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VOICES OF
SANITY AT LAST

WORLD 12
US-CHINA TRADE TALKS TO
START VERY SHORTLY: TRUMP

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BARCELONA BEAT
REAL BETIS IN LA LIGA

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No mediation on Kashmir, says Modi; Trump nods

India and Pakistan can resolve Kashmir problem: US Prez

PTI ■ BIARRITZ/LONDON

With US President Donald Trump by his side, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday categorically rejected any scope for third party mediation on Kashmir, saying it was a bilateral issue between India and Pakistan, and "we don't want to trouble any third country" — a position that was immediately backed by the American leader who had recently offered to mediate.

In an apparent backtracking from his earlier comments, Trump said he feels that both India and Pakistan can resolve the Kashmir problem on their own. The two leaders appeared together to speak to the media after overnight talks on the sidelines of the G-7 summit and ahead of their formal meeting.

Modi and Trump were meeting for the first time after the Union Government revoked Jammu & Kashmir's special status by abrogating Article 370 and bifurcating the State into two Union Territories. New Delhi's move was severely criticised by Pakistani leadership, including Prime Minister Imran Khan, who made provocative anti-India statements, triggering tensions in bilateral ties.

"All the issues between India and Pakistan are of bilateral in nature, and we don't want to trouble any third country. We can discuss and resolve these issues bilaterally," Modi said.

He said India and Pakistan were together before 1947 and he was confident that the two neighbours can discuss their problems and solve them.

"When I called Prime Minister Khan after the elections, I told him that Pakistan has to fight against poverty, India too has to fight against it. Pakistan has to fight against illiteracy and disease, and India has to also fight against them...I told him we should work together for the welfare of our people," Modi said.

On his part, Trump said he and Modi spoke about Kashmir "at great length" last night and he feels that both India and Pakistan can resolve it on their own. "We spoke last night about Kashmir, the Prime Minister really feels he has it (situation) under control. They speak with Pakistan and I'm sure that they will be able to do something that will be very good," Trump said.

"I have very good relationship with both the gentlemen (Modi and Khan) and I'm here. I think they can do it (resolve the issue) themselves," he added.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi slaps the hand of President Donald Trump as they share a laugh during a bilateral meeting at the G-7 summit in Biarritz, France, on Monday

Trump's comments on Monday are being seen as a total climbdown from the time when he had made a startling claim that Modi has asked him to mediate on Kashmir, the claim was strongly rejected by India. Trump has also offered to mediate between India and Pakistan on more than one occasion in recent past.

"Pakistan's propoganda was dealt the final blow in the meeting between the PM and President Trump. Pakistan was hoping to get some statement which will give it a last ray of hope. The meeting has categorically confirmed that any issue concerning India and Pakistan has to be discussed bilaterally," BJP spokesperson GVL Narasimha Rao said in New Delhi.

Trump also said, "We are talking about trade, we're talking about military and many different things. We had some great discussions, we were together last night for dinner and I learned a lot about India."

Thanking Trump for congratulating him after his recent election victory, Modi said their two countries "share democratic values."

Later, Trump tweeted that he had "a great meeting with my friend Prime Minister Modi."

"Excellent meeting with @POTUS @realDonaldTrump! We had useful discussions on bilateral matters. We agreed to address trade issues for mutual benefit soon. Looking forward to expand cooperation as large democracies for the benefit of our citizens and global peace and prosperity," Modi tweeted.

Briefing the reporters after

Modi speaks good English, but doesn't talk: POTUS

PTI ■ BIARRITZ/LONDON

Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaks very good English, but he just doesn't want to talk, US President Donald Trump said jokingly on Monday before the two "friends" met for formal talks on the sidelines of the G-7 Summit.

The two leaders held 40-minute discussions in Biarritz, the French town which is hosting the meeting of the world's most industrialised nations.

Modi and Trump exchanged a warm handshake and spoke to the media on Indo-Pak tensions, bilateral trade and other issues. Modi answered questions posed by reporters in Hindi.

"He (PM Modi) actually speaks very good English, he just doesn't want to talk," Trump joked when Modi asked reporters to let the leaders talk in privacy.

The two leaders also held each other's hand while everybody present in the room burst into laughter.

Imran at it again: Raises nuke spectre

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

With Pakistan failing to get traction for its beligerent stand on Kashmir, Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan said on Monday that he will raise the issue at every international forum, including at the UN General Assembly.

Khan once again raised the fear of nuclear war saying, "In a nuclear war, no one will win. It will not only wreak havoc in this region, but the entire world will face consequences. It is now up to the international community."

When asked about the discussion on the Kashmir issue during the talks, the Foreign Secretary said there was "no discussion" on it during the bilateral meeting.

To another question, Gokhale said India has not taken any steps to harm the regional stability. "The normalcy is returning to J&K," he said, adding that certain restrictions will remain in place in the state to maintain law and order.

"Their meeting principally focussed on trade and energy," Gokhale said.

Continued on Page 4

Markets ride crest of stimulus booster

Equities log best in 3 months, Sensex gains 793 points, Nifty rises by 228

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty saw their best day in over three months on Monday, buoyed by the Government move to withdraw additional surcharge on foreign investors and initiate steps to revive the economy.

The BSE gauge Sensex settled with a gain of 2.16 per cent or 792.96 points, while the NSE Nifty ended 2.11 per cent or 228.50 points higher.

Indian equities during the second half of the trading session also got a boost from the news that the US and China will soon resume trade talks despite many failed negotiations in recent months.

However, Asian markets closed with significant losses as investor worries grew over the ever-lasting US-China trade war, though sentiment revived in other markets, including India and the Europe, after the news broke out about a possible resumption of talks between the two major economies.

Riding on a wave of economic stimulus optimism, the 30-share Sensex opened over 663 points higher, but global volatility wiped out its gains as the session progressed. It swung 1,052 points during the day before settling at 37,494.12. The index, however, made a roaring comeback in the later



A view of the BSE building in Mumbai on Monday

half tracking news about US-China trade talks resumption.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty reclaimed the 11,000-level. During the day, it climbed a peak of 11,070.30 and touched a low of 10,756.55. It finally closed at 11,057.85.

Both benchmarks Sensex and Nifty have logged their best single-day gains in over three months, since the return of the Narendra Modi Government for a second term.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday announced a raft of relief measures, including the rollback of enhanced super-rich tax on foreign and domestic equity investors, for the ailing economy. She also announced exemption of startups from "angel tax", a package to address distress in the auto sector and upfront infusion of ₹70,000 crore to public sector banks.

To bolster consumption, the Government also said that banks have decided to cut interest rates, a move that would lead to lower EMIs for home, auto and other loans.

Yes Bank topped the gainers' list on the Sensex. It was followed by HDFC, Bajaj Finance, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, L&T, SBI, Axis Bank and Kotak Bank — rallying up to 5.24 per cent.

On the other hand, Tata Steel, Sun Pharma, Hero MotoCorp, Vedanta, RIL, Tata Motors, Maruti Suzuki and Bajaj Auto fell up to 2.01 per cent. Sectorally, BSE finance, realty, bankex, capital goods, industrials, FMCG and power index rallied up to 3.86 per cent. While BSE metal index fell 1.12 per cent. Broader BSE midcap and smallcap indices rose up to 1.65 per cent.

Meanwhile, the Indian rupee depreciated 36 paise to 72.02 against the US dollar.

Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, rose 0.92 per cent to \$59.34 per barrel.

See P4 RBI to transfer highest-ever surplus of ₹1.76 lakh crore to Government

Delhi House OK's ₹290 cr for women's free travel

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Assembly on Monday approved the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Government's supplementary demands for ₹290 crore for the free ride scheme for women passengers in Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) buses and Delhi Metro trains.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, who also holds the Finance portfolio, tabled a proposal under the supplementary demands for the grant of ₹142 crore to fund deployment of marshals in buses and ₹47 crore for the regional rapid transit system corridors and it has been approved by the Assembly with the voice vote.

Sisodia said the free-ride scheme would be implemented

ed soon in the public transport buses, but it would take some time incase of metro trains as the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) had to make preparations for it.

Over all, the Delhi Assembly approved ₹479 crore supplementary grants for the transport sector moved by the Finance Minister.

According to the supplementary grants tabled by the Minister, the Government has granted ₹479 for Transport Department, out of which ₹142 crore is for Road Safety Cell payment to marshals and ₹140 crore for free travel for women in DTC buses and cluster buses, while ₹150 crore has been granted for subsidy to DMRC for women commuters and ₹47 crore for RRTS corridors.

Sisodia informed the Assembly that some procedural approvals are under process and once everything is finalised and the project will get a Cabinet nod, the Government will implement the scheme for buses.

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal during his Independence Day address had announced that the AAP Government will implement the free ride scheme for women in DTC and cluster buses from October 29, marking the Hindu festival Bhai Dooj.

Under the RRTS, three corridors — Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut, Delhi-Panipat and Delhi-Gurgaon-SNB (Shahjahanpur-Neemrana-Behror) will converge at Sarai Kale Khan RRTS station.



Chidambaram's CBI custody extended to Aug 30

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a setback to former Finance Minister P Chidambaram, a designated CBI court on Monday extended his CBI custody by four days for interrogation in the INX Media case. The remand will end on August 30. Chidambaram was produced in the court on the expiry of his four-day CBI custody which was granted to the agency on August 22. Chidambaram, 73, was arrested by the CBI on August 21 from his Jor Bagh residence.

Special Judge Ajay Kumar said the CBI demand was "justified" that Chidambaram has to be further interrogated in its custody.

"Investigation is the prerogative of the investigating officer which he has to conduct within the framework of law...



Senior Congress leader and former Union Minister P Chidambaram after being produced at a CBI court in the INX Media case in New Delhi on Monday

I am of the view that further police custody of accused Chidambaram is justified and accordingly the accused is remanded in police custody till August 30," the judge said in his order.

The court allowed Chidambaram's family members and lawyers to meet him for half-an-hour every day during the CBI custody.

The CBI sought extension of Chidambaram's custody to confront him with certain e-mails and to unearth the larger conspiracy involved in the case. Solicitor General Tushar

CAPSULE

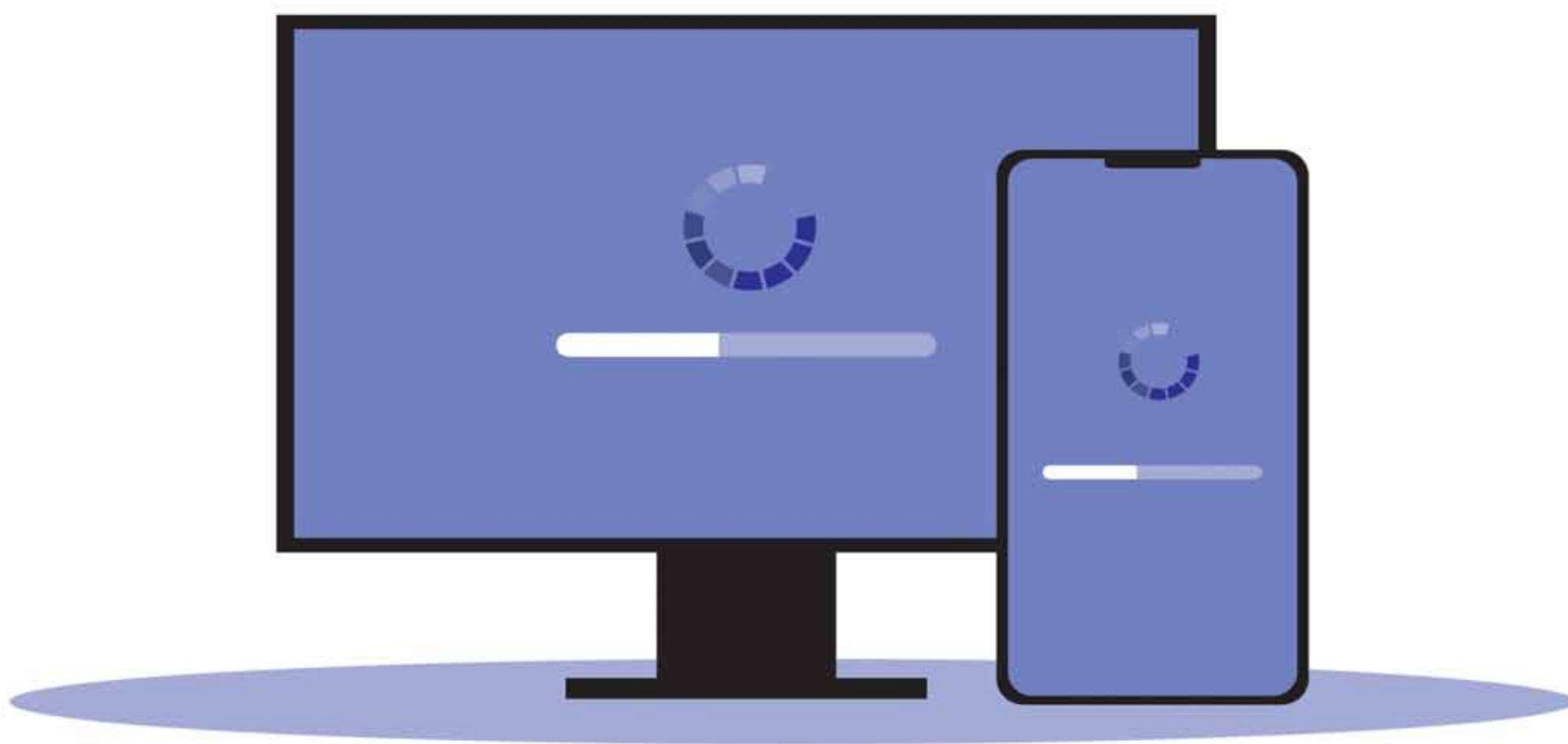
MANMOHAN'S SPG COVER WITHDRAWN
New Delhi: The Special Protection Group (SPG) protection given to former PM Manmohan Singh has been withdrawn following a review. **P4**

JD(U) CAN'T USE ARROW IN J'KHAND, MAHA: EC
New Delhi: The JD(U) cannot use its poll symbol "arrow" to contest elections in Jharkhand and Maharashtra owing to its similarity with the "bow and arrow" symbol used by the JMM and the Shiv Sena in the two States, the EC has said. **P4**

22 MORE TAX OFFICIALS COMPULSORILY RETIRED
New Delhi: The Government has compulsorily retired 22 tax officials accused of corruption and other malpractice as it continues to crack down on errant bureaucracy. **Continued on Page 4**

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR RESIDENTS OF DELHI

**All online services of Delhi Jal Board
will remain closed between August 23 to August 30
for enhancing the efficiency of Water Billing System**



- For improving the efficiency of Revenue Management System (RMS), DJB is moving to an Upgraded System.
- Due to this migration activity all online services like online viewing and payment of water bills/ applying for new connection/ cash counter etc will not be available from 23-08-2019 to 30-08-2019
- Bill Payment due dates during this period will automatically stand extended upto 09-09-2019 without Late Payment Surcharge.
- Offline activities in Zonal Revenue Offices will continue during this period. Consumers can make payment of water bills at the kiosks available at Zonal Revenue Offices.
- For more information please contact 1916 (toll free)

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Health Department, Government of NCT of Delhi

FIRST COLUMN

Half-baked reforms won't work

Given India's unsatisfactory progress in maternal health, a multi-pronged approach is needed to ensure healthy lives for mothers and their babies



SOUMITRO CHAKRABORTY

Over the last few decades, India has confronted several major socio-economic changes. The country has witnessed profound shifts in politics and policy, diplomacy and digitisation. However, what has remained unchanged is the state of public healthcare services. The Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana Abhiyan (PMJAY) may be one of the world's largest publicly-funded health insurance schemes but it is certainly not the finest. Fundamental impediments like inadequate health infrastructure and low doctor-to-patient ratio remain a roaring challenge. Perversely, the deficit is acute in both rural and urban areas. There is an increasing dependency on private healthcare services. India has one of the world's highest rates of out-of-pocket spending in healthcare, thus pushing the people into the poverty trap.

We are the world's sixth largest economy with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of \$2.6 trillion, yet we have not addressed crucial indicators like Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) and Infant Mortality Rate (IMR). Government policies and schemes may boast of attempting to achieve universal healthcare and free treatment but delivery mechanisms have faltered frequently. India continues to add almost a fourth to the worldwide maternal morbidity and mortality even after renewed efforts. As reported by UNICEF in 2017, around 44,000 women in our country die annually due to preventable pregnancy-related causes. Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY), a maternity benefit scheme of the Union Government, which ensures a conditional cash transfer to underprivileged and marginalised sections for promoting institutional delivery, had very little impact in reducing the MMR.

Though the policy led to a phenomenal rise in institutional deliveries thanks to Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA), it failed to address crucial components like antenatal care and neonatal care. The "incentive" structure of the JSY resulted in sluggish progress. To supplement JSY, the Government launched the Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram (JSSK), that focussed on other vital aspects such as transportation, medicines, C-sections and care for sick newborns, which were free of cost. However, a few incidents were reported where patients had to pay from their pockets for even basic items like syringes and gloves. Inadequate implementation of the scheme has resulted in no-takers for the benefits.

Yet another scheme, the Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA) introduced in 2016, appears to be comprehensive and has all the components of maternal healthcare. But to make the policy a success, State Governments need to be committed towards executing it in a coherent and transparent manner. We can ensure steady progress with an all-inclusive schedule of activities, including educating and empowering women about maternal health, family planning initiatives, reproductive wellness and sanitation and hygiene. Actions have to be coupled with transparent communication tools, including effective Information Education and Communication (IEC), Interpersonal Communication (IC) and Behaviour Change Communication (BCC). The potential of communication methods like documentaries, *nukkad natak*, puppet shows and community radio campaigns cannot be overlooked.

Further, it is essential to develop a consistent skill and knowledge-building process around efficient management of labour and delivery across health centres. To be precise, "respectful maternity care" must be provided to the mothers, which includes a clean bathing place and toilet, warm place for the child and privacy for breastfeeding. Healthcare centres require well-planned Emergency Obstetric Care (EMOC) training programmes that can achieve twin objectives. First, train the obstetricians, nurses and nursing attendants. Second, strengthen the skills of front-line workers, ASHA workers and Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANM). Such an integrated approach can be made effective if training schedules are formulated on evidence-based clinical guidelines and techniques. It must be an uncompromising arrangement that adheres to strict guidelines and subdues harmful practices. Government interventions both at the national and State level must be strategised through a series of care, beginning from pregnancy care to childbirth and finally postpartum care. Statistics on maternal deaths must not be taken lightly. We need a steady momentum to transform the "silent emergency" of maternal deaths into a war-cry as it is a matter of basic human rights for survival and social justice for women.

(The writer is CEO a leading research and advisory firm)

I THINK THE J&K GOVERNOR MUST BE MADE THE BJP CHIEF FOR J&K BECAUSE HIS BEHAVIOUR AS WELL AS STATEMENTS ARE MORE LIKE THAT OF A BJP LEADER.

—CONGRESS LEADER
ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY

POINT COUNTERPOINT



BY SAYING WHAT HE (ADHIR) SAID IN PARLIAMENT, HE BURIED HIS PARTY IN THE GRAVE. WHAT DO I SAY ON HIS KNOWLEDGE?

—JAMMU AND KASHMIR GOVERNOR
SATYA PAL MALIK

Promote self-sufficiency

The big bang reforms proposed by the Government for the oil and gas sector are laudable but without a stable and predictable policy environment in place, they can't make much headway



UTTAM GUPTA

The Union Government is considering far-reaching reforms in the gas sector. These include the setting up of a local gas trading platform to facilitate price discovery, stripping the power sector off its priority status by withdrawing priority allocation of natural gas and hiving off the transportation unit of the Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL), a public sector undertaking (PSU) which currently holds an overwhelming 75 per cent share of the gas transmission network.

The stated objective of these reforms is to enable energy firms to invest in exploration and develop gas fields so as to encourage indigenous production and ensure that the country attains self-sufficiency in this major source of clean energy (currently 50 per cent of our domestic gas is imported). While the Government's move is laudable, the moot question is whether the proposed measures will help it come anywhere closer to the goal. The answer will be a categorical "no". The biggest stumbling block towards this is the lack of a "stable" and "predictable" policy environment.

As per the guidelines effective since November 1, 2014, for all domestic supplies covered under the New Exploration and Licensing Policy (NELP) as also the blocks given on "nomination" basis to Oil Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India Limited (OIL) under pre-NELP, the price (call it normal price) is a weighted average of the costs at four international locations in the US, the UK, Canada and Russia. As per this formula, from April 1, 2019, the price is \$3.72 per million British thermal unit (Btu).

Under a special package for deep/ultra-deep and high-pressure/high-temperature (HP/HT) fields announced in March 2016, the supplies therefrom are allowed a "premium" price and are linked to the prices of alternate fuels, including fuel oil, naphtha and imported Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG). The current rate determined on this basis is almost double than the normal price.

Then there's a third pricing mechanism that exists for fields given under the Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP), which was introduced in July 2017. Supplies from these fields — conventional gas as well as unconventional hydrocarbons *viz*, shale gas, Coal Bed Methane (CBM) — are eligible for market-based price. The same also applies to unconventional hydrocarbons from the fields that come under NELP.

ONGC and OIL have 149 small and marginal oil and gas fields that account for a mere five per cent of their total output (courtesy the little attention they receive from PSUs). The Government intends to auction them to private entities. After the transfer, new owners will get complete marketing and pricing freedom of supplies from these fields. In short, the pricing structure is highly differential and has varying prices, depending on the source of supply and hydrocarbon type. Strangely, it also depends on the operator in question.

In 2014, when the process of formulating the new pricing policy was under way, energy companies — both private and public sector — lobbied hard to adopt market-based price for all supplies. But the Modi Government opted for a for-

“THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD DISMANTLE THE EXISTING REGIME OF GAS ALLOCATION AND HIGHLY DIFFERENTIATED PRICING FOR A VARIETY OF SUPPLY STREAMS. CONCURRENTLY, IT SHOULD DEREGULATE IMPORT OF LNG TOGETHER WITH HIVING OFF PORT HANDLING, GASIFICATION AND TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE FROM GAIL, THIS WILL CREATE AN ECOSYSTEM THAT WILL ENSURE ADEQUATE AVAILABILITY OF GAS TO MEET THE DEMAND.”



mula-based price applicable to all. The Government's stated logic behind rejecting a market-led price was that since the gas market in our country is at a very nascent stage and supply falls short of demand, this mechanism may lead to a sharp increase in price, which user industries, particularly fertilisers and power (together they consume nearly 3/4th of the available gas), may not be able to afford.

There was merit in the argument and the Government ought to have continued with a "uniform" policy for all supplies. Even then, seeking a higher price for a deepwater high pressure, high temperature field is untenable as it is expected to contain much larger reserves than a shallow or on-shore field, thereby generating extra revenue with the same price. Likewise, giving higher market-based price for shale gas or CBM from an existing field under NELP, where all costs have already been fully recuperated under the subsisting "profit sharing" contract, makes no sense. But it buckled under continuing pressure from lobbyists, thus giving birth to the present chaos.

Firms may have managed higher price (via "premium" or market-based price) but there is no guarantee that this alone can yield higher production as other factors, such as their ability to stick to output projections among other things, also come into play. In fact, these factors may work negatively. Take the example of the Krishna Godavari Dhirubhai 6 (KG-D6), operated by Reliance Industries (RIL). Against an

initial estimate of over 10 trillion cubic ft (tcf), the actual reserves turned out to be a mere about 2 tcf. As a result, production from this high-profile field plummeted to less than 10 million standard cubic metres per day (mmscmd) against the promised 80 mmscmd.

No wonder, gas production has declined from a high of about 52 billion cubic metres during 2010-11 to around 33 billion cubic metres during 2018-19. This prompted the Government to come up with new ideas like a local gas trading platform and stripping power plants of their priority status. Both these ideas are bizarre.

The distribution of domestic gas is totally under Government control. It is decided by an inter-ministerial committee under the chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MPNG). Of the total supply, a maximum quantity, 31 per cent, is given to the power sector, 24 per cent to fertilisers while 22 per cent is allotted for city gas. There is no gas left for trading. In this backdrop, what will a trading platform do? What will be the relevance of the price discovered on such a platform? To which supplies will this price apply when almost all of it is regulated and applicable prices pre-determined?

As regards power, the Government gives a boost to gas-based power plants (at 25,000 MW, these plants account for about 10 per cent of the total generation capacity) by assuring supply of domestic gas on top priority and charging low price. Then suddenly, it seeks to withdraw the priority status. This will

result in steep increase in gas prices and exterminate them as well.

Today, there is an unholy mix of controls and market-based principles. This is more dangerous than total control on all aspects, which anyway is not desirable. Doing things in fits and starts (as may be seen from a flurry of policy changes during the last three years) will not take us anywhere. There is an urgent need for holistic reforms in the hydrocarbon sector.

The Government must dismantle the existing regime of gas allocation and highly differentiated pricing for a variety of supply streams. Concurrently, it should deregulate import of LNG (currently all gas imports are canalised through PSUs such as GAIL). Together with hiving off port handling, gasification (of imported LNG) and transportation infrastructure from GAIL, this will create an ecosystem that will ensure adequate availability (domestic plus import) of gas to meet the demand. This is the way forward for the development of competitive markets.

This may as well result in a slight increase in price over the current formula-based level yet, it will remain well below the exorbitant level currently promised to specified supply sources. This will also offer a "stable" policy environment for energy companies to invest in exploration and development of oil and gas fields. The larger question, however, is will the Modi Government crack the whip on these reforms?

(The writer is a New Delhi-based policy analyst)

A marketplace for political exchange

The study of the bazaar in the context of politics is not that old despite the fact that it has played a significant role in the politics of various Muslim countries



NADEEM PARACHA

The word bazaar has Persian origins and means an enclosed marketplace. Twentieth century Marxist analysis saw bazaar politics at the core of the political and economic action of the *petit bourgeoisie* (lower-middle-classes) even though many political scientists have also seen it as an extension of middle class political activity.

The study of the bazaar in the context of politics is not that old, despite the fact that they have been integral economic and physical mainstays of Muslim-majority regions for centuries. The expression "bazaar politics" first emerged soon after the 1979 revolution in Iran. Traditional bazaars of the country played a noteworthy role in the turmoil which toppled the powerful Shah of Iran.

The action in this respect was initiated by trader and merchant groups operating inside Iran's major bazaars. The revolutionary movement against the monarchy was driven by various forces, which included the communists, secular democrats and the Islamic clergy. But it was the bazaars which eventually tilted the scale in favour of the clergy and the revolution became "Islamic."

The participation of groups formed inside Iran's traditional marketplaces by traders, merchants and shop owners in the revolution was influential enough for political scientists to begin studying the concept of bazaar politics. Many such studies discovered that some political activity in this context did take place prior to the 1979 revolution. But it was during and after the revolution that the bazaar emerged as a major political influencer.

ME Bonine and NR Keddie in *Modern Iran Dialectics* demonstrate that the Shah's "modernisation" policies briefly benefited the economy of the bazaars. However, this modernisation sought to shift economic activity away from traditional marketplaces to modern souks and emporiums.

But this did not see the traditional marketplaces recede. Instead, with the continuing influx of migrants from rural and semi-rural areas to the cities, the traditional bazaars were "ruralised." Their owners and consumers now overwhelmingly came from *petit bourgeoisie* backgrounds and from transitional segments perched between traditional agrari-

an economics and modern urban capitalism.

Due to the disorienting impacts of haphazard modernisation, the customary bonds between the bazaars and the clergy strengthened. This aided the clergy during the revolutionary turmoil. No wonder then, Iran's Islamic regime immediately inducted many members from bazaar organisations in the new regime.

Something similar happened in Pakistan. Riaz Hassan's 1985 study, *Religious, Political and Social Change in Pakistan*, demonstrates that increasing and unplanned urbanisation between the late 1960s and the late 1970s left a large segment of the population, leading a highly precarious existence which was subjected to all kinds of exploitation.

This generated a considerable amount of disillusionment with modernist governments and their policies of economic and social development. The persistent insecurity of urban existence among many shopkeepers, traders and their families, over the years, resulted in the emergence of various religious movements. The number of mosques in

the cities multiplied and, through them, religious influences further permeated social life. Much of this took place in the urban bazaar areas of Pakistan.

The late political scientist Khalid B Sayeed writes in *Politics in Pakistan: The Nature and Direction of Change* that the bazaar's first major political endeavour in Pakistan was during the 1977 protest movement, against the populist ZA Bhutto regime. However, according to Phillip E Jones, the bazaar was active during the 1968 anti-Ayub movement as well. But Sayeed is correct in pointing out that trader outfits were not as radicalised in the 1960s as they became in the 1970s.

Sayeed writes that the traders had welcomed the Bhutto regime's rhetoric against big businesses but quickly turned against him when he began to nationalise small and medium enterprises. As mentioned by Hassan, by the mid-1970s, the bazaar had already established close links with the clergy and these rapidly extended to the country's religious parties. Umair Javed, in his essay for the anthology *New Perspectives on Pakistan's Political Economy*, writes

that mosques were extensively used in bazaars to propel protests against the Bhutto regime.

Just as influential figures of bazaar politics were co-opted by Iran's "Islamic" regime, the conservative General Zia dictatorship in Pakistan appropriated various powerful trader outfits, many of whose members became part of the local, provincial and national Assemblies.

From the 1980s onward, Pakistani bazaar politics has continued to operate through pressure groups that keep Governments from imposing economic policies that are seen as unbeneficial to traders and shopkeepers. Trader organisations and alliances in the bazaars have also retained their exhibition of "piety" and they often associate themselves with, and even spearhead, campaigns against certain religious minorities and against any move to reform the "Islamic" entries in the Constitution.

The Pakistan Muslim League (N) inherited the bazaar as a constituency in the 1990s. But by the 2018 election, this constituency (in the Punjab) had split between PML-N, Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf and Khadim Hussain

Rizvi's Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan. There is no study, as such, on how the bazaar in Karachi evolved after it embraced the politics of the Jamaat-i-Islami and Jamiat-i-Ulema Pakistan in 1977.

Largely, bazaar politics of Karachi has remained pragmatic. Because even though almost as conservative as the bazaar politics of Punjab, the one in Karachi hasn't demonstrated as much support to causes that look to oust religious minorities, impose social morality or safeguard "Islamic laws," as much as Punjab's bazaars have done in the last three decades.

Maybe the ethnic diversity of Karachi keeps this from happening as the bazaars here are segmented between different ethnic groups. They are more concerned about safeguarding their respective groups' economic stakes in a highly competitive, even contentious, ethno-political environment. That's why, for example, one can expect campaigns to restrict the entry of certain minority communities in the bazaars of Punjab but no such activity has ever been reported from the bazaars of Karachi.

(Courtesy, The Dawn)



HEALTH

DNA Speaks

Researchers have found that DNA sustains more damage and gets fixed less often when blood sugar levels are high compared to when blood sugar is at a normal, healthy level, thereby increasing one's cancer risk. These cancers include ovarian, breast, kidney and others



DOCYARD

DR PARTAP CHAUHAN

Ayurvedacharya & Director

JIVA AYURVEDA, NEW DELHI



Keep your skin healthy

Monsoon nourishes every living being on earth, the overall ecosystem with sufficient rainfall, still, it brings some serious problems with it.

According to Ayurveda rainy season is also the time for aggravation of *vata* and *pitta* accumulates, which the functional energy of our body dominant in fire element, and is primarily responsible for metabolism and digestion of food. Digestion is weak during this time. Diseases caused by *pitta* like hyperacidity, indigestion, skin disorders (boils, eczema, and rashes), hair loss, and infections are common in this season.

Why skin problems aggravate during monsoon?

The rainy season is responsible for aggravation of *pitta*, the functional energy of our body dominant in fire element, and is primarily responsible for metabolism and digestion of food. In Ayurveda, though skin diseases are caused due to imbalances in all the three *doshas*, the prime *dosha* involved is *pitta*. *Pitta* symbolises heat or fire. Therefore all those foods or activities that increase the fire element in the body should be eliminated. This includes hot, spicy, fried, oily and greasy foods. Acidic foods like tomatoes, citrus fruits, yogurt and vinegar should be avoided. Exposure to heat and sun, drinking too much tea, coffee, and alcohol, and smoking also aggravate *pitta*.

Here are a few skin care tips you can keep in mind:

■ **Drink a lot of water:** Drink at least eight to 10 glasses daily. Though you need to keep dry outside in this season to prevent skin problems it is important to consume adequate quantities of water to keep your skin hydrated.

■ **Avoid alcohol-based skin cleansers:** You should avoid alcohol-based skin cleansers because it irritates and dries your skin. Instead use a herbal soap or cleanser regularly to get rid of excess oil, grime and dust, and of course to keep you skin free of bacterial infections.

■ **Use cooling herbs:** It is beneficial to use the herbs that have cooling effects on the body (*pitta* pacifying) such as fennel, coriander seeds and Indian gooseberry (amla) for a glowing skin in monsoon. Amla helps to detoxify the liver and aids digestion — and is also a good source of Vitamin C and other minerals. One of the benefits of taking it regularly is a flawless complexion.

■ **Use aloe vera gel:** Aloe vera gel is very beneficial for the skin because it purifies the blood. Fresh aloe vera gel can be taken in the dose of two or three tablespoons on an empty stomach every day. You can also use fresh aloe vera plant gel on your skin — it has anti-aging, anti-tanning, antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties.

■ **Take mild laxatives:** A clean bowel movement is imperative for a healthy skin. Taking mild laxatives such as *triphala* powder or other natural laxatives such as prunes, figs and raisins is beneficial if you don't have clean bowel movements. A teaspoonful of *triphala* powder can be taken at bed time every night, with warm water or milk.

■ **Keep dry:** Getting a little wet or sometimes getting drenched is not uncommon when you are outdoors during the rainy season. However, don't let your skin remain wet for a long time while enjoying the monsoon showers. It is important to keep your skin folds and feet dry and clean at all times. Damp skin is a breeding ground for fungal infections.

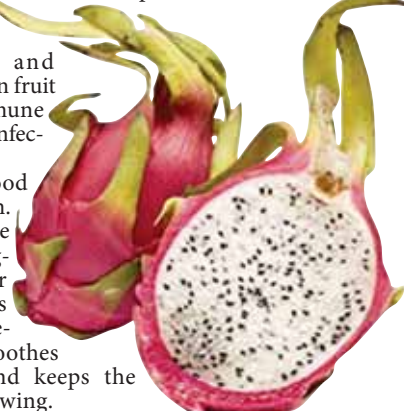
SUMMERCoolERS

DRAGON FRUIT: The dragon fruit is a pink-skinned fruit with white flesh. It is sweet and sour in taste. Dragon fruit is low in calories but is packed with nutrients, vitamins and minerals.

It is also rich in anti-oxidants which helps fight the chronic diseases. It also contains prebiotics, that can potentially improve the balance of

good bacteria in your gut. The Vitamin C and carotenoids in dragon fruit may boost your immune system and prevent infections.

It is also a good source of magnesium. Apart from all the health benefits, dragon fruit is good for your skin too. It helps fighting signs of ageing, treats acne, soothes sunburned skin and keeps the skin healthy and glowing.



All about mental wellbeing

Study suggests that too much sleep can be a warning sign for Alzheimer's disease. DR RAJNISH KUMAR tells you how one can fight this disease

The vagaries of the brain is something that mankind strives to figure, especially when it comes to figuring out how to stop the gradual deterioration of the mind. Alzheimer's, one of the cruelest results of this decline, holds a special space of worry in the medical fraternity, owing to the devastating effect it has on the patients and their loved ones. Now, studies have provided a sliver of hope in proper detection and diagnosis — the initial symptoms of Alzheimer's may be depression and irritability. These are considered to be non-cognitive signs, which appear at an early stage of life. These symptoms are noted to occur in three stages, with inter-related characteristics that meld into each other. Irritability, depression, and nighttime behavior changes are said to develop first. Anxiety, appetite changes, agitation, and apathy follow, at a successive pace.

The third stage has a variety of mixed symptoms — elation, mobility disorders, hallucinations, delusions, and impulsive, inappropriate behavior. Yet, prudence is the key to dealing with these signs, as not all of these are sure-shot indicators of Alzheimer. While one should not jump into extreme conclusions, these recent findings throw a constructive light on the early occurrences of this life-crippling disorder.



Follow 4 pillar approach

Alzheimer's certainly a disease that requires the world's attention owing to the devastating effect that it has on the sufferer and immediate families. It's occurrence has evolved into a public health problem, as the elderly population in developing countries is increasing rapidly. While cure might be the end-line mode of combat, best is to extol the key steps to prevent it in the first hand, itself. A four pillar approach is needed, in order to provide a decisive arsenal against the disease. The four pillars are as follows:

- **Regular physical exercises** reduce the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease by up to 50 per cent, by stimulating the brain and keeping it active.
- **Increased social engagement** keeps isolation, one of the root causes of Alzheimer, at bay. This essential, especially for senior citizens as a strong knit network helps ease mental stress.
- **A proper diet, mostly filled with nuts and essential fats,** combats Alzheimer effectively. They charge up the brain and boost mental capacity to function properly, keeping deterioration away.
- **Keep your mind occupied via activities,** in order to defeat Alzheimer effectively. Studies prove that those who continue learning new things end up keeping mental degradation at bay.



DadiKaKehna

Hair is your crowning glory. When they fall, it can be a cause of worry for men and women of all ages. ROSHANI DEVI shares home remedies that can be beneficial



Thinning hair or falling hair can be a cause of worry for most as they are our crowning glory. But fret not, there are some ways in which one can reduce their fall to a great extent.

■ **Onion:** It is high in sulphur contents. This helps prevent hair fall. What to do? Rinse your hair with onion juice while you are washing your hair. You can also apply the onion juice on your scalp and leave it on for 30 minutes. Shampoo afterwards. Do this twice a week.

■ **Aloe vera:** You need a cup fresh aloe vera gel. If you have a plant at home, fresh gel is perfect, two tablespoons of castor oil and two tablespoons of fenugreek powder. Mix all

the ingredients. Apply the mixture to your scalp and hair. Leave it overnight. Wash with a mild shampoo. Do this twice a week.

■ **Coconut:** Coconut oil can penetrate into the scalp and prevent protein loss. This helps reduce hair damage and breakage. Massage virgin coconut oil into the scalp and hair. Leave it on for at least an hour before rinsing it off with a mild cleanser. Do this at least twice a week. One can use coconut milk as well. Take 1/4th cup coconut milk and warm it. Massage into the scalp for 15 minutes. Leave for 45 minutes. Wash hair with shampoo. Apply it once a week.

Treatment

Alzheimer's is a burgeoning issue that has taken the healthcare in a worrying path. With the increasing curve of number of people rising, it is not something

that one can turn a blind eye. While prevention is better than cure, one needs to talk about the apt diagnosis and cure for the same. While tests should be involved to diag-

nose the stage at which the deterioration has reached, in terms of treatment, doctor prescribed medicines are a good way to control the scenario. Also creating a safe space for the patient to thrive and flourish is effective, here.

The writer is Neurologist, Paras Hospital, Gurugram

BE NATURALLY BEAUTIFUL

Everyone wants a healthy and glowing skin. SARGAM DHAWAN tells you how organic and vegan products can help achieve this



In the pursuit of a healthy lifestyle, more men and women are developing their interest in natural or organic ingredients due to the increased benefits which can be reaped from using these products. It is vital to include skin-care products which are made with natural and botanical ingredients to maximise the fruitful impact on health. Here are some benefits of using organic and vegan skincare products.

Natural beauty products are farmed and manufactured organically, which makes them sustainable in nature. These are mostly safe to use as there are no chemicals, toxins or parabens which may affect our body. Being free from any sort of synthetics, these natural or organic skin care products cause no harm to people who have sensitivity towards particular ingredients or products.

Organic products will revive and regenerate your skin from within rather than just acting on the epidermal layer. The botanical ingredients are unlike the traditional chemicals which only work on the surface and impact the skin with long term use. Formulated with essential antioxidants and minerals, these sustainable products protect your skin from harmful pollutants which are even safe to be used by those with sensitive skin. With powerful and potent formula, these natural products are committed to work wonders on your skin. The plant-based formula is not only good for your skin, but it is even good for the earth!

One should abstain from using chemical and synthetic products which include various toxins and parabens that can have a detrimental impact on skin and health. One can be more aware about picking the products which have chemicals and particularly should look for specific chemicals that are environmentally unfriendly and unfavorable to health. Some of the most common chemicals found in personal skin care products like methyl paraben, propylparaben, ethylparaben, and butylparaben have damaging impact on health in the long run.

Many of these chemicals penetrate deep within the skin impacting the skin layer by layer. For instance, the chemicals in sunscreen are absorbed by our skin that can cause cancer and cellular damage. The best way to avoid these chemicals is to apply natural sunscreen.

One should refrain from using products made with chemicals and should try to use natural products. Not only are the natural products environmental friendly and sustainable, but are also good for our skin in the long run. Though it is impossible to avoid products made with chemicals, but with proper awareness, research and a conscious effort the use of these can be limited. So go ahead and adopt a healthy lifestyle that includes plant based products which are certified organic, natural and safe to use.

The writer is Director, Paul Penders



TIPTOP

Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad Researchers have derived collagen from waste eel skin and shown that tissue scaffolds built using such collagen allow growth and proliferation of stem cells. The practical applications of this research can lead to utilising eel fish skin-derived collagen as a promising alternative to animal derived collagen, which are expensive and associated with pathological diseases.

The Researchers believe that sustainable utilisation of marine discarded eel skin derived-collagen for the biomedical application would boost Indian 'blue' bioeconomic growth and help in the development of an alternate industry that converts waste into useful products.

Explaining this research and its significance, Dr Mano Govindharaj, Young Scientist Fellow, Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Laboratory, IIT Hyderabad, said:

"Our team's finding is a valuable asset in the area of 'blue' biotechnology. The color 'blue' in biotechnology is assigned to the development of technology on the basis of aquaculture, coastal and marine biology. Our research group at IIT Hyderabad uses a common marine waste product for producing collagen, a biomaterial that is extensively used in tissue engineering."

Low immunogenicity, porous structure, good permeability, biocompatibility and biodegradability make collagen scaffolds useful in tissue engineering applications. Collagen is usually extracted from bovine skin and tendons, porcine skin and rat tail. Such sources are associated with several problems such as the spread of diseases such as the mad-cow disease and religious constraints of using certain animals. Extraction of collagen from non-mammalian sources is therefore attractive.

SLIMLINE

A 24 year old Mumbai girl who was suffering from a rare and complex congenital heart disease underwent a combined heart and lung transplant at Global Hospital, Mumbai. Akshara, a resident of Panvel, Mumbai suffered from ventricular septal defect since childhood and this defect over the years led to Eisenmenger's syndrome. Although she was managed medically for a very long time, her condition worsened off late, and she had to be put on home-based

oxygen therapy. The 24-year-old underwent a combined heart and lung transplant in the month of June, 2019 and is recovering well.

Dr Sandeep Attawar, Director and Chair of the Heart & Lung Program, Gleneagles Global Hospitals said: "The final solution for Eisenmenger's syndrome is a heart and double lung transplantation. Akshara is one such young girl who wasn't operated in her childhood. Heart-lung transplantation is a viable treatment option for such patients."

STUDYCENTRE

The people with restless legs syndrome (RLS) may be at significantly higher risk of suicide and self-harm, warns a new study.

Using Big Data, the researchers found that people with restless legs syndrome had a 2.7-fold higher risk of suicide or self-harm, even if they didn't suffer from conditions such as depression, insomnia, diabetes and so on.

Restless legs syndrome causes an uncomfortable feeling in a person's legs resulting in the urge to move them, often during the night.

"Our study suggests that restless legs syndrome isn't just connected to physical conditions, but to mental health, as well," said Xiang Gao, Associate Professor at Penn State University in the US.

The study looked at health records of 24,179 people who had been diagnosed with RLS and 145,194 people who did not have RLS.

All participants were free of suicide and self-harm at the baseline of the study.

After analysing the data, the researchers found that people, who had restless leg syndrome, had a 270 per cent higher chance of suicide or self-harm than people who did not.

The risk did not decrease even when the researchers controlled for such factors as depression, sleep disorders and common chronic diseases.

Trend
Blazer

Ayushmann plays bald man in Bala

The teaser of **AYUSHMANN KHURRANA's** forthcoming film *Bala* is out, and the actor is striking nostalgia into the hearts of Bollywood's first superstar Rajesh Khanna and actor Shah Rukh Khan's fans, with his quirky dose of baldness.

Directed by Amar Kaushik, the film revolves around a prematurely balding man, which is being essayed by Ayushmann.

The video begins with Ayushmann recreating SRK's iconic *Deewana* bike stunt. He can be seen happily riding a bike and aping Shah Rukh's signature steps on the latter's hit song *Koi na koi chahiye*.



'I feel traumatised seeing how we treat nature. I am not saying this as an actress, these are the things one should say irrespective of their profession. I am one of those who always wears natural fabric. I also choose cotton over silk and leather. I am against a lifestyle that goes against nature. Although I have a luxury car, I carpool because I feel that is the logical solution to stay resourceful and control pollution.'

—**Richa Chadha**



Director **NITESH TIWARI's** *Chhichhore* tells the story of friends, who stay connected to each other even after college life.

As the cast meets, their picture is a witness to how the characters have a chemistry in real-life as well. The actors are seen enjoying their time by making quirky faces, their expressions makes people miss their college days.

DiCaprio commits \$5 mn to Amazon

Hollywood star **LEONARDO DICAPRIO's** environmental initiative called Earth Alliance has pledged \$5 million towards the preservation of the Amazon Rain Forest following the wildfires.

The organisation's emergency fund is working to support local partners and indigenous communities in their efforts to protect the sensitive habitats within the Amazon. The funds will be donated to five local organisations.

"The largest rainforest in the world is a critical piece of the global climate solution. Without it, we cannot keep the Earth's warming in check," says DiCaprio.



'Our generation is overconsuming resources'

Actor **KANGANA RANAUT** has urged people and the fashion industry to be considerate and encourage celebrities to repeat their outfits and recycle fabrics

Bollywood actor Kangana Ranaut has always tried to uphold the Indian culture by wearing sarees too often and blending it with modernity to make it more relevant. She has proudly taken Indian sarees beyond borders, a recent example being Cannes Film Festival at France, where she wore a Kanjeevaram saree paired with an embellished corset blouse.

Recently, she made headlines for wearing a plain cotton saree worth ₹600, publicly. She said that a generation that is "over-consuming resources" is noticing it. The actress has urged people and the fashion industry to be "considerate" and encourage celebrities to repeat their outfits and recycle fabrics. She said, "I am happy that people have noticed it. I tell the fashion industry that we, as a generation, are overconsuming resources. Also, the shaming (of people) for repeating outfits and recycling fabrics should be stopped."

Remarking that we need to encourage people every time they style differently, she added, "They should appreciate that spirit. Also, we spent so much on organic stuffs when they come from fancy stores. But we don't really see the farmers and craftsmen. They are so poor that they can't even afford pesticides and synthetic fabrics and are organic, by default. We don't realise that."

Recently, Kangana's sister Rangoli Chandel took to social media to upload a photograph of the actress in the saree. She tweeted, "On her way to Jaipur, Kangana is wearing ₹600 saree she picked from Kolkata. She was shocked to know one can get such good organic cotton in this amount and it's heartbreaking to see how hard people work and how little they earn. Please support domestic brands before the international ones take over."

Commenting on this, the National Award-winning actor



'We spent so much on organic stuffs when they come from fancy stores. But we don't really see the farmers and craftsmen. They are so poor that they can't even afford pesticides and synthetic fabrics and are organic by default'

said, "Just because it's from a roadside shop, it doesn't mean that it's not good. When you buy it from a big store, it does make it a different stuff." Kangana said that her perception towards herself changed after she entered Bollywood and now she doesn't think of herself as a "small entity" whose contributions are irrelevant.

She believes that every person can contribute to the world and no matter how small, contribution is relevant. "Initially I used to think that the world is very big and I'm very small and I can't make a difference to it. But I don't feel the same any more. Believing that we are irrelevant in this scheme of things is the biggest mistake that we make," said she.

As a woman, I don't always want to get struck with big producers, actors and directors. I don't believe in this. I feel as an individual, I have a standing," Kangana said.



Kareena brings the curtains down

The diva walked the ramp for designers **GAURI** and **NAINIKA** in an all-black off-shoulder ensemble grabbing eyeballs

Wrapped in an all black off-shoulder ensemble with layers of silk and net, actress Kareena Kapoor Khan brought down the curtains at the Lakme Fashion Week Grand Finale as she walked the ramp for closing designers Gauri and Nainika.

She sealed the look with bold lip colour laying emphasis on Lakme's theme this season #FreeYourLips, which focussed at freedom of expression. The actress, who is the face of the make-up brand, said her association is almost 10 years old.

"Walking each season feels very special. Thanks to Lakme as I am getting a chance to strut for the best of the best. This feels more special because of Gauri and Nainika. We embody the power of women. The freedom of what women want, whether it's about getting married, wanting to work or wanting to make your voice heard," said Kareena.



Talking about the collection, the designers said that they tried to keep the range true to their DNA which is about being "glamorous and feminine." Nainika said, "This time around there has been a lot of synergy with the Lakme's new range of lipsticks. The whole sense of free your lips inspired us to create the beautiful hues as we use a lot of reds and pinks. There is a sense of lightness in the fabrics that we use, the matte lipsticks are very light weight. The freedom to experiment with the line gave me a sense of women empowerment."

Lots of oversized silhouettes and bows, with solid colours — monochrome, red, green, hot pink and golden ruled the collection along with florals and sequins. Some models wore rubber gloves and boots in hues of yellow and orange among others. Songs such as *Billie Jean* and *We belong to the light* got the models in a playful rhythm to flaunt the multi-layered ensembles.

Nainika also shared that the range is full of bold silhouettes, rich embellishments, luxurious silk and embroideries that are inspired by vintage botanical illustrations and kew gardens.

(The finale was held at the Richardson and Crudass.)

Relevant and divisive

The Venice International Film Festival has become a hotbed for discussion about the launch of Oscar hopefuls and its embrace of controversial filmmakers

It may be the oldest film festival in the world but at 76, the Venice International Film Festival is more relevant and divisive than ever. This year's festival has already become a hot bed for discussion about the Oscar hopefuls launching there, its embrace of controversial filmmakers like Roman Polanski and Nate Parker in the #MeToo era and its lack of female directors.

Among the highest-profile films debuting in competition for the prestigious Golden Lion Award, which last year went to Alfonso Cuarón's *Roma*, include — James Gray's space epic *Ad Astra* starring Brad Pitt, Noah Baumbach's divorce drama *Marriage Story* starring Scarlett Johansson, Steven Soderbergh's Panama Papers comedy *The Laundromat*, with Meryl Streep, *Waiting for the Barbarians*, a JM Coetzee adaptation with Johnny Depp and Robert Pattinson, and *Joker*, an unconventional, Martin Scorsese inspired origin story about Batman's foe starring Joaquin Phoenix. For *Joker* director and co-writer Todd Phillips, the festival debut will be helpful in "educating the audience" before it opens in theatres. "We don't want to mislead people," Phillips said. "Comic book films have been giant, great spectacles and this is truly a character study," he added.

But only two of the 21 films in competition are from female directors — Shannon Murphy in her directing debut with *Babyteeth*, starring Ben Mendelsohn, and *The Perfect Candidate* from Saudi Arabian director Haifaa Al-Mansour about a young Saudi female doctor who decides to run for office. It's an increase from last year, which only had Jennifer Kent's *The Nightingale*. To add to this, one of the coveted competition slots went to Roman Polanski's espionage thriller *An Officer and a Spy*. The *Rosemary's Baby* director has been a fugitive for more than 40 years. He fled the US after pleading guilty to unlawful sex with a minor.

The festival is also hosting the pre-



miere of *American Skin*, the first film from Nate Parker since a rape allegation from his past derailed the release of his Nat Turner biopic *The Birth of a Nation* in 2016. Melissa Silverstein, the founder and publisher of the website Women and Hollywood and co-founder of the Athena Film Festival, has been one of the most vocal critics of the programming, which festival director Alberto Barbera has defended as worthy choices.

"There are festivals that are committed to making systemic change and those that felt forced to be a part of an agenda they had no interest in. The Venice Film Festival is clearly in latter camp," Silverstein said. "The only way a festival can change is if the leadership wants it to change. Nobody is expecting the change to be easy, but the message this festival is sending is that abusers are more welcome than

women directors," she added. A spot at Venice has helped launch careers, like Al-Mansour, Saudi Arabia's first female director, whose first feature *Wadja* was played at Venice in 2012. "Venice has been really an important launch for my career. This time I am in the competition, this hopefully marks a new stage in my life as I grow as a director," Al-Mansour said. "I am very grateful for the opportunity to bring my voice to the world with such an amazing platform for filmmakers. But it's still very nerve-wracking. It's a big screen and a big festival."

She would like to see more women in competition, as would Olivier Assayas, who also debuted his first feature there over 30 years ago and credits the festival for putting him "on the map." Known for writing and directing films with complex female leads,

Assayas is coming this year with *Wasp Network*, based on the stories of the Cuban Five, a spy ring in the 1990s that was controversially arrested and imprisoned by the United States. It stars Edgar Ramirez, Penelope Cruz and Ana de Armas and was partially filmed in Cuba. "For a film like this it is very important to be in Venice, Toronto and New York. It gives us the kind of visibility we need," Assayas said.

Venice is the unofficial start of the fall film festival season, with the Toronto International Film Festival and Telluride and New York festivals following shortly after. It helps to define the films in awards discussion until the Oscars in February. Last year saw the debuts of Oscar winners like *A Star Is Born*, *Roma* and *The Favourite*, while in 2017 Venice premiered the eventual best picture winner *The Shape of Water*. It is also regarded as one of the friendlier festivals for streaming. Netflix is bringing three films this year: *Marriage Story*, *The Laundromat*, and David Michod's *The King*, an adaptation of several Shakespeare plays starring Timothee Chalamet.

Julie Andrews is being honoured with the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement, which will coincide with a retrospective screening of *Victor Victoria*, directed by her late husband Blake Edwards. The festival opens on August 28 with the premiere of *The Truth*, Hirokazu Kore-eda's first film set outside of Japan, which stars Catherine Deneuve as a French movie star Juliette Binoche as her estranged screenwriter daughter.

"The idea to make a film about the nature of performance came to me as soon as Juliette Binoche suggested we make a film together," he said. Kore-eda also credits the festival for launching his career. The festival closes the following week with *The Burnt Orange Heresy*, featuring Mick Jagger as an art dealer.

(The film festival runs through September 7.) —AP

A tryst with melody

As Hindustani vocal and *Kirana Gharana* expert JAYATEERTH MEVUNDI makes his debut at the 23rd edition of the Parampara Series, he talks about how the lack of patience among youth is drawing them away from Indian classical music. By TEAM VIVA

There have been endless debates around the origin of the *Kirana Gharana* and its founder. While some call Veena player Ustad Bande Ali Khan, who hailed from a village near Ambala in Haryana, whereas, others mention the Dhannu and Dhondu brothers, who were great devotees of Lord Krishna and are said to have asked him to grant their voice the same beauty as his melodious flute. It's also said that the foundation was laid by Ustad Abdul Karim Khan and his cousin Ustad Abdul Wahid Khan during the early 1870s as their singing styles bear many similarities with the Carnatic music.



While the debate may go on till eternity, vocalist Jayateerth Mevundi, who has expertise in the *Kirana Gharana*, is very clear about the art form and his undying passion for it. The artist, who is all set to perform for the first time at the 23rd edition of the Parampara Series, says that it was due to Raja Reddy 'ji', whom he has known for many years, that he is performing at the show.

Talking about Ustad Karim's Carnatic influence in the *gharana*, he tells us that Khan saab's (Ustad Karim) singing style was very different from what is popularly known about him today. He says, "It was in the then Baroda (now Vadodara) that he was introduced to Carnatic music. Those days, many Carnatic musicians would come to perform in the king's court. And he got deeply influenced by the music form. He later went to Mysuru to learn it further. Thus, his music has an influence of the Carnatic style in elements of music like *aalaap*, *khatka* or *murki*."

Hailing from Dharwad near Hubli in Karnataka, he says that his growing-up years highly influenced his music and formed his inclination towards the *Kirana Gharana*. His initial training began under his mother's guidance, who despite not being trained professionally, had a strong inclination towards the music form. He used to visit Kundgol, a village near Hubli with his parents which was home of Pt Sawai Gandharva under whom Bhimsen Joshi and Gangubai Hangal had also received training. "My first tryst with classical singing was through my mother. There were no such musicians in my family who would have trained me although they would listen to songs on radio and iden-

tify *ragas* and notes." His childhood was replete with memories of music and learnings from a culture that revolved around rich, classical art forms. However, there is a difference between how those traditions have been passed on to future generations and how they are actually treated today. With the advent of social media and the growing Western influence on the young generation, isn't classical art losing its charm among the youth? Mevundi says, "It hasn't lost its charm. It's just not being followed very religiously. Western music influence has been great. It has made them more inclined towards other genres, through which they think that they would get more of international exposure. Today's youth just wants to get famous instantly. And gaining expertise in classical music is a long process. It takes years of practice to master the art, which is also why they lose interest mid way, look for other options and leave it in between. Not all understand classical. We have also seen parents becoming impatient about the need for their children to 'become someone'. But we need to realise that it takes time to gain recognition in this field."

However, for *Kirana* and other classical music forms, he feels they need to grow since they connect to people emotionally. "They can easily get in a meditative state through it. It's like meditating loudly. Classical music is divine. Melody, deep emotions and gentleness are the most important elements in this singing," he says. Indeed, this is why many describe this *Gharana* as that of romantic singing as well. (The series will start from August 30 and go on till September 1.)



A COMEDY OF ERRORS

Theatre director NIKUNJ WADHAWAN's *Sweet Suite*, a Hindi adaptation of Ray Cooney's *Out of Order*, will make you laugh till your stomach aches. By AYUSHI SHARMA

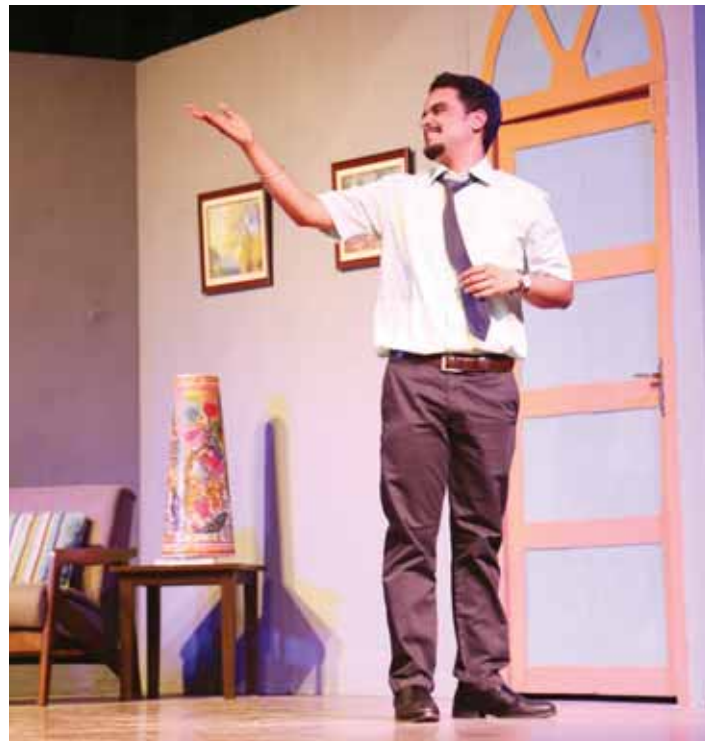
Who doesn't like a comedy of errors? Even William Shakespeare did. For it hilariously teaches us about the different ways in which human beings react when they are faced with unavoidable circumstances. Directed by Nikunj Wadhawan, *Sweet Suite* is a Hindi adaptation of Ray Cooney's comedy play *Out of Order*, which deals with a similar concept.

Wadhawan says, "It's basically a situational comedy, where the characters create a condition which turns out to be a comedy. It was way back in July 2018, I was reading through Cooney's play. He is known as the farcical king. Many of his plays like *Run For Your Wife* and *Not Now Darling* have been adapted without giving him royalty or taking his permission. So we took the rights to adapt this play to Hindi. And the play whenever gets adapted in a different language, the title can be changed. And *Out of Order* has already an internationally acclaimed status. So I changed the title to *Sweet Suite*."

The play features a government secretary who lies his way out of situations with the help of his innocent junior PA, who gets more and more entangled in the improvised tales as the events unfold. The action takes place in a posh hotel and everything revolves around the accidents caused by a

defective sash window. "Mr Das is the secretary to the Cabinet Minister. He has a PA who he brings to the hotel. There's a meeting happening in his suite but the secretary has sneaked into the room of a young lady from the opposition. Now there's also an affair going on in the hotel. There are certain things that they find inside the hotel, because of which there are many lies that keep building up. The window of the room has a dead body stuck in it. Now only three people know about it — Mr Das, his PA and the young lady. What you have to see is how in the two hours, they get out of the situation safely," says Wadhawan and adds, "The audience had actually complained of stomach ache because they laughed so uncontrollably during the show. When I was reading the original play, it had the same effect on me."

The director tells us that it's a farce comedy that aims at entertaining the audience through situations that are highly exaggerated, extravagant and thus improbable. Wadhawan feels that any genre of comedy is just a way to entertain people. There can definitely be a message at the end. "Take theatre and cinema, for instance, entertainment in any form is something that attracts people and that is why it's an important medium to give a message also. When people leave all their worries behind and they are



actually laughing and relaxing, you can explain the hard-hitting reality of the world to them and they understand it better in that moment. That is why comedy is used for moral policing also. However, here, the play is just for entertainment,"

says Wadhawan and adds, "There is no moral policing here. We are not trying to teach anything to anyone. I, as a director, believe that people are already aware of everything and they learn at their own pace. They don't have to be taught about any-

thing."

Since it's an adaptation, what are the new elements here? He tells us that it's the exact original. But there is just one important thing which has changed from 1990 to now. That is the mobile phones. "There were no phones at that time but in this digital era, if you don't have one, you either don't belong to this planet or you are a small kid. The audience has become quite intelligent today. They cross-question. They don't want to leave their mind back at home. Even while watching a comedy they'll ask *yeh aise kaise hogya* or *voh kaise hua*. That is why we already let the audience know that we are not using the phone so even they should not let it between the performance. And also if you have a phone, the situation will never occur," says the director.

The play has had a long run in UK when it was first premiered in 1990 and was then adapted to French in 1996, followed by a Hungarian film. It collected accolades internationally as it entered the APAC region in 2012 with the show being staged at Singapore and Malaysia. The play currently runs in Russia and China and is all set to tickle the funny bone of the Indian audience.

(The play will be staged on August 31 and September 1 at 4 pm and 7 pm at Little Theatre Group (LTG) Auditorium, Mandi House.)

In this overcrowded planet, our urban spaces are no longer the romanticised natural landscape of our agrarian forefathers or the picturesque beauty of heritage monuments. Presenting a rootedness and affinity to their respective locales, five young artists at *Rooted - Curator's Pick* at Gallery Espace create a visual narrative of what their livelihoods have been. They trigger conversations around landscapes, climate, Himalayas and coastal communities through their architectural sculpture.

The assemblage in ceramics and painting offer an insight into the workings of young contemporary artists and refer to common concerns. The artists have manipulated the material in different ways with technique and patina from opposing ends of the artistic spectrum, creating an offering that is both challenging and innovative. The series will be held once every two years and will invite senior artists to curate works by emerging artists with the objective of encouraging fresh talent and introducing enthusiasts and collectors to new-age art.

GIRI AND KUSHWAHA

Artist Khokan Giri belongs to a remote village in coastal Bengal and his works echo with an ecological aura. Not only are they intrinsically architectural but they also refer to an indigenous lifestyle. His stimulus is the textural detailing of fishing nets, traps and boats of the *nuliah* fishermen he grew up around. His landscape 'colograph' has ember-like tonality and texture.

Yet another delight is artist Harendra Kushwaha's fragile constructions of paper and cloth. Born to an agricultural family in the Terai in Nepal, his use of homegrown Nepali paper and other kinds of paper turns

Clay could mould you too

Rooted - Curator's Pick presents a visual narrative of the livelihoods of five young and emerging artists, says UMA NAIR



into a sculptural idiom with a fragile ingenuity that is classic as well as uniquely contemporary. According to Paula Sengupta, who discovered Giri and Kushwaha at the Rabindra Bharti University, Khushwaha resorts to means and material that are "intrinsic" to his roots. He weaves, sews and

shreds in order to construct architectural proportions through lightweight paper, operating between two-dimensional constructions and sculptures.

THREE CERAMIC ARTISTS

Kristine Michael and Mudita Bhandari's



ceramic works have about them a tensile yet tenuous ardour. Mudita weaves urban and rural constructs in a brilliant installation that blends paper pulp and terracotta. She has been working with terracotta for many years and it is her elegance at handling the medium that stands out. Her little house-like grids



speak of humanity and abstraction in the modern sense. She had previously said that her work is related to the different phases in her life, to the things she absorbs, observes and how she responds over many journeys. So most of her work that comes about is both spontaneous as well as reflective of that space within herself. The little houses in the sculptural installation *Nesting*, reference quietude and a silent symphony, "where the real walls are not as significant. Just like empty quiet spaces, these walls are created within as if one is just wandering around in that empty space."

Kristine Michael's *Necropolis* again mirrors urban dwellings but in its network of columns, we see the rhythms of solitude and soliloquies that remain as residual rhythms within us.

In that vein of rhythms but deeply marine, born of the oceanic tides and beaches, is Japneet Keith's urchin series that can blow one's mind. Her compositions herald the power of passion and perfection in the entire sequence of moulding, firing, glazing and creating a series that are a cynosure for the eyes. Her initial days at the NID, Ahmedabad, were spent exploring the possibilities of two and three-dimension-

al media and other materials. Her interest in ceramics and glass ultimately lead her to select pottery as her true calling. She honed her skills under the watchful eyes of the master Shantanu Jena. She has worked on improbable things that often make their appearances on the pottery wheel. It was a time of intense introspection when she learned the possibilities and limits of clay and glass. She went on to establish a formal studio in 2010 with a space for people to explore materials and learn.

Japneet says that she developed programmes and workshops in her studio to help people explore the possibilities of glass and ceramics as media. But the progression of her workshops was not skill-based or course-based. She adds, "It was designed to introduce people to this wonderful, tactile and often quirky medium. You learn along the way that as you mould clay, clay moulds you." Nature is at the heart of Japneet's pottery, with objects and figures in the landscape taking its shape at the wheel. An avid traveller, she is often found exploring the forests, mountains or tide pools in foreign lands where she finds her inspiration in people, land and the art she encounters. From *Hummingbirds* to *Sea Shell Murals* to the geometric lines of ancient Iznik designs, her repertoire is also a record of her journeys. Japneet's sea urchin halt you in your tracks and ask you to ponder about the goodness of the earth and the beauty within. The colour tones, the detailing and the understanding of design dynamics make her the absolute Athena of her own world of perfection and poise.

(The exhibition is on till September 29 at Gallery Espace.)

WATCH OUT

Curated by Suneet Chopra, Payal Kapoor of Arushi Arts Gallery presents the 19th edition of *Harvest 2019*, which will feature works by Jamini Roy, T Vaikuntam, FN Souza, MF Husain, SH Raza, Akbar Padamsee, Krishen Khanna and many other artists from different periods of history. **WHEN:** September 8 to 11 **TIME:** 11.30 am to 6.30 pm **WHERE:** The Stainless Gallery.



India International Centre presents *World of Music Tour 2019*, which will bring together classic music melodies from five continents with improvisations on audience's demand. **WHEN:** August 30 **TIME:** 6.30 pm **WHERE:** IIC.

Art Alive Gallery presents *Contemporary Idioms*, with its first edition, *What is Contemporary...*, which will feature works by artists Suman Chandra, Divya Singh and Purvai Rai. **WHEN:** Till September 15 **TIME:** 11 am to 7 pm **WHERE:** Art Alive Gallery, S-221, Panchsheel Park.



Curated by Anushka Ray, *Nurture* is an art exhibition to raise funds and awareness for people with breast cancer. It will showcase works by Mita Brahma, Parul Chopra, Tania Chowbey, Aashna Mehta Kataria, Rupali Sameer Paranjape, and Kaveri Ray. **WHEN:** August 30 to September 5 **TIME:** 11 am to 7 pm **WHERE:** AIFACS Gallery.



Triveni Kala Sangam presents *alGORITHM OF THALLUCINATION*, which will feature a series of photographs by Sunando Mazumdar. **WHEN:** Till September 2 **WHERE:** Triveni Gallery, Tansen Marg.

