

MONEY 6
TEA GROWERS FEEL
PINCH OF ASSAM PROTESTS

WORLD 7
NOT FAIR THAT I AM BEING
IMPEACHED: TRUMP

SPORT 8
INDIA FACE WINDIES
IN 1ST ODI TODAY

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RAIPUR CHANDIGARH
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USUAL SUSPECTS SWAPAN DASGUPTA

Citizenship Act is not discriminatory

For the past three years, various British friends have insisted that the pro-Brexit outcome of the referendum in 2016 was a freaky aberration and born out of voter ignorance. The professional middle class consensus, particularly in London, was that once the full implications of the decision of the United Kingdom was realised, the voters would find a way of reversing the decision. Meanwhile, it was up to the anti-Brexit majority in Westminster to stall any decision to rush through the departure. They would be helped by the Eurocrats in Brussels who would complicate the negotiations. Good Samaritans in the UK would also chip in by going to the courts and exploring ways and means to undermine the sovereignty of Parliament.

The plan certainly did work up to a point. Theresa May, by no means emotionally committed to Brexit, dragged the negotiations on and on to the point where people just gave up following the negotiations with the European Union. Parliament on its part chipped in by frustrating every attempt by May's successor Boris Johnson to meet a deadline he had set. The Supreme Court of the UK - a relatively new institution - did its best too by thwarting attempts to bypass parliamentary scrutiny. And as for the 'quality' newspapers, they were always on the side of enlightened capitalism, spreading scare stories about the grim fate that awaited Britain when the benign EU umbrella wasn't there. I knew of people who stocked up on essential supplies in anticipation of the day when Brexit would happen. Around the end of October last year - Boris Johnson's deadline for leaving the EU - I was firmly told to avoid visiting the UK since there would be absolute chaos everywhere, particularly the airports.

I woke up at the crack of dawn on Friday morning to listen to the BBC reporting on the outcome of the British general election. The exit polls at 10 pm GMT had forecast a clear majority for the Conservatives fighting on the simple but unattractive slogan "Get Brexit Done." The presenters

One side behaves like a bigot and discriminates against people for being a Hindu or a Sikh. By acknowledging this was indeed the case, the Modi Govt gets charged for being discriminatory against Muslims. It is bizarre logic

tried to appear normal and nonchalant but it was clear that, like other members of the professional classes, they weren't entirely happy. Part of the unhappiness stems from the crab mentality of journalists: they weren't elated that a maverick member of their own tribe had defied all expectations and ended up as a Prime Minister with an emphatic majority. More to the point they were absolutely aghast that the results were a clear re-endorsement of the referendum outcome. The areas that voted for Brexit voted Conservative. This included areas that the Labour Party had never lost since the Labour sweep of 1945. Even Tony Blair's old seat, where the Labour majority used to be weighed rather than counted, elected a Conservative MP.

The situation that Friday morning was so reminiscent of our own counting day on May 23 when Narendra Modi defied the chattering classes and stormed back to power. I recall the mood of gloom and doom among the editorial classes and their sneering disgust at the voters for having defied the metropolitan consensus. I particularly found it deeply satisfying that the international media that had shed its traditional detachment from local affairs to campaign against Modi had been shown two fingers by the electorate.

The counting day of this month's British general election coincided with the passage of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill by both Houses of Parliament. I had sat through the debate in the Rajya Sabha where Opposition stalwarts made two claims. First, that the legislation violated the 'soul' of India, not to mention assaulting the 'idea' of India. Secondly, that regardless of who commanded the majority in Parliament, the issue would finally be settled in the Supreme Court. Since then, the media has persisted in telling us that India has become a version of Nazi Germany and that the CAB is akin to the infamous Nuremberg laws that institutionalised the exclusion of Jews from citizenship and paved the way for the gas chambers. By the morning I even received an email informing me that some American expert on genocide had even suggested that India was just a step away from the genocide of Muslims.

It is not for me to speculate on the verdict of the courts. I had heard earlier that the Ayodhya judgment by a five-judge of the Supreme Court was bad in law. The apex court heard the review petitions and threw them out. I don't know whether they will do the same with the petitions against the CAB, a legislation enacted by Parliament as opposed to the court-draft settlement in Ayodhya. At least the court hearing will also take note of the fact that the CAB does not outlaw Muslims acquiring Indian citizenship. The CAB will at best fast-track the acquisition of Indian citizenship by refugees from the two wings of erstwhile Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The real complaint by the sceptics centres on identifying the refugees by faith. They imply that the people who left the three countries for professing a particular faith should be secularised. Acknowledging that they were harassed because they professed an Indic faith (and Christianity and Zoroastrianism) is tantamount to being discriminatory and anti-secular.

This is a strange argument. One side behaves like a bigot and discriminates against people for being a Hindu or a Sikh. By acknowledging this was indeed the case, the Modi Government gets charged for being discriminatory against Muslims. It is bizarre logic.

There are certainly Muslim migrants from the two Pakistans and Afghanistan. But they didn't leave on account of professing Islam. They left for other reasons. Maybe we should spell out what these were. Then we would get the complete picture.

Actually it is not necessary to be explicit. People tend to discover the score by themselves. Be it Brexit or CAB, you can't get away by heaping scorn and telling people they are ignorant or bigoted.

CITIZENSHIP ACT STIR

Protesters go berserk in Bengal

Torch 5 empty trains, 15 buses; Mamata appeals for peace, says won't allow NRC in State

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■
ULUBERIA/SANKRAIL/KOLKATA

Five empty trains, 15 buses and many other public properties including shops and Central Government facilities were torched in different parts of Bengal even as the State continued to boil and burn for the second consecutive day on Saturday over the enactment of Citizenship Amendment Act and possible invoking of National Register for Citizens. Even as Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee made frantic appeal to people against taking law in their hands violent protesters torched empty rakes at Lalgola the last Indian Railway station a few miles from Bangladesh border. Lalgola is in Murshidabad district that accounts for about 67 per cent of minority population.

At Basudevpur, violent mob put to fire a railway signaling facility and torched a fire

Jamia students call off protest; varsity announces vacation till Jan 5



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Hours after Jamia Millia Islamia on Saturday announced vacation till January 5 and cancelled all ongoing exams in view of the tense situation in the university due to students protest against the new citizenship law, the students called off their university lockdown.

"All exams have been postponed. The new dates to be announced in due course of time. Vacation declared from December 16 to January 5. University will reopen on January 6, 2020," a senior university official said.

The university administration said those who indulged in violence and clashed with police on Friday were "outsiders" and not students.

Jamia students, teachers and alumni, said they have formed a coordination panel to hold peaceful protests against the amended Citizenship Act. They said the law is discriminatory.



Policemen try to protect themselves as protesters throw stones on them during an agitation against the Citizenship Act at Santragachhi in Howrah district of West Bengal on Saturday

brigade engine that was rushed in to control the railway fire. By late evening the situation had literally gone out of control with no fire fighting team daring to move into the affected areas.

Similar incidents were reported from North 24 Parganas and rural Howrah, where several long-distances trains were halted, after a portion of the Sankrail station was vandalised, police said adding about 15 public and private buses were torched and many other vehicles were stoned by protesters on NH-6 - popularly known as Bombay Road and NH-2 - known as Delhi Road.

The agitators blocked both Kona Expressway - that connects Howrah and Kolkata to Golden Quadrilateral - and NH-34 - that connects South Bengal to North Bengal - throwing burning tyres on the roads even as an helpless police brigade looked on for want of

specific direction. About 20 trains including some 10 express trains were stranded in several routes as protesters squatted on railway tracks at Sankrail, Mourigram and Bakranawaz stations, Railway sources said adding many more trains had been cancelled too.

Among the cancelled trains were Howrah-Digha Express, Howrah-Pune Duronto Express, Howrah-Tirupati Humsafar Express, Howrah-

destroying the economy) has not been done by the enemies, but by Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself. And, (he) still calls himself a patriot," he added.

Training his guns on Modi, a charged-up Rahul said the PM only thinks about one thing - whether he has the power. "They will do anything for the power - make the youth unemployed, destroy the economy and what not," he said. He also alleged that people manning various institutions, including media and constitutional ones like judiciary, have forgotten their work.

While approving of media's criticism of the UPA government, he said, "I respect that and you did the right thing but today you have forgotten your work."

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated the State's first-ever 'Marine Drive Eco Retreat' at the Ramachandi beach near Konark on Saturday. Later, Patnaik tweeted, "Delighted to launch the Marine Drive Eco Retreat, a unique festival encompassing Odisha's scenic coastline, art,

IN BHUBANESWAR

Deposit plastic waste, get free meal

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) is going to launch a new drive to deal with the issue of plastic wastes.

The civic body would provide a full meal absolutely free to a person who would deposit 500 grams of plastic wastes. The programme would take off on Monday at an Aahar centre near Kalpana Square.

This initiative would be carried out by the BMC in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the

Touch Stone Foundation. The free food offer would be extended to the Aahar centres across the city in subsequent phases, official sources said.

The Aahar centres are located near bus-stops, railway stations and hospitals. Notably, this is not a first-of-its-kind initiative in the State. The Kotpad NAC had started a similar drive about 45 days ago.

However, it is a deal of a free meal in exchange for a kilogram of plastic wastes. The drive has an encouraging response.

Mahanadi hearing deferred to Feb 1

MBA concerned over delaying process

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The appeal of Odisha to suspend all ongoing projects and operation of completed projects in Chhattisgarh has not been given due attention or sympathetic view in the 10th sitting of the Mahanadi Tribunal held on Saturday, lamented the Mahanadi Bachao Andolan (MBA).

Bank cheating: K'pada woman teacher held

PNS ■ KENDRAPADA

The Kendrapada Town police on Saturday arrested Rashmita Pradhan (Gochhait), a PET teacher of Rajkanika block, in a bank cheating case.

According to SP Niti Sekhar and Rashmita and her husband Prasant Pradhan of Ekalapur in the Malianch area under the Tantiapala Marine police station had purchased a piece of land from Harish Pattanaik of Golakhnagar.

Pattanaik allegedly sold the land after obtaining a loan of Rs 4.43 lakh by mortgaging it in the Syndicate Bank, Santasahi Branch.



Charred remains of a train coach that was set on fire on Friday by protesters during their agitation against NRC and Citizenship Act, at Beldanga Station in Murshidabad district of West Bengal on Saturday

CSMT Geetanjali Express, Howrah-Ernakulam Antodaya Express, Howrah-Digha-Howrah Kandari Express, Coromandal Express from Howrah, Howrah-Yesvantpur Duronto Exp, Howrah-Hyderabad East Coast Express, Puri-Digha Express, Puri-Santragachhi Passenger etc.

In an apparent bid to prove a point or two about their numerical strength, the agitators mostly from a particular community not only targeted Government properties but also torched shops belonging to private citizens sources said adding about 20 shops were set on fire at Bagnan in rural Howrah.

Things however improved in parts of South 24 Parganas where no new report of violence came in from Diamond Harbour.

Oil tanker set ablaze in Assam, driver killed

Curfew relaxed in Guwahati from 9 am to 4 pm

PNS ■ GUWAHATI/NEW DELHI GIRIDIH/BAGHMARA (JHARKHAND)

Sporadic violence continued in Assam on Saturday against the amended Citizenship Act. An oil tanker was set ablaze in Sonitpur district whose driver succumbed to injuries even as curfew was relaxed in Guwahati from 9 am to 4 pm. But students' associations have given a call for 3-day satyagraha and the State Government employees have decided to cease work on December 18.

Protesters also resorted to blockade of rail and indulged in sit-ins and hunger strike.

Several countries, including the US, UK, Israel Canada and Singapore, have asked their citizens to exercise caution while travelling to the

Northeast India. In its advisory, the US Government said it has temporarily suspended official travels to Assam, the epicentre of the protests.

The empty oil tanker, on its way for refilling petrol from Sipajhar in Udalguri district, was set ablaze by a group of people at Dhekiajuli in Sonitpur on Friday night, police said. The driver of the tanker was taken to a private nursing home where he succumbed to severe burn injuries on Saturday morning, they said.

Meanwhile, AASU, Asom Jatiyatabadi Yuba Chatra Parishad (AJYCP) and 30 other organisations of indigenous people, spearheading the agitation against the Act, held protests in all districts of the Brahmaputra Valley along with senior citizens, students, artists, singers, intellectuals and teachers among others.

The AJYCP blocked tracks at Kamakhya railway station, disrupting train services from Guwahati to other parts of the country.

CM opens Marine Drive Eco Retreat

PNS ■ PURI

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated the State's first-ever 'Marine Drive Eco Retreat' at the Ramachandi beach near Konark on Saturday. Later, Patnaik tweeted, "Delighted to launch the Marine Drive Eco Retreat, a unique festival encompassing Odisha's scenic coastline, art,

culture and eminent artists of the day as a highlight. An extraordinary, breathtaking experience awaits every traveller for next 48 days in Konark."

Patnaik released balloons to mark the inauguration of the retreat located on the mouth of Kushhadra river at Ramachandi beach. The retreat would be open for public book-

ings for 45 days.

Featuring food festivals, beach markets, luxury cottages, water sports and cultural shows, this cultural melting pot is expected to attract tourists from all over the world.

Among others, Tourism Minister Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi, Tourism Secretary Vishal Dev and Puri Collector Balwant Singh were present.

'I am similar to my character'

MUSBA HASHMI speaks with ASHNOOR KAUR, who started her career at age 5, about the new season of Patiala Babes, her favourite pastime and plans to explore digital medium

What is your take on the latest track in Patiala Babes?

It is a different story and the track is completely different, that is why this is Season 2. As an actor, it is challenging for me because it is altogether a different journey for me. There are a lot of complicated and mixed emotions which are tough to enact. It is like something else is going on Mini's mind but she speaks something else. And to make the audience understand everything, you have to perform well. So keeping the hollowiness inside and still trying to cheer up everyone else, comes as a challenge for me. Also Mini is now an elder sister to Arya. So this is an added responsibility on Mini and me too, since I am the only child and I have no experience of how to deal with your younger sibling. But, I bond well with kids so I am enjoying the new track and the new season.

Do you share any similarities with your character?

Yes, there are many things that I can relate to with my character. Mini and Ashnoor are 99.9 per cent same. I am chirpy, bubbly and I always try to cheer everyone else around me, just like my character. I believe in standing up against the wrong and speak with absolutely no filters on, just like Mini. (laughs)

You started very young, how do you see your journey?

Firstly, I feel good when someone asks me this question. I feel blessed that people still remember me as a child artist. I get messages from people saying that they will keep their child's name by my character's name, it is overwhelming. This proves that in a decade's journey, I have been able to make my place in people's hearts.

My journey has been a roller-coaster ride. I have played various roles and have explored different

My journey has been a roller coaster ride. I have played various roles and have explored different genres. I have also been a part of films like Sanju and Manmariziyaan. I have evolved as an actor in this period of time

genres. I have done a lot of ads, shortfilms and have also been a part of films like *Sanju* and *Manmariziyaan*. I have evolved as an actor in this period of time. I have polished my skills and I still keep on learning. Life never stops teaching and you should never stop learning, this is what I believe in.

A role that came close to you.

All the roles that I have played are close to my heart, but to name one it is Mini. Because all the roles that I have played before happened just like that. I was very young back then to understand that I was actually working. But now when I have grown up and have started seeing things with a broader perspective, I understand that this character has challenged me with every episode. I have got a chance to portray different shades of the character and that's why this one is my favourite.

Any show from the good old days that you would like to see a remake of?

I would like to see the remake of my first show — *Shobha Somnath Ki*, where I played Shobha, a warrior princess. I was just six back then.

Apart from acting what else is keeping you busy?

I am a Class XI commerce student. So, study keeps me busy most of the times. Apart from this, I spend my time in exercising, reading books, spending time with my family and friends and also watching movies. It helps me enhance my acting skills.

Can you share some behind the scene moments?

There are a lot of fun moments behind the scenes. But my favourite one is it was my birthday and we were shooting the last scene of the day. It was a serious one and suddenly a large piece of cake came flying on my face and everyone on the sets laughed hard. It was like a cake facial for me. The brain behind the idea was our director, Yusuf sir. We both share a father-daughter bond off-screen.

Are there any plans of exploring the digital space?

Yes, I have been receiving offers for web series, but I am busy with *Patiala Babes* these days. When you are playing a lead in daily soaps, it becomes difficult to become a part of other project. May be after this show, I would step into the digital medium if I got some good offer, where I am getting to perform new things.



Plan Your Sunday

Celebrate Christmas The Irish Way

Venue: The Irish House, Nehru Place & Noida
When: Till December 29, 2019
Time: 12 pm to 12 am

Christmas waves a magic wand all over the world, and behold, everything turns elated and more beautiful. With Christmas bells ringing and the smell of delicacies in the air, your favorite neighborhood pub, The Irish House is all geared up to host a legendary Christmas menu filled with extravagant food and loads of booze.

Celebrate the most magical month of the year by digging into a wide range of dishes such as spinach and feta tartlets, roast tomato, garlic and cheese flatbread, wild mushrooms and goat cheese on brioche toast, char-grilled pears, onions, brussels sprouts, chorizo, chicken ham and cheese flatbread, drunken lamb burger, christmas chicken roast, spicy pork ribs; with a chocolate, cheese and cranberry tart for a sweet ending.

So this December, eat, drink and make merry, literally. Don't think twice and head to the cafe for an amazing drunken Green Christmas experience!



Food For Thought Fest

Venue: GMR Square, Aerocity
When: December 15, 2019

The 2019 edition of the Food for Thought Fest brings in the exciting components

that make this a truly unique event. There will be talks and discussions around culture and cuisine in the Thought Fest, while the Food Fest will be offering cookery workshops with master chefs of the region and an authentic flavor from the participating countries. This year the theme of the Food Court is 'A Taste of Luxury' which brings together 13 of the most well-known luxury hotels in Delhi NCR to showcase their top seven dishes in their booth, which will be served in tasting portions and priced between rupees ₹150 to ₹350 only! This is the very first time that luxury will be so affordable.



Ranthambore Music & Wildlife Fest

Venue: Nahargarh Palace, Ranthambore
When: December 27 to December 29, 2019
Ticket: ₹2,500

Spread over two nights and three days, the festival Springs to its audience a spectacular banquet of music, art, food and wildlife experiences. The festival features some of India's most cutting edge music performance acts as well as an exciting mix of genres ranging from folk to rock, jazz, rap and electronic. This year will feature performances by Peter Cat Recording Co, Mame Khan, Naezy, Arko Mukharjee Collective, Lifafa, Rasika Shekar and others. Adding to the exhilarating musical affair, the festival will offer guests a host of experiences like wildlife safaris, live music concerts in step-well swimming pools and stone amphitheatres, block printing and pottery workshops, heritage expeditions, star gazing, and a delectable feast of local and international cuisine.



Unwind, Innovate & Collaborate

Venue: Whiz Café, Whizdom Club, Savitri Complex, Greater Kailash II, New Delhi, 110048
When: Till December 15, 2020
Time: 11 am to 8 pm (Closed on Tuesdays)
Cost: ₹1,550 for two (plus taxes)

Looking for an ideal spot that inspires you, gives you an opportunity to network and serves you an epicurean menu? Look no further, we have the perfect place for you — Whiz Café.

The cafe offers a gourmet menu that covers an impressive line-up of various cuisines and delicious dishes, along with a host of refreshing beverages curate by internationally renowned Culinary Chef Ashay Dhopatkar and acclaimed Pastry Chef Neha Lakhani.



TELLYTALE

SHIVIN INJURES HIMSELF



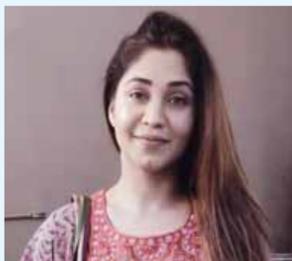
While shooting for *Beyhadh 2*, Jennifer Winget encountered the most dangerous sequence so far which almost cost her life. Shivin and Jennifer's first shoot together for the show was an outdoor shoot at a construction site. During the shoot Shivin emerged as a real life hero for Jennifer when he saved her from falling off the building. While they were shooting, Jennifer had harness on and was in the lift used by construction site workers. The lift lost control and dropped from the top floor. Jennifer's harness got stuck in the lift and she was getting dragged with it when Shivin came to her rescue and reached out to her and saved her from falling. He himself got injured and hurt his hand but did not stop shooting.

On the incident, Shivin shared: "Our first shoot together was an outdoor shoot at a construction site and I was quite excited. The sequence was one where Jennifer was supposed to be in a lift. While performing such stunt sequences, the production takes utmost care of the artists and even Jennifer had her harness and other safety gear on but unfortunately her harness got stuck and she was about to get dragged with the lift from top floor when I instantly reached out for her and grabbed her. In the course of saving her, I injured myself and my hand got hurt and she got a few bruises here and there and both of us were terrified."

Meanwhile in the show, it will be interesting for audience to see how Maya plans to meet with MJ's sons and manipulates Rishi, spies on him and his family.

AMRAPALI IS BACK

Tujhse Hai Raabta, one of Zee TV's popular fiction dramas, has kept its audiences hooked with its heartwarming narrative of a unique mother-daughter



relationship that emerges between a young girl and her step-mother. Recently, viewers witnessed that the honest and upright cop Malhar (Sehban Azim) has been framed. Everyone now thinks that he is a corrupt police officer, but he is out to prove his innocence. In fact, he holds the Chief Minister at gunpoint for the truth to come out in front of the world. Another new, big twist is on the cards with the return of Kalyani's mother Madhuri Deshmukh, played by Amrapali Gupta.

For those of you who don't know, Amrapali was also seen in the initial episodes of the show, where she ends up meeting with an accident. Although, it seemed like she is dead, with her return, we are sure the viewers have a much more exciting twist to look forward to.

Commenting on her return on the show, Amrapali reveals: "*Tujhse Hai Raabta* is a fascinating story and I am really excited to be back on such a show with such a unique concept. I am glad that it is doing so great and Madhuri is coming back into Kalyani's life. We have seen how Madhuri has been a selfish person, but she loved her husband and daughter unconditionally. However, this time around my character has amnesia and she may or may not remember her daughter. I hope I am able to justify my character and I hope that the audience extends their support to me in this endeavour."

DHARMENDRA-RISHABH'S COMMON WISH



Sony Entertainment Television's *Indian Idol* season 11 upcoming episode will be one of the most anticipated episode as the legendary Dharmendra and Asha Parek will be coming this weekend. The show has already become everyone's favorite because of the talented contestants and their extraordinary singing skills. The panel consists of the very Talented Neha Kakkar, Vishal Dadlani and Himesh Reshaimiyya.

The rockstar of *Indian Idol* Season 11 Rishabh Chaturvedi performed on the song *Pyaar Deewana Hota Hai* and *Pyar Ke Iss Khe Mein*. Recently Rishabh expressed his liking for Bollywood superstar Alia Bhatt and was telling the same to Dharmendra ji and also mentioned he hasn't gotten the chance to meet her till now. Dharmendra ji said he really likes the work of Alia Bhatt and till date he also hasn't met her.

Further in the show Asha Parek also told she is a huge fan of Dilip Kumar and

Vijayanti Mala.

Neha Kakkar while appreciating Rishabh said: "I can see so much improvement in your singing since your audition. With every performance you are becoming better and your today's performance was really enthralling."

SHUBHARAMBH OF NEW SHOW

Colors has collaborated with Rouble Nagi Art Foundation (RNAF), for its new show *Shubharambh*, to weave the longest



ecofriendly bed linen. Giving a platform to the artisans from across the country, the initiative imparts the importance of strong partnerships and how it can help in the betterment of our society. The show chronicles the journey of Raja and Rani, who are imperfect as individuals but together they weave magic. As the show focuses on the power of *ek aur ek gyarah*, the initiative too will bring India together for a stronger tomorrow.

FAHMAAN KHAN TO BE SEEN IN MKKD

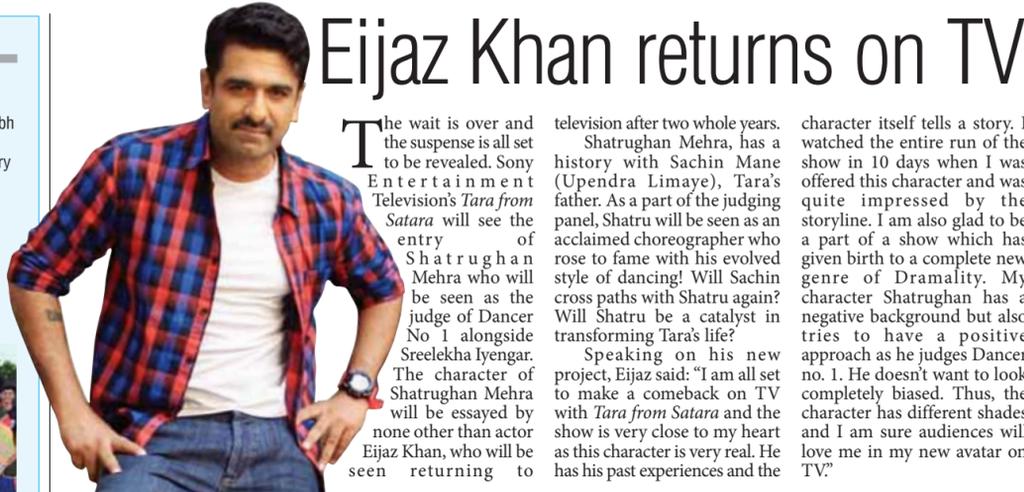
Actor Fahmaan Khan who has previously been seen in a few television shows, has been roped in for Sony Entertainment Television's latest offering *Mere Dad ki Dulhan (MDKD)* to portray the character of Randeep, a carefree boy who believes in living his life to the fullest.

Randeep, the son of a businessman, who belongs to a wealthy family, has dreams and goals of his own. His father however wants him to be the next CEO of their company and lead the organisation. Niya's accidental meeting with Randeep brings out a stark difference in the way they approach life.

Fahman and Anjali Tatrari are having a gala time shooting with each other, most of which takes them away from the set.

Fahmaan Khan shares: "I'm very excited about this role because it's something I've never done before. All my characters have been serious ones in the past, but Randeep is a very lively person. Unlike Niya, he is a very impromptu, and lives-in-the-moment. He is very different from Niya and that's what makes her admire his way of life. He's a carefree guy with an entrepreneurial in nature and he assists his father in reviving small scale businesses."

Was the chance encounter between Niya and Randeep just a coincidence or will it lead them to meeting each other further?



Eijaz Khan returns on TV

The wait is over and the suspense is all set to be revealed. Sony Entertainment Television's *Tara from Satara* will see the entry of Shatrughan Mehra who will be seen as the judge of Dancer No. 1 alongside Sreelekha Iyengar. The character of Shatrughan Mehra will be essayed by none other than actor Eijaz Khan, who will be seen returning to

television after two whole years. Shatrughan Mehra, has a history with Sachin Mane (Upendra Limaye), Tara's father. As a part of the judging panel, Shatrug will be seen as an acclaimed choreographer who rose to fame with his evolved style of dancing! Will Sachin cross paths with Shatrug again? Will Shatrug be a catalyst in transforming Tara's life?

Speaking on his new project, Eijaz said: "I am all set to make a comeback on TV with *Tara from Satara* and the show is very close to my heart as this character is very real. He has his past experiences and the

character itself tells a story. I watched the entire run of the show in 10 days when I was offered this character and was quite impressed by the storyline. I am also glad to be a part of a show which has given birth to a complete new genre of Dramality. My character Shatrughan has a negative background but also tries to have a positive approach as he judges Dancer no. 1. He doesn't want to look completely biased. Thus, the character has different shades and I am sure audiences will love me in my new avatar on TV."

Special gift for Reem

Zee TV's popular fiction drama — *Tujhse Hai Raabta*, has kept its audiences hooked with its heartwarming narrative of a unique mother-daughter relationship that emerges between a young girl and her step-mother.

The character of Kalyani, played by the teen heart-throb Reem Shaikh, has been getting a lot of appreciation from the viewers and the actor enjoys a whopping fan following across her social media platforms. The current track has been high on drama with Madhuri, Kalyani's biological mother, coming back on the show and Malhar being held captive by the Naxalites.

Reem, who loves to share her special



moments with fans on social media, recently put up a video about her mom's cute gesture of putting up stickers of funny emojis around her mirror. While the actor

seemed awed by the gesture, fans turned curious about this special gift from Reem's mom.

Feeding their curiosity, Reem said: "My mother gave me a sweet surprise by putting up quirky emojis around the mirror in my makeup room. I love using a lot of emojis, I feel they can express feelings when words fail and can make anyone smile. Whenever I am tired or a bit stressed out, my mom sends me cute emojis to cheer me up. This gift will remind me of those sweet messages from mom whenever I am back into my room on the set."

Expressing her love for her mother, Reem added: "I share a very special bond with my mother as she is more like a sister to me. I am glad to have such a loving person as a mother, who is the reason behind what I am today."

Well, not just on-screen, Reem is a lovely daughter off-screen as well and we wish to see more of such cute moments between the mother-daughter duo.

Viacom 18's new offering

The vivacious, chirpy and a fun-loving mother, Soha Ali Khan was spotted recently on the launch of Viacom18's new kid on the block — *Voot Kids* along with handsome and humorous father, Ashish Chowdhry and renowned educationist, Dr Swati Popat where all of them shook a leg as the Pappy Dance video played along.

At the launch, the Pataudi mother, Soha Ali Khan revealed what came right in time for her and we are really shocked to know!

When quipped Soha about her association with *Voot Kids* she smiled: "I am very excited about this app and I was looking how to introduce my daughter who is turning two, to screen content, which is educational and entertaining. I think it was fortuitous that *Voot Kids* came into my life when I was looking for something like this."

Well, the app is certainly what this millennial mother was looking for her daughter.

So now, you know where to head if you want to find the right content for your child's early development. Download the app to know why Soha loves it.

Riya Shukla to play Pinki

Love can fight all odds and every shortcoming/hurdle can be conquered with the right attitude. With this insight, Colors has strengthened its content line-up with its upcoming show *Naati Pinky Ki Lambi Love Story*. Based out of New Delhi it is a unique, light-hearted love story that is sure to tug the heartstrings of viewers. Riya Shukla who has carved a niche for herself with various Bollywood projects will be seen essaying the lead role of Pinky in the show. Excited Shukla says: "The show came as a big surprise and was destiny's blessing for me. I was home in Lucknow when I got a call from the production team, and my life has changed thereafter."

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Notary Public, Baripada on 12/12/2019, I, Sri Ludhiya Murmu, Service No.4279966F, Rank-HAV, S/O - Late Bajun Murmu of Tadkisoile, P.O. - Budhikhamari, P.S. - Baripada, Dist. - Mayurbhanj hereby declared that, my wife's name recorded as PHULAMANI HANSDAH in her all recorded documents including School Certificate. But, in my Service record it has been inadvertently mentioned as PHULAMANI MURMU. Hence, She will be known as PHULAMANI HANSDAH for all purposes.

Sd/-
Ludhiya Murmu

HIV+ woman unattended in hosp; delivers stillborn

PNS ■ BARIPADA
In yet another incidence of negligence at a Government hospital, a pregnant woman infected with HIV positive was denied treatment and she delivered a stillborn baby. The woman's condition was stated to be critical. This was reported from the Pandit Raghunath Murmu Medical College Hospital here. The woman, wife of one Surai Hembram, a resident of Jamda village, had been admitted to the hospital after she suffered labour pain on Thursday.

But the doctors allegedly refused to attend to the patient and she gave birth to the still-born baby. According to the woman's husband, she had first been admitted to the Rairangpur Sub-Divisional Hospital, from where she was referred to the Pandit Raghunath Murmu Medical College Hospital. As she was infected with HIV positive, she was left unattended by nurses and doctors. The baby was born dead due to medical negligence, her husband alleged. Even after delivery, the

hospital authorities did not provide treatment to the patient, he further alleged. The matter came to the fore after the media and various voluntary organisations working in field of HIV/AIDS reached the hospital 24 hours after the incidence. Being pressurised, doctors admitted the patient to an operation theatre. Meanwhile, Health Minister Naba Kishore Das has ordered an enquiry into the matter and stated that action would be taken against the doctors and other hospital staffs if they are found guilty.

IN SAMBALPUR Drivers die in truck-tanker clash, fire

PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

In a freak accident, two persons were killed when a truck collided head on with a LPG tanker in front of the Jujumura police station on NH-55 in Sambalpur district late on Friday night.

The deceased were the drivers of the two vehicles. According to reports, the intensity of the collision was so high that both the vehicles caught fire. While the front portions of both the vehicles were completely gutted, the drivers were charred to death on the spot.

Receiving information, two firefighting teams from Jujumura and Sambalpur



rushed to the spot and doused the flames. The vehicular movement on the road was disrupted due to the mishap.

INBRIEF

10 JAJPUR KIDS HURT TRYING TO LIGHT CRACKERS

Jajpur: As many as 10 children were injured while trying to light unexploded crackers in Mirzapur village under the Kuakhia police station in the district on Saturday. A group of children had collected some unexploded firecrackers after a marriage function in the village. Later, they collected gunpowder from the crackers to keep in a piece of paper to light which resulted in an explosion. The victims sustained injuries all over their bodies and were initially rushed to the Madhuban Community Health Centre. Later, four of them were referred to the District Headquarters Hospital.

CATHOLIC CHURCH INAUGURATED IN GAJAPATI



Paralakhemundi: A Catholic Church was inaugurated at Podaguda village under Kashinagar block in Gajapati district constructed with one Jakhya Gamanga's own funds. Parala Swabhiman Manch president Dr Tirupati Panigrahi inaugurated the church and praised Gamanga for his efforts. Among others, Gabara Tirupati Rao, Sukanti Sabar, Yudhistir Gamanga and Silpani Bhuyan were present.

THREE BEARS ENTER MALKANGIRI SCHOOL

Malkangiri: Residents of Govindapalli village in Malkangiri district were panicked when three bears were spotted in the area on Friday night. The CCTV cameras installed at the Govindapalli High School captured the entry of the bears, including two cubs. When the school students chased, the wild animals jumped the school main gate and moved out of its premises. The local Forest Ranger was informed about the incident on Saturday morning.

BSF camp opened in Malkangiri

PNS ■ MALKANGIRI

In a bid to combat the Maoist menace, a Border Security Force (BSF) camp was inaugurated at Hantalguda in the Swabhiman Anchal in the district by the Superintendent of Police (SP) on Saturday. With the effort of police and the BSF's 9th Battalion, the camp has been successfully set up in the area.

Earlier, locals had opposed the setting of the camp. Senior police said this was done after the local populace was instigated by the Red rebels.

With the effort of police and the BSF's 9th Battalion, the camp has been successfully set up in the area. Earlier, locals had opposed the setting of the camp.

After the setting up of BSF camps in the district, the Maoist activities have been curbed to a large extent. The ultras from Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh had earlier turned the Malkangiri district into a safe haven, giving sleepless nights to the Odisha police.

IN BOUDH Boy killed, another hurt as truck hits bike

PNS ■ BOUDH

A boy was killed and another was seriously injured when a truck rammed into a motorcycle near Bridge Chhak on NH-57 in Boudh district on Saturday morning.

The deceased was identified as Mahesh Pradhan (18) of Tutusingha village in the district.

Mahesh and one Bimal Pradhan (17) were travelling by the motorcycle towards Boudh when the tragedy took place. While Mahesh died on the spot, injured Bimal was admitted to the Boudh District Headquarters Hospital before being shifted to the VIMSAR in Burla in Sambalpur after his condition deteriorated.

Police reached the accident spot, seized the truck and began an inquiry. The truck driver fled from the spot. Meanwhile, agitated villagers staged a road blockade demanding compensation to family members of the deceased.

Girl found dead in farmland in N'rangpur

Family alleges murder after rape

NABARANGPUR: The body of minor girl of Gumandali under Kosagumuda block in Nabarangpur district, who had been missing since Friday, was recovered from a farmland in the locality on Saturday morning.

Her family members alleged that she had been raped and murdered by miscreants.

Reports said after returning from a cultural festival, the girl had gone outside home at around 8 pm and did not return after that. Family members along with other locals searched for her frantically till late night but in vain.

On Saturday morning, a group of women first spotted her body in a farmland around half a kilometre from the village and informed her family members. Since two jeans pants were found near the girl's body, which also bore several injury marks, family members of the deceased alleged that she was raped and killed.

Getting information, the Kosagumuda police reached the spot. They sent the body for postmortem and launched an investigation into the incident.

Six Khondalite stone blocks reserved for Puri For World Heritage City project requirement

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State Government has decided to reserve six Khondalite stone mines in favour of the Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC) as Khondalite stones would be required for use in the beautification works around the Jagannath Temple and other areas in Puri under the World Heritage City project.

The Government has taken up a flagship programme, "Augmentation of Basic Amenities and Development of Heritage and Architecture (ABADHA)" for the purpose at a cost of Rs 3,500 crore.

The six Khondalite stone reserves are in Khordha, Cuttack and Jajpur districts. Among the reserved blocks, the Kurumpada decorative stone block containing magmatized Khondalite and Kundakundi Kunda stone block having Khondalite stones, together of 5 hectares of land, are in Khordha district.

Biggest Khondalite stone block of 78.3 hectares is located at Sukhuaparha in Jajpur district. Khondalite stone blocks are also located at Chandia, Teligarh and Gobindpur, together 31.5 hectares, in Jajpur district. A Khondalite stone block of 20.3 hectare

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area located at Gobindpur in Cuttack district is reserved for the OMC.

Now, the OMC would extract Khondalite stones to be utilised by the Works Department and other designated agencies for projects under the ABADHA programme.

The Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA), the Works Department and the OMC would chalk out joint modalities for supply of Khondalite stones.

All concerned district Collectors have been asked to facilitate early mining operations for the OMC as the ABADHA is the in the top priority list of the State Government, said an official.

IN GAJAPATI Minor rape: Man gets 10-yr jail term

PNS ■ PARALAKHEMUNDI

Gajapati District and Sessions Judge Arun Sahu on Friday convicted and awarded a 10-year imprisonment term to one Shiva Sankar Mahakud for raping a minor girl.

The accused was also asked to pay a fine of Rs 10,000 and, in default, to undergo more six months of more imprisonment.

Sources said Mahakud had raped the 13-year-old girl multiple times on the pretext of marrying her. Following this, the girl became pregnant.

To abort the pregnancy, Mahakud had given various medicines to the girl. Later, the girl informed about the matter to her parents and a complaint was lodged in the police station on July 31, 2017.

Acting on the complaint, Mahakud was arrested and produced in the court.

Guv opens Endocrine Society annual meet

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

The 8th annual conference of the Endocrine Society of Orissa is being held at the MKCG Medical College Hospital here from December 13 to 15 in which over 500 doctors from various parts of the State and the country are participating.

Governor Prof Ganeshi Lal formally inaugurated the programme on Saturday and said diabetes and thyroid diseases have assumed epidemic proportions and new drugs and research are required to meet the challenges.

The conference would help many physicians in updating the knowledge in the field of



endocrinology, he added.

During the programme, various topics relating to diabetes, thyroid, obesity, growth disorders and latest drugs would be discussed.

Among others, MKCG

Medical College Principal Prof Radhamadhab Inpathy, organising committee chairman Dr SR Pattanaik, association president Prof AK Baliarsinha and organising secretary Dr P Ravi Kumar were present.

Sachivalaya Marg now 'Lok Seva Marg'

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The stretch of road from AG Square to Acharya Vihar here, which was earlier known as Sachivalaya Marg would now be called as 'Lok Seva Marg', said the

General Administration and Public Grievance Department on Saturday.

The decision was made keeping in view of the new name of the State Secretariat or Sachivalaya as Lok Seva Bhavan.

The GA Department said, "With the change in the

The decision was made keeping in view of the new name of the State Secretariat or Sachivalaya as Lok Seva Bhavan

nomenclature of the State Secretariat as Lok Seva Bhavan, the entire stretch of the road from AG Square to Archarya Vihar will now be called as Lok Seva Marg."

On July 29, 2019, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had announced the change of the State Secretariat's name.

Dhaulti Peace Pagoda chief monk no more

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Chief monk of Dhaulti Peace Pagoda Rev Kazuo Yoda breathed his last at the Kobe Temple in Japan on December 12 morning at the age of 65 after a brief illness. He was the resident monk of the Dhaulti Peace Pagoda for more than three decades.

Rev Yoda had come to Bhubaneswar along with his guru Rev Fuji in 1971 when he was only 15 years old. He was a reformist monk who was highly respected for being able to balance Buddhist learning with meditation practices.

Mahabodhi Society of India president Dr Bimalendu Mohanty recollected with fond



memories the charismatic Rev Yoda. He said Yoda was one of the great Buddhist masters of meditation who lived a hermit-like life. He was

determined to observe Buddhism in its pure state.

Historian Anil Dhir, a friend of Rev Yoda, recalled his youthful zeal and innocence. He led a reclusive life at the Buddha Temple at the base of the Dhaulti Hills with his dogs for company. He also has set up a school. He will be greatly missed by his students and all those who are grateful for his teachings and his friendship.

A memorial prayer meet was held at the Maha Bodhi Society of India's Bhubaneswar Centre on Friday evening. It was attended by Dr Bimalendu Mohanty, Dr Sourendra Mohapatro, Dr Aryakumar Jnanendra and Anil Dhir, among others.

U Sammilani seeks nt'l tag for Balyatra

And Bay of Bengal renamed as Kalinga Sagar

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Utkal Sammilani Mancheswar Industrial Estate Branch president Dillip Dashsharma has demanded that the Central Government accord 'National Maritime Heritage Festival' status to the annual Cuttack Balyatra soon.

He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi is well aware of the historic Balyatra as he has mentioned about the event while addressing gatherings in different countries.

"The Balyatra has already got national recognition as Prime Minister Narendra Modi knows it and appreciates it at global events. The accordance awaits official mention only," said Dashsharma.

He further demanded that the sea (Bay of Bengal) connecting Odisha and Bali in Indonesia be declared as 'Kalinga Sagar' as it was known years ago.

CPI stages demo, protests CAB, NRC



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR/CHAMPUA

The Communist Party of India (CPI) and the Bharatiya Kshet Mazdoor Union (BKMU) staged a demonstration here on Saturday in protest against the Citizen Amendment Bill (CAB) and National Citizens' Register (NRC).

Hundreds of activists belonging to the CPI and the BKMU wearing black badges around necks moved from the CPI office to Raj Mahal Square where they staged the demonstration and blocked the road. Later, they moved through the Ashok Nagar area.

CPI zone secretary Sura Jena and State executive committee member Jayant Das address the gathering at the Raj Mahal said the CAB has come up in violation of the Constitution and would destroy the secular structure of the country and play as a divisive force based on religion. They demanded that the Union Government annul the CAB Act as six States have already opposed it.

Among others, Kailash Puhan, BKMU leader Sarat Swain, Chhtambar Bhoi, Laxmidhar Behera, Rita Sethi and Abhimanyu Behera were present.

The CPI Barbil unit also opposed Citizen Amendment Act saying it would not help the country in any manner and would meet the fate of demonetisation enforced a few years back.

CPI Barbil unit assistant secretary Md Baddru said the Union Government brought the CAM in order to divert the people's attention to rising unemployment and skyrocketing of prices of essential commodities. The Centre is playing divisive policies in the name of religion, he alleged.

Among others, Maheswar Rout, Bidyadhar Mahanta and Kapila Mahanty also spoke.

Blood donor bodies' conf held in BBSR

Representatives from 24 States attend

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Samarpita Social Foundation Trust organised a conference of national-level blood donor organisations here on Saturday.

Samarpita advisor and Odisha Khadi and Gramodyoga Board president Sangram Keshari Paikaray presided over the event. Ministers Arun Sahoo and Samir Ranjan Dash, Commission for People with Disabilities Chairperson Sulochana Das, MLA Ananta



Narayan Jena and Samarpita secretary Sadasiba Jena were guests in inaugural programme.

Ministers Sahoo and Dash spoke on the importance of blood donation and the contribution being made by the BJD's 'Jeevan Bindu' programme in this field.

Women and Child Organisations and individuals from 24 States attended the conference and they were all felicitated on the occasion.

In the afternoon session, Odisha State Housing Board Chairman Priyadarshi Mishra,

and Minister Arun Sahoo and Dash spoke on the importance of blood donation and the contribution being made by the BJD's 'Jeevan Bindu' programme in this field.

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B'swar parents allege daughter killed by hubby in Hybd

Appeal to Telangana, Odisha CMs for justice

UBACHAK MOHANTY ■ BALESWAR

The parents of a deceased woman of Jaleswar alleging that their daughter was killed for dowry demands in Hyderabad have appealed to the Chief Ministers of Odisha and Telangana to give them justice.

They alleged that their daughter died in Hyderabad during her stay there with her husband and 18-month-old son under mysterious circumstances which raised doubts although it was claimed as a case of suicide by their son-in-law.

According to the aggrieved parents Asta Hazra and Sumitra Hazra, the father

and mother of the deceased respectively of Nampo of Jaleswar, they had married off their daughter Puja with Samir Malik, a resident of Muchipada of Kolkata two years ago as per the Hindu traditions and customs along with demanded articles.

After the marriage, they alleged that the husband and in-laws of their daughter began to torture her for more demand of dowry.

While she was tortured physically and mentally by them in absence of her husband (as he was in Hyderabad in connection with job), the parents alleged that during her stay in in-law house the father -in-law, Brundaban Malik, even attempt-

ed to keep physical relationship with their daughter.

However in July, Puja had gone to Hyderabad along with her husband with her son. On November 2, they got information from the son-in-law Samir that Puja committed suicide by hanging.

When they rushed to Hyderabad, they found injury marks around body of Puja, which raised suspicion that she was brutally beaten to death, they alleged.

Alleging death of their daughter was a conspiracy of her husband and in-laws to eliminate her, they further demanded a proper probe and action against the culprits.

DGP reviews anti-Maoist drive in K'put

PNS ■ KORAPUT
On his first official visit to Koraput district after assuming charge, DGP Abhay on Saturday held a close-door meeting with SPs of six southern Maoist-hit districts and senior officials of the Border Security Force (BSF) and the Special Operation Group (SOG).
Sources said a detailed discussion on intensifying anti-Maoist operations and other

law and order situation was held at the meeting.
Later, South-Western Range DIG Sheefen Ahmed K said the DGP instructed to take stringent action against organised crime, cyber crime and ganja smuggling in the region.
Senior officials of Odisha police, including IG (Operations) Amitabh Thakur, ADG (Law and Order) DS Kutte and Intelligence IG RK Sharma also attended the meeting.



Trainers' meet on cyber security held at IIIT

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR
The International Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), Bhubaneswar in association with the Odisha Electronics and Information Technology Department and Odisha Police organised a Masters' Trainers Programme on 'Cyber Security and Security Awareness' here on Saturday.
The programme was organised in support of Information Security Education and Awareness (ISEA), an initiative of Union

Odisha's E and IT Principal Secretary Manoj Kumar Mishra, IIIT BBS Director Prof Gopal Krishna Nayak and Computer Science Professor Dr Debasish Jena attended as guests in the programme which aims to create master trainers for educating against cyber crime matters
Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and Cyber Dost, an initiative of

Union Ministry of Home Affairs.
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On the occasion, IIIT BBS Registrar Prof Ajit Das was honoured by the guests. As many as 170 persons attended the programme.

2 K'handi migrant workers held captive in Maha

AFTER 2 OTHERS FLEE DUE TO TORTURE

BIKASH KHEMKA ■ BHAWANIPATNA
The Kalahandi district administration began a probe on Friday after an allegation of captivity of two migrant labourers in Maharashtra was received.
The victims' family members met Kalahandi SP, Battula Gangadhar and alleged that eight workers under Jaipatna police station limits were lured by local agent Mohan Dalapati.
They said all the workers were handed over to a labour contractor of Maharashtra who had allegedly given some advance money to the local labour agent. Then workers joined in a Pune-based fish stroller firm on October 20.
The victims' family alleged that six of them escaped after being tortured, who were yet to reach the native place, but two had been held captive by the contractor and firm owner.
They further alleged that the contractor threatened the local agent saying unless the advance money was returned, the two

migrants would not be spared.
The SP told the media that a team had been formed to inquire into the matter.
The workers, who have been held captive, are Narottam Sabar (30) of Haramal village and Rupendra Majhi (18) of Brahmani Kenduguda village.
Narottam's wife Pramodini Sabar told the media that after departure from the village, she talked to her husband once. Since then she had no contact with him.
"Two months passed, I have not talked to my husband as his mobile phone always remained switched off. His life is under threat," said Pramodini adding, "I want my husband back from the clutches of the contractor."
After receiving the complaint, a team of labour officials went to the village for inquiry. Assistant labour commissioner (ALC) of Kalahandi Pradeep Mohanty said that as per primary investigation, eight persons including the local agent and his nephew along with six workers had migrated from the region.
However, the agent's nephew came back a few days ago to the Haramal village who was contacted personally but other seven are yet to be traced.
"I talked to the firm owner, who informed that after working for 15 days, all of them went to Hyderabad without informing him. The owner told me that he lost Rs 1 lakh towards the fish business after the workers fled. I was told that no workers are with him anymore," the ALC said adding he tried to contact local agent Mohan Dalapati, but his phone was switched off.
It is to be noted that in December 2013, the labour contractors and his associates from Kalahandi had chopped off right palm of two migrants Dialu Nial (30) and Nilambar Dhangda Majhi (28) under Jaipatna police station, who had tried to escape from their clutches.
On December 24, 2016, a local court of Kalahandi had sentenced eight persons to life imprisonment for their involvement in the incident.

Withdraw NEP, demand A'wadi employees

Send memo to PM
PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR
Anganwadi Workers, Mini Workers and Helpers from across the State staged a massive rally under the banner of the Anganwadi Employees' Union Sanjukta Morcha, Odisha here demanding withdrawal of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2019.
A seven-member delegation submitted a memorandum to the Governor addressed to the Prime Minister demands in



favour of their withdrawal of NEP-2019, making the ICDS universal, converting Anganwadi Centres to preschools and Anganwadi Workers and Mini Workers as

Preschool Teachers and Helpers with salary at par with the primary teachers and provision of basic infrastructures at Anganwadi Centres as preschool educational institutions.
Another 10-member delegation submitted 16-point charter of demands memorandum to Women and Child Development (W and CD) Minister Tukuni Sahu and discussed about the State, district and block level issues threadbare. She assured to work out on the demands.

ICSI, IBBI hold talk on bankruptcy code

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR
A national seminar on 'Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC)' was organised jointly by the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI), the Institute of Company Secretaries of India and the ICSI Institute of Insolvency Professionals here on Saturday.
Gracing as chief guest Sucharitha R, Judicial Member, National Company Law Tribunal, Cuttack Bench said that Company Secretaries are not only experts in corporate laws and IBC but also a good leader in the NCLT and NCLAT platforms. She also elaborated



the powers, role and duties of the National Company Law Tribunal. IBBI CGM Rameshwar Dhariwal said that Odisha has huge scope and possibility for industrial development. The interest of banks and other financial institutions needs to be secured through legal remedies and expeditious disposal as they are the major source for supply of capital for industrial development.
Ananta Kumar Sethi, Registrar of Companies-cum-Official Liquidator, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Cuttack, apprised about the e-adjudication proceedings, Zero tolerance for fraud and

200 professionals participate
also in malafide intention and falsification of documents while filing with the Registrar of Companies.
CS Siddhartha Murarka, Central Council Member, the ICSI, Alpesh Mania D, AROC-Cum-AOL, MCA, Dr Binoy J Kattadiyil Managing Director, ICSI IIP, CS Priyadarshi Nayak, Vice Chairman, EIRC, CS Soumya Sujit Mishra, Chairman Bhubaneswar Chapter, CS Divesh Goyal, PCS, New Delhi and Gopal Krishnan B, Advocate, Mumbai also addressed the seminar. More than 200 delegates, including Company Secretaries, lawyers, corporate executives, faculties from management institutions and bankers attended.

CM felicitates 20 young scientists

YATS winners to visit an ISRO facility
PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR
Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Friday felicitated Top 20 winners of the 13th edition of the Tata Steel Young Astronomer Talent Search (YATS) 2019-20 at a function held at the Pathani Samanta Planetarium here on Friday.
The winners would get the opportunity to visit one of the premier facilities of Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) in May 2020 and receive a first-hand experience of space science in action.



A total of 62,000 students from 300 schools across the State had participated in the YATS 2019-20. The theme was 'Unravelling the Wonders of the Universe'. Science and Technology Minister Ashok Chandra Panda, planetarium Director Rashid Khan and Tata Steel CEO and MD TV Narendran and Corporate Services VP Chanakya Chaudhary were present, among others. Institute of Physics Director Dr Sudhakar Panda was felicitated on the occasion.

No unanimous candidate for K'jhar BJP chief

One may be picked up by State leadership
PNS ■ CHAMPUA
In view of the ongoing office-bearer selection exercise in the BJP, a party meeting was held at Keonjhar to elect a new district president.
While nine candidates, Dhiren Panda, Dhanu Sidhu, Biraja Mishra, Suka Mahanta, Sabuja Mahanta, Dilip Panda, Sabitri Bishwal, Rama Sahu

When contacted, incumbent BJP district president Radhakanta Mahanta said that in the absence of a consensus the list would be sent to the State high command who would take a final decision. Last time, Radha was picked up by party's senior leader and union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan in the absence of a selection of a unanimous candidate
and Satya Panda, had offered their candidature, Satya Panda withdrew from the race showing his personal problem.
Party insiders revealed that all the nine candidates are only dummy ones as one of three leaders former MP Anant Nayak, MLA Mohan Majhi and former BJP president Murali Sharma would head the party in the district.
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'Nagada to be a model tribal village'

MINISTER VISITS HILLOCK HABITATION



PNS ■ JAJPUR
Energy, Industries and MSME Minister Captain Dibya Shankar Mishra visited remote Nagada and its nearby villages on Friday to review the developmental works.
The Minister discussed with local tribal people about projects undertaken in those areas. Notably, the Nagada hillock came into limelight after 21 Juang kids died of malnutrition three years back.
"Nagada will be a model tribal village in the country. Our aim is not just handing over land but creating model tribal villages with sustainable

food self-sufficiency avenues. The focus will be on large-scale cultivation of millets and pulses, which once kept poverty and malnutrition away from the tribal belts," said the Minister.
He said Nagada would be developed as a model tribal village with community living and collective farming.
"We will repair all the roads soon. Street lights will be installed from Kaliapani to Nagada. We have already provided houses for Anganwadis, health centres, community centres and playgrounds in the village. The land document for each family would have details of latitude and longitude of the land, family details and photographs. So, no alienation in future would happen," added the Minister.
Mishra further informed that the Government would set up a hospital at Kaliapani and upgrade the health sub-center at Deogaon and the Community Health Center (CHC) at Sukinda. The District Mineral Fund (DMF) would be utilised for the developmental works of the tribal people of the district, he said.
Sukinda MLA Pritiranjana Ghadai and others were present during the visit of the minister to Nagada.

Inter-IIT sports from today

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR
The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bhubaneswar in association with the IIT Kharagpur is organising the 54th Inter-IIT Sports Meet here from December 15 to 22.
The IIT Kharagpur

and the IIT Bhubaneswar are hosting eight and four events, respectively.
The IIT Bhubaneswar is organising competitions in volleyball, badminton, table tennis and squash. As many as 770 students from 23 IITs have arrived to participate.
Union Minister Pratap

Sukhbir re-elected SAD chief for 3rd time

PNS ■ AMRITSAR
For the third time in a row, Sukhbir Singh Badal on Saturday was re-elected as the president of the Shiromani Akali Dal on Saturday.
The 57-year-old former Punjab Deputy Chief Minister's name was proposed by senior party leader Tota Singh and

seconded by another senior leader, Prem Singh Chandumajra while Jagmeet Singh Brar endorsed it.
Around 600 party delegates gave their approval, paving the way for Sukhbir Singh Badal to lead the party that was founded on this day in 1920.
The SAD observed its 99th foundation day on Saturday.

3 dolphins found dead at Pentha beach

PNS ■ KENDRAPADA
Rajnar forest personnel on Saturday recovered bodies of three dead Irrawaddy dolphins from Pentha beach within the Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary in Kendrapada district.
While two of the dead dolphins were female, the rest one was a hatchling, said Ranger Surjit Sahu.
Though the reason behind the death of the dolphin was yet to be established, forest personnel said they have sent the corpses to the Rajnagar Veterinary for autopsy.
Wildlife lovers suspect that the dolphins might have died after being entangled in fishing



nets or hit with a trawler's propeller. According to the Ranger, one of the female dolphins was pregnant and they might have died within a day or two.

Punjab CM Amarinder attacks Sukhbir on Citizenship Act

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH
Countering Sukhbir Badal's 'Carcinogenic' remarks on Afghan Sikhs in the context of the Citizenship Act, Punjab Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh on Saturday said it seemed the SAD president was more interested in dirty politicking than in protecting the Constitutional ethos.
"Do you have no shame? You are ready to destroy the country's secular character to promote your vested political interests," said Capt Amarinder, taking on Sukhbir over his latest comments on the issue.
While people were getting killed in their fight to save India's secular character, and its Constitution, Sukhbir was busy indulging in politics over an issue of such grave concern, lashed out the Chief Minister, adding that what was at stake

was the very survival of the country as a democratic and secular entity.
Responding to Sukhbir's question "if he (Amarinder) favours granting Indian citizenship to Sikhs who migrated from minorities Afghanistan," the Chief Minister said the issue at hand was not granting or not granting citizenship to a particular community.
The matter related to the brazen attempt of the central Government, of which Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) was a part, to tinker with the Indian Constitution – the very bedrock of the country's existence, he added.
"Sukhbir claims SAD has been fighting for the last 10 years for ensuring Indian citizenship to these people (Afghan Sikhs). Without getting into any argument over his claim, I want to ask him whether he has favours exclusion of Muslims from Indian citizenship," said the Chief Minister.
"Did the SAD not, in its initial reaction to CAB, declare that Muslims should also get the benefit of the amended Act" the Chief Minister asked, demanding an explanation for the sudden U-turn of the Akalis on the issue. With these contradictory statements, Sukhbir had once again exposed himself as an unprincipled leader with no values or morality, said Captain Amarinder, asking SAD to clarify its stand on the issue.
India's secular fabric has always been its strength and any attempt to rip it apart will be vehemently opposed by the Congress, as well as the people of the country, said Captain Amarinder.

UNFRUITFUL EXPENDITURE OF ₹7 CRORE CBI books Padma Shree awardee Leela Samson

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has booked ace Bharatnatyam dancer and former Chairperson of Sangeet Natak Akademi Leela Samson for alleged "unfruitful expenditure" of ₹7.02-crore on renovation of Koothambalam Auditorium of Kalakshetra Foundation, Chennai.



Samson, a Padma Shri awardee and also a former Chairperson of Central Board of Film Certification, has been booked in her capacity as the then Director of Kalakshetra Foundation along with four other officials of the Foundation. The other accused in the case include the then officers of the Foundation: Chief Accounts Officer (on deputation from CAG) TS Murthi, Accounts Officer S Ramachandran, Engineer Officer V Srinivasan and proprietor of architecture firms CARD and Chennai Engineers.

After registering the case on Thursday, the CBI also conducted searches on the residential premises of the accused.

In a complaint to the CBI, the Chief Vigilance Officer of the Culture Ministry has alleged that the officials of the Foundation awarded the contract for the renovation work to consultant architect CARD in violation of General Finance Rules (GFR), according to the FIR which stated the period of the alleged offence from 2006 to 2012.

After conducting an inquiry in 2016, the Culture Ministry alleged that the 84-year old Foundation had spent Rs 62.20 lakh more than the estimated amount on the Rs 7.02-crore project.

The estimation given by the Central Public Works Department revealed that the

expenditure of Kalakshetra and submitted the report on August 5, 2011. In the report, the CAG brought various lapses in executing the renovation work of the auditorium. The CAG also pointed out that the renovation works were undertaken without formal sanction of the Governing Board and Financial Committee.

It also alleged that Samson failed to apprise the non-official members of the Works Committee about the GFR norms and inform the Works Committee about the CAG Inspection Report received in August 2011.

Instead, approval of the Works Committee was obtained for two major expenditures in September and December 2011. She failed to place the CAG Inspection Report in the meeting of Finance Committee and General Body meeting held on January 23, 2012, and January 24, 2012, respectively and kept these bodies under dark," the agency has alleged.

The FIR, citing reports, alleged even if there were only limited sources of supply of sophisticated equipment for sound, stage lighting, these were not justified in the file notings for resorting to limited tender, and hence there was no justification in not resorting to open bidding.

She was allegedly responsible for the losses incurred by the Foundation on account of not opting for open tendering as also mandated by the General Body, it said.

The FIR said Kalakshetra had spent Rs 62.20 lakh more than the estimated amount. The CPWD estimates revealed the contracts were awarded at a higher rate and the payments made to the contractors accordingly.

The Comptroller and Auditor General audited the

BHARAT BACHAO RALLY

Time to rise to save constitution, democracy: Sonia

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress president Sonia Gandhi on Saturday launched a scathing attack on 'Modi-Shah Government' over several issues concerning the nation and gave a clarion call to rise to save democracy and Constitution.

Addressing the Bharat Bachao Rally in the national Capital, Sonia alleged that the BJP-ruled government's sole agenda was to make people fight to serve their politics, and vowed that her party would not retreat in its struggle against injustice.

Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh too addressed the crowd during which he accused his successor Narendra Modi of misleading the people by making "lofty promises" which he "failed" to fulfil. Other Congress leaders P Chidambaram, Bhupinder Singh Hooda, Sachin Pilot and Chief Ministers Ashok Gehlot, Kamal Nath, Bhupesh Baghel too addressed the gathering that had come from across the country, particularly from the Congress ruled States.

Sonia also targeted the government over the economic situation and exhorted people to raise their voice to protect the country and its Constitution. "The Congress and only Congress has always fought for people's rights. And today too, the Congress party is not going to retreat. Till our last breath, we will fulfil our duty towards protecting the country, democracy and the Constitution" she said.

"Andher nagri chaupat raja wala mahaul hai (confused leader, chaotic State)... kahaan hai sabka saath sabka vikas? What has happened to economy? Where are jobs?" she asked, hitting out at the government over the handling of economy.

The Congress chief said



Former PM Manmohan Singh along with Congress president Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi waves at the party workers during the party's Bharat Bachao rally at Ramilla Maidan in New Delhi on Saturday

the situation in the country is serious as she highlighted the plight of women, farmers, labourers and the youth and asked party workers to struggle hard for protecting their rights. "The greatest sin is to bear injustice. So raise your voice to the Modi-Shah government and tell them that we are ready to give any kind of sacrifice for the protection of democracy. And we are ready for any kind of struggle to protect the Constitution."

Talking about the new amended citizenship law, Sonia Gandhi said it has been on BJP's agenda for a long time now. "They are not bothered that this new CAB law will shred the soul of India, as is happening in Assam and other northeastern States." It is for India's soul that our great nation builders and Babasaheb Ambedkar struggled hard, but I can say with confidence that our country's basic foundation does not allow such discriminatory actions. I assure you that the Congress will stand by all those against whom injustice is done," she said.

The Congress has been

opposing Citizenship Amendment Act, alleging that it discriminates on the basis of religion. Training her guns on Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah, the Congress chief said, "Modi, Shah are not bothered about the Parliament nor do they care for Constitutional institutions. Modi and Shah have a single aim - they have a single narrow agenda. They only bother about politics. Their narrow agenda is 'Lagon ko ladao, aur asli muddon ko chhupao' (Make people fight and hide the real issues)."

She said they "violate" the Constitution everyday and then also celebrate Constitution Day. Asking people to rise against the injustice, she said, "There comes a time in the life of any person or society or country when you have to decide which side you're on, today is one such day. The time has come to struggle hard to save the country. It's time to rise to save democracy and Constitution." She said unprecedented job losses are being witnessed and the youths face darkness.

On his part Manmohan

Singh said Modi had promised to take the country's economy to \$5 trillion by 2024, double farmers' income and provide two crore new jobs every year for youths. "Six years ago, Narendra Modi showed lofty promises to people. Now it has been proved that all these promises were false and he has failed in fulfilling all the promises made and the people of the country were misled," he said.

In his brief address, Manmohan Singh urged the

people to strengthen the Congress party and the hands of Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi in order "to take the country forward in the right direction". He also urged Congress workers present at the rally in large numbers to take the message of Congress chief Sonia Gandhi to every nook and corner of the country. "It is your responsibility. The enthusiasm in you will surely help give a new direction to the country," he noted.

Priyanka takes jibe at 'Modi hai toh mumkin hai'



Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra speaks during the party's Bharat Bachao rally at Ramilla Maidan in New Delhi on Saturday

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Saturday said those who don't fight the prevailing situation today will go down in history as cowards. "If you love India, please raise your voice. If we remain silent today, our revolutionary Constitution will be destroyed. The division of the country will start and we will all be as responsible for this division as any corrupt leader of the BJP and the RSS," she asserted while addressing the party's Bharat Bachao Rally.

While Priyanka urged everyone to gather the courage to fight the current situation, she also took a jibe at BJP slogans praising Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"At every bus stop, in every newspaper, on every TV channel, one can see that 'Modi hai toh mumkin hai' (Everything possible with Modi at the helm). Asliyat ye hai ki BJP hai to ₹100 kilo ki pyaaz mumkin hai, BJP hai to 45 saal mein sabse zyada berozgarai mumkin hai, BJP hai to 4 crore naukriyan under

hona mumkin hai, BJP hai to 15,000 kisan ki atmahatya mumkin hai....(The fact is under the BJP, it is possible that onion sells ₹100 a kilo, it's possible that unemployment is highest in 45 years, it is possible to destroy 4 crore jobs. If the BJP is there, it is possible that 15,000 farmers commit suicide....)," said the Congress general secretary.

A combative Priyanka raised the recent alleged torching of a rape victim in Unnao who subsequently succumbed to her injuries at a Delhi hospital and remembered her father Rajiv Gandhi and his sacrifices.

"When I saw the father of the Unnao rape victim burying his face in his palms and crying, I remembered my own father whose body I saw as a 19-year-old. My father's blood is in this soil just as the blood of the Unnao victim is nurturing this earth. This country is ours and it is our moral duty to save it," she said flanked by her mother and party president Sonia Gandhi and former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi seated at the stage.

Govt to conduct Economic Census

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Seventh Economic Census was launched in the national Capital on Friday. The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has tied up with Common Service Centre (CSC), an SPV under Ministry of Electronics and IT, to carry out the 7th National Economic Census.



"For the first time the entire Census is being conducted on a digital platform by the use of an application which will ensure high accuracy and data security. Delhi is the 26th State where the survey has been launched, while the process is already on in 20 States and 5 UTs. In Delhi the entire process will take around three months where enumerators will survey around 45 lakh establishments and households," said A.K. Sadhu, DG (Social Statistics), Central Statistics Office (CSO).

Aspects of all establishments in the country. The census will provide valuable insights into geographical spread/clusters of economic activities, ownership pattern; persons engaged etc. of the establishments engaged in economic activity.

In the 7th Census, an IT based digital platform is being used for data capture, validation, report generation and dissemination will be used. The fieldwork for the Census started in June 2019. A comprehensive training strategy has been evolved to impart training to enumerators and supervisors engaged in the Census. CSC CEO Dr Dinesh Tyagi was also present on the occasion.

Kovind hosted university heads' conference

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India has set itself for sustainable development as it strives to eliminate poverty and become a middle-income country, President Ram Nath Kovind said on Saturday as he hosted a conference of 46 heads of Central Universities and institutes of higher learning in the fields of agriculture, pharmaceuticals, aviation, footwear-design, fashion, petroleum and energy, maritime studies, planning and architecture and information technology.



President Ram Nath Kovind in group photograph with heads of Central Universities/Institutes of Higher Learning during their conference in New Delhi on Saturday

"India has set itself for sustainable development as it strives to eliminate poverty and become a middle-income country. Each of these institutes will be instrumental to the realisation of our socio-economic goals. The central agricultural universities can support our national goal of promoting sustainable agriculture, productivity and supporting our farmers with useful research," Kovind said in Rashtrapati Bhavan.

"The same is true of all other institutes linked to different areas be it pharmaceutical, aviation, oceanography, petroleum and energy, IT,

Design, Architecture and others. Each of them is doing well but we need to raise the bar further.

As our economy grows we need to acquire the scale and efficiency that is greater and better than the best in the world," he added.

The president said while developing their specialisations, these institutes should collaborate and learn from each other. "This is possible

for institutes in the same field. It is also possible across categories. For example, advances in information technology can aid architects and town planners to design smart cities that minimise use of energy. All of them should set up systems that can scout for and support cross-category collaborations which might hold creative promises to solve many of our problems," Kovind said.

Issues such as promotion of research, promotion of innovation and entrepreneurship among students, building industry-academia linkages, filling up of vacancies, including faculty from foreign universities, creating alumni funding and enhancing alumni activities and completion of major infrastructure projects in a time bound manner, were discussed during the conference.

Government eases FASTag execution

Up to 25% of FASTag lanes to be temporarily converted to hybrid lanes at NH toll plazas

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

To avert inconvenience to citizens, the Centre on Saturday announced to convert up to 25 per cent of FASTag lanes at national highway toll plazas to hybrid lanes for a month. The hybrid lane will accept FASTag and other modes of payment.

pile up at high traffic volume fee plazas, not more than 25 per cent 'FASTag lane of fee plaza' may be temporarily converted to hybrid lanes," the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways said.

This is to be considered on a case to case basis, it added. "A daily evolution of such cases be made to take necessary corrective action," it said.

It should be ensured that the least possible number of the declared FASTag lanes are converted into hybrid lanes and at least 75 per cent lanes of every fee plaza should remain operational as FASTag lanes, it added.



it is a temporary measure to be adopted for 30 days only to facilitate smooth flow of traffic so that no inconvenience is caused to the citizens. The

Government had earlier extended the date to December 15 for making FASTag mandatory for toll payments on national high-

ways. The National Electronic Toll Collection (NETC) programme, the flagship initiative of the ministry, has been

implemented on a pan-India basis in order to remove bottlenecks and ensure seamless movement of traffic and collection of user fee as per the notified rates, using passive radio frequency identification (RFID) technology.

After announcement of waiver of tag cost from November 21, there has been a growth in FASTag issuance. To give a fillip to digital payments and bring in enhanced transparency, the ministry had directed to declare all lanes of fee plazas on National Highways as 'FASTag lanes' by December 1. However, one lane in each direction was decided to be kept as 'hybrid lane' which will accept FASTag and other modes of payment.

A customer may call on the helpline number '1033' for any assistance related to FASTags, the ministry had said and added that they can also reach out to banks to obtain FASTags.

राजस्थान राज्य पथ परिवहन निगम, मुख्यालय
परिवहन मार्ग, चौमू हाउस, जयपुर।

संशोधन-पत्र
निगम की वाहनो का सर्वर लक्षण 2200 सरो का सतरीय पक्ष एवं यणियों का जोषिय बीमा करवाए जाने के लिए टेंडर आई डी 2019.RSRTC.169963 1 एवं सुधील नं. RTIC/19205LOB00331 के द्वारा अप्रवर्ष की गई थी। चला बोली आमंत्रण की दिनांक को 09.12.2019 से बढ़ाकर दिनांक 16.12.2019 समय 15:00 बजे तथा बोली खोलने की दिनांक को भी सन्दर्भार 10.12.2019 से बढ़ाकर दिनांक 17.12.2019 समय 15:00 बजे किया जाता है। शेष सारस्वत शर्तें सथागत रहेंगी।
राज. संवाद/सी/4135/2019-20 वि. सं. 130/2019-20 वित्तीय सलाहकार

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FASHION TECHNOLOGY
Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India
NIIFT Campus, Karwar, Jodhpur-342037, Rajasthan, India Ph: 0291-2639520

E-TENDER-NOTICE
NIIFT, Jodhpur invites E-tenders for under mentioned supply and installation of machinery & equipment for labs at campus at Karwar, Jodhpur:-

(1) Supply & Installation of Wi-Fi Device (2) Supply & Installation of Lab Equipment for Foundation Programs (3) Supply and Installation of machinery & equipment for BFT department (mechanics & IoT Lab) (4) Supply and Installation of machinery & equipment for BFT department (Ergonomics lab) (5) Supply and Installation of machinery & equipment for BFT department (Artificial Intelligence lab) (6) Supply & Installation of Smart Board

Detailed information such as E-Tender forms, pre-bid meeting, submission of tender, opening of Technical Bids & Financial Bids etc. will be available in NIIFT Jodhpur website www.niift.ac.in/jodhpur & <https://nifttenders.eproc.in> The date of issue/receipt of E-tenders etc. will be valid as per the tender uploaded on website. In future any information regarding corrigendum/addendum, extension of time etc. of above tenders would be updated in above mentioned website only. **Purchase Officer**

Tea growers feel pinch of Assam protests

Farmers fear less production, sales

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Tea growers in Assam have started feeling the pinch of the ongoing protests with partial disruption in production at many gardens and sale of the crop at the Guwahati auction centre being hampered, industry insiders said on Saturday. Transportation of the produce has also been affected due to the ongoing stir, they said. "Though winter months are not the peak season, plucking and manufacturing operations in many gardens across the state have been affected amid widespread protest," North Eastern Tea Association adviser Bidyandana Barkakoty told PTI. Compared to last few years, the weather condition was favourable during this December and the growers were able to produce relatively better quality tea but operations at several estates have been adversely affected by the protests, he added. "During Tuesday's shutdown, gardens were mostly closed. Plucking activities took place on Friday but not in a

Violent protests broke out in the Assam earlier this week with agitators engaging in pitched battles with the police, forcing the administration to impose curfew in several places. Planters also said the Tea Board has extended the plucking time till December 19 on account of shortage and non-availability of workers

full-fledged scale as many workers could not come due to lack of transport," All Assam Small Tea Growers' Association general secretary Karuna Mahanta told PTI. The legislation has put the state on boil as people fear that it may exacerbate the problem of illegal immigration. Violent protests broke out in the State earlier this week with agitators engaging in pitched battles with the police, forcing the administration to impose curfew in several places. Planters also said the Tea Board has extended the plucking time till December 19 on account of shortage and non-availability of workers. The board had earlier asked them to shut plucking and manufacturing operations by mid-December to prevent production of inferior quality tea, according to growers.

Suspension of internet services has also affected their business. "Due to the internet suspension and violent protests, several tea growers are apprehending that they may face difficulties to pay wages to workers as banking services might be affected. Usually, payments to labourers are made either on Friday or Saturday," Barkakoty said. Sales of tea at the Guwahati auction centre have also been disrupted. "Every week, around 40-45 lakh kgs of tea is sold. But, only 15 lakh kg has been sold so far this week," Guwahati Tea Auction Buyers' Association Secretary Dinesh Bihani said. Barkakoty said planters are also apprehending that if the ongoing protests continue for a prolonged period, the pruning activities and other agri-



cultural processes which usually happen during the winters might get disrupted. "Several agricultural processes, including pruning,

are done during the winters to ensure quality of tea for the upcoming season. These are time-bound activities. If the protests continue longer and

such cold-weather agricultural activities are affected, the industry will face severe impact next season," he added.

BUSINESS CORNER

WORKSHOP ON FUNCTIONAL MATERIALS HELD AT SRM



M Kamruddin addresses the gathering at the inauguration of 'Advanced Functional Materials and Devices (AFMD-2019)' at SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Kattankulathur

New Delhi: International workshop on Advanced Functional Materials held at SRM Nanotechnology Research Center (NRC) and Department of Physics and Nanotechnology jointly organized a two-day international workshop on 'Advanced Functional Materials and Devices (AFMD-2019)' at SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Kattankulathur. The focus of the workshop is on energy sectors, fuel cell, hydrogen storage and so on. Dr. M. Kamruddin, Associate Director, Accelerator & Nanoscience Group MSG, IGCAR, Kalpakkam was the chief guest for the second edition of the event. Prof K Ramasamy, Director (Research), SRMIST presided over. Prof R Murugan, Pondicherry University was the guest of honour. In his presidential address, Prof K Ramasamy said, "We have had three Nobel physicist from India such things should motivate students to take up more research. To facilitate this we should reorganize our approach towards education. Students need to be interactive and subjects should be multi-disciplinary. Students should also realize your deficiency and work towards it. Such workshops will give you a hands on training on the latest technology and expertise that is available. They should also focus on creating new product." Dr. M. Kamruddin in his speech said, "New technology and new devices are need to innovate often to meet new demand. The trend is to make small products that are more efficient. I am happy that SRMIST is encouraging research and the facilities here are world class." Guest of honour, Prof R Murugan said, "Almost all the breakthrough in nanotechnology is related to India. Battery storage devices is the next technology that we are heading to."

Jewellery segment sees silver lining

FIANS ■ JAIPUR

The gems and jewellery segment sees a silver lining after a long slump as the number of queries has increased since last month, said former chairman of Gem and Jewellery Exports Council and Jaipur Jewellery Show secretary Rajiv Jain. Jain was speaking at a press conference called to announce the dates of 16th edition of Jaipur Jewellery Show (JJS), which is the largest business to consumer show and second largest business to business show in India, attracting around 40,000 visitors including buyers from India and abroad.

This year, JJS is putting up its best foot forward with 800 booths for exhibitors. Out of 800 booths, 188 shall display gemstones, 535 will showcase jewellery, 62 will display allied machinery, costume jewellery and artefacts. Many new exhibitors too are showing interest in the 'December Show,' said JJS chairman Vimal Chand Surana. Jain further said that the present Hong Kong crisis can benefit India if India amends the present SEZ rules. "Recently Union commerce secretary Anup Wadhawan and representatives of industry had an interaction where Wadhawan was

informed that many players from China and Hong Kong are looking to shift their manufacturing base to India. In fact, many Jaipur players have also been receiving calls with queries," said Jain. "Many of us in the Sitapura gem and jewellery special economic zone received queries from Chinese manufacturers who want to relocate their manufacturing facilities to Jaipur. However, the present SEZ laws prohibit any kind of renting or selling out facilities. If this law is amended, it can benefit state government as well as stakeholders," he further said. Jain said that Wadhawan promised to look into the issue during the meeting, adding that the Chinese entrepreneurs have their running facilities and they want to shift in shortest time to ensure their operations don't suffer.

Apart from this, there will also be a stall of 'Museum of Gem and Jewellery Federation' in Jaipur. This time JJS will be attended by 100 new participants. JJS is also called the 'December show', where products are not only limited to Jaipur but feature merchandise from exhibitors worldwide. The Department of Tourism, government of Rajasthan, has listed the event on their annual calendar for the tourists and visitors.

US-China trade deal gets tepid reception

AFP ■ WASHINGTON

US officials announced a truce in the trade war with China with much fanfare, but economists and trade experts call it largely a victory for Beijing. After a dispute that raged for close to two years, with several fumbled efforts at a resolution, the US agreed to cancel planned tariffs and rollback others immediately, without a similar commitment from China to lift tariffs it imposed on the US.

"Pardon me if I don't pop champagne, but aside from a cessation of continued escalation, there is not much worth cheering," leading China expert Scott Kennedy said in an analysis of the agreement. "The costs have been substantial and far reaching, the benefits narrow and ephemeral." The US Trade Representative office said they expect to sign the phase one agreement in the first week of January, and issued a fact sheet highlighting key points, including enforcement provisions and improved protection for American technology. In addition, it includes a Chinese commitment to buy \$200 billion more in US goods and services over two years, USTR said. That would be a significant

increase: China imported just shy of \$190 billion in goods and services in 2017, so if the target is met it would cut the US trade deficit with China by a third. President Donald Trump has long railed against the trade imbalance, citing it as proof China is using distorting policies to gain an unfair advantage. Trump tweeted that Beijing "agreed to many structural changes and massive purchases of Agricultural Product, Energy, and Manufactured Goods, plus much more."

Alliance for American Manufacturing President Scott Paul said agreeing to remove tariffs amounted to "giving away much of our leverage, while kicking the can down the road on the most meaningful trade issues with China." And trade economist Mary Lovely said the deal could only be viewed as a "partial win" which "didn't move the needle very much." "We were kind of on a brink, and we saw the negotiators reach a deal that pulled us back, and I think that is important," she said of the news Trump canceled the 15 percent tariffs on electronics that were due to hit Sunday. But the gains in the deal do not compensate for the damage to US farmers and businesses, she told reporters.

B'desh withdraws import restrictions on 9 items through 2 Tripura land ports

PTI ■ AGARTALA

The Bangladesh government has withdrawn its restrictions on importing nine items from India through two land ports in Tripura, in a boost to traders of the region, officials said on Saturday.

Bangladesh had exported various items amounting to Rs 522.42 crore in 2018-19 while imports of goods through seven land ports in Tripura to the neighbouring country were around Rs 14.66 crore, they said. "The trade imbalance is due to restrictions imposed by Dhaka on various items. Bangladesh has withdrawn its restrictions on importing nine items through Akhaura land port and Srimantapur land custom station," state industries and commerce department's additional director Swapna Debnath said. The nine items on which the restriction was removed from December 1 included cashew nut, paper, sugar, generator, broken glass, chocolate, baby wipes, confectionary and bitumen, she said.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform general public that Mr. Sonu is the owner of the Second Floor, (as per technical R/S) 'said floor' built on Property Bearing No. 45, area measuring 55 Sq. yds. out of Plot No. 38, Killa No. 9, 10, 21, 22, 3, Situated at Abadi of Gali No. 6, Sarojini Park, Shastri Nagar, Village - Khuruj Khos, Shandara, Delhi. Mr. Sonu has misplaced the Original General Power of Attorney dated 11.12.2000 along with AT & Will, Original Registered General Power of Attorney dated 02.05.2005, along with AT & Will and Original Sale Deed dated 01.06.2007. Any one who find the above said documents shall handover the same to the Manager of Hero Housing Finance Limited having its office at Mehra Estate, New Delhi. Sonu Kumar has availed loan on this property from Hero Housing Finance Limited by mortgaging the said property. We have been made to understand that no other person has any interest, right or title in the above said property. Viso this notice we wish to inform that in case anyone has any objection regarding mortgage of the said property, the same may be raised within 15 days of this publication to Mr. Muneesh Dhanraj/ Mr. Sudhir Jain (Advocates), Law Offices, Unit no. 405, 4th Floor, GID/ITL, Northex Tower (A-09), Netaji Subhash Place, Delhi-110034 or contact at 9066707172/981828636 (M).

Office of the Executive Engineer (Distribution)

Extension Notice-01
In view of limited response, the last date for submission of e-bids of following e-NIT is hereby extended as per below mentioned details:
S.No.1 e-NIT No. :- e-NIT No. KED/23 of 2019-20 dated 03.12.2019
Name of work :- Creation of 250KV/G Substation along with 11KV Line of Gov Degree College at Bani falling under the jurisdiction of Electric Division, Kathua (JPDC), on turnkey basis.
Last date for submission of e-Bids (Extended) :- 23.12.2019 01.00 P.M.
Opening of Technical and commercial bids :- 23.12.2019 01.00 P.M.
Sd/- Executive Engineer (Distribution)
No. DP/14-12-2019
Date: 14-12-2019
JPDC, Electric Division Kathua

Chela Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited

PUBLIC NOTICE
An advertisement was published under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Securities Interest Act, 2002 for the above mentioned company. In this advertisement of Symbolic Possession (For Immovable Property) on 28/11/2019 and Sale cum Auction Notice on dated 11/12/19 is hereby recall and stand cancel for the below mentioned property.
Property Address:- Property Admeasuring:- Entire Upper Ground Floor with 1/4th roof right of property bearing No G3/39 area measuring 145.44 sq.Yards. Situated in Model Town Delhi-110009. (Borrower Name-RAMA RANI, Loan A/c No-XOHEELD0000171871 & XOHEEDS00002245255)
Auction of all remaining properties remains same and auction shall be done on the date, time and venue scheduled on 31/12/19. Sd/- Date: 15/12/2019 (Authorised Officer) Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited

WESTERN RAILWAY

DESIGN, SUPPLY, INSTALLATION, PROGRAMMING, TESTING & COMMISSIONING OF NEW ELECTRONIC INTERLOCKING SYSTEMS
Dy. Chief Signal & Telecom Engineer/Const./Field/W/Rly, 8th floor, Station Building, Churchgate, Mumbai-20 invites offer through e-tender portal www.ireps.gov.in through Two packet system for the following tender. Tender Notice No. Dy.CSTCE/CBCT/334 (Two packet system). Name of work with its location: Design, Supply, Installation, Programming, Testing & Commissioning of New Electronic Interlocking (EI) systems, Alteration in existing Route relay interlocking/ Panel Interlocking/Auto huts at various sub-urban stations including modification in Train Management System (TMS)/interfacing of EI with TMS in connection with provision of 6th line work in BCT-BVI section of Mumbai division, Western Railway. Approx. NIT cost of the work: ₹50,05,07,769.71. EMD: ₹26,52,500/- e-Bid Submission closing on: 16.01.2020 at 15:00 hrs. e-Bid opening date: 16.01.2020 at 15:30 hrs. Instructions to the Tenderers: 1. Only e-tendering online through www.ireps.gov.in will be considered. Please note that printed offer will not be entertained. 2. The date of tender, terms & conditions and scope of work are uploaded and are available in electronic format on our website www.ireps.gov.in. Like us on: [Facebook.com/WesternRly](https://www.facebook.com/WesternRly)

Pak, WB sign agreement for financing Khyber Pass Economic Corridor project

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan and the World Bank has signed a project agreement worth \$406.6 million for financing the Khyber Pass Economic Corridor (KPEC) project with an aim to promote economic development. The signing ceremony was held on Friday at the Economic Affairs Division, Islamabad, The Express Tribune reported. The project is aimed at constructing a 48km four-lane,

dual carriageway, high-speed and access-controlled motorway from Peshawar to Torkham border point with Afghanistan in a bid to promote economic development and ensure uplift of the areas adjoining the expressway and falling in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. The project envisages public-private partnership and private financing for developing clusters of economic activity, economic zones and expressways.

Up to 25% of FASTag lanes to be temporarily converted to hybrid lanes at NH toll plazas

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

To avert inconvenience to citizens, the Government on Saturday announced to convert up to 25 per cent of FASTag lanes at national highway toll plazas to hybrid lanes for a month. The hybrid lane will accept FASTag and other modes of payment. The government earlier had announced rollout of mandatory FASTag under electronic toll collection from December 1, which was later extended to December 15, 2019.

Adani Transmission gets Lol for project in Maha

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Adani Transmission Ltd (ATL) on Saturday said it has received a Letter of Intent for a power transmission project in Maharashtra. The Letter of Intent (LoI) to ATL has been awarded under a tariff based competitive bidding model from Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Company Ltd (MSETCL). "ATL has received the LoI from MSETCL to build, own, operate and maintain a transmission project in Maharashtra for a period of 35 years," a company statement said.

The project 'Kharghar Vikhroli Transmission Pvt Ltd' comprises approximately 34 km of 400 kV and 220 kV transmission lines along with 400kV GIS (Gas Insulated Switchgear) Substation at Vikhroli in Mumbai. According to the statement, this will be the first ever 400 kV substation facility in Mumbai. The project is critical to Mumbai as the existing capacity of transmission corridor is not sufficient to carry further power into the city. It would enable additional power to be brought into the city, thus helping in meeting the future demand of Mumbai.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED

(See Section 82 Cr. PC)
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person namely **Nandlal Kumar Mirधा S/o Mahadev Mirधा R/o Village: Kura, P.O. Baratand, PS: Chitra, Distt: Deoghar, Jharkhand**, has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No. 278/15 Dt.: 01.06.15 u/s 420 IPC, PS Naraina, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused **Nandlal Kumar Mirधा** could not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Nandlal Kumar Mirधा** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused person. **Nandlal Kumar Mirधा** of **FIR No. 278/15 Dt.: 01.06.15 u/s 420 IPC, PS Naraina, Delhi**, is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before **01.02.2020**.
By Order
Sh. Manoj Kumar
Metropolitan Magistrate,
Room No. 28,
Patiala House Courts, New Delhi
DP/8531/WD/19

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is here by informed that this person (depicted in the photo) namely: **Gourav Duva S/o Vishambhar Duva R/o G-6/282, Ground Floor, Sector-16, Rohini, Delhi** has been missing/ kidnapped from the area of PS KNK Marg, since **06.11.2019**. In this regard DD No. 17-A dated **07.11.2019** has been registered at **PS. KNK Marg, Delhi**. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the person but no clue has come to light so far.
His physical description is as under:-
Sex: Male, **Age:** 34 years, **Height:** 5'6" ft., **Complexion:** Fair, **Face:** Round, **Wearing:** Black Shirt, and Black Pant.
Any person is having information or clue about this missing/ kidnapped person may kindly inform to the following:-
SHO
Website: <http://cbi.nic.in> P.S. KNK Marg, Delhi
E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in Ph. No.: 011-270061294, 27061295
Tel. No.: 011-24368638/24368641 Mob. No.: 8750870327
Fax No.: 011-24368639 DP/3503/RD/19

Not fair that I am being impeached: Trump

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump on Friday said it was unfair that he was being impeached as he had done no wrong and the country under him was doing quite good.

"It's not fair that I'm being impeached when I've done absolutely nothing wrong!" Trump said in a tweet on Friday night as a key Congressional committee, earlier in the day, approved the two articles of impeachment against him.

The impeachment against Trump now moves to the House of Representatives, where the opposition Democratic Party enjoys a majority. Once passed by the House, the trial for impeachment would be carried out in the 100-member US Senate, where Trump's Republican party has a majority.

"The Radical Left, Do Nothing Democrats have become the Party of Hate. They are so bad for our Country," Trump said in his tweet.

Earlier in the day, he described the impeachment as a hoax and politically motivated.

"The impeachment is a hoax. It is a sham. It started a long time ago, probably before I came down the escalator with the future First Lady. It started a long time ago," Trump told reporters earlier in the day at the White House.

"It is a witch hunt. It is a sham. It is a hoax. Nothing was



done wrong. Zero was done wrong. I think it is a horrible thing to be using the tool of impeachment, which is supposed to be used in an emergency. And it would seem many, many, many years apart," he asserted.

"To be using this for a perfect phone call, where the president of that country said there was no pressure whatsoever — did not even know what we were talking about. It is perfect; the relationship is perfect. I have done much more for the country than Obama did for them. It is a scam. It is something that should not be allowed. And it is a very bad thing for our country," Trump said.

The Democrats, he said were trivialising impeachment.

"I tell you what, someday there will be a Democrat president and there will be a Republican House, and I suspect they are going to remember it. Because when you use impeachment for absolutely nothing, other than to try and get political gain," Trump said. He asserted that his poll numbers had gone through the roof.

US Supreme Court to hear Trump tax return case next year

Washington: The US Supreme Court agreed Friday to hear cases next year over the release of Donald Trump's tax returns and financial records, setting the stage for a ruling during the presidential election campaign.

Trump has been seeking to block access to his tax returns and other financial records in lawsuits involving New York prosecutors and the US House of Representatives.

Lower courts have ruled that Trump must turn over the records but lawyers for the president appealed to the nation's highest court, arguing that as president, he has blanket immunity.

The Supreme Court — where conservative judges are in the majority — said it will hear arguments during the March session with a ruling to be issued before the session ends on June 30.

Trump, a New York real estate tycoon, is the first American president since Richard Nixon not to make his tax returns public, claiming they are under audit by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). **AFP**

Boris Johnson goes north to celebrate election win

London: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson visited northern England on Saturday to thank voters and newly elected Conservative Party lawmakers in the working class heartland that turned its back on the opposition Labour Party in this week's election and helped give him an 80-seat majority.

Speaking in Sedgefield — the constituency once held by Labour former prime minister Tony Blair — Johnson acknowledged the seismic shift that helped sweep him to victory in Thursday's election.

"I know that people may have been breaking the voting habits of generations to vote for us," he told supporters.

"And I want the people of the northeast to know that we in the Conservative Party and I will repay your trust."

In a victory speech outside 10 Downing Street on Friday, Johnson called for an end to the acrimony that has festered throughout the country since the divisive 2016 Brexit referendum, and urged Britain to "let the healing begin."

Johnson's campaign mantra to "get Brexit done" and widespread unease with the leadership style and socialist policies of opposition leader Jeremy Corbyn combined to give the ruling Conservatives 365 seats in the House of Commons, its best performance since party icon Margaret

Thatcher's last victory in 1987. Labour slumped to 203 seats, its worst showing since 1935.

While Johnson was on a victory lap Saturday, Corbyn — who has pledged to stand down next year — was under fire from within his own party, where there was little sign of healing starting any time soon.



Former lawmaker Helen Goodman, one of many Labour legislators to lose their seat in northern England, told BBC radio that "the biggest factor was obviously the unpopularity of Jeremy Corbyn as the leader."

Another former Labour lawmaker criticized the election campaign more broadly as muddled.

Anna Turley told the BBC that the party put forward an overwhelming number of policies and voters "just didn't believe we were the party that could deliver on any of it."

Armed with his hefty new majority, Johnson is set to start the process next week of pushing Brexit legislation through Parliament to ensure Britain leaves the EU by the January 31 deadline.

Once he's passed that hurdle — breaking three years of parliamentary deadlock — he has to seal a trade deal with the bloc by the end of 2020.

"We've just been going over the timetable we can definitely get it in before Christmas, and we're out on January 31," Johnson said.

While Johnson's large majority means he has relatively clear air ahead on Brexit, he faces turbulence over renewed calls for a referendum on Scottish independence following the strong election showing of the Scottish National Party. **AP**

'Brexit election' raises hopes, fears in Northern Ireland

Belfast: Prime Minister Boris Johnson's crushing election victory gives Britain a chance to move past years of gridlock over Brexit — especially in Northern Ireland, where social and political divides run deep.

"We're leaving limbo," said Orlaith McKeever, preparing food for the lunchtime rush at St. George's Market in Belfast, a redbrick rabbits' warren of stalls and kiosks.

Brexit-voting music trader Lawrence John, 69, also reflected relief that the stalled process of extricating Britain from the European Union after nearly five decades was finally moving ahead.

"Like many, many people I'm sick of all this Brexit stuff. Three-and-a-half years ago there was a referendum to decide whether we were going to leave," he told AFP.

"We're just finally getting news that it can actually happen after all this time," he said after Johnson's Conservatives won their biggest majority since the heyday of Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s.

Thursday's snap general became a re-run of the 2016 EU membership referendum in which Johnson championed the Brexit cause.

The Prime Minister ran this campaign on the promise to "get Brexit done" — a simple but effective message with profound implications for Britain's most politically volatile region.

Northern Ireland voted by 56 percent to remain in the European Union in 2016.

Since then, it has become central to a Brexit deal with Brussels.

Unease spread about the prospect of a no-deal Brexit and the re-emergence of a hard border with EU neighbour Ireland to the south.

Border checks are associated with three decades of sectarian violence over British rule of Northern Ireland that left some 3,500 people dead.

The potential removal of an open border — a plank of the 1998 agreement that ended "The Troubles" — has been seen as an unwelcome return to the past.

It also reopened the issue of Northern Ireland's place in the United Kingdom with England, Scotland and Wales, and the potential of a united Ireland.

For the first time, the election returned more Irish republican than British unionist lawmakers to the UK House of Commons. The largest republican party Sinn Fein even took the seat of North Belfast from unionist hands for the first time since it was drawn up in 1885. Sinn Fein leader Mary Lou McDonald called it a "historic moment".

"The discussion around constitutional change is now underway," she told old Irish broadcaster RTE Friday.

"It's safe to say that Irish unity will be firmly on the agenda in a way that it has never been before," Queen's University Belfast politics lecturer Jamie Pow told AFP.

Palpable sense of fear over Johnson win, says British Muslim group

PTI ■ LONDON

A prominent British Muslim representative organisation has issued a statement expressing a "palpable sense of fear" within the Muslim community in the UK following Prime Minister

Boris Johnson's massive victory in the country's General Election this week.

Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), which has been calling for a full-fledged inquiry into anti-Muslim conduct within the Johnson-led Conservative Party, used one of the key slogans from the election campaign to express fears that the strong majority in the House of Commons could mean that, like Brexit, Islamophobia is also "oven-ready" for the new government.

"Mr Johnson commands a majority, but there is a palpable sense of fear amongst Muslim communities around the country," said MCB Secretary General Harun Khan in a statement released on Friday.

He said: "We entered the election campaign period with long standing concerns about bigotry in our politics and our governing party. Now we worry that Islamophobia is 'oven-ready' for Government."

"Mr Johnson has been entrusted with huge power, and we pray it is exercised responsibly for all Britons."

Pak Court adjourns hearing in terror financing case against Saeed

Lahore: After his indictment, the trial against Mumbai attack mastermind Hafiz Saeed in the terror financing case failed to be held for the third consecutive day on Saturday due to a country-wide strike by the lawyers.

Saeed, who has been indicted along with three close aides in terror financing case, could not be produced before the Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) here on Saturday because of the lawyers' strike. The lawyers are protesting for the last three days against the arrest of their colleagues in a case of hooliganism at a hospital in Lahore.

The ATC Lahore adjourned the hearing of the terror financing case against Saeed and others till December 16.

"Except the arrested lawyers, no other suspect or witness in any other case were presented before the ATC due to the lawyers strike during the last three days," a court official told PTI on Saturday.

He said the prosecution which was to present witnesses against Saeed and others also could not bring them to the court.

The ATC court on Wednesday indicted Jammata-ud-Dawah (JuD) chief and his aides Hafiz Abdul Salam bin Muhammad, Muhammad Ashraf and Zafar Iqbal in the terror financing case and directed the prosecution to produce witnesses.

The ATC on Wednesday framed the terror financing charges on the four suspects in their presence. Deputy



Prosecutor General Punjab Abdur Rauf had told the court that founder of terror group Lashkar-e-Taiba and others were involved in terror financing case and the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) of Punjab police had 'solid evidence' in this regard.

The CTD had registered 23 FIRs against Saeed and his accomplices on the charges of "terror financing" in different cities of Punjab province and

arrested Saeed on July 17. He is detained at the Kot Lakhpat jail in Lahore.

The cases have been registered in Lahore, Gujranwala and Multan for collection of funds for terrorism financing through assets/properties made and held in the names of Trusts/Non Profit Organisations (NPO) including Al-Anfaal Trust, Dawatul Irshad Trust, Muaz Bin Jabal Trust.

According to the CTD, investigation launched into financing matters of proscribed organisations - Jammata-ud-Dawah (JuD) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) - in connection with implementation of UN sanctions against these designated entities and persons as directed by NSC (National Security Committee) in its

Meeting of January 1, 2019 chaired by Prime Minister Imran Khan for implementing the National Action Plan.

"These suspects made assets from funds of terrorism financing. They held and used these assets to raise more funds for further terrorism financing. Hence, they committed multiple offences of terrorism financing and money laundering under Anti Terrorism Act 1997. They will be prosecuted in ATCs (Anti Terrorism Courts) for commission of these offences," the CTD said.

The US Department of the Treasury has designated Saeed as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist, and the US, since 2012, has offered a USD 10 million reward for information that brings Saeed to justice. **PTI**

Ex-Sudan strongman al-Bashir gets 2 years jail for corruption

Khartoum (Sudan): A court in Sudan convicted former President Omar al-Bashir of money laundering and corruption on Saturday, sentencing him to two years in a minimum security lockup.

That's the first verdict in a series of legal proceedings against al-Bashir, who is also wanted by the International Criminal Court on charges of war crimes and genocide linked to the Darfur conflict in the 2000s.

The verdict comes a year after Sudanese protesters erupted in revolt against al-Bashir's authoritarian rule. During his three decades in power, Sudan landed on the US list for sponsoring terrorism, and the country's economy was battered by years of mismanagement and



American sanctions.

Al-Bashir has been in custody since April, when Sudan's military ousted him after months of nationwide protests. The uprising eventually forced the military into a power-sharing agreement with civilians.

Sudan's military has said it would not extradite him to the

ICC. The country's military-civilian transitional government has not indicated whether they will hand him over to the The Hague.

The Sudanese Professionals' Association, which was the backbone of the protest movement, welcomed Saturday's verdict as a "moral and political conviction" against the former president and his regime.

Under Sudanese law, al-Bashir, 75, will be sent to a state-run lockup for elderly people who are convicted of crimes not punishable with death. But he will remain in jail amid an ongoing trial on separate charges regarding the killing of protesters in the months prior to his ouster. **PTI**

Pompeo warns Iran of 'decisive response' if harm in Iraq

Washington: Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Friday warned Iran of a "decisive" response if US interests are harmed in Iraq, after a series of rocket attacks on bases.

"We must... Use this opportunity to remind Iran's leaders that any attacks by them, or their proxies of any identity, that harm Americans, our allies or our interests will be answered with a decisive

US response," Pompeo said in a statement.

"Iran must respect the sovereignty of its neighbours and immediately cease its provision of lethal aid and support to third parties in Iraq and throughout the region," he said.

The United States has expressed mounting concern about the flurry of attacks on Iraqi bases used by US troops, several of which it has blamed on Iranian-backed Shiite paramilitary groups.

Two rocket attacks this week targeted a compound near Baghdad International Airport, which houses US troops, with an incident Monday wounding Iraqi troops.

"We hope and pray these brave Iraqis will quickly and fully recover from their injuries," Pompeo said.

Pompeo, who has repeatedly warned Tehran, pinned the blame for the latest attacks squarely on "Iran's proxies". Iran has gained overwhelming influence in Iraq, its neighbour with which it shares a Shiite



majority, since the 2003 US invasion brought down Saddam Hussein.

President Donald Trump's administration, which is close to Iran's adversaries Saudi Arabia and Israel, has been trying to counter Tehran's influence around the region, including through sanctions aimed at blocking all its oil exports.

The United States last week imposed sanctions on three leaders of the Shiite paramilitary force Hashed al-Shaabi, accusing them of taking part in the deadly crackdown on nationwide protests.

Iraqi prime minister Adel Abdul Mahdi, a close ally of Iran who also enjoyed cordial relations with the United States, resigned after the two months of demonstrations in which around 460 people have died. **AFP**

Thunberg calls for 'fight for tomorrow' at Italy protest

Turin (Italy): Swedish climate change activist Greta Thunberg on Friday asked young people to fight for their future in the next decade, as she joined a demonstration in the northern Italian city of Turin.

"Adults are behaving as if there's no tomorrow," Thunberg told young protesters at a Fridays for Future demonstration, the global movement inspired by her activism. "But there's a tomorrow. We have to fight for that tomorrow as if our lives depend on that, because they do."

Thunberg traveled to Turin in an electric car after attending the COP25 climate conference in Madrid, where she had given a speech accusing world governments of "creative PR" over their climate change stances.

The 16-year-old, who this week became the youngest person to be named Time magazine's Person of the Year, warned that the decade that is about to start will be the one that "will define our future," and will have a key impact over the rest of our lives.

"For sure her tenacity, her determination, is an example to everybody that reminds us that we need to fight every day for this climate crisis," said Laura Vallaro, a climate activist who joined Turin's demonstration. **AP**

UN climate talks in limbo as rifts among countries remain

Madrid: Countries remained deadlocked Saturday in talks over combating climate change as UN talks dragged on beyond the official deadline with no end in sight.

Chile's environment minister, Carolina Schmidt, who is chairing the two-week talks in Madrid, urged officials from almost 200 countries to recognize the "overall balance" of the latest draft agreements hammered out overnight.

"We must show the outside world that we deliver," she said.

Environmental activists staged protests inside and around the venue during the talks, as they have around the world in the past year, to demand leaders take bolder action against global warming.

Many nations and observers said the latest draft agreements risked backtracking on existing commitments made in the 2015 Paris climate accord and didn't reflect the urgent warnings from scientists that greenhouse gas emissions need to fall sharply, and soon.

"If this text is accepted, the low ambition coalition will have won the day," said David Waskow of the World Resources Institute, a Washington-based environmental think tank. Among the issues at stake are aid for poor countries suffering the impacts of climate change and efforts to agree rules for international markets to trade carbon emissions vouchers. **AP**

Bomb explosion in south Nepal home kills 3

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Three people, including a police officer, have been killed in a bomb explosion at a house in southern Nepal's Dhanusha district.

The bomb was planted at one Rajesh Shah's house in Kshreshwarath Municipality by unknown persons, police said.

Rajesh (42) and his son Ananta Shah (17) died on the spot, while Police Inspector Amir Dahal, in charge of Sakhuwa Mahendranagar-based Area Office, was seriously injured in the explosion. Dahal died undergoing treatment.

Rajesh's father Bhikhari Shah (73), his daughter Nikki Shah (21), son Prakash Shah (14) and another police officer Rijan Mahatto were also injured in the incident and were hospitalised.

Upon seeing the bomb at his home's gate, Rajesh Shah alerted the police late on Friday night.

Police personnel were checking the improvised explosive device when it exploded, officials said.

Untiring protesters come up against immovable elite in Algeria

AFP ■ PARIS

Algeria's unpopular presidential election was meant to reset the country's politics after months of crisis, but it exposed a rigid system determined to perpetuate itself, analysts say.

"You get the impression of two parallel Algerias: a ruling class which congratulates itself on organising elections and a populace that holds protests," said Maghreb expert and historian Karima Direche.

The North African country plunged into crisis in February when veteran president Abdelaziz Bouteflika announced he would seek a fifth term, sparking mass demonstrations.

Bouteflika quit under popular pressure in April, but the Hirak protest movement has kept up the pressure with weekly mass rallies to demand sweeping reforms.

Thursday's presidential vote was bitterly opposed by Hirak, which saw it as an establishment ploy to cling to power.

Anti-election rallies rocked major cities and in the Berber-dominated region of Kabylie, protesters ransacked polling stations and clashed with police. Fewer than four out of ten Algerian voters cast their ballots on Thursday, according to election officials.

Direche suspects the real figure may be less than half that. Officials "stuff the ballot boxes, they fix the numbers.

They don't even make the effort" to hide their manipulations, she said.

On Friday, vast crowds descended onto the streets of Algiers to reject newly elected president Abdelmadjid Tebboune, a longtime government insider and former premier under Bouteflika.

But the opposition to the poll "matters little to a regime committed to a sham election intended to prolong its tenure," said Anthony Skinner, regional director at risk analysis firm Verisk Maplecroft.

Algeria's elite, dominated by army chief Ahmed Gaid Salah, sees the turnout as "enough to bestow what it sees as legitimacy on the next president," he said.

"Gaid Salah will probably still treat the election as a success." Yet with the protest movement showing no sign of abating, that calculus may be wrong, said Jean-Pierre Filiu, a professor at Sciences Po university in Paris.

"Gaid Salah failed in his bid to stifle popular protest through imposing this election," said Filiu.

The protesters on the other hand "succeeded in making participation the only real issue in this poll, rather than the identity of the future president," he said.

"By sticking to a non-violent approach... The Hirak is continuing to erode military decision-makers' stranglehold on the country. There will be no going back" to the status quo.

Insider attack kills 9 Afghan militia, say officials

Kabul: At least one member of an Afghan militia opened fire on his fellow militiamen early Saturday, killing nine, in what the country's interior ministry called an insider attack.

The Taliban however claimed the attack was actually a coordinated insurgent assault on the checkpoint where the shooting took place, killing over two dozen militiamen, according to Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid.

There was no immediate explanation for the discrepancy, but the Taliban often exaggerate their claims.

Details were sketchy and investigators were still looking into the attack in central Ghazni province's Karabagh district, said Interior Ministry spokesman Fawad Aman. The number of attackers was also not immediately clear.

Afghan militias operate in remote regions and are under the command of the country's National Security Forces, which suffers near daily Taliban attacks. The Taliban now control or hold sway over half the country.

Insider attacks have been steady throughout the 18-year conflict, with U.S. and NATO troops most often targeted. But when Afghan security forces are targeted, the casualty rate is often much higher.

In July, two US service members were killed by an Afghan soldier **AP**

India start favourites against WI

PTI ■ CHENNAI

India will have their tails up when they play West Indies in the first One-day International of the three-match rubber in MA Chidambaram Stadium today, seeking a 10th straight bilateral ODI series win against the side from the Caribbean.

The home team will miss the services of seamer Bhuvneshwar Kumar, ruled out after his sportsman hernia symptoms resurfaced, and Shikhar Dhawan, who is yet to recover from knee injury.

Mumbai's Shardul Thakur, who represents Chennai Super Kings in the IPL, has been called up as the replacement for the injured Bhuvneshwar.

Virat Kohli's men have the momentum after winning the T20 series with a splendid batting performance in Mumbai where Rohit Sharma and K L Rahul, who is expected to continue as the opener in the absence of Dhawan, and the captain himself displayed terrific form.

It remains to be seen if the team decides to hand Mayank Agarwal a debut after he was drafted in as replacement for Dhawan.

Shreyas Iyer has done well in the opportunities he has received and is likely to be slotted at No 4.

The focus will be on wicket-keeper-batsman Rishabh Pant, who has been under fire for his unimpressive performances with the bat and the big gloves. The first ODI could be another chance for him to justify the faith shown by Kohli and the team management.

It will be interesting to see if the spin duo of Yuzvendra Chahal and Kuldeep Yadav reunite after last playing together in the World Cup, as the Chepauk surface is expected to aid the slow bowlers.

The experienced Mohammed Shami and Deepak Chahar will most probably form the pace attack and would face a stern test against the aggressive West Indies batting line-up.

The visitors will be hoping that big-hitting opener Evin Lewis, who suffered an injury while fielding in the Mumbai T20, will be able to play a part in the ODI leg of the tour. Team officials said he was being assessed ahead of the series opener.

The Windies batsmen have had a lot of success in the T20s thanks to their ultra-aggressive approach but ODIs will be a different ball game and as assistant coach Roddy Ewstick stated the batters need to focus on rotating the strike, which



Rohit Sharma, center, chats with Indian teammate Shreyas Iyer, left, as batting coach Vikram Rathour watches the proceedings

PTI

India vs Windies
Live from 1:30pm IST
STAR SPORTS 1 NETWORK



West Indies' Brandon King, left, and Sheldon Cottrell attend a training session

they did well in the series against Afghanistan recently.

The onus will be on the batsmen to not only go on attack mode first up but also keep wickets in hand to accelerate in the back-end.

Shimron Hetmyer and Nicholas Pooran have showed their abilities in the shortest format and need to display the same in the 50-overs game too if the West Indies hopes to give India a run in this series.

All-rounder Roston Chase is likely to figure in the XI and could provide some stability to the line-up boasting of several power-hitters.

INDIA-WINDIES IN ODIS					
Venue	P	WI	Ind	T	N/R
In India	55	27	27	1	-
Total	130	62	62	2	4
Day matches	97	53	40	-	4
Last 5 matches	4	-	4	-	1

HIGHEST INNINGS TOTALS		
India	418-5 in 50 overs (Indore)	08-12-2011
Windies	333-8 in 45 overs (Jamshedpur)	07-12-1983

LOWEST INNINGS TOTALS		
India	100 in 28.3 overs (Ahmedabad)	16-11-1993
Windies	104 in 31.5 overs (Trivendrum)	01-11-2018

HIGHEST INDIVIDUAL SCORES		
India	219 Virender Sehwag	08-12-2011
Windies	152* Desmond Haynes	21-03-1989

BEST BOWLING PERFORMANCES		
India	6-12 Anil Kumble (Kolkata)	27-11-1993
Windies	6-19 Patrick Patterson (Nagpur)	08-12-1987

Skipper Kieron Pollard, who has a rather modest record in the ODIs, will have to lead by example and provide the thrust in the slog overs.

Sheldon Cottrell will lead the Caribbean bowling attack and will need to strike early if the team hopes to restrict a formidable Indian batting unit with Rohit, Kohli and Rahul in ominous form. The other pacers including former captain Jason Hoder will have to step up as would the spinners.

Leggie Hayden Walsh Jr bowled

well in the T20s and has a big task at hand to contain Kohli & Co, known to be adept at tackling spinners.

An intriguing battle is on hand with the Indian team favourite to add the ODI series to the T20 win but the unpredictable West Indies can spring a surprise or two.

SQUADS

India: Virat Kohli (captain), Rohit Sharma (vice-captain), Mayank Agarwal, KL Rahul, Shreyas Iyer, Manish Pandey, Rishabh Pant (WK), Shivam Dube, Kedar Jadhav, Ravindra Jadeja, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Deepak Chahar, Mohammed Shami, Shardul Thakur.

West Indies: Kieron Pollard (captain), Sunil Ambris, Shai Hope, Khary Pierre, Roston Chase, Alzarri Joseph, Kieron Pollard (Captain), Sheldon Cottrell, Brandon King, Nicholas Pooran, Shimron Hetmyer, Evin Lewis, Romario Shepherd, Jason Holder, Keemo Paul, Hayden Walsh Jr.

Mayank knows how to switch between formats

PTI ■ CHENNAI

His place in India's Test squad cemented, opener Mayank Agarwal says it is easy to switch formats if the game-plan is clear.

Agarwal has been picked in the team for the ODI series as a replacement for the injured Shikhar Dhawan.

"The more I play like this, the better it is for me as a cricketer because I rather play cricket than not play cricket. When it comes to mindset (switching formats), the basics remain the same. It's easy to switch formats if your game-plan is clear and your understanding of the game is clear," Agarwal said on *Chahal TV*.

Since making his Test debut last December in Australia, Agarwal has made rapid strides, ending the 2019 season as one of the top-run-getters in the format.

Irrespective of whether he is playing Test or limited overs cricket, Agarwal is always focussed on the task.

"Regardless of wherever I play, I always think about how I can become an asset to my team and how I can contribute to the team. Even if I don't score runs with the bat, I think about contributing on the field, bringing in more energy on the field," he said.

Agarwal has two double tons and a century under his belt for India in Test cricket.

"I want to win each and every match, each and every tournament. When you come in with that attitude, your mindset will be good. There's no guarantee that you'll get the results 100 percent but you will be giving yourselves a good chance to perform," he said.



WI captain Kieron Pollard, right, & Nicholas Pooran interact in the nets during a training session

We are on mission to do better in ODIs: Pollard

PTI ■ CHENNAI

West Indies captain Kieron Pollard on Saturday said his team is "on a mission" to do better in the one-dayers but insisted that favourable results may not come immediately.

"We are on a mission and have a clear plan of how to approach 50-over cricket. There is a process and it is something we are actually going through. The results might not show straightaway. We had a good series against Afghanistan. Now, we are coming up against a better side in India," Pollard said.

"It's a matter of what we need to do going forward. There are things internally which we are working on. Success will not come overnight. Winning is always good. Sometimes, you play well but the result would not go your way. The Afghanistan series was good and we want to continue in that track. That's the ultimate goal," he added.

Asked how his team plans to go about handling the middle overs in ODIs, he said it has been discussed and the players were aware of their roles and responsibilities.

"We have discussed how we want to go about playing middle overs, be it batting and bowling and how we want to play this format. Obviously, we can't reveal what our plans are going to be. The guys are aware of their roles and responsibilities, now it's about executing them," the captain said.

He said the inclusion of Roston Chase in the ODI side brought a good balance to the team.

"He (Roston) brings a good balance to our team. He is a great asset, he is someone who bats in the middle order in Tests and has centuries too. He can bowl as well. With him in the side, it gives us an opportunity to field another specialist player."

"He has been very valuable for us. He is sort of a left-field selection, but I think that has worked for us. He will play a key part going forward," the skipper added.

'Once Pant gets runs, he'll be massive player'

CHENNAI: Batting coach Vikram Rathour on Saturday said Rishabh Pant will be a "massive player" for the Indian team once he starts getting runs, backing the under-fire wicket-keeper to the hilt.

Asked why the Delhi keeper-batsman kept getting chances despite low scores, Rathour attributed it to his "immense ability".

"The reason why we keep discussing him is that he has got an immense ability. Everybody believes he can be an X factor. All of us believe he is a good player who can come good. He is working hard on his game and fitness."

"... Because he has done well in the past in this format. Once he starts getting runs, he can be a massive player for the Indian team, he can be a match-winner," Rathour told reporters on

the eve of the first ODI.

When asked if it was time to give him a break, Rathour said it has not come yet.

"I don't think the time has arrived yet. Again he is working on certain things. He is looking good in the nets. He has been decent in the T20s."

"He was asked to do a certain job in the last T20 which he did. That's what the team looks for."

About K L Rahul who did well in the recent T20s and if any changes had been made in his technique, Rathour said there was no doubt he would do well.

"He went through a lean patch which every cricketer goes through. A couple of technical changes and change in mindset and the result shows."

"He has always been a good player. There was absolutely no doubt he will do well," the batting coach added.

PTI

Dhoni will play World T20: Bravo

PIANS ■ CHENNAI

West Indies all-rounder Dwayne Bravo believes that his Chennai Super Kings team mate and captain MS Dhoni will be at the World T20 that will be held in Australia next year.

"Dhoni has never retired. So I think he will be there at the World T20. MS has never let things outside cricket influence him and he has taught us the same and told us to never panic and trust our abilities," Bravo was quoted as saying by *Times of India*.

Bravo recently reversed his international retirement and made himself available for T20s. The 36-year-old former ODI captain said that he still has a lot to offer and it was the change of leadership both on and off the field that convinced him to make the comeback.

"I feel good physically and I still have a lot to offer. I had retired because of off-field politics. But there is a change of leadership both on and off the field. So I felt that it is a good time to come back."



DJ Bravo & MS Dhoni in file photo

Guwahati T20I: BCCI, Assam CA to 'monitor' situation

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The BCCI and Assam Cricket Association (ACA) will be "closely monitoring" the security situation in Guwahati in the wake of protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, keeping in mind the January 5 T20I between India and Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka are coming to India for a short three-match T20I series, which starts at the Barsapara Stadium in Guwahati, but the prevailing security situation has cast a shadow of doubt.

"Right now, we cannot comment on whether the T20I in Guwahati will happen or not. All the authorities (state Police, Home Ministry) will be monitoring the situation. We have to wait for some time. There is still three weeks to go so we have to be hopeful," Assam CA vice-president Parikshit Dutta said.

Both BCCI and ACA need to be extra cautious as it involves the security of an international team.

Due to the protests in Guwahati, the fourth day's play in the Ranji Trophy match between Assam and Services was cancelled, and the players remained in their hotels.

The BCCI officials are, however, hopeful of normalcy prevailing in Guwahati within the next three weeks.

"At this point, it will be premature to comment that the India versus Sri Lanka game will be shifted. Yes, we are all monitoring the security situation and close to the date, we will take a call. For the time being, BCCI will 'wait and watch'" a senior BCCI functionary said.

Asked if the BCCI will be ready with an alternate venue if Guwahati is unable to host the match, the official said: "Right now, we haven't zeroed in on any alternate venues but we always keep back-up options ready in case of unforeseen circumstances. For now, let's hope that normalcy returns and we can have the match as per schedule."



Tim Paine, left, is bowled by Tim Southee, right, on Day 3

Australia's lead balloons to 417

AFP ■ PERTH

Australia was in a commanding position despite a late batting collapse on the third day of the first Test against New Zealand at Perth Stadium on Saturday.

Having led by 250 runs on the first innings, the home side were 167 for six at stumps, with Matthew Head on eight and Pat Cummins on one — an overall lead of 417.

Cruising at 131 for one when Marnus Labuschagne (50) and Joe Burns (53) were at the crease, the Australians lost five for 29 under lights later in the day against some spirited bowling from the Kiwis, with Tim Southee claiming 4-63.

Labuschagne, dropped on four by Colin de Grandhomme from the bowling of Neil Wagner (2-40), missed the chance to join elite company when he pulled a short ball straight to Mitchell Santner at mid-wicket from the same bowler.

Without a Test century only a month ago, he was on

track to become just the second Australian batsman, and fifth overall, to score four Test centuries in succession. The only Australian to do so previously was Jack Fingleton in 1936.

Smith's relatively lean summer continued when he holed out to a short ball from Wagner for 16, the first time in his entire 71-Test career he has gone three matches without a half-century.

After the home side made 416 the Kiwis were dismissed for only 166 in their first innings as Australian paceman Mitchell Starc terrorised their batsmen in continued sweltering conditions.

Australia didn't enforce the follow-on given the extreme heat and the absence of front line pacer Josh Hazlewood due to injury.

Starc claimed 5-52 and troubled the New Zealanders with his pace and bounce. Only Ross Taylor offered meaningful resistance with 80, but he was caught at slip by Smith off the bowling of Nathan Lyon.

Rahul 'serious keeping option' for T20 WC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Only Mahendra Singh Dhoni knows whether his body will be able to cope up with rigours of international cricket after a break, KL Rahul could be a "serious keeping option" for next year's T20 World Cup and Rishabh Pant needs to "calm down", feels India head coach Ravi Shastri.

With Pant not doing well and mystery surrounding Dhoni's international future, Shastri didn't rule out the possibility of Rahul doing multi-tasking during the marquee tournament *Down Under*. "It's sensible (the break by Dhoni). I like the time (around IPL) when he will be starting to play again. I don't think he is too keen on the one-day stuff. He is finished with Test cricket. T20 is an option. It's a format that is tailor-made for him. But will his body be able to cope with the demands, only he will answer," Shastri told *India Today* during its programme *Inspiration*.

"The rest would have done him a

world of good, mentally. That mental fatigue would have gone away by now. If he decides to play, which he will because he will play the IPL, then he will start training with a very fresh mind. Then you have got to see form," said Shastri, who has already said that no one should "fool around" if the legend decided to play the T20 World Cup.

However, he also believes that Rahul could emerge as an option as he keeps in the IPL as well as for Karnataka in domestic white-ball tournaments.

"It is an absolute option. You got to see where your strength is. Tomorrow, there could be a couple of guys in the middle-order who are firing with unbelievable innings in the IPL. And then if you have a guy who can multi-task, who could be used at the top, because there's some firepower at the back who are doing extremely well, then why not," when asked if Rahul could be an option.

Asked what he expects from Rishabh Pant, Shastri said, "a bit of calm". "You have got to cash in. Your work



KL Rahul arrives for training session

Have lot of respect for Sourav: Shastri

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

"To hell with those who don't understand" was Ravi Shastri's inimitable response to the sceptics, who have constantly made conjectures about his alleged frosty relationship with BCCI president Sourav Ganguly.

A week back, it was Ganguly who had cleared the air on his part making it clear that rumours of bad blood between him and the head coach of the Indian cricket team are merely "speculations". "As far as the Sourav-Shastri 'game' goes, that is a brilliant *chaat* and *bhulpuri* for the media with all *mirch* and *masala*," Shastri said.

The Ganguly-Shastri relationship became a topic of discussion after the Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC) comprising Ganguly, Sachin Tendulkar and VVS Laxman preferred Anil Kumble over him in 2016, with both having a public fallout.

"What he (Ganguly) has done as a cricketer, I have got utmost respect. He took over Indian cricket at the most troubled times, post the match-fixing era when the Indian cricket was in shambles. You needed the faith of the people to comeback and I respect that. And if people don't respect that, to hell with them," Shastri, known for his plain speak, said.

The Ganguly-Shastri relationship became a topic of discussion after the Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC) comprising Ganguly, Sachin Tendulkar and VVS Laxman preferred Anil Kumble over him in 2016, with both having a public fallout.

ethic should be solid. You have to have a solid approach to your batting. You can't think everything is going to happen the way I want it to happen from

ball 1. No, it won't happen like that. This game teaches you. There's a method to madness as well. So, he has to learn that method."

I think that people should absolutely be allowed to do whatever they want with their bodies and to live the life they want to lead
— Elisabeth Moss



FROM THE INSIDE

The unending Baloch saga

A book that traces the roots of the deep-seated Baloch alienation to the forced accession of Kalat to Pakistan in 1948



Correct your weaknesses

Identify, acknowledge, and address your own fault lines, and things will change sooner than later

Our textiles are our communiqué. These bear imprints of diverse cultures and their traditions. There is deep history and heritage attached to what we wear and re-create over and over again, writes SAYALI GOYAL as she shares her impressions from



TEXTILE JOURNEY THROUGH BENGAL

When talking about Bengal, one must start the narrative from a weaving cluster village as the textile heritage of the region boasts of some of the finest weaving traditions of the country. Upon reaching Bengal, about four hours north of Kolkata, lies Shantipur, a village of Jamdani weavers, who migrated from Bangladesh during partition. Traditionally, these weavers made *dhotis*, a drape worn by Bengali men, now reduced to occasional wear. Which is why they mostly weave saris for the local women.

A master weaver, who hosted us at his workshop, shared with us how weaving involves the critical labour of his family members — his wife and his brother's family weave for nearly six to eight hours a day. Sometimes it takes up to a week to make one sari which they sell for ₹1500. An average of ₹10,000 is what a weaver makes per month, which is slightly above the minimum wage. The information is enough to make you sit up and wonder: what is the fair price for a traditional craft? Where does the difference lie between a skilled labourer and an artisan? Our host explained that they visit the *melas* organised by the ministry that provide a platform to sell directly to customers; at other times, boutiques from the city commission their pieces. He shared that for him, this is the best job as he can stay close to his artisanal tradition and family. Working in the city, he said, that would require him to live alone.

It was pleasing to see the community spirit in the weavers and that women held an equal position in the trade. There are 50,000 weavers in Shantipur who mostly work on handlooms, but the market demand has been in the hold of power looms as well. He talked about the use of natural dye only on request or when the weavers are specifically provided with naturally dyed yarns by the boutique. Chemical dyes are cheaper to produce, thus making it a competitive product. The community has now formed a weavers' society to bring more structure to the craft village where they try to solve issues of daily business. They hope for bigger, more concrete support from larger organisations in buying more looms and raw materials like threads. For the weavers, the biggest challenge is the money circulation, as they are only paid at the end of the month; most of their cash is invested in raw materials by that time. A common complaint is that the larger buyers work on consignments and refuse to pay for raw materials in advance, which for them is a big risk.

My rendezvous with the weavers in Shantipur and interactions with the master craftsmen left with me questions but also ideas. My visit to Mahamaya, a third generation Kantha artist and a National Award winner proved insightful. Some of her masterpieces include scenes from

Ramayana with Kantha stitch work.

"Illustrations make for a *naksha* on Kantha which is the stitched layered fabric", explained Mahamaya. Kantha stitch is typically a long running stitch; however, there is innovation today and Herringbone, Satin, and Button stitches are also used. Browsing through her pile, I came across one that her grandmother had made, a 70 year old piece with natural colours.

Kantha is a way of storytelling through geometric patterns, figurative narratives, and floral illustrations. Mahamaya talks about her process and shares that she like to draw first on the fabric and then go by her instinct to fill colours into the piece of work. "Some of these works take years to make. Sometime I do the border and then another artisan fills the space inside. Reds and black were traditionally used but now there are more options in colours. I look for inspiration in other forms of art as well as in books and museums. During my mother's time, they used to pull out threads from old saris to embroider but now I use anchor thread. I also collaborate with other artisans like Kashmiri, who I have worked with for sixteen years. She is in the craft for tradition and it is a skill that gets her money as well".

Mahamaya has trained artists and taught them to preserve the art. Speaking of innovation, Mahamaya likes to experiment with the base fabric like cottons and tussars. There is a lot of scope where the artist could bring themselves in the work with experimentation within the technique. Some of her new projects include graphic inspiration and also a mix of techniques like applique. A new series is being developed under her, which is inspired from the panels of *Kamasutra*. Mahamaya shares that most of the works are commissioned art pieces such as the ones recently sold to Reliance Foundation at the Swadeshi Bazaar, but a lot of orders in the form of wearable art such as *dupattas* or bed linen keep the workshop running.

The textile documentation trip to Kolkata would be incomplete without a meeting with Namrata, Founder of Biome Conscious Textiles. Her story of entrepreneurship came together as she was looking out of the window of life for inspiration to make her financially independent while also staying true to her values. She was at that time questioning consumerism. So, there she was, with no prior experience in business other than having some entrepreneurial DNA by virtue of belonging to the Rajasthani Marwari community. Then, she encountered someone who was invested in herbal dyeing process for almost a decade. Naturally, it was the opportunity she was waiting for, to work in a social impact space through the world of clothing and fashion that she understood very well ever since her childhood. She finally found a product in her hands that was in harmony with nature and did not promote consumerism.



Au Naturelle

Indigo process that Biome follows and shares at workshops:

Take 2 parts of refined lime powder and mix some warm water and stir for almost 10 minutes. Now add 1 part of indigo sweetened powder and mix slowly and cover, removing all oxygen supply and light exposure for 3-4 hours. Open and check if the top is metallic purple and bottom is green. If yes, your indigo is active, alive and ready to go. Dilute if needed and put your fabric inside. Let it soak the dye, and as you bring it out, it magically comes out green turning blue on exposure to sun's light and oxygen. In time, it's bright blue. Wash it after it's dry with a mild soap and rinse in vinegar water and dry again. Ready to wear!



"I am but a tool in the hands of this movement," she said. "I like to think, and question, and that is what makes me act the way I do. I love clothes but not the indulgence".

Namrata believes that clothes are a symbol of need, comfort, artistic expression, dignity, celebration, attraction, and more but they must not become the reason for environmental degradation and human exploitation. Her organisation represents the idea of a communiqué — of a clean present and a cleaner future that is invested in the welfare of everyone involved in the process.

Working with bio-degradable products is what keeps her going ahead in her journey. Endorsing, embracing and collaborating with other like-minded people are her sources of joy. Biome makes natural-dyed fabrics and customised garments. It identifies with the movement of integrating with nature. As part of that process, Biome also sells natural dyes and Namrata travels with natural dyeing workshops throughout the country.

She believes that work should not be for one person's fancy but instead should be collaborative and transcendent differences. "In the end, work should unite, not divide". Revolution starts with an individual but it must expand to the community as we are parts of one big whole. Nature is the intelligent system that has prevailed ever since life started, we can only grow and survive in harmony with it.

Namrata realised that we as humans need to engage our senses to relate to our physical presence in life. And only listening or reading are incomplete ways of sharing, understanding and experience the beauty of natural dyes. Through workshops, Biome facilitates spaces and guidance to dye your own fabrics, engage with the look, smell and feel of the dyes, and know how real and alive it is. Just like us.

Biome is interested to adopt 'grow local, buy and sell local and decentralise'. Hence, they have been exploring work with the strong weaving heritage of Bengal and introduce natural dyeing to the weavers. Also, instead of thinking of 'export', the focus is on spreading awareness amongst Indians, who form a significant hub of consumers and can afford the best fabrics. Biome also concentrates on natural fibres, sustainable man-made fibres, and hand woven fabrics along with naturally dyed threads and fabrics. Natural dye is the boundary that does not limit, but instead creates a balance between environment and our need for colours.

Namrata makes it a point to collaborate with

other sustainable field workers when she is touring for her workshops, especially with those who are working in education, food, lifestyle, and the like.

A piece of textile is a symbol of creation. So much has been created, imagined with warp and weft and has been an expression of art and design. Our textiles are our communiqué, our language various cultures marked it with their sense of aesthetics and there is deep history and heritage with what we wear and re-create over and over again. Design has been evolved in textiles in rhythmic dance with our lifestyle, socio-economic conditions, geography of a place and now it marks globalisation. Another important driver has been 'fashion' and it has both pros and cons as anything in excess can result in.

Biome has always loved and learnt from collaboration and sharing. That's been the constant motivation and satisfaction. "This one time, we happened to meet this bright, young student from Srishti School of Design and we came in touch with her work on flora and fauna, and a very imaginative expression of human mating a flower and the resultant evolution of life. When we interacted with her more, we discovered that she loves trees, can communicate with them and sketching plants alive is her passion. We took a look at her sketches and decided to convert them on our clothes through batik and herbal dyes. Thus started this experimental project of batik and painting with herbal paste. On board was the batik artist, Sushanto and Ghana, an artist from Chennai who was with us for that period. We released a collection and it was like a dream come true", Namrata reminisces.

Paramita Kar Choudhury is a batik and block printing artist who also dabbles in shibori and clamp techniques. She started her journey with synthetic dyes but soon found the calling for natural dyes. She took her training from an experienced practitioner from Shantiniketan. Then she opened her unit and heart to embrace Biome as a collaborating partner to use our herbal dyes and process orders together in batik, block printing, and dyeing.

As I traversed through the landscape of Bengal, it was heartening to see skilled craftsmen dedicating their time to keep the age-old traditions alive. So many ideas bubbled inside my mind after all the interesting conversations, but for the moment I treated myself to a naturally dyed blue and white Jamdani.

The writer is the founder and cultural curator at www.cocooandjasmine.com



ARNOLD BENNETT, THE AUTHOR OF *THE OLD WIVES' TALE* AND *CLAYHANGER*, HAS AN OMELETTE NAMED AFTER HIM. THE OMELETTE WAS INVENTED AT LONDON'S SAVOY HOTEL WHERE BENNETT OFTEN STAYED

With his keen understanding of the region, the author traces the roots of the deep-seated Baloch alienation to the forced accession of the princely state of Kalat to Pakistan in 1948, writes KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

The unending struggle of the Baloch

The statement by General Rawat, Chief of Staff of the Indian Army, that Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK) is controlled by terrorists and Gilgit-Baltistan and POK have been under illegal occupation of Pakistan is to be noted seriously. A perusal of history shows that many such provinces in the North West region as well as North East region of the country were part of India and the country was forced to surrender the rights over them as part of a ploy by the British rulers.

One such independent country that existed during the colonial rule of the British and enjoyed the status of a sovereign nation was Balochistan. Ironically, nothing much has been written or taught in India about Balochistan, its glorious past and communal amity (which is in stark contrast to that of Pakistan). One of the TV news channels in Kerala had telecast a programme about Hinglaj Mata Temple in Balochistan which is being preserved with utmost care by the tribal community. Every year, the Mandir draws thousands of Indian devotees to this country and the pilgrims are treated with respect by the tribal communities. In modern times, the term Balochistan was heard in the Indian narrative for the first time in 2009 when the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh assured his Pakistani counterpart Yusuf Raza Gilani that India was doing nothing in Balochistan. "Indeed nor should it be doing anything there," the economist-turned-politician is reported to have said in the joint statement with Gilani issued on the sidelines of the Non-Aligned Movement meeting held in Egypt.

An attempt has been made to unravel the hitherto untold and unpublished details about Balochistan. "Pakistan: The Balochistan Conundrum" authored by Tilak Devasher, a former senior official of the Cabinet Secretariat. Devasher is an authority on Pakistani politics which could be understood from his first book "Pakistan At The Helm", published by HarperCollins. His lucid style and articulation are the reasons why readers prefer his works. Devasher tells the required facts in a straightforward manner. His intentions are clear because he wants people to get enlightened and educated. The style is as elegant as Devasher himself.

The author takes the readers straight to Balochistan and gives us



some important facts which would kindle passion in the mind to know more about the subject. The population of Pakistan is 21 crore while that of Balochistan is 1.23 crore. Balochistan constitutes 44 per cent of Pakistan's landmass. This is just one of the reasons behind Pakistan's avarice for this once sovereign country. Balochistan is a treasure house of minerals and energy resources. "Had there been no Balochistan, there would not have been any Pakistan," felt the British rulers who had manipulated the geo-politics of the region before they lowered the Union Jack and gave way to the national flags.

The British colonialists wanted to manipulate and influence the sub-continent by remote controlling from London. They had a fear that the ever increasing influence of the then Soviet Union was detrimental to their political, commercial and other strategic

interests. Hence they felt the need to have a region, a long strip from the Gilgit to Balochistan administered directly by the Britain. This was what suggested by a British army officer R C Money in charge of strategic planning in India during the period.

"However by 1947, the British felt that instead of locating a base in a weak Balochistan, such a base could be established in Pakistan that was more than willing to accommodate the British. Hence it was in British interests to ensure that Balochistan was kept within Pakistan and did not become an independent entity," writes Devasher (Page 85).

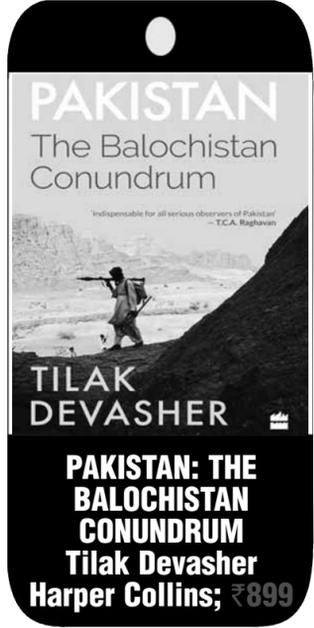
As per various treaties entered into by the then rulers of the princely State of Balochistan (the Khans of Kalat) with the British government, the former had been assured by the colonial masters that Balochistan would remain a

sovereign country with no obligation of any kind either to India or Pakistan. What Devasher has done is to bring to light the palace coup staged in Kalat with the political script authored in the corridors of power in Lahore, New Delhi and London. It shocks us and further embarrasses as because it was another *faux pas* committed by Jawaharlal Nehru which resulted in Mohammed Ali Jinnah annexing Balochistan to Pakistan.

This backstabbing came within weeks of Jinnah issuing a statement declaring that "the Government of Pakistan recognises Kalat as an independent sovereign State, in treaty relations with British government with a status different from that of Indian States." Needless to tell, Jinnah's statement was issued immediately after a well publicised meeting the former had with the Khan of Kalat and his aides.

Jinnah was a visionary as well as an Islamic fundamentalist. As on date, '36 per cent of Pakistan's total current natural gas production, as also reserves of coal, gold, copper, silver, platinum, aluminium and uranium are in Balochistan. Reko Diq, Saindak, Sui and Chamalang produce a wealth of resources like copper, gold, natural gas, coal and other minerals. Reko Diq is a copper and gold mine in Chagai district with an estimated mineral resource of at least 54 billion pounds of copper and 41 million ounces of gold,' writes Devasher. All these details establish the fact that Pakistan without Balochistan is a big zero. Jinnah and the subsequent rulers of Pakistan have made use of all games in the trick to keep the people of Balochistan in perpetual poverty, illiteracy and ignorance. This is what the Grand Old Party did in India too.

Devasher has revealed the details of



how the then Prime Minister Nehru rejected and refused the offer from the Khan of Kalat to merge with India. What the author has stated in pages 81 and 82 is sufficient to expose the then Prime Minister's inefficiency, failure to read the writing on the wall and his larger than life image hyped up by the media.

This book is a must read for all those who are interested in the history of the sub-continent, prior to and after the exit of the British rulers lest we are cheated by manipulated and distorted history. Balochistan is waiting for India. India's safety and security could be ensured only through the liberation of Balochistan and Tilak Devasher is an author who has to be taken seriously by our policy makers and those who want to excel in the game of diplomacy.

While reading the book, what crossed the mind was the football teams from Balochistan, namely Makran United and Makran Sports Club which used to figure in the Sait Nagjee Football Tournament which was held at Kozhikode in Kerala. They were favorites of Malabar's football lovers. Balochistan is loved by people who know about the country.

NEW ARRIVALS

KHANTASTIC: THE UNTOLD STORY OF BOLLYWOOD'S TRIO
Sanjukta Nandy
Rupa, ₹295

Did Shah Rukh Khan reject *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge*? Did Amir Khan audition for *Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak*? Was Salman Khan's voice dubbed by another in *Maine Pyar Kiya*? Did Salman's and Amir's film rejections give Shah Rukh Bollywood a platter? KHANTastic answers all these questions. Destiny binds together this charismatic trio. Three different, yet magnetic personalities—they form the three points of the invisible Bandra Triangle in Mumbai.

NAKED
Papa CJ
Westland, ₹499

Papa CJ is able to turn the ordinary into the extraordinary. And then destroy it. Only to rise again like a phoenix. As Papa CJ lays bare his life, from the streets of Calcutta to the University of Oxford and stages across the world, you will bask in nostalgia, laugh your guts out, feel your heart ache, and find a new lens with which to look at your own life. A lens that allows you, like Papa CJ, to always see the positive. And of course, the funny.

PAPER MOON
Rehana Munir
HarperCollins India, ₹299

When her estranged father passes away, Fiza, fresh out of college, discovers that he has left her a tidy sum in the hope that she will open a bookshop... Overnight, Fiza's placid life is thrown into a whirl of decor decisions and book-buying sprees, unconventional staff and colourful patrons, small pleasures and little heartbreaks, as the store — Paper Moon — begins to take shape in a charming, old Bandra mansion...

In a refreshing departure from stereotypical portrayals of muslim women, their helplessness and ignorance, the book *Resilience: Stories of Muslim Women* explores the lives of 11 women who fought against all odds to shine, once they got the opportunity to study in a tiny adult education centre. The author, Shubha Menon, has documented life of girls and women of Nizamuddin Basti, Delhi, in a manner that makes the reader a partner in her adventure. The reader is taken through the winding *gullies*, narrow staircases and tottering houses, right into the homes of the girls.

The Seher Centre was an experiment in education started by social activist Shabnam Hashmi. At the time, Shabnam herself was a young girl studying in Russia. She was home for the summer holidays and went with a friend to Nizamuddin Basti to volunteer as a teacher for young girls. When it was time for her to go back to Russia, two of the girls begged her not to, as they had seen hope in their lives after she had started teaching them. Shabnam could not turn her back on the girls. She stayed back and started the Seher Education Centre. From 1980 to 1985, about 400 girls studied in the Centre. The book encompasses the stories of 11 girls whose stories unfold one by one.

The girls' stories are poignant and real. There is Farida, who started wearing a burqa at 9, got married at 12 and was a mother of two, divorced and abandoned by 16. Today, she runs a non-profit, teaching other young girls like her. Mussarrat, who was virtually a prisoner in her own home, forced to do domestic chores all day. She is now a health supervisor with the Aga Khan Foundation. And Parveen, who was turned away from the Gandhi residence because she

Hope lives behind the veil

Resilience is an important book on Muslim women in contemporary India. It brings out stories untold. There are so many layers to examine, writes JAYSHREE M SUNDAR



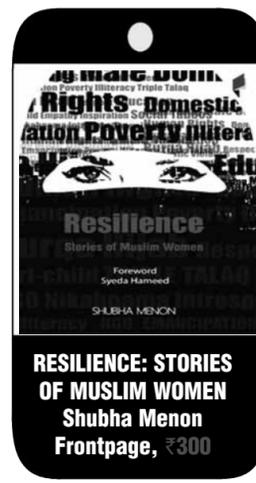
couldn't write her name in the entrance register. Today she a Sewa Dal worker and political voice for a political party. The stories of Syeda, Asma, Ishrat, Shahjahan, Najma and Ayesha also show the transformation that the Seher Centre brought about.

The writer recreates the tiny room where classes were held. We learn about the rivalry between the girls, their favourite teachers and how their thoughts are gradually changed, till from burqa-clad silent citizens they become agents of change in their own right. We also learn about the various forces at play in the *basti*, those that opposed girls education. There are the elders

of the *basti* who disapprove of girls going to school. There are the Pirzadas who want Shabnam to teach their kids exclusively because they do not want their children to share space with lowly 'Ghosis'. There are opposing forces in the *basti* and old mores are at loggerheads with new thinking. The Shah Bano case is at the centre of this dichotomy. The author dwells upon the case at some length.

The writer has included conversations with eminent, educated Muslim women — Syeda Hameed, Warisha Farasat, Zarina Bhatti, Seema Mustafa, Noor Zaheer — who talk about the state of Muslim women in the country. These conversations

are a good counterpoint to the conversations with the Seher girls. The Markaz versus the Dargah is another contradiction of the *basti*. The Markaz propagates pristine orthodox Islam which is strident and austere. The author does not deride one practice at the cost of the other. Their parallel existence may occasionally clash but seldom becomes a major flare-up. The reader is gently led through this labyrinth of contradictions and incongruities which are both literary and figurative. A hidden world is revealed in easy flowing prose. What gives the book its unique flavour is the anecdotes and tales about the Nizamuddin Basti, the *dargah*, the *Auliya*, the



graves, monuments, etc. The book is full of interesting details that lend colour to the stories of the girls.

It was not just the old and new that were clashing in the *basti*. There was Shabnam Hashmi herself, a communist-atheist, ultra-liberal rebel of sorts. She never wore a burqa and sported short hair and spectacles. Just the way she looked, raised the red flag for many in the *basti*. Subjects like sex, reproductive rights, gender parity, taboo for Basti dwellers, were freely discussed in the Seher Centre. Shabnam's total lack of fear against a menacing, threatening phalanx of Basti old men, guardians and gatekeepers of the

'izzat' of their women and girls, was cause for alarm. Girls, who were not allowed to uncover their heads in their own homes or sit on a chair in front of their elders, began to learn alphabet of rights. The Seher teachers who included Shabnam's mother and sister, were berated because of the fear that they would make the girls 'azaad' and 'la mazhab'. Underlying this popular slogan verbiage was the larger fear that *Basti* women may begin to think and assert their rights.

This book brings out the unique world of the Nizamuddin Basti. One which you may not find on a map. Where, in the by lanes of crowded homes with limited means women broke out of the shackles of stereotypical roles and fearlessly fought their way to an education. Where women helped women. The book has interesting anecdotes about the ghosts that coexist with human beings there and the sounds of urdu, the music from the *dargah*, and the fragrance of *kebabs* which create the unique atmosphere of this area.

Resilience is an important book on Muslim women in contemporary India. There are so many layers to examine. And, Seher comes out as a unique experiment, which not only transformed all those women who studied there but their future generations.

The writer is a senior advertising professional and a visiting professor at B-schools

What do Iraqi protesters strive for?

Iraq has once again descended into an abyss. Since the downfall of Saddam Hussein in 2003, the country has not witnessed peace for almost two decades now. Modern Iraq was established in 1932 from the amalgamation of three provinces of Baghdad, Basra and Mosul that formed Mesopotamia. This new country was primarily centred around tribes purely external to the main city centres. Thus from the very beginning, Mesopotamia was vulnerable to both security and unity.

The Ottomans overestimated their ability to control Iraq and did not emphasise on domestic development and the existing tribal structures. Like many other ancient empires, the Ottomans were forging ahead with the concept of "the strong do what they want, they have the power to do" and thus committed remarkable errors in their handling of the West Asian sojourn. What historians say is that the Ottomans failed to understand the existing cultural, ideological and ethnic divisions existing in the Mesopotamian region. From 1299 to 1921, the mighty Ottomans ruled this region and lost it during the First World War. And henceforth, the British and the French established the political boundaries of Iraq, bordering the Persian Gulf between Iran and Kuwait.

In 1920, the UK was awarded a League of Nations mandate over Iraq. This heralded a western style governance structure in Iraq. In 2014, Tim Marshall described the geographical division of this region in his book, *Prisoners of Geography* this way: "When the Ottoman Empire began to collapse, the British and the French had a different idea. In 1916, British diplomat Colonel Sir Mark Sykes took a grease pencil and drew a crude line across a map of West Asia. It ran from Haifa on the Mediterranean, what is



now Israel, to Kirkuk now in Iraq in the northeast. It became the basis of his secret agreement with his French counterpart Francois Georges Picot to divide the region into two spheres of influence. North of the line was to be under French control, south of it under British hegemony."

This grease pencil drawn boundary lacked the acknowledgement of all the existing demographic arrangement of the region, which later came to be known as the historic Sykes-Picot Agreement. This arbitrary demarcation of boundaries of states in West Asia brought complete anarchy to the entire region. Clearly, all the states that were created by the Sykes-Picot were not based on the logic of socio-economically driven conditions but purely out of the ruins of the empires. Thus the competing aspirations of different communities and ethnic groups could not be fused into a melt-

ing pot and, hence, schism has been remained as a potent anomaly in Iraq and the rest of West Asia.

The current crisis in Iraq has emerged due to entrenched corruption in public offices and the rising gap between the elites and the ordinary citizens. The demonstrations which started since October 1 have already taken more than 400 lives of ordinary Iraqi citizens. Probably the international community is too used to hear Iraqis being killed in huge numbers, whether it was under the horrific Saddam regime, the US-occupied Iraq or under their own leadership in the post-Baathist era. Today the young protesters highlight the way the Adel Abdul Mahdi Government made appointments to Government services on ethnic lines or sectarian quotas which is popularly known as "Muhassasa" in Iraq.

The aggrieved citizens air their anguish that this spoils

system is sharpening the divides among the Shias, Sunnis, the Kurds and the rest of the ethnic minorities across Iraq and bringing no benefit to the ordinary folks. But definitely a small section of the party sympathisers, supporters and cronies extract rich benefits from the Government.

Since the departure of the US forces, the youth of the country has been utterly frustrated with the façade of reforms and with the political class who promised but failed to deliver the basics and introduce much-needed reforms in public offices.

However, what is worrying the global community is that this saga of mass demonstrations is purely leaderless. The protesters are not backed by any organisational structures and ideological narratives. Only common chord among them is a strong sentiment of anti-Government agenda. Therefore, the guardians of

end of Iraq".

We need to enquire into the recent political history of Iraq to find out the malaise that is killing the country today. It all started with the deposition of the Saddam rule and the American invasion of Iraq. Besides, subsequent political upheavals accompanied by regime changes in the West Asia and fast-changing global political scenario had a strong impact on the future course of action in Iraq. Saddam was no more a nincompoop, as the western leaders thought, as he was able to maintain a stable political rule for more than two decades. Of course his authoritarian streak spearheaded the systematic persecution of the minorities and fast marginalisation of the majority Shias.

In addition to Sunni-Shia divide, the third major political player in Iraq is the Kurds, mainly concentrated in the north and north-eastern provinces of Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, Dahuk and their surrounding areas. The Kurdish people inhabit a swath of land through northern Iraq, Syria, Iran and Turkey. They are primarily a people without their own homeland, a major victim of the Sykes-Picot deal.

The way the global liberal order is crumbling under the leadership of Donald Trump, the world could hardly look for any respite from the volatile political atmosphere raging in West Asia. With the withdrawal of American forces from Iraq in 2011, gradually the country has fallen into a complete anarchy. And this has happened because

Washington wanted to dislodge the erstwhile political regime, secret forces and security forces of the Saddam era. The coming of a Shia regime, after the fall of Saddam, has completely changed the power structure of almost three decades of Sunni political establishment, its entitlements and its beneficiaries. Thus many of the elite guards, offi-

cers and former army commanders have quietly joined the Islamic State, an affiliate of the al-Qaeda.

The US Army in Iraq knew very well that these officers joined various insurgent groups and offered tactical support to the al-Qaeda.

What could be seen from the ruins of Saddam empire is a pure chaos. And in this anomie has brought more differences and violence back to the Iraqi society. Much beyond these, Iraq has become a playground for many big powers, such as Iran and the US.

Iran's influence in Iraq is of great importance. But in the last few months, this Iranian led Shia coalition has been largely fractious as the Government forces killed Shias who were demanding better social services, mainly basic needs. It is coming out in public space that Iran is seriously trying to repress the civil rebellion in Iraq. Its elite Quds Force, the foreign arm of the Revolutionary Guard in Iran, view these protests as masterminded by foreign hands. The outcome of the counterproductive attempts by the Iranian backed forces to repress the protesters may trigger a new Arab Spring to the entire West Asia in the days to come.

The impending departure of Mahdi is symbolic victory of the protesters. But unfortunately too many people were killed and it could be regarded as a mass uprising of the Shia community against their own leadership. Mahdi has proved himself to be an ineffectual leader.

It seems the ruling elite of Iraq are simply interested in sticking to power at any cost. Therefore, it is truly doubtful whether the demands of the protesters for sweeping changes in the Iraqi political system could be agreed upon by the opportunist leadership.

(The writer is an expert on international affairs)

What is worrying the global community is that the saga of mass demonstrations in Iraq is leaderless. The protesters are not backed by any organisational structures and ideological narratives. The only common chord among them is a strong sentiment of anti-Government agenda



MAKHAN SALKIA

PERSPECTIVE

Iraq protests: A terrible political-economic predicament

Post-Saddam Iraq has graduated from the demands and desires of the generations which felt satisfied with whatever the Government gave them. The younger generation knows that the exchequer is earning enough revenue from oil but the Government is unwilling to spend the same for their welfare. Till the Government delivers on its promises, there is no end to protests in Iraq



YASIR ALI MIRZA

The world witnessed a spate of violent protests in Iraq, Lebanon, Hong Kong and Chile in the last few months. However, the Iraqi protests stand out in terms of intensity of violence: over 300 young protesters have been killed and thousand others injured in the crackdown by the Government security forces. After the fall of dictator Saddam Hussein in 2003, it has been the largest popular demonstration across Iraq, mainly in Shia south.

Protesters have blamed the successive Governments for large-scale unemployment, rampant corruption, and poor civic services, despite the exchequer getting easy revenue from the lucrative oil businesses. However, the authorities claim that Iraq does not get reasonable chunk of its share from the complex and unfair system of international oil markets to revive its fractured economy. Majority of the people lack access to adequate healthcare, schooling, water or power supplies as the promises made by successive Governments have remained unfulfilled. According to a World Bank report, nearly three-fifths of its 40 million people live on less than \$6 a day. The Iraqi protesters, primarily comprising the economic poor class, are venting their anger against some filthy rich political leaders and businessmen who are pillaging the country's wealth, pushing the commoners into further poverty.

The trigger for the latest round of protests was the news of demotion of Lieutenant General Abdul Wahhab al-Saadi, the Commander of the Iraqi Counter Terrorism Force (ICTF). He gained wide popularity during the anti-ISIS military campaign and became a national hero. Protests in Baghdad jog the memory of



Anti-Government protesters gather in Tahrir Square, Baghdad on November 29. Celebrations erupted following the announcement of resignation by Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul-Mahdi AP

Arab Spring in 2011, where the protesters had swarmed the streets in the Arab world. The year-long Prime Minister, Adel Abdul Mahdi, has witnessed the most tumultuous phase of his tenure as protesters are demanding his immediate removal from office and fresh elections.

Sistani calls for reform

The initial response of the Baghdad authorities, using unnecessary lethal force, was shockingly unscrupulous that made matters worse. Iraq's most revered Shia cleric Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Hussaini al-Sistani, who holds unprece-

dent moral authority among the Shia believers, had called upon the ruling clique to initiate major political reforms. He issued the statement through his representative in a Friday prayer gathering. He urged, "The marjia (Shia religious authority) has made clear its position calling for reform in the last Friday sermon. It stressed that the demonstrations must be peaceful and free from violence and vandalism. It also underlined the sanctity of Iraqi blood, and the need for political forces to respond to the rightful demands of protesters." While influential Shia leader Sayyid Moqtada al-Sadr too called for reforms and

urged protesters to continue to press for their demands.

Show of solidarity

One of the significant features of the anti-governmental protests in Iraq is that it has an element of cross-sectarian or ethnic identity i.e. Iraqi nationalism. Unlike previous protests, symbols of Shia piety have not taken a central place in the demonstrations which signifies the gravity of the demands which entirely stick to its legitimate socio-economic demands. It reflects the growing disenchantment of Iraqi people towards the religious parties who have been ruling

for 16 years. It is an alarming curve for the ruling elites and they need to pay heed to the people's voice. It also signifies a new turn of events in country's beleaguered history which only experienced repression by ruthless dictators and started craving for the idea of social justice and citizenship. However, despite having a broad nature of the protests largely participated by young and poor social class from Shia background, the Sunni and Kurdish areas haven't extended solidarity with the protesters. Sunni and Kurdish leaderships are suspicious that any break in the status quo will

dismantle their positions in the power structure what they are enjoying in the unofficial mohassasa system (confessional system) introduced by the Americans after 2003.

External factors

There is no denying the fact that after the US occupation, the CPA-led administration had created such mayhem in the country. The menace of terrorism and sectarianism gained enormous foothold among multi-confessional society. There is an ample evidence of external intervention by regional actors in fomenting political unrest in Iraq. The attacks on Iranian consulates and embassy substantiate this argument. Since 2003, arch rival Iran has turned Iraq's staunchest ally.

Iran's ties with Shia political groups which have been at the helm of power irked the regional actors led by Saudi Arabia, and they perceived it as the revival of Shia politics in West Asian and North African (WANA) region. Iran's role in repulsing the rise of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) further brought these two neighbours closer. Most of the Iran-backed factions like Asaib Ahl al-Haq, Saraya al-Salam, Badr Corps, Harkat Hezbollah al-Nojaba constitute the backbone of Hashd al-Shabi (Popular Mobilisation Forces, PMF), an umbrella group of militias which came into existence after the ISIS' blitzkrieg attacks, further alarmed the US, Israel and other regional powers. Displaying extraordinary courage in countering the ISIS tide, PMF achieved pre-eminence in the society. By virtue of its popularity, the political bloc of PMF, called al-Itilaf al-Fatah (Conquest Alliance) led by Hadi Amiri, secured a sizeable chunk of

seats in the parliamentary elections last year. However, al-Hashd has kept restraint despite anti-social elements camouflaging into the crowd to sabotage the peaceful protests. However it had vowed to crush any coup attempt with malicious intent.

Tuk tuk, a vehicle of change: Indian connection

There is a little Indian connection with the ongoing protests in Iraq i.e. Tuk-Tuk. The three-wheeled Tuk-Tuk, a word referred in common parlance to autorickshaw has its origin in India. It was being manufactured by a prominent automobile company Baja Auto and exported to Iraq. It functions as frontline ambulances, ferry protesters and supplies necessary stuff. The most interesting part is that some activists started a tabloid named after it in order to circumvent information blackout by authorities. Iraq's once marginalised Tuk-Tuk drivers took a centre stage in Iraq and the vehicle become a symbol of resistance called 'Markabat al-Thawra' (vehicle of revolution).

Despite the resignation of the Prime Minister, people are still angry and protests will go on until new political and economic reforms are introduced. But what comes after these demonstrations will not be the same as before. Iraq is going through a phenomenal phase. The new opposition that is emerging can play an important role to lead status quo towards change. The authorities should initiate a process for structural changes and must pay heed to their legitimate demands.

(The writer is a PhD student at Centre for West Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi)



LETTING GO MEANS TO COME TO THE REALISATION THAT SOME PEOPLE ARE A PART OF YOUR HISTORY, BUT NOT A PART OF YOUR DESTINY —STEVE MARABOLI



YOUR WEEK AHEAD

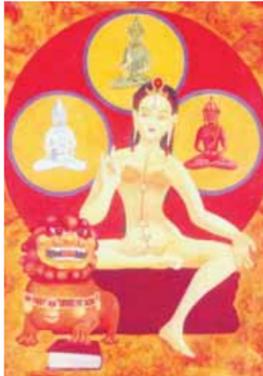
MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19

You need to manage your stress level in order to stay in good health. Face your problems rather than avoid them. Those looking for spiritual healing, ensure you get adequate rest. Avoid temptations or addictions; otherwise you may face health hazards. Your dream job may come your way. Your accomplishments will make your peers look bad. That's mostly their problem, but don't be oblivious about it. Some of you may attain a position where you can exert power and authority. Control your temper when dealing with subordinates at workplace. You may feel the negative vibes in the relationship as well. Conflict with near and dear ones is predicted. Think calmly and carefully about the person you are in a relationship with, before you react.

Lucky number 9
Lucky colour Black
Lucky day Wednesday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

You will witness a complete change in your health. Those suffering from serious ailments will be surprised by the unexpected changes such as improvement in their test results. A disciplined and controlled lifestyle is always welcome. Curb your craving for sweet and fried food. On the career front, be careful of the source you are making money with. An unfair deal to get quick success might put you in legal action. Be cautious, as this is the time when you can use your power in a negative way. On the relationship front, your love life seems to be going very well. Those who are committed, a strong relationship that is mutually supportive and beneficial will bring you happiness. Singles, this is a good time to meet new people.

Lucky number 18
Lucky colour Brown
Lucky day Friday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

Health may cause worry this week. Those awaiting test results, need to stay calm as there is nothing much you can do. Relax, things are not as bad as you fear. You will experience a spiritual strength that will help you gain good health. Connect with deeper joy and love for living. It is advised you do breathing exercises and meditation now. On the work front, you may feel stagnated. You don't have to stay in a situation that is unhealthy for you. Those who wish to pursue higher studies and simultaneously work may go ahead. Love life looks promising. Singles, a new and very positive, romance is on the horizon. Just, don't get carried away. Keep your balance and perspective. Those in a committed relationship will enjoy a new level of understanding.

Lucky number 22
Lucky colour Red
Lucky day Friday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

Confusion about a medical test/result is foreseen. Go for a second opinion. Any health changes are likely to take place slowly. This may be for the best, regardless of how fast you would like things to move. Take things one day at a time and note small changes. Professionally, you can win any situation with your skill and intelligence. Your logical and analytical skills will help you to overcome any difficulties. This is the right time to appear for an interview, or write a competitive exam. Your writing and communication skills could give you an extra edge over others. Relationship wise there could be explosive arguments with the near and dear ones. This is not the time to look for love as you may take wrong decisions. Existing relations could suffer due to misunderstanding.

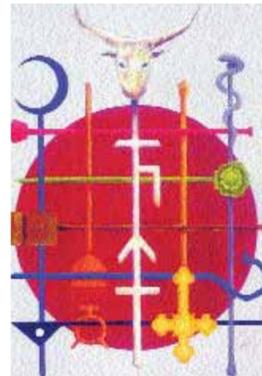
Lucky number 33
Lucky colour White
Lucky day Wednesday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

Confront your dark side. This is a good time to explore your fears, limitations, and unhealthy attachments. Addictions and indulging in material pleasures in order to forget about your worries are foreseen. Be aware and avoid falling into any material traps. Career-wise, beginning of a project is indicated in which a great deal of creative energy will be invested. This is the time when you need emotional support to go forward in life. Try to meet your immediate demands at the workplace with maturity and sensitivity. On the love front, you may get hyper on small things with the people who matter to you. Your mind will empower your heart and emotions will take a back seat. Remember words speak louder than action.

Lucky number 12
Lucky colour Mustard
Lucky day Saturday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

Stay grounded to do justice to your body this week. It is important you take rest and relax. Stay away from spicy and junk food. You may experience stress due to certain unavoidable factors. Stay calm and avoid anger or aggression. Release your frustration to express it rather than keep it to yourself. Professionally, you will find stability after a long time. Those who are looking for a job change, you need to disconnect yourself with the current company. People sitting for an interview or a competitive examination will be successful. Any pending work needs to be completed now. Relationship wise, this is a highly emotional time. Situations can instantly become heated or uncomfortable. Take a break if you need to. Don't hurry to end or to begin a relationship.

Lucky number 15
Lucky colour Purple
Lucky day Wednesday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

This week your health regime will move to the next level and so will your maturity and intelligence. You will not think twice before spending money on health. Your views in terms of health are conventional and practical and will pay you rich dividends. On the career front, clear communication will bring changes in your work life. Travel to a foreign land on account of the job is likely. Your initiatives blend with your people skill. Explore and see where it takes you. Your finances will improve considerably and you may plan a deal in property. On the romantic front, this week you are all charged and lovable. Online love messages will revive your energy and passion. Singles may find a suitable partner or get marriage proposals.

Lucky number 9
Lucky colour Yellow
Lucky day Thursday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

Those dealing with a health problem, need to look for treatments beyond your family doctor. What you need is a vacation or a change of environment. Focus on your dreams. You are likely to find spiritual answers that will help you a lot. On the career front, new opportunities will tempt you. New projects, deals or assignment could be signed this week. Those in business would be able to increase their networking and convert them into benefits. Securing a big deal is on the cards. At a personal level, new friendships or bonding is likely to turn into a loving relationship for you. An existing relationship will become more intense. If someone is interested in you, give him/her a chance. This relationship could be just what you are looking for.

Lucky number 23
Lucky colour Green
Lucky day Sunday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

This week your health will be good. You are in the right place, doing the right thing. You are likely to achieve what you have wished for. The week holds new beginnings that naturally emerge out of the accomplished cycle. To balance your energies, avoid rich food and oversleep. Work life may not be very satisfactory. You may feel uncomfortable at your work place. Your seniors may feel that you are not putting your 100 per cent effort into a project or task. Your honest nature may fetch you a suspension or some kind of displeasure. Avoid any kind of investment or a new deal in business/property. Those in love may face conflict and difficult phase. However, a balanced approach will work in your favour.

Lucky number 11
Lucky colour Golden
Lucky day Tuesday



CANCER June 21-July 22

Your perseverance and hard work on the health front will bear results. Your self-confidence will draw people to you like a magnet. Those who are worried about health need to relax. Things are not as bad as you fear. There is an underlying, spiritual strength that will sustain your health. Career-wise good news is on the cards. You are likely to use your power and leadership for the benefit of others. Success in the project is foreseen. Those who are looking for a transfer, or job change, should approach an authoritative person to help you in your endeavour. On the love front, doubts about a relationship may nag you. This is the time to be very clear about what you want out of life and your relationships and accordingly, plan your actions.

Lucky number 10
Lucky colour Blue
Lucky day Tuesday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

You will enjoy good health. This week there will be occasions when three generations of the family will get together. The youngsters may receive a gift in form ancestral property, it could be money or invaluable advice. On the career front, your insight and mental clarity will generate good results. This is a good time to act and achieve your target. Be alert as new opportunities will knock at the door. You are likely to get promoted. Draw upon your creativity and mental ability for making more money. In love life, relations will blossom and may materialise into marriage. You will feel at ease with your spouse/partner, and take important decisions with regard to your family. This is a good week for family reunions and to bask in the bliss of love and relations.

Lucky number 5
Lucky colour Dark Grey/ Grey
Lucky day Saturday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

Change is inevitable. You will seek spiritual answers that have eluded you for some time. This week you will experience high energy and self-confidence. You may plan a vacation or time out in nature. Someone new and exciting will make a move in your direction. Be prepared for a surprise. Relax as everything is under control. Career-wise you will be exerting yourself for a job change. Those in arts fields could collaborate for the first time on a project that will give a boost to your career. Good opportunities are coming your way. Promote your ideas. Make sure to seek intelligent advice before accepting an invitation. Romance is likely to be bloom this week. Extension in the family, the birth of child or news of conception is indicated.

Lucky number 13
Lucky colour Magenta
Lucky day Monday

Madhu Kotiya is a tarot card reader, spiritual healer, and Founder, MShezaim Institute of Tarot and Divination. Contact details: madhu@indiatarot.com, www.indiatarot.com, M: 9873283331



ASTROTURF
BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

Correct your own weaknesses

It is in human nature to improve one's lot, which tempts one to look towards a better tomorrow. So, invariably we begin life with high hopes and aspirations. Accordingly, we set our dream destination. Dreams are necessary for reaching heights one is capable of, as they serve a focus to reach an objective. Since time immemorial the Moon fascinated and evoked man's curiosity, seen every day — yet unknown. A longing to know and understand it, led scientists to send man on the Moon. Yet, not everybody's dreams get fulfilled. Non-realisation often brings in frustrating experiences. Why? Are we so helplessly fated?

Not really, provided we optimally use our indwelling empowerment tools. Remember, we are all born carrying limitless potential, which if unfolded would know no limits. The paradox, however, is that major part of our mind-power remains untapped, as it remains clouded by lot of inherent limitations. Truth be told — ordinary mortals are hardly able to use five to seven percent of their mind power. The irony, however, is that even this, if judiciously used, can enable one to negotiate life with relative ease and comfort. Bear in mind; even people like

Einstein are said to have used just 10 to 14 percent of their mind-power to create history.

You need to strive to unfold your full potential. It may then spontaneously lead you through. You may then discriminate between 'What you want' and 'What is worth' before you take any call. Also, you would be able to put forward your best foot. So, the real challenge is to overcome limitations of our mind and expand its outreach. The way forward is to get into self-search mode. The process helps identify, acknowledge and then rise above the limitations of mind.

It is pertinent to note here that we seldom remain conscious about invoking one's most profound empowerment tool — *Buddhi* (the faculty of discriminate intelligence) — before jumping into action. Not to say anything about getting over the limitation of mind. And *buddhi* won't come into play by itself. Consequently, we blindly submit ourselves to indwelling desire trends, coming as they may with karmic imprints carried over from the past. We neither try to figure out whether the desires pursued are worth it or not, nor do we care whether we are geared up for the



purpose. When we meet failure, either we try to shift the blame on others, or our destiny. Truth, however, remains that we do not strive sufficiently to unfold the immense power within. So said Swami Vivekananda: "The history of the world is the history of few men who had faith in themselves. Faith calls out divinity within. You can do anything. You fail because you have not sufficiently strived to unfold immense power within."

Here is the case of someone, who came asking the other day: "Sir, since last year, I am having a tough time both in terms of career as well as my personal life. I get lot of offers but at the last moment, they all fizzle out. I am afraid, those envious of me have been playing foul with my life. My wife is self-centric and is least bothered about my sensibilities and concerns. The worst is she discourages me from pursuing spirituality. When do you think the situation may change?"

Don't try to rationalise peculiar beliefs you carry, coming as it may with Jupiter ill-disposed off to Neptune. Before blaming others, better identify, acknowledge, and address your own fault lines, and things will change sooner than later. Look at your astrological

pointers. You are born in Aries *lagna*, with its lord Mars, erratic *Rahu* and the Sun firmly placed in *lagna bhava* itself. That makes you, impulsive, aggressive, arrogant, irritable, intolerant, and impatient. You wish to live in a demanding mode, expecting from all others to follow your dictates. You have the tendency to jump into action without applying proper forethought. If that would not be enough, both the luminaries, the Sun and Moon as well as Mercury, all locked in adverse formation to Uranus, makes you self-willed, tactless, eccentric, and opinionated. Mercury ill-disposed off to Saturn and Moon, brings in a rigid one-track mind, and makes you resentful of others. Moon placed adverse to Saturn brings in a negative mindset. Also, you would be jealous and over critical of others. Let me add here that the calling of spirituality is to first set the thought process right, which doesn't anyway reflect in your conduct. It means you are simply hallucinating over your illusionary perceptions.

The writer is an astrologer, vastu consultant and spiritual counsellor. Write to him at G-102, Bharat Nagar, New Friends Colony, New Delhi-110 025
Tel: 91-11-49848475/9818037273
Email: bharatbhushanpadmadeo@gmail.com