health benefits.

SLIMLINE

Drinking one alcoholic drink daily as well as being overweight can increase the risk of developing breast cancer, warns a study of over two lakh women.

"That means that consequently, even relatively small preventable proportions translate into large numbers of preventable breast cancers," said Maarit Laaksonen, from the University of New South Wales in Australia.

Over the next decade, drinking alcohol

Speaking about this, Dr KK Aggarwal, former national resident of Indian Medical Association said: "Modern and advanced technology has certainly made life easy and convenient for us. Online shopping, online payments and accessing information all of which can be done from the comfort of our homes but at the cost of our health. The benefits of exercise are well-established. But, the level of physical activity among all age groups has decreased. A heavy work schedule is often a deterrent to physical activity for many of us."

Replacing just 30 minutes of sitting with low-intensity physical activity may lower the risk of early death by 17 per cent. Swapping the same amount of sitting for moderate to vigorous activity would be twice as effective, cutting the risk of early death by 35 per cent.

will lead to 13 per cent increase of breast cancer cases in pre-menopausal women and six per cent in post-menopausal breast cancers. Being overweight or obese will contribute to 13 per cent cases.

Together, these modifiable risk factors - regular alcohol consumption and excessive weight gain - will be responsible for nearly 30,000 cases of breast cancer by next decade, noted the study published in the International Journal of Cancer.

GIVE ME RED

DR SUJATHA VARALWAR tells you the benefits of having red wine in a limited quantity



We all have a question, is the hype around the red wine is so good to be true? Keep in mind that a modest glass is all you need. Beyond psychological happiness, drinking red wine one or two ounces of cup a day might enjoy alcohol health benefits. Centuries ago, wine was used to treat various health conditions. Wines, especially red have been studied extensively. However, research suggest any health benefits from red wine can be driven only by applying to moderate drinking.

PREPARATION

Red wine is an alcoholic drink derived by fermentation of grapes and other fruits.

The sugars are converted into alcohol and carbon dioxide either in a natural process or with the help of yeast. It is made from the pulp of red and black grapes. White wine is made from crushed grapes to extract the juice and skin is removed.

The process of wine making takes months to years, from fermentation to ethanol, and sent in tanks where skin is removed and malo-lactic acid conversion done by a bacterial process. Then it goes in to oak casks, settled and clarified.

COMPONENTS

**Acid:** The most important component, consisting of tannic acid, malic acid, citric acid and ascorbic acid. Sugar content increases as grapes ripen and acid decreases. The acid balances alcohol and sweetness.

**Alcohol:** Produced by the fermentation when yeast comes in contact with grape sugar.

**Tannins:** Belong to a group of poly phenols, are derived from skin and seeds. These are flavonoids found in plants. Anti-oxidants (Catechins, Resveratrol) flavonols, Anthocyanins (pigments).

**Carbohydrates:** Simple sugars and complex carbohydrates such as pectin's and glycan's. Residual sugars are those left in wine after fermentation.

**Preservatives:** Sulphur dioxide, sodium or potassium metabisulphite, potassium sorbate.

**Inorganic components:** Potassium salts (contribute to acidity) iron, copper, phosphate chloride, sulphate.

HEALTH BENEFITS

**Heart and blood vessels:** Free radicals are held responsible for the effects of aging, inflammation and immune response. They are released as a result of the effect of pathogens, UV damage, environmental pollution and toxins. Resveratrol is known to slow down process of atherosclerosis. It inhibit platelet aggregation, plaque formation and relaxes coronary arteries.

**Cholesterol:** Reduces LDL cholesterol and increases good cholesterol (HDL).

**Diabetes:** Help lower blood sugar, maintain better insulin response.

**Brain and Nervous System:** Helps reduce age related free radical damage, plaque formation and lessen the age related dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

**Renal System:** Prevents stone formation, by flushing effect and inducing diuresis.

SIDE EFFECTS

Alcohol is hepatotoxic and neurotoxic and unreasonable quantity can damage liver and nervous system. Contaminants found in wine such as sulphur can cause allergic reactions.

Ideal amount recommended for women is one glass per day and two glasses per day for men. Maximum of five glasses per week is said to be ideal.

The writer is Health & Lifestyle coach and Nutrition Consultant

STUDYCENTRE

Statistics indicate that India accounts for one-third of all measles-related deaths worldwide. Measles is highly infectious and as per the WHO, a country needs to ensure that at least 95% of all children receive two doses of the vaccine. About 15 per cent of vaccinated children fail to develop immunity from the first dose, meaning that if only 80 per cent are fully immunised, an outbreak is likely.

Measles is a highly contagious and spread by contact with an infected person through coughing and sneezing. The infection is followed by high fever, rash that spreads over the body, cough, running nose and red watery eyes. Measles weakens the immune system and often leads to serious complications.

**The vaccination schedule:** BCG 1 dose at Birth (up to 1 year if not given earlier).

DPT Toxoid 5 doses; Three primary doses at 6 weeks, 10 weeks and 14 weeks. Two booster doses at 16-24 months and 5 years.

OPV 5 doses; 0 dose at birth, three primary doses at 6, 10 and 14 weeks and one booster dose at 16-24 months of age.

Hepatitis B vaccine 4 doses; 0 dose within 24 hours of birth and three doses at 6, 10 and 14 weeks of age.

Measles 2 doses; first dose at 9-12 months and second dose at 16-24 months.

TT 2 doses at 10 years and 16 years of age.

— Courtesy Heart Care Foundation of India



Trend  
Blazer

I am interested in politics: Pankaj

Actor PANKAJ TRIPATHI, who will be seen in the forthcoming web series *Criminal Justice*, says though he has an interest in politics, he still has time before he pursues it.



Pankaj said, "I have an interest in politics but I am not going to explore that interest now. I have time for that. I believe that only a well-read, well-aware individual can make a great leader and build a progressive nation. I tend to read a lot of books and believe in a certain ideology. I think reading and travelling not only make us good artists but also broaden our horizons and open our mind. It really helps us to become a good human being."

Living life in the public eye can be very difficult sometimes. As much as it is a blessing, it also comes with its downside. Over the last two years, I've gained weight. I'm going to bring you on the journey of becoming the best version of myself again, and I want you to join me on this journey too. —Nargis Fakhri



Actor SUSHANT SINGH RAJPUT will have many "funny sequences" with his former *Shudh Desi Romance* co-star Nalnees Neel in the forthcoming film *Chhichhore*. "The film will focus on an engineering college where different types of students study. My character's name is Pandu who is a cook. He is very interesting. He is a bit comical and also helps people win games," Nalnees said. "I enjoyed working with Sushant in *Shudh Desi Romance* too, he said. Nalnees will also be seen in *Bhor*, directed by Kamakhya Narayan Singh, and will be playing a lead role for the first time.



Kim anxious about her baby

Reality TV star KIM KARDASHIAN WEST is anxious about baby number four. During an episode of *Keeping Up with the Kardashians*, the 38-year-old shared that she and husband Kanye West are expecting their fourth child via surrogate. "We have an announcement to make," Kim told her family. "We're having a baby. We're having a boy." Kim later admitted to sister Kylie Jenner that she's "low-key freaking out" about the pregnancy. "I didn't think it was going to happen. I thought like 'Oh, it probably won't even take,'" she said.



# GUILTY OR NOT?

Actor VIKRANT MASSEY, who plays a rape and murder accused in *Criminal Justice*, tells AYUSHI SHARMA that a discussion on the Indian Judicial System is a never-ending one

India or rather Indians do not cover themselves in glory when it comes to sexual assault and crimes against women. Despite formulating numerous women-friendly laws and doing away with outdated ones, the country still has a long way to go in delivering justice to many rape victims.

*Criminal Justice*, a crime drama captures Aditya Sharma's (played by Vikrant Massey) journey, as one fateful incident completely turns his life around. He is ambitious but is aware of his middle-class roots, a boy who drives his father's cab to add to the family income. But his life turns upside down when during his last trip for the night, he ends up being accused of rape and brutal murder of his passenger. As skeletons tumble out of his closet, one begins to wonder whether Aditya is innocent or guilty of the terrible crime?

Vikrant apprises us that playing the character of someone who has been accused of rape and murder took a mental toll on him. He says that he had to prepare "quite a lot" in comparison to what he has done earlier. The character required a lot of intensity as well as a huge amount of research. From the nuances of Indian prisons to the life of criminals locked inside, "every little detail was important." He says, "It was torturing, be it physically, emotionally or mentally."

The actor feels that one can never even imagine being in that position or envision what it is like to be an accused.



"Hence, it becomes even more difficult to put yourself in that person's shoes and be in that mindset. I have never been to jail and have always lead a very happy and protected life." (Touches wood). He goes on to add, "System jaise Aditya ko todta hai, main vaise kabhi nahi toota (I have never been as broken as the way the system breaks Aditya). There were days when it made me emotionally drained, but that is what all powerful stories do," says the actor who is going to star opposite Deepika Padukone in the forthcoming film *Chhapaak*.

As an artist, to be in the mental state of the character is important for him to live it "as when you are mentally ready for something, your body, gestures and everything else follows you automatical-

'ONE CAN NEVER EVEN ENVISION WHAT IT IS LIKE TO BE ACCUSED OF RAPE. HENCE, IT BECOMES EVEN MORE DIFFICULT TO PLAY THE CHARACTER AND PUT YOURSELF IN THAT PERSON'S SHOES'

ly." The show is the Indian adaptation of the renowned BBC's eponymously-named series, which was later adapted into the Emmy Award-winning HBO show *The Night of*. Vikrant says that the show is relevant and has been moulded to Indian preferences. "We obviously knew the sensibilities of Indian audience and that they differ in many ways — culturally as well as in terms of traditions. I wanted Aditya to be that one boy which every family has. The whole structure of the show is based on the Indian Judicial System."

When asked about what he thinks of the judicial procedures of India, Vikrant laughed and said that the topic was very lengthy and no amount of time would be sufficient to discuss it. "I don't think *main iska jawab aadhe ghante me bhi de paunga*. There are pros and cons of everything. It is up to us how we contribute towards any kind of change," he says.

Rather than feeling apprehensive while working with veteran actors like Pankaj Tripathi and Jackie Shroff, Vikrant feels that it's an opportunity for him. "There is a sense of motivation. I had a fan boy moment with Jackie Shroff ji. It was incredible seeing him in person, almost like a dream come true. I still remember when I was a kid and he was shooting and I was one of the hundreds of people standing there and trying to get a glimpse. I never thought I'll work with him," says the *Mirzapur* actor. (It will air on Hotstar from April 5.)

## Beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder

Acid attack survivor LAXMI AGARWAL says that she's happy to see Bollywood coming up with real stories

Laxmi Agarwal, whose life as an acid attack survivor has inspired an forthcoming Bollywood film *Chhapaak*, said she found it amazing how people were finding beauty in the 'burns' that actress Deepika Padukone sported for the movie.

Laxmi was attacked when she was all of 15. Over the years, she has been vocal about her experience and actively campaigns against acid attacks.

Last week, Deepika unveiled her first look from Meghna Gulzar's *Chhapaak*, and it was widely lauded by the film fraternity.

What was Laxmi's first reaction on seeing Deepika's look? "I was happy to see Deepika's first look from the film. The response and the messages I got on social media was overwhelming. In fact, it was my daughter's birthday, and more than messages for her, I got congratulatory messages about the film."

"I was feeling good that a celebrity has come in that look. A lot of make-up artists changed a natural face to acid distorted face after that (on social media). And I felt, 'see, they are finding beauty in an acid-burnt face,'" said Laxmi,



who was a showstopper at the just concluded India Runway Week.

Laxmi was on her way back home from music class when a man, twice her age, threw acid on her for rejecting his advances. Her face and other body parts got disfigured in the attack.

With *Chhapaak*, she feels happy that Bollywood is coming out with real stories. "People are intrigued by Bollywood. A long time ago, a film named *Tezaab* came out. It spoke about beauty. Today, beauty through films is shown in a different manner and the youth will see and learn," she said.

Asked about her involvement with the film, Laxmi who has remained largely tight-lipped about it said, "I was involved with the film," and was happy to share the story of her struggle and survival with the makers of the film.

"I am always open about my life because I have seen several people in my journey who are doing a lot in front, but are suffering behind. I feel if you are an inspiration for someone, then you should come out and talk about these things. Laxmi is an open book," she said.

—IANS



## Marvel universe to get LGBTQ superhero

*Avengers: Endgame* co-director Joe Russo says the Marvel universe will introduce a LGBTQ superhero very soon.

When asked whether it is time for a LGBTQ superhero in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, Joe said, "One hundred per cent and you will see one very soon."

There has been talk that a LGBTQ superhero may find space in the Marvel world after Marvel Studios president Kevin Feige spoke about the possibility. He had said it's "percolating."

Rumour mills are also abuzz that Angelina Jolie is in talks to star in Marvel Studios' *The Eternals* in what would be the actress first venture into the superhero realm.

Created by Jack Kirby in 1976, the story of *The Eternals*

is set millions of years ago when the cosmic beings — known as the celestials — genetically experimented on humans to create super-powered individuals — known as the eternals — along with the villainous Deviants.

For now, the studio is set to release *Avengers: Endgame*, starring Robert Downey Jr., Chris Hemsworth, Chris Evans and Scarlett Johansson. It will release in India on April 26 in English, Hindi, Tamil and Telugu.

The film, directed by Joe and Anthony Russo, is a continuation of *Avengers: Infinity War*, which left Marvel fans in shock with the failure of the superheroes against the supervillain Thanos.

Joe is in India to promote the film.

—IANS

## AN AWARD FOR CREATIVITY

After creating a platform to acknowledge short films, critics now unite for feature films

After the success of the short film awards, critics unite for the first Feature Film Awards as a pan-India category to celebrate the diversity of the Indian cinema.

The awards will be a celebration of the best of Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Bengali, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam cinema.

Anupama Chopra, chairperson, FCG said, "The FCG is the first registered body of film critics in India. We are a pan-Indian, pan-language, pan-platform body. We have critics from print, television, radio and digital and our opinions reach millions of people including 32 lakh on Twitter alone. It gives us great pleasure to announce the first Critics Choice Film Awards to honour and celebrate the finest talent in the Indian cinema. We hope that these awards will contribute to setting and raising standards for films in the country."

With entries coming in from all parts of the country, a panel comprising India's top film critics have first curated and shortlisted the nominees. The Guild as a whole then voted for and felicitated the best short films



from across the country with the aim of acknowledging and appreciating the rising growth of the industry as a whole.

While the short film awards were decided based on entries by filmmakers, the Critics' Choice Film Awards will decide on nominees and winners based on the theatrical releases from the year 2018. With the participation of credible film critics from all over India, the awards aim to honour films based on the art of filmmaking as opposed to mere popularity.

"We bring credibility and the team has worked creative elements around this property which will truly give it a premium feel. We believe CCFA can become a benchmark in the years to come, through which quality films will be recognised and the masters of this craft can be given their due honour."

The nominations will be announced in the first week of the month, while the ceremony will take place on April 21.

Filmmaker Zoya Akhtar will grace the announcement.



# THE PAINTER'S DILEMMA

History, legend and a tale about RAJA RAVI VARMA come together in this 1881 oil on canvas which came up for sale recently. By UMA NAIR

Amidst a range of artworks at the Saffron Sale, one painting, which was the cynosure of all viewers and art aficionados, was from the Income Tax department, Lot 13 — Nirav Modi's Raja Ravi Varma. The 1881 oil on canvas represented history, legend and the royal lineage of the Maharaja of Travancore.

Replete with tropical elements, royal bodyguards standing in knee-deep water with a houseboat, the scene was epic. The rare oil painting illustrated the welcoming of the third Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, Richard Temple-Grenville, on his official visit to Trivandrum, a Princely state in southern India in 1880.

Temple-Grenville was the Governor General of Madras (1875-1880). In the artwork, Visakhram Thirunal, the younger brother of the Maharaja Ayilyam Thirunal of Travancore, is welcoming the Duke, who is accompanied by his aide-de-camp and a few British army officers. Raja Ravi Varma was invited to document this historical event, and to paint "the moment when Buckingham alighted from the splendid barge, which must have undoubtedly brought him through the waterways of Kerala," noted the sale.

The Maharaja is seen standing behind his brother in the building which bears the image of a conch shell, the symbol of the state of Travancore, as well as a welcoming banner for the Duke. It is likely that the ceremony depicted in the present lot took place at the Vallakadavu Boathouse, which was built in the 1820s and served as an important waterway hub for travel and cargo activity during the Travancore era. "Historical records reveal that the boattupura, as it is known to the locales, was used by the state barges of the Travancore kings. The royal parties which went picnicking in the Veli Lake used to set sail from the boathouse. The priests, scholars and nobility who used to come to Thiruvananthapuram from far and near, used to alight here," wrote T Nandkumar in 2004.

According to Erwin Neumayer and Christine Schelberger, during the Duke's visit to Travancore, he was eager to meet Raja Ravi Varma, a fact that made the Maharaja jealous. This visit ultimately turned out to be disastrous for the painter. "When the Duke met Raja Ravi Varma in the presence of the king, he asked him to sit with them, which, according to the custom of the land was unthinkable. Raja Ravi Varma declined to sit in the presence of the king and the three, the governor, the king, and the painter, remained standing while talking. Raja Ravi Varma knew that he was now out of favour with the king and left Trivandrum never to come back



REPLETE WITH TROPICAL ELEMENTS, ROYAL BODYGUARDS STANDING IN KNEE-DEEP WATER WITH A HOUSEBOAT, THE SCENE IN THE PAINTING ILLUSTRATED THE WELCOMING OF THE THIRD DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM AND CHANDOS, RICHARD TEMPLE-GRENVILLE, ON HIS OFFICIAL VISIT TO TRIVANDRUM

during the lifetime of the king," (Erwin Neumayer and Christine Schelberger eds., *Raja Ravi Varma, Portrait of an Artist: The Diary of C Raja Raja Varma*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 300)

Upon completion, the present lot was gifted to the Duke as a token of appreciation. After his death, the painting passed on to his eldest daughter Baroness Kinloss. In the 1920s, it changed hands and became a part of Castle House, Buckingham, the offices of Buckinghamshire County Council and remained there until 1974, when a private collector acquired it. The scene in all its perfection its intricate details and the allure of the cultural fabric of those times created a once in a lifetime panorama of panache and royal regalia.

## In search of oneself

Australian soprano DEBORAH CHEETHAM tells AYUSHI SHARMA that she found similarities with her Aboriginal roots

She visited India for the first time in 2017 and ever since she has loved the country and its people. "I knew that I will return," said Australian Soprano Deborah Cheetham, as she marked the closing ceremony of the six-month long Australia Fest in India recently.

The lyric soprano said that even though her visits to the country have been limited, "Indian music and art have been an important part of music and fashion for most of my life. Now that I have visited the source, I understand better why Indians know and love their culture and are attentive to their craft."

There are always certain stories and narratives etched deep in the songs that opera singers perform. Talking about the one that Cheetham narrated at the festival, she said that it is *Songs of Belonging*, which narrated "my journey of discovering my

identity as a Yorta Yorta or Jotijota (indigenous Australian people who have traditionally inhabited the area surrounding the junction of the Goulburn and Murray Rivers in present-day north-eastern Victoria and southern New South Wales) woman."

She believes that such events initiate a cultural dialogue between two nations as "they help us understand each other on a much deeper level."

Recalling one of her past experiences in India, she said that she plans to expand the art in the country. "Whilst in Mumbai, we visited a school at the Darvai Transition Camp. Although we have no plans to open a school here, I plan to stay in touch with the children who we met in order to mentor them," she said.

Having performed across the world, she talked about how she has explored different kinds of audience and music practices. "There are fundamental truths which bind humanity together. The desire to understand and realise that you belong to the world is a universal theme and so I find this recital has resonated well with the audience. Also there is so much about Australia which is not fully understood especially the shared history since colonisation and the effect it had on the Aboriginal Nations."

Talking about the evolution of the industry, she said, "It is true to say that the digital age has changed the way people connect to music thus opening up many new pathways. There is instant gratification everywhere. However I know there is still a place when you are seated in a theatre and the house lights are switched off and you wait in breathless anticipation for the music to be played live."



## The fire within

Percussionist ANURADHA PAL tells CHAHAK MITTAL that when music is universal, its creators cannot be specific to one gender. She further discusses her struggle to become the biggest female tabla player of all time

Recently a daily quoted: 'If there's a female equivalent of Ustad Zakir Hussain, it's Anuradha Pal.' While the percussionist feels that the two can never be compared as he is "my guru", she is much more — an inspiration, a fighter, a writer as well as a trend-setter.

Even though her journey of more than 40 years in the industry has been rewarding, she says, it has been challenging as well. Coming from a non-musical and male-dominated background, Pal struggled to find her way through the restrictions and challenges the society imposes on a woman, to become the first professional female tabla virtuoso in the world. "I had to be really at the top of the game to prove my niche and have a unique set of offerings that would make an impact. I had to train myself very hard and practice for eight to 10 hours each day to reach the level of the best musicians. I had to make sure that my work does the talking since I didn't have any Godfather. Neither did I take any external help," she says.

She explains why she has never chosen to stop. From being featured in the

Limca Book of Records, to receiving a number of national and international accolades like the Excellence Award from the government of Canada, First Ladies award from the President of India, Women Achiever's Award and many more. She says, "I started receiving awards when I was 10-years-old. With every award that I brought home, my parents told me 'Very good, but you have to work harder.' Honestly, their attitude helped me reach out for more. I needed to do more for excellence in the field."

The legend, who has performed in the biggest international music festivals as both the youngest and the most senior musician, had begun the *Anuradha Pal in Tabla Jugalbani with Herself*, a series of live events across the country, where she played solo and narrated interactive stories through innovative rhythmic dialogues.

The world of classical instruments, especially that of tabla, has been dominated by men from the beginning. This was one thing she has aimed at changing ever since she began playing the percussion instrument. She formed the all-



woman ensemble *Stree Shakti*, the first-of-its-kind in an era when there were hardly any women's music groups. What also made it unique was that it combined both Hindustani and Carnatic styles. "When music is universal, its creators cannot be specific to one gender. When I started performing at the age of 10, I started encountering a lot of opposition, most of which was on account of my gender. I don't give up easily. I was studying science and until then I hadn't decided that I will dedicate myself to music and tabla," she says and adds that this was the time when she felt that there would be many other women who must have felt the same way.

Creating a platform for them was important. She says, "I formed *Stree Shakti* to give strength to women and change the society's perception that they can't do things other than what they are supposed to. I wanted the band to be different and develop as a community. It's also special since there is not even a band of men that has attempted to combine so many different styles of music — Hindustani, Carnatic, vocal and percus-

**'With the Naari Shakti anthem, I wanted to document the journey of resilience and power that women have become over time. It's a fight against the numerous acts of monstrosity against them'**

sion — together. It is a meeting of many different souls and streams."

Pal says that she was determined to make it something different, rather than just women-centric. "It had to be something beyond a singular aspect. It had to be powerful and make a statement that inspires other women too. Even though many all-woman bands have come up today, this band created a revolution 23 years ago as it was a concept, completely unheard of. It was important to make people understand that women have a lot of potential that we don't realise," says the trend blazer.

The ambassador of the *Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao* Yojana recently launched and composed the *Anthem for Naari Shakti* campaign in India. "The idea of the lyrics for the anthem birthed when we (*Stree Shakti* team) were on our concept tour across Europe celebrating our 21st anniversary. I wanted to document this journey of resilience and power that women have become over time. I also wanted to give a voice to those who needed one," she says.

Pal has been exposed to writing as well since her mother was a writer. And it was one of her Hindi poems or prose that inspired the lyrics, which go like... "Khud ko tu pehchaan de khuddari ko choom ke/ Padh kar apni pehchaan bana, stree shakti ki misaal de." (Give yourself an identity by becoming self reliant/ Educate yourself and become a symbol for woman power.)

The anthem, she says, calls out the evils in the society against women, be it dowry, *sati*, or female foeticide and numerous other acts of monstrosity. "It's a fight against all the acts of injustice against women, and an initiative to show solidarity towards making India a superpower of women," she adds.

### WATCH OUT



**Art Tune of Spring** is a group art exhibition by four painters and one sculpture, featuring works of Sekhar Kar, Subrata Das, Subrata Paul, Swarnali Pal and Jayanta Khan. **WHEN:** April 2 **TIME:** 10 am to 7 pm **Venue:** Lalit Kala Akademi, Rabindra Bhavan, 35 Ferozeshah Road.



There are many stories hidden behind a veil in India, screaming to be told, revealed, expressed and staged. *Aaina*, the Indian Dance Theatre, brings a range of performances as a reflection of the human condition, mirroring up to give people a glimpse of their desires, anxieties, fears, and emotions. **TIME:** 7 pm onwards **WHEN:** April 4 and 5 **WHERE:** Kamani Auditorium.



*The Needle Reverence*, a story stitched by the thrift of Bengali women, is an exhibition of Kanthas from the late 19th century till pre-Independence, and contemporary Kanthas created in the 1990s initiated by late sculptor Meera Mukherjee. **WHEN:** April 4 to 12 **TIME:** 11 am to 7 pm **WHERE:** Art Gallery, Kamaladevi Complex.

Art Spice and Art Magnum presents Eclectic Strokes, an art exhibition featuring a wide collection of art pieces by all the Indian senior masters like S H Raza, M F Husain, Ram Kumar, F N Souza, to name a few. **WHEN:** Till April 10 **TIME:** 11 am to 8 pm **WHERE:** Art Spice gallery at the Metropolitan Hotel & Spa.



Gallery Espace presents artist Akshay Raj Singh Rathore's solo exhibition, *un-practised frugality*, showcasing his vision that "surpasses the present sense of contemporary contemplation." **WHEN:** Till April 13 **TIME:** 11 am to 6 pm **WHERE:** Gallery Espace, 16 Community Centre, New Friends Colony.

**SINGLES**

**FEDERER GOES FOURTH IN RANKINGS**  
**PARIS:** Roger Federer jumped up one spot to fourth in the ATP rankings released on Monday after capturing his 101st career title with his victory over John Isner in Miami. The Swiss great switched places with Austria's Dominic Thiem, who had briefly climbed to fourth after defeating Federer in the final at Indian Wells two weeks ago. Rising Greek star Stefanos Tsitsipas moved up to a career best of eighth, while Canadian teenager Denis Shapovalov cracked the top 20 for the first time following his run to the Miami semi-finals. Felix Auger-Aliassime, 18, soared 24 places to 33rd after matching compatriot Shapovalov's run to the last four.

**GHOSAL ENTERS TOP-10 IN PSA RANKINGS**  
**NEW DELHI:** Saurav Ghosal on Monday became the first Indian male squash player to enter the top 10 in the latest PSA world rankings. Indian women squash players — Joshna Chinappa and Dipika Pallikal — had earlier reached top-10 in the world rankings. Riding on his recent performances, Ghosal has moved up two places to a career-high ranking of 10. Ghosal made it to the quarter-finals of the 2018-2019 PSA World Championships in Chicago, USA for the first time in his career. He was also a quarter-finalist at the prestigious Grasshopper Cup in Zurich, Switzerland. In the women's rankings, Joshna continued to be the best-ranked Indian, moving up to the 15th position.

**MARQUEZ CLAIMS 45TH MOTOGP TITLE**  
**TERMAS DE RIO HONDO:** World champion Marc Marquez emerged triumphant at the Argentina MotoGP ahead of his rival Valentino Rossi. Marquez put up an impressive show aboard his Honda RC213V as he claimed his 45th career victory in the elite class, finishing almost 10 seconds ahead of Rossi on a Yamaha. Andrea Dovizioso, who won the season-opener in Qatar, finished third on a Ducati. Marquez is currently leads the 2019 championship after two rounds with 45 points. "Today was a perfect day," he said. Honda now moves to the top of the Constructor's Championship as a result of the victory.

**SL CAPT APOLOGISES FOR BEHAVIOUR**  
**COLOMBO:** Sri Lanka's Test captain Dimuth Karunaratne apologised on Monday for his "unbecoming behaviour" after being arrested for drink-driving in an accident that left a taxi driver injured. Karunaratne, 30, was taken before a magistrate who suspended his driving licence and fixed a trial for May 2. The cricket star was also asked to take a medical test. "My actions were utterly unbecoming of a Sri Lankan national cricketer and I do apologise to all of you for this incident," Karunaratne said in a statement. Sri Lanka's cricket board said it would investigate the incident "in order to take necessary action." Agencies

# Benzema saves Real blushes

French forward scores in last minute of regulation time to help Madrid win 3-2

AFP ■ MADRID

Karim Benzema stopped Real Madrid's underwhelming La Liga season going from bad to worse on Sunday after firing a last-minute winner to hand the European champions a barely-deserved 3-2 win over bottom club Huesca.

Humbled by Ajax in the Champions League and dumped out of the Copa Del Rey by deadly rivals Barca, third-placed Real showed little signs of improvement in Zinedine Zidane's second game in charge but Benzema, subject to rumours he may leave Madrid in the summer for Manchester United, struck with a fine curling finish the to snatch the three points at a sparsely populated Santiago Bernabeu.

"We are happy with him and I am going to count on him, now there are nine games left and then we will see what happens. He is a Real Madrid player and I don't think this will change," Zidane said. "You have to accept it. If the people want to come to the Bernabeu to see us so much the better, but I understand that since we are not going to win anything fewer people come."

Zidane's son Luca was given his second ever start between the sticks for Real but got off to the worst possible start, picking the ball out of his own net within three minutes after Cucho Hernandez lashed home Ezequiel Avila low cross.

Isco levelled the scores in the 25th minute when he tapped home a Brahim Diaz cross after Benzema's low shot was well saved, but it was the away side — playing their first ever La Liga game at the Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu stadium — who went closer going into the break ahead.



**REAL MOVE TO WITHIN TWO POINTS OF SECOND-PLACED ATLETICO MADRID, WHO HAMMERED CHAMPIONS LEAGUE HOPEFULS ALAVES 4-0 ON SATURDAY**

Zidane junior had to be alert to stop Damian Musto from glancing home a header nine minutes before the break, while Avila punched the ground in frustration in first half stoppage time after flashing a power shot over from the edge of the box.

**HEARTBROKEN HUESCA**

Real continued to disappoint in the second half but took the lead just after the hour mark thanks to Dani Ceballos, who bundled home the second after Gareth Bale's beautiful cross was headed back across goal by Benzema.

Bale then missed a glorious opportunity to put the game beyond Huesca when he somehow

put Alvaro Odriozola's low cross over the bar from just yards out. Huesca pounced on that awful miss to draw level when Xabier Etxeita powered home Moi Gomez's cross from a short corner. However Benzema was on hand to break Huesca hearts with his 14th league goal of the season, which gives Zidane two wins from his first two matches back in charge.



# Pogba has big part to play at Utd: Ole

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Manchester United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer says Paul Pogba has a "big, big part" to play at Old Trafford despite speculation linking the French World Cup winner with a move to Real Madrid. Real boss Zinedine Zidane is expected to be busy in the summer transfer market as he tries to reinvigorate a side that crashed out of the Champions League in the last 16 and are lagging 12 points behind leaders Barcelona in La Liga.

United midfielder Pogba last week described Madrid as a "dream club for every player" while on international duty with France and Zidane on Saturday hailed him as "a player who knows how to do everything".

But Solskjaer is determined that Pogba, one of the world's most marketable players, will not be a part of Zidane's rebuilding plans and

believes the midfielder simply gave a straight answer to a question.

"I don't like to talk about other teams' players," the Norwegian said ahead of his side's Premier League match against Wolves on Tuesday. "That is one of the challenges of the international break."

"Players are available all the time and it's a different environment and it's more of a general talk."

"Paul is a very nice and polite man and he answered a general question. Of course, Zidane is an icon in France. Zidane is a fantastic manager and he used to be a fantastic player and I played against him."

"So Paul has politely answered that question. But he is happy here. He is going to be a big, big part of things here."

"I have always said that you would like to build your team around him and that has not changed at all."



# SRIKANTH HEADS TO MALAYSIA AFTER INDIA OPEN HIGH

PTI ■ KUALA LUMPUR

A strong finish at the India Open will hold him in good stead when Kidambi Srikanth yet again strives to end his long title drought at the \$ 700,000 Malaysia Open, beginning here on Tuesday.

Srikanth, who last won a title at the 2017 French Open, came close to ending the lean patch when he reached the finals of the India Open but Denmark's Viktor Axelsen thwarted his challenge on Sunday.

Despite the loss, it was a good week for the 26-year-old as he quelled the challenge of one opponent after another on way to his first summit clash of a BWF world tour event in 17 months.

On Wednesday, Srikanth will begin his campaign against a qualifier, following the withdrawal of Malaysian legend Lee Chong Wei, who was supposed to play his first event after recovering from nose cancer.

"I'm just happy how it has been last week. I just want to take it the way it comes. I know I was trailing in most of the matches but somehow I wanted this kind of momentum. I wanted these kind of wins and want to continue this form now," Srikanth said after the final on Sunday.

Olympic Silver medalist P V Sindhu too was on course for a title win before she blew a four game points to lose the semifinal against He Bingjiao of China last Saturday.

The fifth seeded Indian will cross swords with Japan's

Aya Ohori in the opening round of the BWF World Tour Super 750. She is likely to get a chance to avenge her first-round loss at the All England Championship against Sung Ji Hyun of Korea, who she is expected to face in the second round.

Indonesia Masters champion Saina Nehwal, who had battled pain after developing pancreas infection en route the All England Champion quarterfinals, will look for a good outing after skipping the Swiss Open and India Open. The eighth seeded Indian will face Thailand's Pornpawee Chochuwong in the first round.

Among others, H S Prannoy will look to continue his promising show after regaining some form at the India Open where he reached the quarterfinals. He will square off against Hong Kong's Ng Ka Long Angus.

Sameer Verma will also look to snap his run of early exits this year but it will be easier said than done as he faces world No 2 Shi Yuqi of China.

Men's doubles pair Manu Attri and B Sumeeth Reddy, the only Indian pair to reach the semifinals at New Delhi last week, will face seventh seed Chinese pair of Han Chengkai and Zhou Haodong in the first round, while Ashwini Ponnappa and N Sikki Reddy will take on Korean pair of Baek Ha Na and Kim Hye Rin.

Pranaav Jerry Chopra and Sikki will meet Ireland's Sam Magee and Chloe Magee in their opener.

# Mbappe kills off Toulouse resistance

AFP ■ PARIS

Kylian Mbappe fired Paris Saint-Germain to their eighth straight Ligue 1 win with a stunning goal that earned the champions a 1-0 victory at Toulouse on Sunday and kept them miles clear at the top of the league.

The 20-year-old World Cup winner crashed home his 27th league goal of the season, his seventh in as many league games, with 16 minutes left as he continues to shine in the absence of the injured duo Neymar and Edinson Cavani.

"We had to wait, be patient and in the end we won with Kylian's speed," said PSG skipper Marquinhos.



Kylian Mbappe celebrates after scoring against Toulouse during Ligue 1 clash

"It brought a great deal of joy to our fans, I'm sure of that."

PSG now have 80 points, 20 ahead of second placed Lille with a game in hand to boot.

Coach Thomas Tuchel said he was delighted that the runaway leaders have not been tempted to take their foot off the gas.

"Many of our players were away in the international break and there was a bit of fatigue in some of them," said the German.

"It could have been tempting to relax, especially with the lead we have in the league, but nobody does it and I like that."

Mbappe's goal was the

highlight of a dull game which was otherwise lit up by a cheeky PSG fan sneaking onto the pitch to snap a selfie with the striker.

The video assistant referee system ruled out Marquinhos' tap-in just before half-time after Mbappe was judged offside, and the runaway league leaders threatened little other than that.

However they maintain their huge gap on second-placed Lille, who earlier on Sunday scored three quickfire second-half goals to come back from 2-0 and snatch a vital win that kept them firm favourites for direct qualification for the Champions League.

# Pep believes pressure will bring out best in Man City players

AFP ■ LONDON

Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola believes the pressure of needing to win every one of their remaining Premier League matches to finish ahead of Liverpool will boost their quadruple bid.

City, with the League Cup already in the bag, are chasing an unprecedented clean sweep, with the Premier League, Champions League and FA Cup also in their sights. They can return to the top of the table if they win their game in hand against struggling Cardiff on Wednesday.

City play an out-of-sorts Tottenham in the Champions League quarter-finals next week and Brighton in the FA Cup semi-finals on Saturday.

Liverpool, seeking their first English top-flight title since 1990, beat Spurs in a dramatic finish on Sunday to restore their two-point lead.

"For the semi-final and for the Champions League, being in the position in the Premier League where you know if you don't win you are going to lose the Premier League, maybe that's going to help us for the other competitions," said

Guardiola. "If you are 10 points in front you can maybe be a little more selective."

"But now there's no other option, we don't have any other choice, so every game we have to win, if not you drop that competition."

"So that's why sometimes to play with that pressure is nice, it's necessary to get the best out of ourselves." Guardiola is bidding to add a second Premier League title to go with the three he won in Germany and three in Spain with Bayern Munich and Barcelona.



# Finch sounds WC warning as Aus confidence rockets

AFP ■ DUBAI

Captain Aaron Finch warned Australia will embark on their World Cup defence next month with confidence riding high after completing an ODI sweep against Pakistan on Sunday hot on the heels of a series victory in India.

Written off after a torrid 15 months which saw Australia win just three of 18 one-day internationals, Finch led the 2015 World Cup winners from 2-0 down last month to beat Virat Kohli's formidable side 3-2, Australia's first series win in India since 2009.

They then romped to a 5-0 rout of a depleted Pakistan who rested six top players for the series played in the United Arab Emirates, including regular captain Sarfaraz Ahmed, ahead of the World Cup.

"We'll go to the World Cup with a lot of confidence now, even after a lot of people wrote us off," said Finch who was declared man of the series for his 451 runs including two hundreds



Aaron Finch poses with the trophy after Australia beat Pak in final ODI to win five match series 5-0

and two fifties.

"Potentially we had a real focus coming here and that was our last hit-out before the World Cup so we wanted to go into that tournament with a lot of momentum," he said after inflicting a fourth whitewash on Pakistan in a bilateral series.

Winners of 2015 World Cup at home, Australia had endured a miserable time in limited-overs cricket since last year's ball-tampering controversy in South Africa.

**TOUGH SELECTION CALLS**

Finch admitted the potential return of Warner, who has been in top form in the Indian Premier League, and Smith would mean some difficult choices when the World Cup squad is named later this month. "There will be some unlucky guys," said Finch of squad that could also see the return of fast bowlers Mitchell Starc, Jos Hazlewood and Pat Cummins after injury.

"Everyone who has an opportunity has played some great cricket. At the

end of the day there will be some tough calls, but its exciting for Australia at the same time because six month back a lot of people were slamming us."

"A lot of people were writing us off, not in just the one-day cricket but in all forms of the game. It's been really positive last couple of months and we have been building nicely."

Pakistan's head coach Mickey Arthur, who has also coached South Africa and Australia, said the defending champions were in good shape.

"All the final jigsaw pieces are coming together nicely. Australia look a very, very good side. They will be a threat at the World Cup," said Arthur. Arthur defended leaving out key players Babar Azam, Fakhar Zaman, Hasan Ali, Shaheen Shah Afridi and Sarfaraz, while Mohammad Hafeez was missing injured. "All we can do is prepare as best we can," he said.

"We got on the road in September last year for the Asia Cup and then went to South Africa and then had the Pakistan Super League so we had to rest them."

# India finish with 16 Gold medals at Asian Airgun C'ships

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian shooters continued their dominance claiming five Gold medals on the final day of the Asian Airgun Championships to sign off with a total of 25 medals in Taoyuan, Taipei.

India finished with 16 Gold, five Silver and four Bronze. On the last day of the competition, Yash Vardhan and Shreya Agrawal bagged three Gold medals each.

Yash finished on top in 10m Air Rifle men's junior event. He then clinched the yellow metal in Team competition with his partners — Keval Prajapati and Aishwary Tomar.

Yash scored 249.5, while Keval and Aishwary shot 247.3 and 226.1 for Silver and Bronze respectively.

Earlier Vardhan and Shreya combined to win the Mixed Team Rifle junior event.

Shreya won the Gold in the 10m Air Rifle women's junior event. She also won the Team Gold along with Mehuli Ghosh and Kavi Chakkaravarthy.

Shreya's Gold winning 24-shots ended on an impressive 252.5, while Mehuli settled for individual Bronze with an effort of 228.3. Kavi was fourth.

Indian shooting's next assignment is scheduled at Al Ain, UAE where the ISSF Shotgun World Cup stage two commences on April 5.

LEADERBOARD	
RUNS	254   David Warner (SRH)
WICKETS	6   Imran Tahir (CSK)
6S	174
4S	385

We win as a team and we lose as a team. If we win the smaller moments in T20s we will do well — AJINKYA RAHANE



# Gayle-less Kings manage 166-9 against Delhi

The lack of batting depth in hosts' line up was thoroughly exposed as KXIP just managed 37 off the final 5 overs, while losing five wickets



PTI ■ MOHALI

Chris Gayle's absence at the top of the order did have an impact as Kings XI Punjab could only manage a par-score of 166 for 9 against Delhi Capitals in an IPL encounter here on Monday.

With the 'Universe Boss' ruled out due to back injury (lat strain), KXIP batsmen despite being good at times could never really take the Delhi bowling apart.

Save David Miller (43 off 30 balls) and Sarfaraz Khan (39 off 29 balls), other batsmen didn't have a good day against the trio of Chris Morris \*(3/30), Kagiso Rabada (2/32) and young Sandeep Lamichhane (2/27 in 4 overs).



Morris was the pick of the bowlers, removing KXIP's last-match hero KL Rahul (15) with an inswinger as he played across the line. Sam Curran (20, 10 balls) promoted up the order did hit a couple of lusty blows but Lamichhane

got him with a flipper. Mayank Agarwal went for a non-existent single and couldn't beat Shikhar Dhawan's direct throw at the non-striker's end. Miller and Sarfaraz however didn't get bogged down as they added 62 in 6.4 overs carrying out a

recovery process from 58 for three. While Miller attacked Lamichhane hitting him for a six over long-on, Sarfaraz played his now patent "closed eyes scoop shot" over keeper's head. But lamichhane had the last laugh as he edged

one to Rishabh Pant behind the stumps while Miller offer the Capitals skipper an easy skier trying to hit Morris out of the park. In the end, Madeep Singh (29 no off 21 balls) took the team past 160-run mark.

## Up Next Royals and Challengers eye first win

Live on Star Sports 1 & 2

RR vs RCB

JAIPUR

TUESDAY | 8:00 PM

HEAD TO HEAD

M 18

RR 8

RCB 8

PTI ■ JAIPUR

Rajasthan Royals and Royal Challengers Bengaluru, the only two teams yet to win a game in the 2019 IPL, will be desperate to outdo each other in a clash of strugglers at the Sawai Man Singh Stadium here on Tuesday.

Both teams have been more than disappointing thus far in the IPL and need a win to revive their respective campaigns.

Royals have failed to tighten the screws when it mattered most. In the all three matches, they were in a good position but could not grab the moments, losing to Kings XI Punjab, Sunrisers Hyderabad and Chennai Super Kings respectively.

In Chennai on Sunday, Royals had CSK reeling at 27 for three before skipper M S Dhoni smashed an unbeaten 75 off 46 balls to bail the hosts out of trouble and eventually win the game by eight runs.

Royals, who boast of star players such as Steve Smith and Ben Stokes, have failed to live up to the expectations.

In the first match against Kings XI Punjab, Royals' bowlers allowed the visitors to some vital runs in death overs and later the batsmen disappointed after being put on victory course by Rahane and Jos Buttler.

The same story has as batting and bowling units have failed to perform in tandem.

The likes of Sanju Samson, who had hit first ton of this IPL, Buttler and Rahane have been good. Rahul Tripathi also looked impressive during his 39 against CSK but Smith and Stokes are yet to set the tournament on fire.

The hosts face an equally hun-



### LAST YEAR'S MATCHES

► Rajasthan Royals defeated Royal Challengers Bangalore by 30 runs at Jaipur

► Rajasthan Royals beat Royal Challengers Bangalore by 19 runs at Bangalore

### FOR THE RECORD

► Prayas Ray Barman, aged 16 years and 157 days, is the youngest player to appear in IPL. He made his debut for Royal Challengers Bangalore in the last match after playing just four Twenty-20 matches.

► Jaydev Unadkat who claimed 148 wickets in 118 innings of 119 matches, needs just two wickets to become 10th Indian and 72nd bowler overall to take 150 wickets in Twenty-20 cricket. **Faisal Features**

gry outfit in RCB, who too are looking to redeem themselves. Their skipper Virat Kohli had conceded that the defeat against Sunrisers Hyderabad on Sunday afternoon was "one of their worst losses".

"We just need our players to put up a better challenge up front. There are still 11 games to go. The pitch will be nice in Jaipur against the Royals. We need to bring our A-game, like we did against Mumbai and play with that kind of intensity," said Kohli after RCB's third loss in a row.

The visitors certainly have the resources in their ranks to beat

Royals. RCB have a destructive batting order comprising Kohli, AB de Villiers, Parthiv Patel, Moeen Ali and Shimron Hetmyer, yet their batting failed miserably in two out of the three games.

Both teams will also have to deal with the soaring heat in the Pink City with temperatures nearing 40 degrees celsius.

## Wanted p'ship after early wickets: Mahi

FIANS ■ CHENNAI

Coming in to bat at 27/3, the stage was set for a typical MS Dhoni innings at the Chepauk Stadium and the CSK skipper did not disappoint as he hit a patient 75 off 46 balls to help the team put on 175 in their 20 overs. The end result was a 8-run win for the lions in their den.

Speaking after the game on Sunday, the 'Man of the Match' Dhoni once again looked at the team, rather than focusing on his own innings. Dhoni also added that he kept the dew in mind while planning his innings. Coming in, Dhoni said his first thought was to stop the fall of wickets and build a partnership.

"We wanted to get a partnership going — that was needed. We knew there was some dew on the field. We knew it would get easier as the game progresses. We bat quite deep until 9 (Mitchell Santner). We could accelerate in the last few overs, and we wanted to get a partnership going at that time," he said.



Dwayne Bravo congratulates Mahendra Singh Dhoni after Chennai Super Kings completes his half century against Rajasthan Royals during IPL clash on Sunday

Commenting on giving Santner a go against the Rajasthan Royals, Dhoni said: "We have a stable XI and there were a lot less left-handers in the opposition, so we gave Mitch Santner a go. It isn't that important to make changes if not necessary. As the tournament progresses everyone will get more chances."

Dwayne Bravo might have conceded 19 runs from the 18th over of the RR innings, but Dhoni still showed faith in the West Indian all-rounder and handed him the ball with the team needing 12 off the last over. Dhoni said that with every game the bowlers will only get better at execution.

"As the tournament progresses, bowlers start executing their plans much better. Initially I thought we would look at how the fast bowlers would bowl so we could bring in the spinners. Jadeja and Santner found it hard to grip the ball. Irrespective of the results, it is important to cut the boundaries and it is difficult for the fast bowlers to execute. It's better to keep hitting the same mark," he explained.



Imran Tahir and Mahendra Singh Dhoni communicate during CSK's game against Rajasthan ICC

## Dhoni unreal as captain: Tahir

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Veteran spinner Imran Tahir described Chennai Super Kings skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni as "unreal", saying even without talking much he has the capability to lift the team up.

"The way he carries himself is just unreal. He won't say much but he knows how to lift the team up. He is a great leader and a great human being," Tahir said at the post-match press conference after Chennai beat Rajasthan by 8 runs on Sunday.

The South African also credited Dhoni for living up to his reputation

of being one of the best finishers in the world and a good tactician.

"You know Dhoni plays really well in these situations because like (Dwayne) Bravo he's done this so many times, and that's why he's called Mr Cool. He works hard on his game plan. Even in practice sessions, he helps his team-mates. And we respect that."

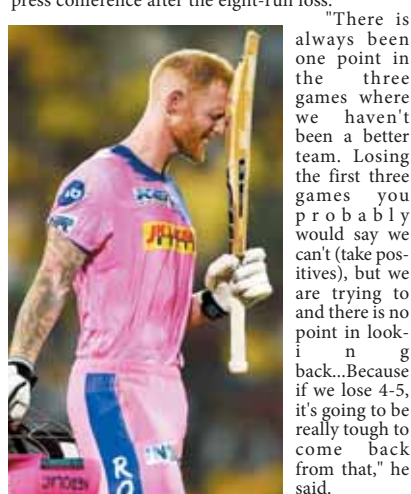
"I think as a bowling group we did really well. Even while batting, Mahi bhai played unbelievably well and set the tone for us. I'm just really happy with whatever we did as a team," he told reporters after the match.

## Comeback won't be easy after losing 4-5 games: Stokes

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Rajasthan Royals all-rounder Ben Stokes has said that his team can't afford to lose another game after suffering three consecutive defeats in the IPL. Stokes said there is no point in looking back and focus on the upcoming games because if they lose the next two, bouncing back could be beyond Royals' reach.

"Our first three games we got ourselves into a real good position to win All three, and we know it is just (about) winning those crucial moments. (This game) it was the last over and unfortunately we couldn't cross the line," Stokes said at the post-match press conference after the eight-run loss.



"There is always been one point in the three games where we haven't been a better team. Losing the first three games you probably would say we can't (take positives), but we are trying to and there is no point in looking back...Because if we lose 4-5, it's going to be really tough to come back from that," he said.

Stokes also hailed CSK captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni saying there was a lot to learn from him. Dhoni smashed an unbeaten 75 to bail his team out of trouble from 27 for three.

"Hindsight is a wonderful thing, if you look back at it like that. He just takes it deep as he possibly can. He's a great person to learn from and watch how he goes about his innings whether it's setting a total or chasing a total."

"Sometimes you got to hold your hand up and say the best players in the world can do that. He certainly showed that tonight."

Paying tribute to Dhoni's finishing skills, the Englishman said he is one of the greatest finishers to have graced the game and the Royals tried to attack him but he got reprieves which could have been a turning point. "Especially when he comes in early, every team knows what he's going to try and do to start with and we tried to attack him. Getting him out was our main objective. There was a dropped catch which you can't blame anyone for — that happens — and the ball hitting the stumps and the bails not coming off."

## Sawhney takes charge as ICC Chief Executive

PTI ■ DUBAI

Media professional Manu Sawhney on Monday took charge as Chief Executive of the International Cricket Council and will work alongside Dave Richardson, who will step down after the World Cup in July.

Former ESPN Star Sports MD Sawhney has already been working alongside outgoing Chief Executive Richardson for the last six weeks to ensure a smooth transition.

Richardson will remain with the ICC until July as originally planned to oversee the delivery of the World Cup in the United Kingdom. Sawhney was appointed in January.

"I am absolutely delighted to be taking over the reins from David, who has steered the sport so capably over the last seven years. I am excited by the opportunities ahead and I am looking forward to working in partnership with our Members, partners and staff to ambitiously accelerate the global growth of the game," said Sawhney.



# INDIA RETAIN TEST C'SHIP FOR THIRD YEAR IN A ROW

PTI ■ DUBAI

India retained the ICC Test Championship Mace and won the purse of \$ 1 million for a third year running after a memorable season that saw them winning their maiden series in Australia.

India finished at the top of the ICC Test team rankings on the cut-off date of April 1 while New Zealand have ensured second place, the world body said in a statement on Monday.

"Retaining the ICC Test Championship Mace once again is something we are all really proud of. Our team has been doing well across formats but it gives us extra pleasure to come out on top of the Test rankings," India captain Virat Kohli said reiterating his love for Test cricket.

"We all know of the importance of Test cricket and of how only the best can prosper in the format," he added.



A top place finish was never in doubt for India, while New Zealand's consistent performances over the past year saw them climb from third position, needing them to only avoid losing the home series against Bangladesh last month to finish at the same position.

The Kane Williamson-led side, who also had the satisfaction of seeing their captain get the ICC Spirit of Cricket award for 2018, earned \$ 500,000 after finishing with 108 points, eight behind India.

South Africa, who had finished second the previous two times, will now get a prize money of \$ 200,000 for finishing third with 105 points while Australia who edged out England on decimal points at 104 points bag \$100,000.

"Our team has a lot of depth and I am sure this will stand us in good stead once the ICC World Test

Championship commences later this year. That is again something we are really looking forward to as it adds more context to Test match cricket," Kohli said.

New Zealand captain Kane Williamson said it is an "awesome" achievement for his side to finish second in the ICC Test Team Rankings "...As a team we should be very proud. It's come off the back of a lot of hard work and perseverance; not just by the eleven guys on the field, but the entire squad and support staff."

"It's been especially pleasing to see the consistency we've shown in the longest form of the game over a decent period of time."

Nine Test nations will compete across 27 series and 71 Test matches to reach the World Test Championship Final in 2021 where the champions will be crowned.