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A BROKEN
JUSTICE SYSTEM

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WIN WITH SPICY CHICKEN CURRY

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CARIBBEANS TASTE
THE FIRST BLOOD

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I DON'T
FOLLOW ANY
PLAN: ANIL
13 VIVACITY

ANTI-CAA PROTEST FLARES UP IN CAPITAL

Agitation in Jamia turns violent, students clash with police, 35 injured, 3 DTC buses torched

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The protest against the amended Citizenship Act (CAA) by the Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) University students erupted on Sunday. Violence spilled on the Mathura Road, Jamia and its adjoining areas following a clash between police and students who were protesting against the amended CAA. The student protest is said to be led by the local leaders of the area. Three buses of Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) and four fire engines were damaged by the protesters claimed the police.

According to report, at least 35 injured people were taken to a nearby hospital.

Delhi Police personnel entered the Jamia Millia campus after situation became highly volatile in the wake of intense violence. Police blocked the university gates to nab some "outsiders" who had entered the premises to hide, sources said. There was a heavy deployment of police in and around the campus. Several metro stations were closed, including Jamia Millia, GTB Nagar, Shivaji Stadium, Patel Chowk and Vishwavidyalaya metro stations.

Later, Delhi Deputy CM Manish Sisodia announced closure of all schools in South Delhi following the incident.

Later a demonstration at police headquarters was held after police crackdown at Jamia.

Both the Jamia Millia students' community as well as the Teachers' Association have dis-

All in a day

- Police forcibly enter Jamia campus, fire tear gas, beat students and detain them along with some 'outsiders'
- Police said they entered the campus to only control situation after incident of arson
- Demonstration at police headquarters after police crackdown at Jamia
- Delhi Deputy CM Manish Sisodia announced closure of all schools in South Delhi following the incident
- Both the Jamia Millia students' community as well as the Teachers' Association have disassociated themselves with the violence and arson that took place near the university

associated themselves with the violence and arson that took place near the university Sunday afternoon. Three public buses and a fire tender were set afire by the protesters during the violence and arson in New Friends' Colony.

The students claimed that "certain" local elements had "disrupted" their protest and indulged in violence.

The sources said that as police tried to disperse the protesters by using baton charge and firing teargas shells, some of the "outsiders" ran towards the campus and tried to hide there. While, a group of Jamia students sitting on the protest said the police baton charged them when they were holding a peaceful protest. A Delhi Fire Services official said



A bus set ablaze by protesters against the Citizenship Amendment Act at Mathura Road in New Delhi on Sunday

four fire tenders were rushed to the spot. "One fire tender was completely damaged and two personnel were injured," said a senior police deployed on the protest site.

While, National secretary National Students' Union of India (NSUI) Saimon Farooqui, said, "The protesters were peacefully sitting on Mathura Road when policemen tried to "trouble" a couple of protesters, who resisted.

BJP ANNOUNCES NATIONWIDE DRIVE TO SPREAD AWARENESS ABOUT CAA

New Delhi: Amid Opposition's pitch against the amended Citizenship Law, the BJP on Sunday announced a nationwide campaign to spread awareness about it. Party spokesperson Sambit Patra said on Sunday the BJP workers will spread out across the country to inform people about the law. He said party cadre from 11 States were briefed by the national leadership on the law. The party has asked all the MPs including those from Rajya Sabha to visit their constituencies and States to create awareness.

AASU HINTS AT LAUNCHING PARTY AS OPTION TO BJP, AGP, CONG IN ASSAM

Guwahati: The All Assam Students' Union (AASU), which has been protesting the amended Citizenship Act, on Sunday hinted at launching a political party along with 'Shilpi Samaj' (artists' forum) as an alternative to the ruling BJP and AGP as well as to Opposition Congress. AASU president Dipanka Nath supported popular actor Zubeen Garg's proposal of launching a political party. "We are in talks with Silpi Samaj and also discussing with people of Assam to think about an alternative," he said.

In U-turn, AGP all set to move SC against law

PNS ■ GUWAHATI/ NEW DELHI

2 injured in protest succumb, unrest continues in Assam

Taking a u-turn after voting in support of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill in the Rajya Sabha, BJP ally in Assam Assam Gana Parishad (AGP) has decided to challenge the Act in the Supreme Court. The party leaders have also decided to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah over the matter.

Meanwhile, the North east continued to witness unrest with two more people protesting against the amended Citizenship Act in Assam succumbing to injuries on Sunday. The deceased were identified as Ishwar Nayak and Abdul Alim. Both of them suffered bullet injuries due to police firing during clashes in Guwahati on Thursday.

Curfew imposed on Guwahati and parts of Dibrugarh district in the wake of the violent protests was relaxed on Sunday for several hours. Special trains have been arranged by the Assam tourism department in association with the railways to ferry passengers stranded in various parts of the state.

party leaders in Guwahati on Saturday night. He asserted that the AGP respected the sentiments of common people, who were wary that the law might threaten their identity and existence.

"We will take the legal route to seek revocation of the amended Act as the indigenous people of Assam are apprehensive that their identity, language might come under threat," Das said. Sources said a delegation of the AGP, led by Das, would leave for Delhi to file the plea in the apex court as PILs seeking revocation of the Act were scheduled to be taken up for hearing on December 18. Former AGP Minister Prafulla Kumar Mahanta, who had been vocal about his opposition to the amended Act, claimed the party never adopted any resolution supporting the law. He urged the AGP leadership to clear its stand on the contentious matter.

On the other hand, dissi-dence had been brewing in the AGP after party chief Atul Bora said if the Centre "wants to bring the Bill, he cannot do anything about it."

People who are setting fire (to property) can be seen on TV... They can be identified by the clothes they are wearing:

NARENDRA MODI

In his first public rally after the Citizenship (Amendment) Act cleared the Parliament hurdle, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday hinted that "some changes" could be made in the law's provisions to address the concerns of the northeastern States

AMIT SHAH

No one should indulge in violence. Any kind of violence is unacceptable. Protests should remain peaceful

ARVIND KEJRIWAL

Delhi is burning, Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya are burning. Violence is spreading in Bengal, the Home Minister does not have the courage to go the northeast, Japan PM's visit had to be cancelled, but Modi is happy doing poll campaign

RANDEEP SURJEWALA

Opp parties behind unrest, raising storm over Act: PM

PNS ■ RANCHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday accused the Congress and its allies of raising a storm over the citizenship law and asserted that the Opposition parties were behind the unrest and arson in parts of the country.

Modi, addressing a rally in Dumka, said the Congress and its allies are creating a ruckus in North Eastern States and other parts of the country after Parliament passed the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). He said, "They are doing arson because they did not get their way. Those who are creating violence can be identified by their clothes itself. The work that was done by protesters on Pakistan's money in London is now being done by the Congress."

The Prime Minister accused the Congress of speaking in the language of Pakistan on CAA and other important deci-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses an election campaign rally, in Dumka, Jharkhand on Sunday

sion taken by his Government in last six months. Modi making a scathing attack on the Congress following the line of Pakistan assumes importance as this is for the first time that the PM has spoken against the Congress after Parliament passed CAA last week.

Amendment Bill, 2019, which provides a path to Indian citizenship for persons belonging to religious minority groups persecuted in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh, was passed by Parliament on Wednesday, with the Rajya Sabha voting 125-99 in favour of the Bill.

After the passing of the Bill, many parts of country witnessed violent agitations in Assam, West Bengal and even at national capital as students of Jamia Millia Islamia University took to the streets to protest against the exclusion of Muslim immigrants from the provisions of new Citizenship Act.

Also, the Congress on Saturday had held a massive rally called "Bharat Bachao" at Delhi's Ramliha Maidan attacking the Modi Government on a number of issues, including the economy, the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and women's safety.

ROW intensifies

- The AMU administration on Sunday night announced that the institution will remain closed till January 5 as clashes broke out between police and students
- AMU hostels being evacuated, clashes reported from inside as police enter campus: Registrar Abdul Hamid
- Toll in police firing amid protests against citizenship law rises to 4 in Assam, say officials
- Curfew imposed on Guwahati and parts of Dibrugarh district in the wake of the violent protests against the amended Citizenship Act was relaxed on Sunday for several hours, police said
- Protests over the amended Citizenship Act continued in various parts of Bengal for the third consecutive day on Sunday as sporadic incidents of violence were reported from Nadia, Birbhum, North 24 Parganas and Howrah
- Internet services suspended in parts of Bengal as a Precautionary measure, amid protests against CAA: Official

Hotstar Out of Love survey

Marriage insecurity: Bhubaneswar not far behind

- 56% respondents in city claim they checked spouse's cell phone
- 24% respondents think their partner may cheat on them
- 62% however ready to forgive their partner



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

As per the 'Hotstar Out of Love' survey, insecurity in marriages looms over as half of all respondents in India who feel the need to pry; with 45 per cent people wanting to check their partner's phone without their knowledge and 55 per cent already done it. Interestingly, 56 per cent peo-

ple from Bhubaneswar claimed to have checked their partner's phone. On the other hand, 24 per cent respondents from Bhubaneswar believe or think that their partner may cheat on them. The survey also revealed that 78 per cent Indians will be bold about confronting in?delity. Having said that, respondents from Bhubaneswar are some of the most forgiving with 62 per cent - second only to Lucknow that leads with 65 per cent. In comparison, 18 per-

cent will fight for themselves and only 20 per cent will forget about it. The survey by Hotstar in partnership with Mindshare and Unomer was carried out with 1, 088 married respondents in the age-group on 18-64 years from across metros and Tier 1 towns with a 50:50 male- female ratio. The survey was conducted using digital river sampling and the data is representative of smartphone user population in India.

Doctor, clinic staff shot at in Khordha

Critically hurt; motive yet to be ascertained

PNS ■ KHORDHA

In yet another example of the deteriorating law and order situation in Khordha town, unidentified miscreants barged into the clinic of a doctor and opened several rounds of fire at him on Sunday evening.

The victim was identified as Pediatric Specialist Dr Manas Ranjan Das. An employee of the medicine shop, Krsuhna Chandra Sahu, who tried to come to the rescue of the doctor, was also shot at by a miscreant and he suffered bullet injuries. Sources said at around 6.30 pm when Das was attending to



patients in the clinic in front of the District Headquarters Hospital, two bike-borne masked miscreants came there. Suddenly, one of them took out a pistol and fired three rounds at Das. One of the bullets hit him on the stomach and he was critically injured. The assailants then fled from the spot. A critically injured Das

and Sahu were initially rushed to the DHH but the doctors there referred him to a hospital in Bhubaneswar.

Getting information, the Khordha SP and other senior police officials rushed to the spot and began investigating into the incident. The motive behind the crime was yet to be ascertained.

FASTag comes into effect in State

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The FASTag scheme was implemented in the National Highway toll plazas in Odisha from Sunday. It is meant to reduce congestion and traffic snarls at the toll plazas where toll collection was earlier done manually.

Most of the motorists have welcomed the move, saying it would now reduce the detention time at the tollgates

Vehicles passing through toll plazas would now pay taxes through Radio Frequency Identification (RFID)-based tag called FASTag under the National Electronic Collection (NETC) programme of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) in order to remove bottlenecks and ensure smooth movement of traffic.

FASTag is a device that



employs the RFID technology and is affixed on the windshield of the assigned vehicle and enables a customer to make toll payments directly from a linked account.

Notably, the toll plazas under the jurisdiction of State authorities are still collecting toll manually and such practice is resulting in traffic congestion

leading to higher levels of fuel consumption and vehicular emissions.

Several tollgates on busy National and State highways like Puri-Bhubaneswar and Sambalpur-Jharsuguda Biju Expressway used to face severe traffic problems due to the manual system of toll collection.

'We quit BJP on our own, joined BJD'

Nine Bargarh ZP Members refute BJP's abduction charge

PNS ■ BARGARH

Even as the BJP alleged that Bargarh Zilla Parishad (ZP) Members, Parbati Bhoi and Sushma Bhue, the two refuted the charge saying they were no more in the BJP as they had

quit it and joined the BJD in March 2019. On Sunday, BJP vice-president Ashwini Sarangi alleged that Bhoi and Bhue went missing since December 4 and BJD leaders had a hand in it. Even their husbands lodged a police complaint and met SP on Saturday, said Sarangi.

However, nine Bargarh ZP members held a press conference in Bhubaneswar on Sunday where the refuted the charge of the BJP and said, "We had quit the BJP and joined the BJD on March 28. The BJP is spreading lies; no one has abducted us."

2 more mines likely to be reserved for State

After meeting CM, Coal Minister has expedited process

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Two mines, Sukinda chromite and Guali iron ore mines, are likely to be reserved in favour of the Odisha Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited (OMECL), a State PSU. Sources said senior officials of the Ministry of Mines and Steel and Mines Department are in constant touch with each other over the issue of reservation of mining blocks in favour of the OMECL.

Recently when Union Coal and Mines Minister Pralhad Joshi visited Odisha in November, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik raised several issues, including the reservation of mines in favour of

the OMECL.

After Odisha visit, the Union Minister discussed with senior official of the Ministry of Mines and advised them to speed up the proposals of the State Government for which officials have now become proactive in this regard.

Validity of both the mineral blocks is expiring on March 31, 2020 and, unless Union Government reserves it for State PSU, the blocks would be put to auction, said an official. Similarly, the Minister has advised the officials to prepare a comprehensive development plan for providing infrastructure and other facilities for amenities of the people living in coal mining areas of Angul, Jharsuguda and Sundargarh. The Minister's move



assumes significance as large tracts of areas, which are mined out, are usual left without any reclamation and rehabilitation. Sources said a Joint Comprehensive Development Plan would be prepared for the mined out areas and reclamation and rehabilitation of these areas would be completed so that these areas are denotified and then handed over to the State Government.

The MCL would take up reclamation and rehabilitation of these areas, said officials. A senior official said if any decision taken in the RPDAC meeting is not implemented by the MCL, Union Coal Secretary and State Chief Secretary would have a joint meeting to take a final decision in this regard.

However, the Centre is yet to agree to the State's proposal of increasing coal royalty. Besides, the Centre yet to consider the State's demand for a share in the coal cess. The State has been placing this demand as it is facing the brunt of pollution due to coal mining.

'Enact stringent laws, punish rapists in public'

Ex-MLA Das sends suggestions to PM for women security

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

While the number of rape and other crimes against women is on the rise in the country, former MLA Bibhuhendra Pratap Das has urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah to make stringent laws to provide security to women.

In a letter, Das has suggested that chargesheet be submitted within 15 days of FIR and time limit fixed for judgment in rape cases and the rapists be given death punishment in full public view.

The rape victims should be examined by an expert committee headed by female gynaecologists at Sub-Divisional Hospital (SDH) or

District Headquarters Hospital. The names of witnesses, if they wish, should be kept secret. Their statement should be recorded in the presence of Class I Magistrates.

Capital punishment should be given to women who would lodge a false FIR against a woman. Fruitful moral education should be included in school and college syllabuses.

Women conductors should be appointed in all night buses and special buses should be introduced exclusively for women. Girls and women should be advised to wear gentle dresses.

Measures should be taken to ensure that cities should not be overcrowded as per town planning norms.

License of drunken bus, taxi and auto drivers and conductors should be cancelled if found guilty. Drunken passengers should not be allowed to travel in public transport. Vulgar films, TV serials and internet pictures should be banned.

NO HELP YET TO S'GARH DISTRESSED FAMILY

Parents mentally ill; minor son turns bread earner

Father chained at home before he goes out for work

MALAY RAY ■ SUNDARGARH

A poverty-ridden minor boy is left with little option except chaining his mentally-ill father before going for work and releasing him after returning home. This is what he does every day.

The ill-fated lad is Parmaswar Behera (19), who resides with his brother Ramesh (12) and father Khelananda (65) and mother Rebat (60) at Kulabira village under Lepripada block of Sundargarh district.

His mother too is a mentally challenged. But they have not yet been provided with any assistance. The clay house in which they are living is in dilapidated condition.

When Parmaswar was only seven years old, his father Khelananda had suffered from mental illness. He started fearing seeing outsiders. His wife Debaki, who looked after Khelananda, herself lost her mental balance within a few



years. She could not provide treatment to her husband due to poverty for which Khelananda's condition went worse. Parmaswar, the elder son of Khelananda and Rebat, had to look after his mentally ill parents. Parmaswar works as a labourer and whatever meager amount he earns, he runs the family.

He had also taken his father to a doctor but when the doctor advised him to take him for super speciality treatment, he could not afford.

Parmaswar's both mentally challenged parents were deprived of disabled pension for long despite the fact that Parmaswar had gone several times to the block office to

request for grant of the pension. However, recently, Social Security Officer, Sundargarh, Ashok Kumar Bisi granted disabled pension to the mentally-ill couple.

"I have also talked to the BDO, Lepripada, to provide all assistance, including providing a house at the earliest," said Bisi.

When asked, Lepripada BDO Pallavi Rani Raj said, "Since there is negligence from panchayat officials in this matter, I have served show cause notice to the concerned PEO and Sarpanch asking them why this family was not provided necessary assistance in time." Raj however assured to release all Government sops to the family soon.

IN ANGUL

2 BJP men held for torching MLA car

PNS ■ ANGUL

The Angul district police on Sunday arrested two BJP workers for allegedly setting Talcher BJD MLA Braja Kishore Pradhan's car on fire on December 7.

The accused were identified as Swadhin Thamb and Jiten Mohanty. While Swadhin is president of the Yuva Samajsevi Sangathan, Jiten is its secretary.

It may be recalled that an

SUV of the MLA and an ambulance, which had been parked in the premises of the MLA's camp office at Nandira village in Angul district, were torched on the night of December 7 while Pradhan was in the office room. Staffs of the office later doused the flames, but the vehicles had already been badly damaged. Notably, earlier on August 19, several vehicles had also been set on fire at MLA Pradhan's official residence in Bhubaneswar.

'Caste system there because of vote bank politics'

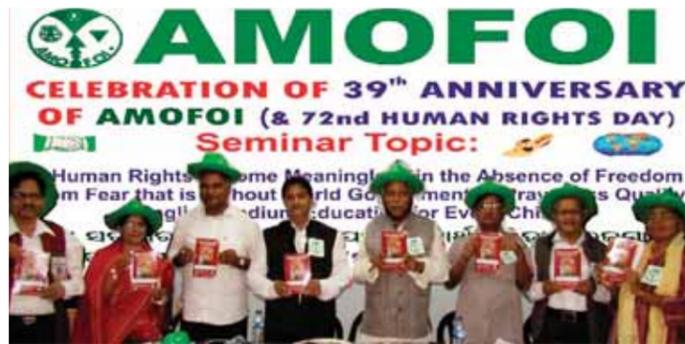
AMOFI's 39th anniversary held

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The AMOFI celebrated its 39th anniversary and the 72nd Human Rights Day here with its president Manas Jena in the chair.

While releasing book, "Priestless Love Marriage By AMOFI and Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 Are Poles Apart", former Finance Minister Panchanan Kanungo as chief guest observed that the AMOFI has been doing a commendable job for the last 39 years.

Speaking on the occasion, Political Scientist Dr KP Padhi opined that the continuance of the caste system has been prin-



cipally there because of "vote bank politics" practised by most of the political parties of India.

While presenting the annual report of MOFOI for the year 2018-19, its founder-sec-

retary B Ramchandra CST Voltaire pointed out that 573 priest-less love marriages were conducted by AMOFI.

The allegations brought against AMOFI are totally unfounded, he told.

Others who spoke on the occasion included Prof Bijay Bohidar, MS Yadav, Harish Chandra Kar, Swapna Bijayini, writer Dr Nirmala Kumari Mohapatra and atheist Odia Poet Dr Banamali Barik.

Sister-in-law held for Balugaon girl murder

PNS ■ KHORDHA

In a twist in the death of a minor girl in the Balugaon area of Khordha district on Saturday, police on Sunday arrested the sister-in-law of the deceased for allegedly killing her.

Earlier, the victim's sister-in-law had alleged that a youth of the locality had murdered the girl as the latter spurned his approach of love for her.

Khordha SP Ajay Pratap Swain said a dispute was prevailing between the deceased

Sibani Behera and her sister-in-law Kaveri Behera as the former used to frequently take potshots at Kaveri for not bringing enough dowries and for eloping with her brother.

To take revenge, Kaveri killed Sibani by slitting her throat with a knife and later blamed a youth of the village for the death, Swain said.

The incident took place in evening at Ganganagar village under the Balugaon police station when the 17-year-old girl was studying in her house.

SBI holds 3rd Green Marathon in city

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

To celebrate the passion for environmental sustainability and better living for future generations, the State Bank of India (SBI) organised a third edition of its 'Green Marathon' here on Sunday.

SBI DMD and CIO Dhananjay Tambe along with Bhubaneswar Circle CGM Praveena Kala flagged off the run that witnessed about 4,000 enthusiastic runners.

Dutee Chand, Asian Games Silver Medalist 2018 (100m and 200m category) and Sradhanjali Samantaray, Head Coach, Odisha Women's Football Team and former Indian captain of Women's National Football Team also graced the event.

The event at the Kalinga Stadium here observed participants from across the city running 5, 10, 21 km marathon, pledging for a greener future.

Bank senior officials also participated in the run along with other participants. The bibs of 5-km runners consist of seeds which would be planted post marathon.



Vehicle mows down 2 women in Badamba

PNS ■ CUTTACK

Two women were killed being run over by an unidentified vehicle near Ratapata Chhak under the Badamba police limits in Cuttack district on Sunday.

The deceased were identified as Rangabati Sahu and Tara Nayak of Ratapata village. They were returning home after bathing in a canal in the morning when the vehicle crushed them to death on the spot.

Tension ran high at the place as irate locals blocked the Cuttack-Narasingshpur road

demanding compensation to the families of the deceased. Vehicular movement was affected as many vehicles remained stranded on both sides of the road.

Being informed, police and district administration officials reached the spot and tried to pacify the locals. The blockade was withdrawn after an assurance for release of Rs 10,000 from the Red Cross fund for the families of each deceased was given to the locals.

Police recovered the bodies for postmortem and started an investigation.

'Don't leave southern Karlapat insecure'

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Wild Orissa' has opposed the very idea of leaving insecure the southern part of the Karlapat Sanctuary while mooting a proposal to declare the sanctuary an Eco Sensitive Zone (ESZ).

It objected to the zero extent of ESZ being proposed in the southern part of the protected area for the reasons that out of eight bauxite blocks, three have been assigned to OMECL for exploration purpose of bauxite. Activities like commercial mining, stone quarrying and crushing units,

setting of industries causing pollution, establishment of major hydroelectric project, use or production or processing of any hazardous substances, discharge of untreated effluents in natural water bodies or land area, setting up of new saw mills, setting up of brick kilns, use of plastic bags and commercial use of firewood will be permitted right on the southern borders of Karlapat Wildlife Sanctuary if there will be no ESZ in southern boundary, which will be highly detrimental for the ecological sanctity of the whole sanctuary, it said.

Teacher clusters in M'giri remote areas

PNS ■ MALKANGIRI

With a view to ensuring uninterrupted teaching in schools in the remote areas of Malkangiri district, the State Government has decided to form teacher clusters in the region, said School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash.

School students of as many as seven gram panchayats would be benefited by the initiative, for which Rs 8 crore would be spent. Facility for accommodation of 15 teachers would be provided in the first

phase, the Minister said. He also informed that foundation-stone for the teacher cluster would be laid on December 18.

Notably, lack of proper roads has been affecting commuting of teachers to the remote areas of the district.

Everybody loves a good encounter



DEBADATTA DASH

The recent Hyderabad police encounter of the alleged rapists and murderers of veterinary doctor Priyanka Reddy has made the country happy. In fact many are jubilant. Voices from the Parliament were also in strong support of 'lynching' 'quick justice', 'shoot at sight' and 'castration'. Some even have demanded to hand over the alleged rapists to people so

that the 'mob' can give justice on the street.

It is now clear that a huge trust deficit in the Constitution and the law of the land is reaching unmanageable proportions. No surprise that we want more such encounters.

Let's find out what is an encounter? The English word 'encounter' in itself is a misleading one in this context. Encounter simply means meeting either by chance or by choice. The word 'police encounter' is an Indian English word having no equivalent in British or American English. They simply use 'police shootings'.

Police encounter in India refers to the fatally injuring or killing of an alleged or dreaded criminal or a terrorist by the police usually in the context of

self-defence. Police use fire-power in response to the (alleged) attack of the alleged/dreaded criminal or a terrorist. Self-defence is used as a justification. Not that everyone in the police department does 'encounters'. Units like Special Cells and Anti-Terrorism Squads (ATS) have emerged specializing in encounters. The phrase 'encounter-specialists' is much popular for their larger than life images both in films and in majority public imagination.

There have been several such police encounters in recent times and most often the police have received the support of the public. Questioning the police encounter and doubting have become rare and if one does so, has to be

ready to hear and bear abuses, personal attacks, and name callings. Especially, if you are a man questioning the police encounter in the context of a rape and murder case, then you will be labeled as a 'rape sympathizer', 'anti-police', 'pro-criminal' and whatnot. So many reflective voices have chosen not to speak or raise any question on police behaviour.

Many celebrities, political leaders, former judges, public intellectuals and former police leaders have hailed the move by the Hyderabad Police terming it as 'heroic', 'justified', 'need of the time', 'a model to follow' and 'a wake-up call for all police departments' in the country etc. This has become a good encounter to learn from. The crime is horrific and

absolutely terrifying, it's in the backdrop of a national demand for immediate justice, it's efficiently executed by the police especially after the alleged culprits were in police remand where they purportedly have confessed to their crime and at last, the alleged culprits were audacious enough to attack the police and prevent them in carrying out their public duty. Killing these four was a good necessity. It has all the ingredients to make this a good encounter. It was, in fact, a very good encounter.

Due process of law continues to fail in producing results. The courts take years to deliver justice. But encounters produce instant results. They deliver quick justice. Encounters minimize the

expense of the tax-payers' money. Encounters minimize the burden on the judiciary, on the prisons and also give quick satisfaction to the victim's family and friends.

Drawing from P Sainath's famous book title 'Everybody Loves a Good Drought', one can argue that 'Everybody also loves a good encounter' as everybody seems to gain in the process and everybody seems to be happy.

(The author is a crime reporter now researching on the challenges before the criminal justice system of India. His book 'Everybody Loves a Good Encounter' will be published in 2020. Mobile: 9937227994, Email: dattadeba.dash@gmail.com)

NHRC asks Telangana dist authorities

'Issue release certificates to N'pada bonded labourers'

AJIT PANDA ■ NUAPADA

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has directed the Collector of Nalgonda district of Telangana to issue release certificates to the bonded labourers of Ranimunda village of Khariar block in Nuapada district who were rescued from a brick kiln of Ramnagar in Telangana in December 2017.

The NHRC has also directed the Odisha Labour Secretary, the ESI department and the Nuapada Collector to disburse a rehabilitation package to the concerned labourers and submit report to the commission within six months.

Human rights activist Dilip Kumar Dash of Bhawanipatna had drawn the NHRC's attention to a news report about the bondage of 40 labourers, including 10 children, in a brick kiln located in

Ramnagar under the Katanagur police station of Telangana in December 2017. As per the direction of the NHRC, the Nalgonda Collector had rescued the labourers from the kiln and a case was initiated in the name of the employer. However, the concerned authorities in Telangana did not issue the released certificates which resulted in denial of rehabilitation packages to the rescued labourers.

It is learnt from that the Nuapada Collector had written to the concerned authorities in Telangana to issue release certificates, but there was no response. "Rehabilitation package will be immediately disbursed as soon as the certificates are received," said an official of Nuapada DRDA, which is the nodal agency to initiate steps for distribution of rehabilitation relief.

Dalits harassed for land in Jagatsinghpur

Thanks to local admin's apathy

KAHNU NANDA ■ JAGATSINGHPUR

Five Dalit men have been running from pillar to post to get possession of their land, thanks to administration's laxity. Even an order of the Orissa High Court was not executed.

Protesting the event, the Dalit Bikash Parishad has petitioned Sub-Collector Jagatsinghpur seeking to implement the High Court order for justice to the Dalit people.

According to sources, in 1999 the Odisha Government had allotted 4 decimal of land each to 5 Dalit people who had been recognized as landless citizens in Karatutha village under Kujang block.

The victims were given original land Patta but the plot demarcation process was delayed by Kujang tehsil. As a result, the victims were yet to identify and take possession of their plots of land.

One victim Yagendra Sethy informed that he had been



allotted an IAY house as he had furnished his land Patta, but the block officials asked him to show the plot location where the house would be built. As he failed to identify the plot, he was deprived of the benefit.

"Many times we have approached the Kujang Tehsildar to get our land demarcated but our appeal was

overlooked," Sethy alleged.

After being harassed by the civil administration, the victims had filed a writ petition before the High Court in the year 2018 stating their difficulty for which the court swung into action and on February 5 had directed the Tehsildar, Kujang, to depute an Amin for demarcation of the victims'

land and complete the process within four months.

Soon after getting court order, the victims had approached the Tehsildar, Kujang, but till date no action had been taken, said another victim Birabar Sethy.

Meanwhile, president, Dalit Bikash Parishad, Shankar Das, brought the case before

the Sub-Collector, Jagatsinghpur, requesting him to carry out the HC order and deliver justice to the poor Dalit persons a week ago and acting on it, the Sub-Collector has instructed Tehsildar, Kujang regarding compliance of the HC order and conduct land demarcation work of the victims soon.

Truck hits scooter; bizman dies

PNS ■ ANGUL

A business man was killed when a truck hit his scooter in Angul town on Sunday morning. The deceased was identified as Parsuram Rout.

According to reports, Parsuram was travelling by his scooter at around 9 am when the truck dashed against his two-wheeler from behind at Thana Chhak, following which he fell down. Locals present at the spot immediately rushed him to the District Headquarters Hospital. However, he succumbed to his injuries at the hospital.

Following the incident, irate locals staged a road blockade for around an hour. Police managed to pacify the agitators and freed the road.

Married woman raped in K'handi; 3 held

PNS ■ BHAWANI-PATNA

A married woman was allegedly gang-raped by three men near the Gobara canal in Junagarh area of Kalahandi district on Saturday.

Acting on a complaint

lodged by the victim, the Sadar police have arrested the accused. The arrestees were identified as Jhasketan Nag, Laxmikant Nag and Kishore Chandra Mahalik.

The husband of the woman, who works in Goa, had given some money to Jhasketan to hand it over to her. While Jhasketan gave Rs 1,000 to the woman at her house, he told her to receive the rest amount from him at an ATM kiosk at Gobara Chhak after



withdrawal of the money.

As the woman reached the spot, Jhasketan and the two other accused, who were telephoned by him regarding her arrival, forcibly took her to a secluded place, where they raped her by turn.

On the basis of the woman's complaint, police have registered a case under Sections 376D, 394, 294, 506 and 34 of IPC. The accused and the victim were sent for medical examinations.

Sex rackets running from hotels in B'swar Managers of two hotels arrested

PNS ■ BALESWAR

Following reports in media about flesh trade being carried out in some hotels and guesthouses in the Talseri beach in the district, the Marine police swung into action and arrested the managers of two hotels on Saturday.

The duo taken into police

custody was identified as Sagar Saikat hotel manager Sadam Shiekh and Sagar Kanya manager Nirapada Rout. The hotels were also sealed by police.

The police team led by SDPO Ananta Kumbhar conducted raids on various hotels and guesthouses, verified various documents, records and registers.

The media reports said the hoteliers and guesthouse owners in Talseri and Udiapur of Bhograi block were operating sex rackets by engaging girls from West Bengal.

But police claimed that during the raids they did not find any objectionable materials during the raids.

KJD demands alcohol-free Odisha SUBMITS MEMO FOR GOVERNOR

PNS ■ ROURKELA

The Kosal Janata Dal (KJD) presented a memorandum to the Odisha Governor through Rourkela ADM Y Yedulla Bijaya demanding an alcohol-free Odisha and second State Women Commission at Rourkela.

High alcohol consumption in Odisha over the years has remained a constant cause of concern leading to social disorder and the fallout is high incidence of violence on women including rape and

sexual abuse of girl child. The only Women Commission stationed in Bhubaneswar is not adequate to handle the number of complaints coming from various corners of the State. The tribal dominated south western Odisha has been the worst sufferer as the victims cannot reach the commission on account of their poverty. The travesty of justice demands one more commission for them, the memorandum stated.

Spokesperson of KJD Surama Mishra accompanied by party State president Baidyanath Mishra, general secretary Chakranta Jena, secretary Swarup Mishra, treasurer Lalatendu Choudhury and a host of members, including its adviser Samanta Kumar Sahoo, presented the memorandum to the ADM.

Teacher jailed, students left in lurch in K'jhar

PNS ■ KEONJHAR

Rudra Narainpur Primary School within Ghasipura block teacher Mangesh Behera was nabbed by the Ramchandrapur police on charges of fraud and sent to judicial custody.

The Ghasipura Block Education Officer suspended the errant teacher and the latter was directed to report in the Banar Sena Nodal Primary School at Sainkul on daily basis. Instead of reporting at headquarters, Behera went on committing more nefarious offences and again was arrested. He is now lodged in the Anandpur Sub-Jail.

Locals alleged that a notorious 'racket' in Keonjhar dis-

trict education office was collecting money to safeguard the habitual offenders like Behera. Reliable sources said that a local voluntary organisation is preparing to file a public interest litigation petition in the Orissa High Court in this regard if Behera was not terminated and the vacancies of teachers in the school were not filled in a week.

"The Chief Minister's strict order to adhere to the 5T has been a mockery in our district in spite of 5-T Secretary VK Pandiyan's recent Keonjhar trip, "lamented Keonjhar against Corruption president Krishna Chandra Barik. "The CM's slogans are confined to higher officers like OAS and CDMO only," he added.

60 migratory bird carcasses seized in Chilika

Two poachers nabbed

PNS ■ KHORDHA

Forest officials arrested two persons for allegedly hunting migratory birds in the Chilika lake and seized carcasses of as many as 60 birds on Saturday. The accused were identified as Mamta Khan and Noor Ali Khan, who were nabbed during patrolling by Tangi Wildlife Range officials at Chilika.

"While the officials were conducting regular patrolling near Sorana, a motorboat was seen trying to escape swiftly. When the officials stopped the boat and wanted to frisk it, two persons suddenly attacked them," said Tangi Wildlife Range Officer Chudamani



Murmu.

Four forest officials sustained injuries in the attack by the poachers. They were Forester Radhakant Hota and bird security officials Chandan Sahoo, Seshdeb Parida and Ramesh Parida. However, they managed to nab the poachers and seized carcasses of 60

migratory birds, 500 bullets, a gun and a boat from their possession, the official said.

Though the arrival of migratory birds has added charm to the Chilika during winter, rampant poaching of winged guests is a big concern among bird lovers.

'Visit OPGC ash pond, report soon'

NGT directs J'suguda DM, SPCB

PNS ■ JHARSUGUDA

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed the Jharsuguda district Collector and the State Pollution Control Board (SPCB) to inspect an ash pond being constructed by the Odisha Power Generation Corporation (OPGC) at Sansaratikra village in Jharsuguda district.

Based on a petition filed by Maa Ambika Self Help Group, the NGT has also directed the administration to submit a

report after a spot visit before the next hearing.

The NGT reprimanded the OPGC and the district administration for overlooking allegations of villagers.

The SHG alleged that ash pond is being constructed within 20 metres from Sansaratikra village against the norm of 48 metres from a human habitation. This apart, the ash pond will pose threat to the nearby Hirakud reservoir. No public hearing was held before land acquisition for the pond, the petition stated.

Meanwhile, the State Pollution Control Board Chairman has said that it would visit soon.

Lok Adalat held in Brahmpaur

86 MV, many other cases disposed of

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

Rashtriya Lok Adalat was organised by the Ganjam District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) here on Saturday.

A total of five benches disposed of 86 motor vehicle accident cases and issue orders for payment of compensation of total Rs 3.52 crore to families of injured victims and deceased. Four general insurance companies and

various private insurance companies participated. Besides, 129 pre-litigation cases were disposed of and

and 57 civil cases were disposed of. The Adalat was held under the chairmanship of DLSA



orders issued for payment of compensation of Rs 74,02,685. These apart, 129 criminal cases

Charina Ram Shankar Hota was attended by Judges of all courts.

Amway launches Nutrilite Traditional Herbs



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Amway India has expanded its popular Nutrilite Traditional Herbs range with the launch of Nutrilite Madhunashini, Shunti and Twak and Nutrilite Vasaka, Mulethi and Surasa.

Amway India CEO Anshu Budhraj said, "We aim to double the size of the nutrition category by 2025 through relevant innovations and the Nutrilite Traditional Herbs (NTH) Range is one such inno-

vation".

Speaking on the herbal nutrition range, Amway India Wellness VP Ajay Khanna said that the new products would help people support their immunity as well as support glucose and respiratory health.

The Madhunashini, Shunti and Twak supports healthy glucose metabolism and supports glucose health as well as the normal pancreatic function of the body while the Nutrilite Vasaka, Mulethi and Surasa supports respiratory health.

Odisha woman impresses with 'Kuttu-A-Pasta'

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Two contestants from Odisha have made it to the list of top 15 chefs in 'MasterChef India', the most popular cooking reality show on national television, in quick succession. After Abinas Nayak who had been selected last week, now Smrutisree Singh has impressed the judges with her culinary skills to be on the show.

The 26-year-old woman from Angul, who works as a general manager of a hotel, won hearts of the reality show's three judges Vikas Khanna, Ranveer Brar and Vineet Bhatia with her dish 'Kuttu-a-pasta' during the audition round of MasterChef India, Season-6.

When the reality show judges asked Smrutisree why she should be considered for a 'MasterChef' apron, she said, "People often ask, 'where is the Odia cuisine!' I want to take



forward my regional cuisine and let the world taste it."

Populr chef Vikas Khanna tied the 'MasterChef' apron to Smrutisree for her delicious dish prepared in lesser time among all the contestants. The judges had given 15 minutes to each contestant to prepare a dish out of the ingredients provided to them.

Earlier, Abinas Nayak from Aska in Ganjam district has impressed the judges with his dish 'Chicken Besar' (a mustard paste-based dish) and made it to the list of top 10 'MasterChef India'.

The reality show is aired on Star Plus at 9.30 pm every Saturday and Sunday.

'Odisha to tap water bodies to generate solar power'

Projects to be undertaken in association with EU

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha Government is contemplating to generate solar energy by leveraging the potential of vast water bodies available in the State, Energy Department Bishnupada Sethi said on Friday.

"Odisha has huge potential for generating solar power by using water bodies and large reservoirs like Balimela, Hirakud and Rangali," he said, while addressing a two-day first international conference on Innovation in Electrical Power Engineering

and Computing Technology (IEPC-CT-2019) which began at the SOA University here.

Sethi, who is also the Chairman cum Managing Director of the Odisha Hydro Power Corporation (OHPC), said the country has fixed an ambitious target of generating 450 Giga Watt of renewable energy in view of the pressing need to reduce the carbon emission level. "Floating solar, as the system of generating solar energy by using water bodies is known to have immense potential," he said.

Prof PK Nanda, SOA's Dean (Research and Development), presided over the inaugural function which was also addressed by Prof Bhaskar Narayan Thorat, Director and Professor at the Institute of Chemical Technology, IOC Campus,

Bhubaneswar and Prof Bijay Ketan Panigrahi, Professor at IIT, Delhi and General Chair of the conference.

Sethi said the Government is discussing the possibility of taking up such projects with the European Union. Such projects would eliminate the need for land acquisition and avoid displacement, he added.

Besides the water reservoirs, the Government has identified seven irrigation projects for the purpose, he said, adding that issues including the method of evacuation of power, its impact on the water body, fisheries and other related matters, however, would have to be sorted out.

He said though Odisha has 30% of the country's coal deposit, it appeared the days of thermal power generation are limited as it is a cause of pollution.

CIFA fish breeding diet trial held

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

CIFA B-CROODTM a proven carp brood stock diet developed by ICAR-CIFA was supplied to few fish farms in Tamil Nadu in September under a NFDB funded project to observe possibility of maturation.

Farms were selected by the Department of Fisheries, Government of Tamil Nadu which fed the spent broods with CIFA BROODTM body weight for 45 days. The breeding programme was carried out on December 3 at Pugazh Aqua Farm, Kumarakudi, Sathihope of Cuddalore district and on December 5 at Government Fish Farm, Manimuthar of Tirunelveli district in Tamil Nadu. Both rohu

and catla were bred at Pugazh Aqua Farm harvesting 25 lakh of spawn from 23.1kg female while 11 lakh of improved rohu (Jayanti) spawn were recovered from 11.3kg female at Government Fish Farm, Manimuthar. This success has long term implication as Tamil Nadu can be developed into a major seed production centre especially during non-breeding season, which will contribute substantially in the country.



Khordha Mahotsav from today



PNS ■ KHORDHA

The New Thinking Forum is going to organise the district-level Khordha Mahotsav at Stadium ground here from December 16 to 22, informed Mahotsav Committee working president Narendra Kumar Prusty at a Press meet held here on Sunday.

He said Social Security and Empowerment of Persons

with Disabilities (SSEPD) Minister Ashok Chandra Panda would inaugurate the Mahotsav in which book fair, health camp, meena bazaar, entertainment for children would be held. Among others, forum VP Baikuntha Rajguru, Bidhan Mohanty, Prafulla Kumar Samantray, Abani Jena and committee chief coordinator Sisir Kumar Parida were present.

ATBN Advocates' Assn holds silver jubilee



PNS ■ ATHAGARH

The Athagarh, Tigiria, Badamba and Narsinghpur (ATBN) Advocates' Association on Sunday celebrated its silver jubilee function here with much pump and gaiety.

Held under the chairmanship of association president Phani Bhushan Rath, the meeting was attended by litterateur Prof Narayan Panda as chief speaker and Dr Sashi Bhusan

Rath, advocates Adwaita Charan Panda, Sarat Kumar Panda, Harihar Balwantray and Bishnu Prasad Dash as guests.

Almost all members of the four bars of Athagarh Sub-Division and delegates from Cuttack and Bhubaneswar congregated at the event. Advocate Phani Bhushan Rath was conferred with "ATBN Ratna" award. A souvenir titled "The Patronms" was unveiled by the guests on the occasion.

IN BRIEF

KHORDHA POLICE HOLDS BLOOD DONATION CAMP

Khordha: The Khordha district police organised a voluntary blood donation camp at the SP office here on Saturday. As many as 102 units of blood were collected. MLAs of Khordha, Begunia, Chilika, Khordha Collector, SP, ASP SDPO, DSPs, IICs and other officials were present. The Blood Bank felicitated the Khordha SP for collecting more than 100 units of blood.

SCIENTIFIC TESTS FOR OTAP HELD

Bhubaneswar: Scientific tests for Odisha Talent Adoption Programme (OTAP) were carried out at the Aditya Birla Public School, Bhubaneswar in which 124 students participated. OTAP is conducted to find out the shooting talents amongst the children who will be trained professionally at the Birla Gagan Narang High Performance Centre. The centre set up by the Aditya Birla Group in the city in collaboration with the Gagan Narang Sports Promotion Foundation and the Sports and Youth Services Department. In the selection camp, Abhilash Mallick from Aditya Birla Group and Prashant Jain from Gagan Narang Foundation and ABPS Principal Dr Nirupama Kapoor were present.

VLCC OPENS WELLNESS, BEAUTY CENTRES IN CITY

Bhubaneswar: The VLCC launched its wellness and beauty centres at Janpath, Saheed Nagar and KIIT College Square, Paita here recently. VLCC Group founder and chairperson Vandana Luthra inaugurated the centre. The VLCC operates seven wellness and beauty centres in Odisha as well as 3 skill development institutes for beauty and nutrition. Both centres will offer the very latest in weight management solutions, skin and hair treatments as well as laser and aesthetic dermatology treatments, using state-of-the-art technology and processes.

SAMANTA OPENS FACILITIES AT K, MAL DHH

Phulbani: Kandhamal MP Dr Achyuta Samanta inaugurated a drying tumbler house, a physiotherapy unit and a testing unit at the Kandhamal District Headquarters Hospital (DHH) here on Sunday in the presence of Phulbani MLA Angad Kanhar, district SP Pratik Singh and CDMO Dr Rajyasri Pattnaik. This is a step forward for health care facilities of Kandhamal people, he said.

MP HONOURS KLF ORGANISERS

Phulbani: Kandhamal MP Dr Achyuta Samanta felicitated the Team Humanity for its efforts in organising the Kalinga Literature Festival (KLF).

BLOOD DONATION CAMP HELD IN BRAHMAMPUR

Brahmapur: A blood donation camp was organised at the City College at Ambapua on Saturday. The camp held under the guidance of Dr Pratap Chandra Dash was assisted by Red Cross officer Praveena Dash, NCC Officer Meghanada Pradhan and NSS Coordinator Sudam Bisoyi. Gopalpur MLA Dr Pradeep Panigrahi, Principal Pushpanjali Sabat, former Principal Jambu Pani Sahu graced as guests. Dr Dilip Kumar Patro, Dr Susil Gantayat, Surendra Panda and Dr Ajay Kumar Pentago coordinated. A total of 42 units of blood were collected.

MAN TRAMPLED TO DEATH BY JUMBO

Sundargarh: A man, Parikshita Gahira (46), was trampled to death by an elephant at Thutipipala village under Bandhabahal panchayat in the district on Saturday night. A herd of wild elephants had entered the village in search of food. Parikshita along with his family members was asleep when he heard annoying sounds. When he came outside the house, an elephant trampled him, resulting in his death on the spot. Being informed, forest officials reached the village and launched an operation to drive away the jumbos.

MAN AXES YOUNGER BROTHER TO DEATH IN BALANGIR

Balangir: A man allegedly hacked his younger brother to death with an axe at Beharensilet village under the Kantabanji police limits in Balangir district on Saturday night. A heated argument had erupted between Sarat Majhi and his younger brother Debaram over a particular matter. It took a violent turn as Sarat lost his cool and attacked. Debaram died on the spot. Sarat fled soon after committing the crime. Police reached the village and started investigation. Efforts were on to trace Sarat.

2 INTER-STATE LOOTERS NABBED IN BRAHMAMPUR

Brahmapur: The Brahmapur police on Sunday arrested court-forwarded two inter-State looters on the charge of looting a woman teacher of two gold chains and another woman of a gold necklace recently in the city. They were identified as Sujit Kumar Padhi (38) of Gajapati Nagar 7th Lane and Jagadish Behera alias Tiki (32) of Ankuli Nigam Nagar 2nd Line. Police seized a mouser, a bike and Rs 10,000 from them. As many as 17 cases in different police stations in Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh and 15 cases in Brahmapur police stations are lying pending against the two, informed police.

LAPTOPS DISTRIBUTED TO STUDENTS



Jharsuguda: Under the State Government's Biju Empowerment Scheme, 135 meritorious students of 14 colleges of Jharsuguda district were given laptops at the Laxminarayana College here. Health Minister Naba Kishore Das and Brajrajnagar MLA Kishore Mohanty distributed the laptops. College Principal Chirabrat Dutt felicitated some students with medals. Lawyers' Association president Sandeep Awasthy, educationist Pratap Bhera and Tahalu Sahoo were present, among others.

OPGC HOLDS HEALTH CAMP IN PONDARY PANCHAYAT

Jharsuguda: The Odisha Power Generation Corporation (OPGC) on Saturday organised a health camp at the panchayat office of Pondary under Lakanpur block in the district. Pondary GP Sarpanch Nirmal Kumar Majhi inaugurated the camp. IB Thermal Hospital CMO Dr Bijaylal Biswal, Assistant CMO Dr Sangeeta Panda, Dr Gopinath Soren and Dr Ekanta Pradhan both from the Lakanpur CHC treated 347 patients from different villages. They were checked up for various ailments like Vertigo, LBA, URTF, LRTF, hypertension, diabetes, cataract, tinia and skin diseases.

Odisha shuttlers eye maiden Sub-Jr Nat'l medal

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Odisha's long wait for its first Sub-Junior National medal in badminton is likely to end when the leading sports-promoting State plays hosts to the 33rd edition of the championships for U-15 and U-17 boys and girls in Bhubaneswar from December 17 to 22.

The Odisha State Badminton Association (OSBA), which is set to field a 22-member squad in the ensuing championship, pins hopes on its India No 1 shuttlers Ayush Pattnayak and Swetaparna Panda. Both have been given direct entry to the main draw in respective doubles and mixed double events.

Baripada boy Ayush is currently leading the Badminton Association India (BAI) Rankings in U-17 doubles with 542 points. He is also placed at No 6 in singles with 576 points. Earlier this year, Ayush finished U-17 boys doubles runners-up at the All



India Sub-Junior Ranking Tournament in Imphal with Suhas V as his partner.

Cuttack girl Swetaparna is now heading the BAI Ranking in U-15 mixed doubles with 310 points. She is the younger sister of rising India star Rutuparna Panda and has the reputation of winning the U-

15 mixed doubles title at the All India Sub-junior Ranking Tournament in Imphal with Sathwik Reddy of Telangana as her partner.

Besides Ayush and Swetaparna, the Odisha squad has other able players like Partha Sarathi Mishra, Ajay Majhi, Siddharth Rajesh Patil

and Tahasif Khan in boys' events and Harshita Rout and Sruti Swain in girls' categories.

According to OSBA secretary Nileen Kumar, the ensuing championship will play a big role for the development and promotion of badminton in Odisha.

Badal founder of Cloud Media

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Bhubaneswar-based 2nd year B.Tech student Badal Sahoo is now founder of Cloud Media. His tremendous creativity and skills, apart from the Instagram market of 100+ million bases, the digital sensation also holds an influential place on other social media platforms, including YouTube, Twitter, Tiktok and Facebook.

Born in a middleclass family with his father working in a Government establishment, what Badal has achieved is a dream of many people in this competitive world.

Badal says, "Invest in your-



self. Take risks. Learn from mistakes. Or regret working for who does."

He aims to make all families happy over social media in busy life. He now has bases over millions of audiences and is constantly trying to create the best puns of the ongoing trends along with his social strategies.

XIMB among best biz schools

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Xavier Institute of Management, Bhubaneswar (XIMB) with its amalgamation of the students' skills, pedagogy and state-of-the-art infrastructure has bagged top ranking among best business schools by different media organisations across the country for 2019.

The institute has served as a right platform for the students to showcase their flair, creativity and aptitude by imbuing the right mix of EQ and IQ amongst the students.

The XIMB has continued to reaffirm its faith by offering unique roles in different sectors to the students and opening up new roles for various specialisations in the institution.

Jai Odisha to clean 73 city statues



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

On completion of a year of its statue cleaning drive, the Jai Odisha on Sunday formed a team of 30 volunteers, named "Swachh Sanmaan Pratindhi" to clean all 73 statues in the city every week on a regular basis. Earlier, the organisation was cleaning 16 statues every week through its "Swachh Sanmaan" initiative.

Noted freedom fighter Shri Bhabani Charan Pattnaik and Jai Odisha advisor Dr Jagannath Mohapatra gave good pieces of advice to the volunteers. Members of Maa Mangala Youth Club, Ambition Club, Youth Association, Kedareshwari Youth Club, Rasulgarh Durga Puja Committee and other clubs make "Swachh Sanmaan Pratindhi" team.

Sainik School holds Biju marathon

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

In the loving memory of Biju Patnaik, founder of the Sainik School Bhubaneswar, a mini marathon was organised at the Sainik School on Sunday in which over 1,500 participants, including 500 cadets from the Sainik School and students from local schools and colleges took part.

The marathon was a collaborative event by the Sainik School and its Old Boys' Association and the Odisha Mining Corporation to spread the message of a "Clean, Green and Healthy" Bhubaneswar. This marathon started



from the Sainik School's Gandhi Mini Stadium and culminated at the starting point covering a distance of 7.3 km.

Li Gen JK Mohanty, Group Capt S Dominic Rayan, Principal, Sainik School, and

Anup Sahoo, DCP, Bhubaneswar flagged off the marathon.

State Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain, chief guest, distributed prizes to the notable participants.

Many trains en route to Odisha cancelled

Unrest in Assam, WB Some too cancelled partially

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Railway authorities on Sunday cancelled more trains running through Odisha in view of ongoing mass agitation in Assam against the Citizenship Amendment Act.

As the massive protests spread to neighbouring West Bengal, over a dozen of trains have been cancelled.

The train which was cancelled from Howrah is

Sealdah-Puri Express from Sealdah on December 16. The trains cancelled from Puri are 22859 Puri-Chennai Express, 58002 Puri-Santragachhi Passenger and 58404 Puri-Khurda Passenger, all cancelled on December 15.

Other cancelled Odisha en-route trains are 20890 Tirupati-Howrah Express from Tirupati on December 15, 22878 Ernakulam-Howrah Express from Ernakulam on Dec 17, 12840 Chennai-Howrah Coromandal Express from Chennai on Dec 14, 22889 Digha-Puri Express from Digha on Dec 15, 12246 Yesvantpur-Howrah Express from Yesvantpur on Dec 16, 18646 Hyderabad-Howrah East Coast Express from Hyderabad on Dec 15, 22860

Chennai-Puri Express from Chennai on Dec 16, 12842 Chennai-Howrah Coromandal Express from Chennai on Dec 15, 12864 Yesvantpur-Howrah Express from Yesvantpur on Dec 14, 22852 Mangalore-Santragachhi Express from Mangalore on Dec 14, 06010 Puduchery-Santragachhi Express from Puduchery on Dec 14, 18048 VascoDagama-Howrah Amaravati Express from VascoDagama on Dec 15, 12513 Secunderabad-Guwahati Express from Secunderabad on December 15 and 22502 New Tinsukia-Bangalorw Express from New Tinsukia on Dec 13.

The trains which were cancelled partially include 22641 Trivandrum-Shalimar

Express, 12246 Yesvantpur-Howrah Express from Yesvantpur on Dec 13, 02842 Chennai-Santragachhi Special from Chennai on Dec 14, 12666 Kanyakumari-Howrah Express from Kanyakumari on Dec 14, 12253 Yesvantpur-Bagalpur Express from Yesvantpur on Dec 14, 80824 Coimbatore-Santragachhi Special from Coimbatore on Dec 13, 12509 Bangalore Cant.-Guwahati Express from Bangalore on Dec 13, 12842 Chennai-Howrah Coromandal Express from Chennai on Dec 14, 18646 Hyderabad-Howrah East Coast Express from Hyderabad on Dec 14, 12704 Secunderabad-Howrah Falaknuma Express from Secunderabad on Dec 14.

'NRO role vital in making Odisha No 1'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/BHUBANESWAR

Non-resident Odias (NRO) would play a vital role to make the State number one in the country, said Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Dharmendra Pradhan at the 4th annual event of Prabasi Odia Utsav 2019 held in New Delhi on Sunday.

He said that all Odias should come together to create identity of their State at global level. The Minister also said that it is not only the responsibilities of the State and Central Governments but of all Odias to create an identity of Odisha across the globe like by promoting Odisha's Chenapoda, Arisa Pitha, Sambalpur Saree and Khordha towel and others.



The objective of the Utsav is to promote Odia culture, handicrafts and food.

Delhi's traffic woes from neighbours!

Despite Western and Eastern Peripheral Expressways, Delhi sees more than 12 lakh vehicles everyday from its neighbouring States. Of them, less than one fourth of the total vehicular movement is attributed to the freight vehicles. As per the study conducted by CRRRI, number of vehicles entering to Delhi rose from 6,13,797 to 6,19,946 everyday

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Despite Western and Eastern Peripheral Expressways to reduce traffic congestion in Delhi, there is to-and-fro movement of more than 12 lakh vehicles everyday from neighbouring States of Delhi.

Of them, less than one fourth of the total vehicular movement is attributed to the freight vehicles. The volume of both personal and freight vehicles is gradually increasing. As per the study conducted by Central Road Research Institute (CRRRI) namely "Megacity Logistics: Metrics, Tools And Measures For Sustainability", the number of vehicles entering to Delhi rose from 6,13,797 to 6,19,946 everyday. The respective figures for the year 2009, were 4,72,852 and 5,50,841.

A Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs on "the management of worsening traffic situation in Delhi", expressed concern as there is no planning to regulate or restrict the vehicular movement from



the neighbouring States when the roads of the city are already reeling under heavy stress because of traffic congestion and other related issues.

The Committee also expressed its strong displeasure on the fact that freight management plan for Delhi has not been formulated till now. The committee was informed by the representative of the CRRRI that the road traffic demand has increased exceptionally and is not in keeping with the growth in the supply side factors such

as increase in road network and upgradation of road infrastructure.

The Committee observed that freight traffic on Delhi roads contribute more than 18 per cent of the total vehicular volume on Delhi Roads. The committee, therefore, strongly recommended that after due study and assessment of management of freight traffic in other major cities, Government of Delhi along with other agencies should formulate a suitable plan for the freight traffic man-

agement in Delhi and NCR and this must be done keeping in mind the fact that least burden is felt during peak hours.

The committee therefore, recommended that infrastructure of suitable nature to commute, transport and dedicated places for boarding and de-boarding of freight materials needs to be earmarked on a priority basis and the timing of freight movement should be regulated/kept in mind the material being carried by it like whether it is perishable item like food or vegetables or building materials, etc..

As per the data, there has been an average growth of 3 per cent in overall vehicular movement on the roads of Delhi in the last decade. Also, during the year 2018, 21.35 per cent of the freight vehicles entering Delhi used the roads of Delhi just to bypass Delhi and there was no plan as of now to regulate or restrict the to and fro vehicular movement from the neighbouring States to Delhi.

Therefore, the Committee also recommended that there

was an urgent need to formulate plan/policy to regulate the entry of the inbound traffic and ensure smooth exit of the outbound traffic by diverting the vehicles using Delhi roads only for bypassing via peripheral and ring roads.

"Recurrence of extreme congestion on the Delhi roads has become a common phenomenon and has hampered the quality of life of all. The average speeds have been reduced to 5 to 10 km/hr during peak hours even on the major arterial roads of the city leading to the loss of time of the working population, fuel wastage and environmental pollution," it said.

Furthermore, the problem of traffic congestion has been aggravated by the rapidly increasing population of Delhi, geographical expansion of Delhi, inadequate expansion of public transport, improper parking on roads and lack of a central coordination mechanism for formulation and implementation of traffic management policies in Delhi.

BJP announces nationwide campaign on Citizenship law

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid public unrest and Opposition's pitch against the amended Citizenship Law, that allows six religiously persecuted minorities excluding Muslims from three neighbouring countries to take Indian citizenship, the BJP on Sunday announced a nationwide campaign to spread awareness about the legislation, asserting that it was not discriminatory against Muslims or any other community.

The Citizenship Amendment Bill, 2019, which was passed last week by Parliament which has now turned effective as an act with Presidential assent has triggered public protest in the North-East, Bengal and the national Capital with police and army called out at the epicenters of the violence.

The ruling BJP has sought to "dispel" the Congress and a section of other Opposition's campaign that the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) was unconstitutional as it seeks to exclude Muslim persecuted minorities from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan from the provisions of CAA and is

thus discriminatory.

Party spokesperson Sambit Patra told a Press conference on Sunday that the BJP workers will spread out across the country to inform people about the law that, he said, meant to provide Indian citizenships to persecuted minorities — Hindus, Sikhs, Parsis, Buddhists, Jains and Christians — in the neighbouring three countries where their numbers have come down drastically on account of various discrimination against them.

The party has affirmed that the CAA was not against Muslims as has been "orchestrated" by the Opposition parties, particularly the Congress. "There is no provision in this law that even a single right of our Muslim brothers and sisters will be taken away. Instead rights will be provided to those who are living in India without any rights facing religious persecution in countries like Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan," Patra said.

He said party functionaries from 11 States were briefed by the national leadership on the law's provisions here on Sunday before they start a campaign in their respective

State. The party has asked all the MPs, including those from Rajya Sabha, to visit their constituencies and States to create awareness about the provisions of the CAA and the specific purpose for which it was passed by the Parliament.

The state level leadership of the party including Ministers and MLAs would also be required to update themselves and inform public on the correct and positive implications of the Act.

Special awareness campaigns would be launched by the party in the North-East which has been the first to witness public protest after the bill was passed by Parliament with the apprehensions that giving citizenships to migrants across the borders and those already there in the region may impact the demography of the region and may also affect their social and cultural identity.

In the BJP Parliamentary party meet last week which was also attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the central leadership had directed all party MPs to counter political campaign launched by the Opposition against the Bill.

7 YEARS POST-NIRBHAYA

Rape conviction rate low at 32%

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Seven years after the brutal Nirbhaya gangrape that shook the entire nation, the conviction rate in rape cases in the country is as low as 32.2 per cent despite laws dealing with sexual assault being made stringent in the aftermath of the incident.

According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data available for 2017, the total number of rape cases that went to trial in that year was 1,46,201 but only 5,822 of them resulted in conviction.

What is perhaps more worrisome is that while the conviction rate in rape cases has increased marginally in recent years, the charge-sheeting rate has gone down — which means cases are not going to court.

The charge-sheeting rate in rape cases dropped to 86.6 per cent in 2017 from 95.4 per cent in 2013, the NCRB statistics show. Shilpi Jain, who was the defence lawyer in the Alwar rape case wherein a foreign

tourist was raped by Bitti Mohanty, son former Odisha director general of police B B Mohanty, said the field-level staff of police dealing with rape investigation need to be made more efficient.

"They are mostly ill-equipped, inexperienced, power gets to their head and in most cases they are extremely corrupt," Jain said.

"A sub-inspector is the highest-level officer who files a chargesheet, so one can imagine the quality of the content," said Jain.

Similarly, the prosecutors who deal with the cases at the district level are of low caliber and less driven, she said, adding that all these factors make up badly investigated cases which results in low conviction rate.

A 23-year-old paramedic student, who came to be known as Nirbhaya, was gang raped on the intervening night of December 16-17, 2012, in a running bus in south Delhi by six people.

Death penalty debate rages on as court considers plea of Nirbhaya convict

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The death penalty has no place in the 21st century." The quote by UN Secretary General António Guterres seems convincing, but over 50 countries still allow capital punishment and gruesome crimes such as the Nirbhaya gang rape-and-murder case serve as a reminder that the issue of doing away with death penalty is not a settled one.

Fifty countries that still allow death penalty include India, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nigeria, the US, Iran, Japan, Kuwait, Bangladesh, Iraq, Indonesia and the UAE, according to information in public domain.

The US-based Death Penalty Information Centre, a non-profit organisation, States that there are 146 countries that have totally abolished it in law and practice. India executes criminals only in extreme cases and only 26 executions have

taken place in India since 1991, last being 1993 bomb blast case convict Yakub Memon in 2015. Before that, India had executed 2001 Indian Parliament attack Afzal Guru.

Death penalty is in focus in India with a plea in the Supreme Court by one of the four death-row convicts in the Nirbhaya gangrape-and-murder case, seeking review of the court's 2017 judgement awarding him the capital punishment.

A three-judge bench will hear the plea filed by convict Akshay Kumar Singh, whose lawyer has questioned in the review petition as to why give capital punishment at a time life is getting "short" due to rising pollution. The apex court had on July 9 last year dismissed the review pleas filed by the three other convicts — Mukesh (30), Pawan Gupta (23) and Vinay Sharma (24) — in the case, saying no grounds have been made out by them for review of the 2017 verdict.

Six States didn't use Nirbhaya fund at all: Govt data

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Nirbhaya fund — set up by the Centre in 2013 to be used towards ensuring women's safety — has seen a dismal nine per cent utilisation with States such as Maharashtra and Meghalaya not spending a single rupee from it, according to Government data.

In total, just ₹147 crore out of ₹1,649 crore sanctioned by the Centre has been spent by the State and Union Territories (UTs) Governments. Parliament was recently informed by Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani.

Uttar Pradesh and Telangana, the two States which were in the news recently for horrific incidents of rape and murder, were among the highest recipients of the Nirbhaya fund alongside

Karnataka, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Delhi.

While Karnataka used 7 per cent of the fund allocated to it by the Centre (the fund allocated to Karnataka was ₹191 crore and utilisation ₹13.62 crore), Tamil Nadu used 3 per cent of the amount allocated to it under the Nirbhaya fund (the fund allocated was ₹190.68 crore and utilisation ₹6 crore).

Six States and UTs — Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Tripura and Daman & Diu — have not spent a single rupee from the fund allocated by the Centre, according to data shared by the Minister in Parliament in response to a question.

The data also showed that Delhi, where the brutal incident took place, saw utilisation of less than 5 per cent of the fund allocated to it.

Rahul should give up name of Gandhi: Patra

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In the light of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's public proclamation that he is a Gandhi and not Savarkar to apologise for his 'rape-in-India' barb, the BJP on Sunday asked him to drop his surname as it was "stolen" by his family for political gains. The party's riposte came a day after the former Congress president, in a public rally here, refused to apologise for his "rape in India" remark saying he is not "Rahul Savarkar".

Addressing a Press conference on Sunday, BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra said former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had called Savarkar "son of soil", while her grandson was referring to him in a derogatory note. "They stole the Gandhi name for political gains. He should give up the name of Gandhi. You (Rahul Gandhi) are a political deserter," Patra alleged.

On Saturday, Rahul has stressed on his surname and unleashed a barb that he was a

Gandhi and not a 'savarkar' to apologise and would rather "die" than seeking forgiveness. Congress leader had earlier come under the BJP's attack for his "rape-in-India" comment at a public rally in Jharkhand.

Rahul had made the comment saying the Modi Government's "Make-in-India" has rather turned into "rape-in-India", indicating spate of rape cases in the country. A furious BJP had sought an apology from Rahul with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in Lok Sabha saying the comment was unbecoming of a member of Parliament.

An unapologetic Rahul responded saying he has not done anything wrong and blamed the BJP Government for not protecting women and ruining country's economy.

In a counter attack, BJP has now accused Rahul of hiding behind his surname Gandhi and seeking to attack a patriot like Savarkar and demanded that he gave up his surname that the family has 'stolen'.

Home Min rejects move to give legal protection to docs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry does not seem to be appreciative of the Union Health Ministry's move to give legal protection to the practitioners of one specific profession i.e. doctors.

Sources said the Home Ministry has stalled draft central legislation, seeking to penalise those assaulting doctors and other healthcare professionals with imprisonment of up to 10 years and fine of ₹2-10 lakh.

The proposed Bill, the Healthcare Service Personnel and Clinical Establishments (Prohibition of Violence and Damage to Property) Bill, 2019, prepared at the behest of Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan, was set to go to the Union Cabinet soon but the Home Ministry has rejected it saying that no central legislation can be brought to protect the practitioners of one specific profession

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- Bill had been prepared in the wake of growing number of attacks on doctors in hospitals

Health Minister Harsh Vardhan, was set to go to the Union Cabinet soon but the Home Ministry has rejected it saying that no central legislation can be brought to protect the practitioners of one specific profession.

Bill had been prepared in the wake of growing number of

attacks on doctors in hospitals and the immediate trigger for the drafting the legislation was brutal assault on junior doctors in West Bengal in June this year, which led to nationwide protests by medical professionals.

"The Union Law Ministry had already given a go-ahead to the draft Bill. But now the

MHA has red-signalled it and we will be forced to junk it," said a senior official in the Health Ministry.

Sources in the Ministry also said that Vardhan was very keen on getting the Bill through and it was due to his intervention that it had got drafted within two months after holding inter-ministerial consultations and taking representations from doctors' bodies. The Ministry had hoped that it would serve as a deterrent to family members of patients assaulting medical staff and doctors on duty.

"It was put out in the public domain for feedback only after we received the Law Ministry's approval. Hence, even we are surprised at the

strong objections by the MHA," another official said.

Apart from proposing strict legal provisions against the grievous attack on doctors, the draft Bill had also said that those resorting to violence or causing damage to the property of a healthcare facility can be imprisoned for six months to five years and fined between ₹50,000 and ₹5 lakh.

Healthcare professionals would have included doctors and para-medical staff, as well as medical students, diagnostic service providers in a health facility and ambulance drivers. The Indian Medical Association, the largest organisation of private doctors in the country had been staunchly pushing the Bill.



Commissioner Santosh Kumar Mall and other senior officials were present at the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) foundation day celebration at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi on Sunday. Pioneer photo

Deficiency of iron in early stages of pregnancy leads to anaemia

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Women considering becoming pregnant or who are within the early weeks of pregnancy, need to ensure that they have enough iron-rich food to prevent anaemia. For, early anaemic pregnant stage may leave their offspring afflicted with intellectually disability (ID), autism spectrum disability (ASD) or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), according to a study published in international journal, JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association) Psychiatry.

However, women diagnosed with anaemia later in pregnancy did not have the same risk, said the study which holds importance in the

context of India too which is home to 50 per cent anemic pregnant women. Iron is a mineral that plays a key role in the making of red blood cells, which carry oxygen.

The Indian Government has mandated consumption of iron-folic acid tablets for 100 days during pregnancy, but only 30 per cent, or three in every ten, pregnant Indian women consume iron-folic acid (IFA) tablets for at least 100 days (NFHS-4), as per the latest Government survey. Anaemia in pregnancy is defined as a hemoglobin concentration of less than 110 g/L (less than 11 g/dL) in venous blood.

The large population-based study (nearly 300,000 mothers of more than 500,000 children



born in Sweden between 1987 and 2010) published in the JAMA journal showed that the risk of ASD and ADHD in children whose mothers had anaemia in early pregnancy was 44 per cent and 37 per cent higher, respectively, compared

with those children born to mothers without early prenatal anaemia.

The risk of intellectual disability was highest, at 120 per cent. However, interestingly, said researchers, anaemia diagnosed after the 30 weeks' gesta-

tion was not associated with an increased risk for any of the neurological development issues. It is believed iron may play an important role in the development of a foetus' brain, particularly in a 'critical window' before 30 weeks, the scientists said.

"It is part of standard antenatal care to screen pregnant women for low hemoglobin levels, and this is important to continue," senior author of the study Renee Gardner, PhD, of Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden, said.

Among the women, 5.8 per cent were diagnosed with anaemia during pregnancy; of these diagnoses, 5 per cent occurred before 30 weeks' gestation, while 90.9 per cent occurred after 30 weeks' gesta-

tion. However, experts caution that while prenatal iron supplements might offset the risk of conditions associated with anaemia, too much iron intake can be toxic.

In India, the prevalence of anaemia in pregnancy is among the highest in the world. The study published in the JAMA journal may not be directly linked with India's status on number of intellectually/neurologically disabled children but definitely indicate the reason that why nearly 1 in 8 children in our country has at least one neurodevelopmental condition.

The actual number may be higher, given that families do not report the cases in view of stigma associated with the condition. The Indian Government has launched Anemia Muk

PREVENT ANAEMIA

- Rich sources of iron include heme iron (in meat, poultry, fish and egg yolk), dry fruits, dark green leafy vegetables (spinach, beans, legumes, lentils) and iron fortified cereals
- Using cast iron utensils for cooking and taking iron with vitamin C (orange juice) can improve its intake and absorption
- Certain foods which may inhibit iron absorption should not be taken with iron rich foods. These include polyphenols (in certain vegetables, coffee), tannins (in tea), phytates (in bran) and calcium (in dairy products)

Bharat (AMB) Strategy under POSHAN Abhiyaan with the aim to reduce anemia prevalence by three percentage points every year till 2022. Ajay Khera, Deputy Commissioner for Child Health and Immunisation under the Union Health Ministry said that the most

important of these is making available the IFA supplementation across the states. While earlier programmes existed for 30 years, the reduction of anaemia has been just 1 percentage point per year, because the coverage of the supplements was about 20 per cent, he said.

CITIZENSHIP AMENDMENT ACT

TMC takes out rallies in protest

Mamata to hit streets in opposing law

Kolkata: The ruling Trinamool Congress in West Bengal took out rallies across the State on Sunday, protesting against the amended Citizenship Act.

Several senior party leaders, including ministers, led rallies in various districts and also appealed to the people to maintain peace and refrain from indulging in violence.

Carrying posters and placards, TMC members shouted slogans against the Modi Government and demanded that the new citizenship law be immediately scrapped.

"We want this divisive Citizenship Act to be immediately scrapped. Our State Government has already said that it will not be implemented in Bengal, so we appeal to the people not to take law into their hands, and



protest peacefully," senior TMC leader and education minister Partha Chatterjee said.

TMC supremo and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee will hit the streets from Monday in protest the law. For three consecutive days, Banerjee who has been at the forefront in opposing the law, will crisscross the city in protest.

PTI

AASU hints at launching political party in Assam

PNS ■ GUWAHATI

The All Assam Students' Union (AASU), which has been protesting the amended Citizenship Act, on Sunday hinted at launching a political party along with 'Silpi Samaj' (artists' forum) as an alternative to the ruling BJP and AGP as well as to Opposition Congress. AASU president Dipanka Nath, addressing a protest meet 'Concert for Peace and Harmony', supported popular actor Zubeen Garg's proposal of launching a political party.

"We are in talks with Silpi Samaj (artists' forum) and also discussing with people of Assam to think about an alternative. With your (people's) permission, we will not hesitate one bit to go in that direction (of launching a political party).

"The AASU will remain apolitical. But, in the interest of the people, along with Silpi Samaj we are ready to go in that direction," Nath said to loud cheers from thousands of people at the event. Nath alleged the Centre decided to implement the amended Citizenship Act to render the culture, language and heritage of the indigenous people "extinct". "Our agitation against the Act will be



long. Each one of us has to carry on our fight peacefully," he said.

Claiming that five persons have so far been killed in police firing, the AASU president accused the Sarbananda Sonowal-led Government of using the state machinery to dominate the protesters.

"They have unleashed their oppressive machinery on people killing five minor students and injuring many others with bullets... This Government will be brought down.

"No Government can suppress our struggle with killings and force. We will intensify our democratic movement through non-violent means," Nath said. The AASU president accused AGP of "betraying" the people of the state and said the Congress was also "equally bad".



Protesters hold placards against Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), in Ahmedabad on Sunday

PTI



Rashtriya Janata Dal activists stage a protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), in Patna on Sunday

Woman found dead in WB, family claims she killed self because of fear of NRC

Bardhaman (WB): A 36-year-old woman was found dead in West Bengal's Purba Bardhaman district, police said on Sunday, with her family claiming that scared of the proposed country-wide NRC she committed suicide.

Shipra Sikder was found hanging with a muffler wrapped around her neck at her house in Jaugram area's Teli village under Jamalpur police station limits on Saturday, police said.

She was taken to the Jamalpur government hospital where doctors declared her brought dead, they said. Locals said Shipra's husband, Shubhash Shikder, was a van driver and they have a son and a daughter. The woman had to depend on her income from the MGNREGA scheme to run her household.

Shipra's brother-in-law Bipul Sikder said she was tensed and scared ever since the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill was cleared by

Parliament.

Though her son, 19, had Aadhaar card but he didn't have a birth certificate and voter ID, due to which Shipra was scared that her son might be "thrown" out of the country, claimed Bipul.

"She went to the BDO office several times to get documents for her son. But she couldn't manage to get those. She killed herself because of the NRC," he said.

An officer of the Jamalpur police station said they suspect it to be suicide, however, a case of unnatural death has been registered.

The body has been sent for postmortem examination, he said, adding that the family's claims are being investigated.

Jamalpur panchayat samiti president Mahmood Khan said that he has heard that Shipra's son didn't have the documents and she killed herself as she was scared that her son will be ousted.

Anti-CAA agitators: We are protesting as Assamese, not as Hindu or Muslim

Guwahati: They come from myriad backgrounds and faiths but at the protest venues in the city and several parts of the State, they all unite against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act as they believe it's an "assault" on Assamese culture and identity.

Forty-eight-year-old Guwahati resident Upendrajit Kalita says he felt a "sense of betrayal" the day Parliament passed the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, alleging that the legislation goes "against the Assam Accord" which was signed to protect the interest of the native Assamese people.

Kalita, who works in an advertisement agency, had participated in the historic six-year-long Assam Movement led by the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) that had culminated in the signing of the Assam Accord

in 1985. The massive protests across the state against the Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB), now an Act, are currently also led by the AASU, which has asserted that it will be unrelenting in its battle.

From Guwahati, the nerve-centre of the protests, to Jorhat, and from Dibrugarh to Sivasagar, protesters have virtually brought the state to a standstill, demanding that "the CAA must go", otherwise the agitation will be stepped up.

"One of the clauses of the Accord mandated detection and deportation of all illegal migrants without discriminating on the basis of religion and the all-accepted cut-off year of 1971. Clause 6 of it was to give constitutional protection to original citizens of Assam," Kalita said, and alleged the

Yogi seeks people's support for nationwide NRC, terms it as tribute to Iron Man

Lucknow: Amid fears in a section of population against the likely creation of a countrywide National Register of Citizens, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday sought people's support to the move terming it a "true tribute" to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

Speaking at a function here to mark the death anniversary of the first Union Home Minister, Adityanath said, "Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel checked divisive policies of the British."

"Through his efforts, he foiled evil intentions of anti-India elements, who had a mindset of dividing the country, and included the country's 563 princely states into the Republic of India, contributing to the creation 'Ek Bharat,

Shreshtha Bharat'," he said.

"The entire country should be united on the NRC and this will be a true tribute to Iron Man Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

"Sardar Patel will be remembered for decades for being the symbol of India's unity, besides as a great freedom fighter," the Chief Minister added.

Bowing to a Sardar Patel's portrait on the stage, the chief minister said, "We are trying our best to make India of your dreams by following your ideals."

Adityanath said the Centre has been successful in bringing Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh under Indian legislation, following the ideals of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat' by Sardar

Kashmiri pandit group hails Act, says entire nation 'stands with PM'

Jammu: Panun Kashmir, an organisation of Kashmiri migrant pandits, on Sunday welcomed the passing of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill in both houses of parliament and said that the "entire nation stands wholeheartedly with Prime Minister Narendra Modi".

"The passing of CAB by parliament is a resolve to ensure complete politico-cultural decolonisation of India. Decolonising Indian mind is a critical necessity for national integration," Convener of Panun Kashmir, Agnishekhar, told reporters here.

Agnishekhar, who was flanked by several other leaders of the group including its chairman Ajay Chrunoo, said the decision to grant citizenship to persecuted Hindus of Pakistan, Bangladesh

and Afghanistan is a monumental decision of Modi Government to address the mutilations inflicted on Hindus during the colonial enslavement.

He alleged that the state of India since independence chose to remain a mute bystander to the genocidal attrition unleashed on Hindus left behind in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

"State of India for long had been functioning as a neutral or hostile entity towards the historical and civilisational responsibilities of the Nation of India. Congress regimes had converted state of India into an instrument to wage war on the historical and civilisational identity of the Nation of India," Agnishekhar said.

PTI



Muslim community members protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act at Indira Park in Hyderabad on Sunday

PTI



Protesters gather for a concert organised by All Artists of Assam against Citizenship Amendment Act, at AEI playground in Guwahati on Sunday

PTI

CAA against Savarkar views, says Uddhav



Nagpur: Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Sunday said the new citizenship law is against the views of Hindutva icon V D Savarkar.

Addressing a press conference on the eve of the winter session of the State legislature, Thackeray said that issues like CAB were being raised to "divert attention" of people from real issues like security of women, unemployment and farm crisis.

"Is CAB based on ideology? What about violence which erupted over it?, he asked. PTI

Those opposing CAA should not jump the gun: Kerala Gov

Kochi: Kerala Governor Arif Mohammad Khan on Sunday urged those opposing the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) "not to jump the gun" and let the things settle down.

He said this in response to a question from reporters here on the statement by Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan that the CAA will not be implemented in the State.

He expressed the hope that elected Governments would fulfill their constitutional duties. The Governor said he was certain that if there was an issue, in a democratic society, elected Governments — both at the Centre and State — would rise to the occasion and fulfill their Constitutional duties.

"I don't know what he has said. I don't like to comment on that. In our Constitution this

has been very clearly specified....

These are the subjects where the Central Government will have the exclusive jurisdiction and these are the subjects where the State Government will have the exclusive jurisdiction....

Sometimes there may be misunderstandings. We should not jump the gun. Let things settle down," he said.

He said in a democracy, even if there are some misgivings about something, the state government, under the Constitution, can take its time to consider the issues and then come to a decision.

Vijayan had lashed out at the BJP-led Government and said the "unconstitutional Bill" will have no place in Kerala and the State would not implement it.

Justifying the the central Government's decision to enact the law, the Governor said life of the people belonging to the smaller denominations "in the neighbouring country" has become difficult.

"From 17 per cent, they came down to 1.3 per cent. Now this is a human tragedy, human problem. How to do it? I am not saying that everything is honky dory. But this is a problem, which is there before you. How to deal with it?", said. He said the controversies created for political reasons would soon settle down.

"Nobody should have any fear that any Indian will be subjected to any harassment or any difficulties. Nobody should have that fear. These controversies which are created for political reasons, they last a few days", Khan said. PTI

Class 10 student raped in UP's Mau, 6 booked

Mau: Six youths were booked in connection with an alleged gang rape of a Class 10 student, officials said on Sunday.

According to Mau SP Anurag Arya, the prime accused, along with two others, have been detained for questioning, while efforts are on to nab the rest of the youths.

Arya said, "The incident took place in the Madhuban police station area of the district on Friday, when a student of Class 10 left her house around 9 am, but did not return till late in the evening."

"Around 10 pm, family members of the girl received a call that she was raped by six youths and they fled leaving her behind," he added.

The family members of the girl reached the spot and brought her back home. "When the girl regained her con-



scious, she narrated her trauma. Subsequently, she was admitted to a private hospital. On Saturday, a complaint was lodged against the six youths, including four named. A case has been registered against them under the IPC and the POCSO Act," the SP said.

UP: Man held on charge of raping, setting ablaze 18-year-old woman in Fatehpur

Banda (UP): A man was arrested for allegedly raping and setting ablaze an 18-year-old woman in Uttar Pradesh's Fatehpur city, police said on Sunday.

According to doctors, the woman sustained over 90 per cent burn injuries and her condition was critical.

An FIR was registered on the basis of a complaint lodged by the woman's family, and the accused was arrested for rape and attempt to murder, Fatehpur SP Prashant Verma said.

Additional Director General of Police (Allahabad zone) Sujan Pandey said it was the woman who allegedly set herself ablaze when a 'panchayat' did not approve of her relationship with a distant relative.

When the matter of her relationship with the distant relative came to light, a panchayat was held in her village during which the woman and the man were made to take a pledge that they would live separately and not meet each other, the police officer said.

Upset over the panchayat's deci-



sion, the woman rushed to her house and allegedly set herself ablaze, he said.

District Magistrate Sanjeev Singh said that upon noticing smoke, villagers rescued the woman and took her to a local community health centre. Police said they are probing this aspect too.

Superintendent of Kanpur's Hallet Hospital RK Maurya said, "The condition of the 18-year-old woman from Fatehpur is extremely critical. She sustained over 90 per cent burn injuries. Only her feet were not burnt."

Leader of Congress Legislatu-

Party in Uttar Pradesh Aradhana Mishra and former Union Minister Rajeev Shukla visited Hallet hospital in Kanpur, and enquired her well being from her family members.

"On one hand, the BJP raises the slogan of 'Beti Bachhao, Beti Padhao', and on the other hand, it is under the BJP Government that maximum exploitation happens to women. If strict action is not initiated against the criminals, then such incidents cannot be stopped," Mishra said.

She also demanded that the family of the woman be given ₹ 50 lakh as financial assistance, provided medical treatment free of cost, and security to her family.

On December 5, a rape survivor from Unnao was set ablaze by five people, including two accused of raping her. They were arrested the same day. The woman later died during treatment in a Delhi hospital.

Govt should impart moral education to curb rape: Maurya

Ballia: Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya has said lack of good values is the reason for rising incidents of rape in the country and the Government should impart moral education to curb such crimes.

"Such incidents taking place in the country are extremely unfortunate. Among other reasons, the lack of good values is a major reason for this," Maurya said while referring to the Unnao rape case.

"The lack of good values in society can be addressed through moral education, among other mediums," he told reporters on the sidelines



of a programme of the BJP's student wing Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) here.

On the statement of Congress chief Sonia Gandhi that democracy and the Constitution are in danger in the country, Maurya said, "It is not democracy and Constitution, but the existence of the Congress which is in danger."

In blood-written letter, shooter writes to Centre to let her hang Nirbhaya convicts

Lucknow: Shooter Vartika Singh on Sunday wrote a letter in blood requesting the Centre to let her hang the rapists convicted in the Nirbhaya rape and murder case, a day before the victim's seventh death anniversary. In the letter, she has sought permission from Union Home Minister Amit Shah to execute the rapists.

Speaking to reporters here, Singh said, "I have a letter in my hand that is written to Union Home Minister Amit Shah. I have written it with my blood. I have written that I should be allowed to execute the convicts in the Nirbhaya case. This will reinforce the concept that women are viewed as goddesses in India."

"This message should go to the entire world. The rapists should know that in India, a woman can execute them. I have sent the letter through registered post and also tweeted it," she added.

The shooter urged all women soldiers, actresses, public representatives and organisa-

tions to lend their support for her.

She hoped there would be a transformation in the country with a "different kind of society" where women need not live in an atmosphere of fear.

Meanwhile, Tihar jail authorities in Delhi said they have been receiving requests from several people who are ready to volunteer as hangman.

Earlier in the week, S Subash Srinivasan, a head constable from Tamil Nadu's Ramanathapuram district, wrote to the Director-General of Tihar jail stating his willingness to serve as an executioner.

The hangman at the Meerut prison has also indicated that he is ready to carry out the execution of the convicts. Pawan Jallad, a third-generation hangman, said his grandfather had carried out the hanging of the two men involved in the assassination of then prime minister Indira Gandhi besides notorious criminals Ranga and Billa.

Ensure justice delivery without delays in rape cases: Naidu to Judiciary

Gandhinagar: Underlining the need to curb the crime of rape with speedy investigation by police, Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu on Sunday said it's the duty of judiciary to ensure that justice is delivered without "constant delays" though there cannot be "instant justice".

He also said that the crime of rape should be curbed without any discrimination or giving it a political hue.

The vice president's comments came on the eve of the 7th anniversary of the December 16, 2012 Nirbhaya gang-rape case that shook the nation, though he didn't mention the incident in his speech.

Recently, Union Home Ministry had sent to President Ram Nath Kovind the recom-

mentary of the Delhi Government rejecting the mercy plea of one of the convicts in the gang-rape case.

Naidu was speaking at a ceremony where he awarded President's Colour and Standard, including special flag and emblem, to the Gujarat Police, at the State Police Academy in Karai village in Gandhinagar district of Gujarat.

The Gujarat Police became the seventh such police force to be conferred with the symbol of excellence and pride.

"The rise in the number of crimes against women and children, especially heinous crimes, troubles me deeply. We have been hearing incidents here and there across the country."

"I want political leadership of the country not to politicise



this and give it a political colour," the Vice President said.

He said rape is a crime against women which should be "curbed with all might without any discrimination".

"Police should be people friendly and women friendly and deal with crimes against women with agility. Police should register every complaint without any distinction,

complete investigation at the earliest and start prosecution at the earliest," the vice president said.

Appealing to judiciary, Naidu said judicial enquiry should be concluded at the earliest and punishment be handed to culprits at the earliest so as to "curb" such criminal tendency.

The country had witnessed a huge outrage with the recent incidents of rapes and murders in Hyderabad and Unnao.

He said while police should do speedy investigation and file a chargesheet at the earliest in such crimes, judiciary should ensure that there are no "con-

stant delays". "There is a duty cast upon the judiciary as well. You cannot do instant justice, but you can't have constant delays. This has to be understood by one and all," he said.

Recently, Telangana Police had killed four suspects arrested for the rape and murder of a Hyderabad-based veterinarian in an alleged encounter.

After the 'encounter', Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sharad Bobde had said that justice can never be instant and it "loses its character as justice" if it becomes revenge.

Stating that 2013 Justice Verma Committee report on crimes against women be implemented "in the letter and spirit", the vice president said, "We simply cannot let the situation to continue."



Tribals perform during Tata Steel 25K run, in Kolkata on Sunday

Will sidelined leader Eknath Khadse quit BJP? Leader's recent cryptic comment sparks speculation

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra's sidelined BJP leader Eknath Khadse's recent cryptic comment that there is no guarantee that he may continue to remain in the party has sparked speculation in the State political circles that he might quit the Amit Shah-led party during the next fortnight.

Informed sources said here on Sunday that Khadse might announce his resignation from the BJP either during the Winter Session of the Maharashtra Legislature beginning on Monday or when Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray visits Aurangabad to lay foundation stone for the construction for a memorial of late BJP leader Gopinath Munde in the near future.

Sources said that Khadse — who had met NCP president Sharad Pawar in the national capital on December 9 and Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on the following day in Mumbai — was toying with the idea of joining the Shiv Sena.

Speaking at public rally organised by BJP leader Pankaja Munde at Panli on the occasion of the 70th birth-

anniversary of her father and senior party leader Gopinath Munde on Friday, Khadse had made no bones about admitting the manner in which he was side-lined within the party and the party had created such a situation where he would have to decide on continue to remain in the party in such a troubled atmosphere or quit the party.

"While Pankaja will remain in the BJP, there is no guarantee about me," Khadse had said.

Singled out former Chief Minister Devendra Fandav for a vicious attack, Khadse had charged that Fadnavis "ungrateful" towards late Munde. "Gopinathrao did not stab anyone in the back. It was Gopinathrao who made Fadnavis the State party president. When I was the Minister in the BJP-led Government, I had allotted the land for constructing a memorial after Gopinathrao. But, Fadnavis completed one full term as the Chief Minister and came back briefly as the Chief Minister.

"Nothing happened during Fadnavis' five year-term. It was only when Fadnavis remained as the Chief Minister for 80 hours during his sec-

ond term that he issued work orders for the start of the construction of a Gopinath Memorial at Aurangabad," Khadse said, adding that if Fadnavis so chose, he could have constructed the memorial for late Munde during the first tenure as the Chief Minister.

Khadse revealed that when he met Maharashtra's new Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, latter readily agreed to allocate money for the construction of a memorial for late Gopinath Munde at Aurangabad. "When I met him recently and broached the issue of the memorial for late Munde, Uddhav readily agreed to allocate money for the memorial. He also told me that he wanted to the location in Aurangabad where late Munde's memorial is to be constructed," he said.

With the possibility of Khadse quitting the BJP looming large over the state political arena, spotlight will turn on him during the course of the winter session of the Maharashtra Legislature. This is despite the fact the Khadse, who was denied party ticket by the BJP contest the State Assembly elections, is not member of both the Houses of the State Legislature.

DIG killed in mishap on Jammu-Srinagar NH

PNS ■ JAMMU

ADIG rank officer of Central Reserve Police Force, currently posted in Srinagar, was killed along with his driver while his personnel security officer (PSO) received critical injuries when their vehicle was hit by a boulder near Diggdol in Ramban district around 8.00 p.m on Sunday.

According to CRPF authorities in Jammu, "the DIG rank officer, Shaileendra Kumar, holding the charge of DIG, North (Srinagar) was travelling in a Scorpio vehicle along with his driver and PSO when their vehicle was hit by a large boulder near Diggdol on Jammu-Srinagar National Highway around 8.00 p.m."

"Both DIG and his driver died on the spot while critically injured PSO was rushed to the nearby hospital," police said.

Local police authorities along with rescue workers immediately rushed to the spot to shift the injured to the hospital.

The rescue workers struggled hard to retrieve the injured PSO from the mangled remains of the vehicle while dead bodies of DIG and the driver were shifted to the local hospital.

Traffic on the Jammu Srinagar National Highway earlier remained suspended due to inclement weather conditions and fresh spell of snowfall for last three days.

MAHA LEGISLATURE WINTER SESSION MVA Govt to corner BJP over State's debts, farm loan waiver

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Shiv Sena-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) Government will go all out to put the Opposition BJP on the defensive in the Winter Session of the Maharashtra Legislature beginning in Nagpur on Monday, by trying to corner former Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis among other things over the piled up the State's debts amounting to a staggering ₹ 6.71 lakh crore and his failure to implement properly the farm loan waiver scheme.

The Sena—NCP—Congress Government will also try to embarrass Fadnavis, who is now the leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly, by raking up the issue of questionable decision of invoking the controversial provision in the schedule of rates for irrigation projects to regularise payments for additional works worth several hundred crores of rupees, taken by him days ahead the State Assembly polls.

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has already stayed Fadnavis' decision. The treasury benches will in all likelihood go for

the jugular against Fadnavis, alleging irregularities in the decision taken by the former Chief Minister.

The two major developments that can be expected during the week-long budget session of the State Legislature are: the tabling of a white paper on the State's current fiscal position and unveiling of a relief package for the unseasonal rain-hit farmers in the State.

Through the white paper on the current fiscal position of the state, the ruling MVA will attempt to put the previous Devendra Fadnavis Government over the "mishandling" of the State's finances. It may also speak about stalling of certain development projects, including the construction of a car shed for Metro phase-III at Aarey Colony in south Mumbai and bullet train project.

The ruling front leaders will also try to needle Fadnavis over BJP MP from Karnataka Ananta Kumar Hegde's claim that during his 80-hour-tenure as Chief Minister of Maharashtra the former "moved back ₹ 40,000 crore" to the Centre. Fadnavis will have to face the music despite the fact that he has

already denied the allegation and hit back at party colleague Hegde for making "false" and "baseless" claims when the fact remained that "the state did not return even one naya paisa to the Centre".

The treasury benches will also try to exploit the statements by disgruntled BJP leader Eknath Khadse and upset Pankaja Munde and delay on the part of the previous Devendra Fadnavis Government to construct a memorial for Gopinathrao Munde at Aurangabad, to project the BJP in a poor light.

In the brief session, there will be no customary question hour. There will be debates on Governor Bhagat Singh Koshiyari's address to joint session of the two houses of State Legislature delivered in Mumbai on December 1, supplementary demands of the budget, official and unofficial bills and passing of a resolution congratulating Sharad Arvind Bobde, who hails from Nagpur, on his appointment as the Chief Justice of India.

On its part, the Opposition BJP will try to drive a wedge between

the ruling Shiv Sena and Congress over the implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), 2019 in Maharashtra. While the Congress has opposed the CAA, the NCP is seeking consensus over the CAA implementation. The Shiv Sena, which had supported the Citizens Amendment Bill (CAB) in the Lok Sabha and staged a walk out in Rajya Sabha before the bill was put to vote in Rajya Sabha, has not made it stand clear on the CAA.

The BJP has already laid bare its game plan to corner the Shiv Sena over CAA issue. Advising its erstwhile ally Shiv Sena to go ahead and implement

Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), 2019 in Maharashtra, the BJP said on Saturday said it was ready to make a "political compromise" and support the Sena in the event of the Uddhav Thackeray-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) Government's collapse over the implementation of CAA in the State. Rahul Gandhi's "My name is not Rahul Savarkar, I am Rahul Gandhi" comment has given fodder to the Opposition to target the Shiv Sena.

The BJP will exert pressure on Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray to speak his mind on CAA and Rahul's controversial comment. However, Uddhav is unlikely to oblige the Opposition as his statements will have a bearing on the stability of the MVA Government.

The winter session will witness nomination of a new Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the Maharashtra Legislative Council in place of NCP leader Dhananjay Munde. With the change in the government in the State, Munde has moved to the ruling side and the LoP's position has fallen vacant.

In the normal course, the then BJP's group leader Chandrakant Patil would have become the LoP in place of Munde in the Upper House. Since Patil was elected to the State Assembly in the recent elections, Patil is no longer a member of the State Legislative Council. There are three contenders from the BJP — Bhai Girkar, Dr Parinay Purke and Prvain Darekar — LoP's post. It remains to be seen as to who — among these three leaders — will become the LoP in the Upper House.

Speculation rife about creating more Deputy CM posts in Karnataka

Bengaluru: As Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa plans expansion of his Ministry, speculations are rife within the state BJP about creating more posts of Deputy Chief Minister or the coveted position being removed altogether, given the growing number of aspirants.

There are already three Deputy Chief Ministers in the Cabinet—Govind Karjol, CN Ashwathnarayan and Laxman Savadi.

Amid speculation that at least two more such posts would be created during the coming cabinet expansion, Savadi on Sunday termed it as a 'creation of the media' and said there was no confusion within BJP on this.

Everyone in the party would abide by the high command's decision on the matter, he said.

"There have been no such discussions, its only a creation of the media. On such issues, the party's state and national leadership will decide," he said to a query about the

demand for at least two more Deputy Chief Minister's posts and also talk of such a position being removed all together.

Noting that there have been instances in the past when Deputy Chief Ministers were appointed by the high command, he said "three of us are DCMs now... Whatever the party leadership decides next, we will abide by it."

While there is talk within BJP that newly elected BJP MLA from Gokak, Ramesh Jarkiholi, who was earlier disqualified as Congress legislator for his instrumental role in bringing down the Congress-JD(S) coalition Government, was being considered for the post, health minister Sriramulu is reportedly sulking with his chances looking dim.

Sriramulu, who had earlier openly expressed his desire for the post, has not been attending official engagements for the last few days.

Take the lead

The domino effect of protests over fee hikes and citizenship law shows that a mass student movement may be possible



The protests over the new Citizenship Act, which promises religion-based acceptance of refugees and excludes the concerns of minorities and indigenous people, may congeal as a mass student movement that is rearing its head across the country in a manner reminiscent of the anti-reservation stir of the 90s. As the young Assamese stood up for their linguistic and cultural pride, one that has been threatened since colonial times by waves of privileged Bengali-speaking settlers, their marginalisation has found echoes across

the country. Students at various colleges and universities, even in faraway Delhi, are out to challenge not just the autocracy of the ruling regime but occupy the space for balance, humanism and logic that has been vacated by civil society, Opposition leaders and rationalists. This confluence of students, therefore, comes from generational solidarity, from their stakeholderhood in an India that is being created by selfish politics but will leave them suffering the consequences and unlearning what we have raised them to believe, to hold the establishment to account. Perhaps, it is getting endorsement because of the silence from a coopted majority. For the new Citizenship Act is not about reimagining India in a positive way but about reconstructing on ruins and relics of our civilisational foundations. It is not about denying immigration rights to Muslims but the selective culling of whom we want on our land that goes against the grain of the Constitution, one of the best documents that guarantees our citizenry equality. It is about creating a fear psychosis among the majority community that for the first time believes it has been a victim of parasitic minorities, no matter how small their numbers. It is about a One India based on Hindu nationalism that disregards, as in the North-east, the emotions of locals who have over the years reclaimed their political rights as national parties have merrily played around with demographics, encouraging immigration for votebanks, first Muslim, now Hindus. It is about upending stability that has been hard-earned in a diverse India. In that sense, the BJP has, by fomenting disunity, probably gifted a plank of unity that might just lead to a transformative and revolutionary student movement. If the mass coalescence following the Nirbhaya rape, the Dalit atrocities, the Rohith Vemula suicide and fee hikes at institutions is any indication, then the young are getting restive. If the 90s fed the drive for economic empowerment in a globalised world, then millennials are looking at value-creation of a different kind, one that keeps them connected to their identity than be submerged by the homogeneous hold of power. One that is not intellectual fadism of campus politics but can be carried into the real world, one that is not just anger against the system but about claiming it.

Perhaps this is the reason why students in Assam, unlike the anti-outsider movement of the late 1970s and early 80s, are spontaneously coming together as an amorphous force. They have demonstrated peacefully by and large through blockades, gatherings and processions. It is the police clampdown which has been harsh in comparison, both in the State and even in Delhi. The All Assam Students' Union (AASU) may be leading the protests like the old times but has been joined by university students and even farmers and tribals. And so far they have decided to stay away from politicisation by national parties, be it the BJP or the Congress. Technology and media outreach have helped mobilise support, scale up the new law as a transnational issue and has even inducted peers in the diaspora. Student movements in India today may begin local but then draw traction in the broader context. This is the reason why the JNU fee hike agitation spread to all other institutions and became a swell of anger against fee hike in the higher education system in general. The *Hok Kolorob* movement in Jadavpur University, against the abrasive arrogance of the VC, had a domino effect with demonstrations being staged across India, including Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad and Bengaluru. But in recent times, it is the Hong Kong students' protest, with human chains, night vigils and Nelson Mandela songs, whose innovation and energy have even compelled a totalitarian China to take a step back. The good part about this non-violent resistance against the regime was that it could not be demonised by the establishment but weaponised the entire world's sympathy. In the same way, the new wave of home-grown student movements could very well capture the national imagination. Once young people have freed themselves from State fear, then we may yet reap a true democratic dividend.

India calling

A record number of Indian-origin MPs were voted to the UK Parliament but not all might end up being friends of India



Fifteen of the newly-elected Members of Parliament (MPs) in Westminster will have Indian roots. And while 15 out of 650 MPs might not seem like much, this is an assertion of how influential the British Indian community has become. At least two or three MPs of the Conservative Party, which won a stunning victory, are expected to become members of the Cabinet, including Priti Patel and Rishi Sunak, the latter familiar to some Indians as Infosys-founder NR Narayana Murthy's son-in-law. There were several Indian-origin MPs from the

Labour Party as well and their number included Lisa Nandy, who some are pegging as a potential candidate for leading the Labour Party following the planned resignation of the current leader, Jeremy Corbyn. While most Indian-origin MPs of the Conservative Party are generally seen as pro-India — there was a concerted effort within the Indian community to consolidate behind the Conservatives after Corbyn's statements on the Kashmir issue and his previous statements sympathetic to terrorist organisations — it is not as if Labour's Indian origin MPs are anti-India. But given Labour's extreme position on some issues, it is almost certain that its MPs will be critical of the Indian Government's stance on several issues.

This is something that the Modi regime must be prepared for as such MPs, while being the biggest advocacy group for Indian interests, could also end up being the biggest critics of policies back home. The Chennai-born US Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal has been leading attacks in the US Congress against the Modi Government. Several first and second-generation Sikh immigrants in politics, particularly in Canada, have been openly advocating the Khalistani cause. Just because someone holds an Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) card does not make them a "friend" of India. Our diplomats and policy-makers should never forget this. At the same time, the Modi Government's overt support to certain Indian organisations that are weaponising the Indian diaspora politically is a good move. For example, many of Jayapal's constituents are from the Indian community working in the Greater Seattle area's IT industry, dominated by Amazon and Microsoft. Hundreds of them have written to her criticising her stance on Kashmir, making her realise that she cannot take the community's vote for granted. We should celebrate the success of our diaspora in every field, including politics, but we must not for one second forget that they do not owe their allegiance to India and are not "Indians."

A broken justice system

Increasingly, rape cases have seen an outpouring of public anger where the demand for death has reached a high pitch. Only reforms in the police and judicial systems can help



KUSHAN MITRA

No matter what problems one may have with fairness of social media platforms like Twitter, posts here do make up for an interesting read and allow one to gauge the mood, if not of the country, definitely of the chattering class. Reactions to the rape and murder of a young veterinary doctor in Hyderabad were telling. Several Twitter users advocated not just death penalty but some even argued that the perpetrators be lynched. This kicked in a fevered discussion and even found its way into the Parliament where several MPs, across party lines, argued in favour of lynching of the rapists. Not a State-sanctioned death penalty but public lynching.

The irony, at a time when people are talking about bringing anti-lynching provisions into the law, was not lost on some. People's anger stemmed, in no small part, due to the fact that December 2019 marks seven years of the horrific gang-rape in South Delhi, where a young physiotherapist was brutally assaulted and left for dead. The perpetrators of this horrific crime, despite being convicted and given the death penalty, have successfully eluded the sentence that was handed down to them. This is death of our conscience by using every available aspect of the law to delay their execution.

But isn't this the right of every prisoner? The ability to use every possible means to prove his innocence or mitigate his sentence or even delay it, particularly when it is a matter of death? The only other major democracy that regularly executes prisoners is the US, which has several provisions in its statute books. Even the Governor of a State can issue a last-minute pardon to prisoners if appeals to the US Supreme Court fail. To deny them that would potentially mean convicting an innocent man or woman to death. In college and school debates, we have held discussions on justice delayed is justice denied but it is almost certain that a rushed judicial process is dangerous. It is gratifying that the Chief Justice of India, Sharad Arvind Bobde, realised this. While commenting on the murders of the four undertrials in the Hyderabad rape and murder case, he said, "Justice should not be revenge. I believe justice loses its character as justice if it becomes revenge."

Those — including not just liberal ideologues in the country but also Right-wing thought leaders — against death penalty have a simple argument: Who is a man to judge a crime? But how do you explain this in the Indian context, because at our core, we remain a deeply tribalistic society where the 18th and 21st centuries have had a troubled relationship. Anyone who has been 50 kilometres outside India's major metropolitan areas, particularly the national Capital, will understand this. When



crimes are committed in such a brutal manner and scale, there is an expectation of punishment matching the act. India is not Norway, where a mass murderer can be allowed to live and also fight the State for human rights. No, we are India, where we have a very specific set of criminal issues. We should not pretend to be a socially developed State. Indeed, it can be argued that India's social problems will likely get worse before they get better and the country will have little choice but to execute certain citizens.

We have to, however, take every single possible precautionary measure to prevent the possibility of an innocent man/woman going to the gallows. We cannot accept even one wrongful death sanctioned by the State. That said, when it is proven beyond any iota of doubt that an accused is guilty of those "rarest of rare" cases, where State-sanction is justified, then the executive and the judiciary both should ensure that the punishment is delivered swiftly. To keep a man or a woman on death row for an indefinite time is technically, cruelty. Of course, one may not sympathise with the murderers but constant appeals bouncing

“ WE HAVE TO, HOWEVER, TAKE EVERY SINGLE POSSIBLE PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE TO PREVENT THE POSSIBILITY OF AN INNOCENT MAN/WOMAN GOING TO THE GALLOWES. WE CANNOT ACCEPT EVEN ONE WRONGFUL DEATH SANCTIONED BY THE STATE ”

around the judiciary and the Union Home Ministry for years is plainly ridiculous. If someone has been sentenced to death for a heinous crime, the death penalty should not be handed out like candy by the lower judiciary. If the sentence has been confirmed by the Supreme Court, the Home Ministry and the President should get on with their jobs.

We have had Presidents who have delayed the signing of death warrants because it went against their conscience. Fair enough, but Presidents should come out and be vocal about it instead of delaying matters until the next head of the State assumes power.

This is a peculiar Indian issue — putting off tough decisions instead of acting on them. It took a century to bring natural justice to the Ayodhya case. On top of that, the fate of the Delhi rapists is still hanging in the air. This is one major reason why there is so much pendency in courts. Forget about the failure of the bureaucracy and the executive to take decisions. Of course, there are other reasons, too, such as delay in filling judicial vacancies, which coupled with the lack of education and knowledge across the board,

including that of the legal profession, has completely broken the criminal justice system in the country.

So when incidents like the Hyderabad rape case happen, there is public anger. The same sentiments run across among the local population when alleged child snatchers or cattle hustlers are lynched. We know how people get worked up over vigilantism.

Our justice system has failed us completely and needs to be revamped with meaningful implementation of processes. Increasingly, people have started taking matters into their own hands. If this isn't a sign of a banana republic, no one really knows what is. It is, therefore, imperative for the executive and the judiciary to work towards fixing this. While policing is a State subject, there needs to be a comprehensive federal re-evaluation of policing and the judiciary, just like the indirect taxation system was overhauled to the Goods and Services Tax system. But we cannot afford to bungle anymore. India needs police and judicial reforms now in sync with the severity of the emerging crime graph.

(The writer is Managing Editor, The Pioneer)

SOUNDBITE

BJP asked me to apologise for telling the truth. I am not Rahul Savarkar. I am Rahul Gandhi. I will not apologise. Nor will anyone from the Congress.



Congress leader —Rahul Gandhi

The big films that I've done and their success gave me the courage to do smaller films and take it all upon my shoulders.



Actor —Sonakshi Sinha

One of India's great strengths is its Constitution. As a fellow democracy, we respect India's institutions, but are concerned about the implications of the CAB Bill.



US diplomat —Sam Brownback

Clearly, this is not an ordinary slowdown. It is India's great slowdown, where the economy seems headed for the intensive care unit.



Former Chief Economic Advisor —Arvind Subramanian

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Assam's anxiety

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Spent force" (December 13). The hard-earned peace in Assam is now on a knife's edge with continuous violent protests in several parts of the State following the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019, which seeks to grant citizenship to non-Muslim migrants from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The passage of the CAA is an act of betrayal by the BJP, which had promised to solve the vexed foreigners' issue once and for all in accordance with the 1985 Assam Accord. The pact stipulates that all foreigners, who came to Assam on or after March 25, 1971, shall continue to be detected, deleted from the rolls and expelled in accordance with the law.

Apprehensions and fears of the Assamese were genuine and, hence, the National Register of Citizens (NRC) was necessitated by the Supreme Court. A consensus was arrived at where it was decided that the final NRC list would be a piece of legal document for identification, deletion of names from the voters' list and

Russia will be missed on the world stage

This refers to the editorial, "Shut out Russia" (December 11). It is unfortunate that Russia has been banned for four years by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) from participating in the world's major sporting events on grounds of doping non-compliance. The WADA took this decision after concluding that Moscow had planted fake evidence and got rid of files linked to positive doping tests in laboratory, data that could have aided the process of identifying drug cheats.

It must be noted that Russia has been embroiled in performance-enhancement drug scandals since a 2015 report commissioned by the WADA found evidence of mass doping among Russian athletes. Many players were sidelined over the past two Olympics and Russia was stripped of its flag altogether at last year's winter games in Pyeongchang as punishment for State-sponsored doping cover-ups at the Sochi games in 2014. One of the conditions for the reinstatement of the Russian anti-doping agency, RUSADA, had been that Moscow would provide an authentic copy of the laboratory data. However, the punishment does still leave the door open for Russian athletes, who are clean, to compete at big international events without their flag for the coming years, something they did at the Pyeongchang Olympics. There have been



protests claiming that the WADA's decision is part of a broader Western attempt to hold Russia back from progressing in the international arena. How will Russia's absence affect the Tokyo Olympics and the World Cup in Qatar? If Russian athletes do not participate in the Olympics, then a lot of the tournament's sheen will disappear. After all, Russia is a sporting power to be reckoned with. The brilliant performances of its athletes often set new global standards in sports.

TK Nandanani Kochi

and resources and lead to conflicts between communities.

Himangka Kaushik
New Delhi

Temporary relief

Sir — The trade war between the US and China, which has continued for almost two years now, led to uncertainty in the way global businesses would be conducted going forward.

Investors underwent sleepless nights as they kept navigating through an environment of slowing growth and increasingly volatile markets. While US President Donald Trump slapped punitive tariffs on Chinese imports, China, too, retaliated. As a result, the global economy suffered.

With the US and China now striking a "phase one" deal to de-escalate trade war, the world can genuinely take a breath. While this is just the first step, any sign that the trade war is cooling off needs to be cheered.

Sudhanshu
Via email

Send your feedback to:
letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Preserve nation's genetic wealth

We need to take our animal resources seriously and utilise them efficiently for economic and social uplift in rural areas



VK BAHUGUNA

India is endowed with huge genetic resources and is one of the 17 megadiversity nations of the world. Human-animal interactions date back to early civilisations and are not restricted to economic reasons. They have deeply impacted the cultural, spiritual and religious life of people. These genetic resources have played a critical role in our agrarian economy. In domesticated livestock and birds, the documented breeds are 30 of cattle, 10 of buffalo, 40 of sheep, 20 of goat, 18 of poultry, nine of camel and six of the horse.

World over, scientists have been seeking animal germplasm in their quest to utilise their genome for medicine and food, to feed growing populations and shore up the dwindling genetic base due to deforestation and climate change. There have been cases in India and Nepal when scientists from Western countries on a tourist visa were found trapping beetles.

We need to take our animal resources seriously and utilise them efficiently for economic and social uplift in rural areas. Traditionally, livestock had been the backbone of small farmers for nutrition, farm work as well as other activities. A whopping 21 million people are dependent on livestock for their livelihood and this sector contributes 4.11 per cent to the country's GDP. The share of animal products in agriculture is more than 25 per cent. Though the country is the largest producer of milk in the world, its production from indigenous cows is minimal. The world is tapping the genome of Indian cows for the healthy A2 milk as the A1 milk produced by foreign breeds like Holstein Friesian and Jersey is not very healthy because it contains Beta-Casein which causes hypertension, heart ailments and diabetes.

These foreign breeds are also prone to infections and need big investments for better milk output. In our quest to increase cow milk production in the past, we had indiscriminately used foreign breeds and neglected Indian cows. There was not much emphasis on research targeted at improving milk production from local breeds. However, countries like Brazil, Uruguay and New Zealand realised the genetic potential of Indian cows early on and have now emerged as world leaders in the production of A2 milk. The Gir cow and other Indian breeds in Brazil won the prize for the highest milk production in a 2014 contest. This germplasm was supplied by India to Brazil during the early and middle part of the last century.

Though the Indian Government has now taken steps for promotion indigenous cow breeds, the attempts are half-hearted at best and lack focus on integrated planning for the future. The Department of Animal Husbandry must focus on converting hybrid cows into fully domestic breeds in the next 15 years. India should initiate bilateral arrangements with Brazil and other countries to get the superior or high-yielding Indian cow gene pool back to improve the productivity of bovines back home. Similarly, we should have a breeding programme with South Asian countries which are home to Indian breeds. For instance, both Pakistan and India have breeding tracks for Red Sindhi, Sahiwal and Tharparkar cows and joint programmes can be launched for enhancing milk production from these breeds and their conservation. This programme should be launched for buffaloes simultaneously as they also produce A2 milk.

Thankfully, now in India, people are working towards making world-class products from cow dung and urine and exporting them. There is also a foundation that is proving that cows can be economically reared for their entire life and is working with more than 75,000 Indian cows in 25 shelters. It offered help to Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand but is yet to get a response from the States.

There should be a plan for economic utilisation of cows when they become unfit to yield milk. At present they are let loose and stray cattle foraging on the streets and blocking traffic are a menace apart from being a big problem for Government agencies. It is well-known that the desi cow's urine and dung have great cultural, economic and medicinal value. This has been proved by several scientific studies. The Animal Welfare Board and the Kamdhenu Commission should be assigned the task of preparing projects for this, so that cows are treated well once their productive years are over. An integrated farmer-centric decentralised programme must be initiated for all other animals like horses, ducks, camels, donkeys, goats, sheep, pigs, quail and so on, with the sole aim to energise the earning potential of farmers. This will require sufficient funds, manpower and technological upgradation through research.

Stray dogs are yet another neglected species in the country. With people preferring foreign breeds, the local dogs are left to roam the streets and scavenge. There should be a complete ban on breeding pedigree dogs and people should be encouraged to adopt strays. The management of animal wealth should get top priority if we have to bring prosperity in rural and tribal areas.

(The writer is a former civil servant)

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

MY NAME IS RAHUL GANDHI, NOT RAHUL SAVARKAR. I WILL NEVER APOLOGISE FOR SPEAKING THE TRUTH. BUT MODI MUST APOLOGISE FOR RUINING ECONOMY.

—CONGRESS LEADER
 RAHUL GANDHI



VIR SAVARKAR WAS A REAL PATRIOT. NO ONE BECOMES GANDHI AND A PATRIOT BY MERELY ADOPTING A SURNAME.

—UNION MINISTER
 GIRIRAJ SINGH

India's beti not nirbhaya

The overall utilisation of Nirbhaya Funds allocated to States till date is just 11 per cent, which is only ₹252 cr of the ₹2,264 cr sanctioned for ensuring the safety of women



RAKESH SENGER

Seven years ago today, the country witnessed an act of monstrosity, when a 23-year-old woman was gang-raped, had a rod inserted in her private parts and was left to die on the roadside in Delhi. Despite battling hard for many days, she couldn't survive, and, to honour her courage, was named *Nirbhaya* (fearless).

Due to the ghastliness of the crime, the citizens of the country came out on the streets demanding justice for *Nirbhaya* and safety for all women. Candle marches and protests were held all over and many PILs were filed. The protests showed results and the then Government introduced the Nirbhaya Fund in the Budget for the Financial Year 2013-14, for the safety and protection of women.

Circa 2019. It has been seven years but the situation remains unchanged and women continue to be unsafe in public spaces. On November 27, a 27-year-old veterinarian was gang-raped and burnt to death, her charred body recovered the next day. This was followed by reports of a nine-year-old girl being raped and strangled to death in Karnataka, the rape and murder of a six-year-old in Rajasthan, a 37-year-old being gang-raped in Odisha, the Unnao rape victim being burnt to death by the accused out on bail and another girl being threatened with the same fate by her tormentors if she testified against them. These are just a few among many more similar heinous crimes against women reported in recent days in the country. These cases led to another outcry in the nation and once again got everyone thinking about the safety of women in their families.

Questions were once again raised in the Parliament on the utilisation of the Nirbhaya Fund, following which, the Minister of Women and Child Development, Smriti Irani, presented data in the Lok Sabha on its use.

The Nirbhaya Fund was created with a corpus of ₹1,000 crore in 2013 and this was increased to ₹3,600 crore in the last six years. Of this, ₹2,264 crore, which is 63 per cent of the corpus, was allocated to various States and Union Territories (UTs), by various departments, including the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Home Affairs, Justice and Road Transport and Highways.

To understand the ways the disbursed money had been used, the Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation (KSCF) carried out an analysis of its utilisation by States/UTs. It revealed that despite an increase in crimes against women and children every year, the overall utilisation of Nirbhaya Funds allocated to States/UTs till date was a mere 11 per cent, which is only ₹252 crore of the ₹2,264 crore sanctioned. It was appalling to learn that none of the States/UTs could spend more than 50 per cent of the funds allotted till the financial year 2019. Shockingly, the BJP-ruled Maharashtra had failed to use a single rupee allotted to it, while Tripura and Tamil Nadu had just spent three per cent of the funds. Manipur had spent four per cent and Daman & Diu, West Bengal, Gujarat and Delhi used five per cent of the total funds allocated to them. Further, out of the 36 States/UTs for which data is available, the utilisation in 18 States/UTs has been less than 15 per cent, which is a testimony of their utter disregard towards women's safe-

“ DESPITE AN INCREASE IN CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN EVERY YEAR, IT WAS APPALLING TO LEARN THAT NONE OF THE STATES/UTS COULD SPEND MORE THAN 50 PER CENT OF THE FUNDS ALLOTTED TILL THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2019. SHOCKINGLY, MAHARASHTRA HAD FAILED TO USE A SINGLE RUPEE ALLOTTED TO IT. WHILE TRIPURA AND TAMIL NADU HAD JUST SPENT THREE PER CENT OF THE FUNDS, MANIPUR HAD SPENT FOUR PER CENT AND DAMAN & DIU, WEST BENGAL, GUJARAT AND DELHI SPENT FIVE PER CENT OF THE TOTAL FUNDS ALLOCATED TO THEM ”



ty. The analysis also revealed that States, including Telangana, Karnataka and Odisha, where the recent cases of crimes against women were reported, have spent only six per cent of the funds allocated to them. In Uttar Pradesh, where the Unnao rape victim was burnt to death, 79 per cent of the funds had remained unspent. The highest utilisation of funds, which was 50 per cent, was done by just two States, Mizoram and Uttarakhand, with just three States, Haryana, Nagaland and Chhattisgarh showing spending of more than 30 per cent of the funds allocated.

The report shows that crimes against women and children have been on a constant rise from 2015 to 2017. The total crimes against women reported in 2015 were 329,243 which increased to 338,954 in 2016 and 359,849 in 2017. Similarly, crimes against children went up from 94,172 to 106,958 and 129,032 in 2015, 2016 and 2017, respectively. The latest annual *Crime in India, 2017* report issued by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) showed that in 2017, 32,559 cases of rape were reported, of which 17,382, (53 per cent) were those of minors. A review of the report from 2013 onwards shows that every year over 30,000 women and girls fall victim to the heinous crime.

The huge non-utilisation of the fund, especially set up for the protection of women, is a testimony to the complete lack of political will and utter disregard for the importance and seri-

ousness of the issue of women's safety. The Nirbhaya Fund was created for the implementation of projects and schemes exclusively designed for providing safety and security to women in public places. Some major schemes, where the States were supposed to use the funds, included the establishment of an Emergency Response Support System, Central Victim Compensation Fund, Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children, One Stop Centre Scheme, Mahila Police Volunteers, and Universalisation of Women Helpline Scheme.

However, meagre spending of the fund has resulted in the sub-optimal operationalisation of these schemes, with the country failing to achieve, even partially, the objectives for which it has been created.

Over the years, there have been demands for setting up special courts, appointing more women police officers, installation of CCTV cameras and street lights in every nook and corner and taking other measures to make the streets safer for the fair sex.

There is a need for strengthening the judiciary through the appointment of more judges, public prosecutors and other officials for time-bound disposal of sexual assault cases. It is imperative to train police officers to ensure timely filing of strong chargesheets against criminals with a diligent investigation to make watertight cases, among other things.

While recently, some policy developments have taken place, including

creation of special courts for speedy disposal of cases related to Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act; further strengthening of the POCSO Act; launch of the fast track special courts (FTSC) scheme for expeditious disposal of cases of rape and the POCSO Act, 2019 (which calls for establishing 1,023 FTSCs), much more needs to be done.

The KSCF has also been working relentlessly for the last several years to raise awareness against these crimes, demanding that India be made a country safer for women and children. A major step taken was the launch of Bharat Yatra, a national march against sexual abuse of children in 2017 and the Rape Free India campaign before the Lok Sabha elections, earlier this year.

The recent incidents of rape and other crimes against women are a wake-up call for State Governments. There is a need for States/UTs to formulate schemes for the safety of women and girls and implement them on a war footing. They need to utilise the Nirbhaya Fund placed at their disposal, and if necessary, allocate a budget from their funds for implementation of these schemes.

The women and children of the country have remained unsafe for long. It is high time that steps are taken to make them feel secure as they go about their daily business, at home and outside.

(The author is Executive Director, Programmes, at Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation)

Unions allow students to let off steam

Clandestine extremist groups have been operating on Pakistani campuses in the vacuum created by the absence of unions



NADEEM PARACHA

The 'Students Solidarity March' on November 29 seems to have ruffled some feathers. It was being thought and even hoped by some that the march would draw nothing more than the kind of negligent attention candle vigils attract. But this wasn't the case and thousands of students from assorted universities and colleges poured out in almost every major city of Pakistan, mostly demanding the restoration of student unions.

Campus unions were first banned in 1984 by the General Zia dictatorship and then restored in 1989 by the first Benazir Bhutto regime. However, they were banned again in 1993, this time by the Supreme Court.

The manner in which the current Government has reacted to the recent march suggests that a lot more hap-

pened, or was perceived to have happened, than just a handful of students marching and raising slogans. Prime Minister Imran Khan tweeted that he was in favour of restoring the student unions. But by the time the tweet was posted, his own Government was arresting certain prominent student leaders and booking them for sedition. Twitter trends such as #StudentsSolidarityMarch and #StudentsMarchExposed began to compete against each other. Some commentators on TV were hailing the march; some were cynically dismissing it as an "elitist" one-off; while others were warning that the restoration of unions would again prompt violence on campuses.

The latter is the most frequently used reason against the demand for restoring the unions. In fact, Khan, even while supporting restoration, pointed out that the unions, before they got banned in 1984, had become violent. This is the perception that has overshadowed the fact that, till the late 1970s, elected student unions were bastions of well-intentioned democratic activities.

One can claim that Khan, too, was drawing his information in this con-

text from the negative perception associated with student politics. But I would like to share here an incident in which Khan actually faced the violence he was talking about. During the Indian cricket team's tour of Pakistan in 1982-83, the fifth Test match of the series at Karachi's National Stadium was repeatedly invaded by student activists agitating against the growing Government curbs on campus politics in Karachi. Khan was bowling and some students charged towards an Indian batsman on strike. Others ran towards the batsman on the non-striker's end who was standing with Khan. Khan pulled out a stump from the ground and threatened to use it against the charging students. However, before he could do this, cops entered the fray and chased away the students.

Indeed, campus politics, especially in Karachi and Lahore, had become increasingly violent. This was mainly due to the brutalisation of politics and society by the Zia dictatorship and the steady introduction of sophisticated weapons in the hands of the youth. These weapons began to arrive almost immediately after Pakistan agreed to fight the US' and Saudi Arabia's proxy battles against the Soviet Union and

Iran. During my research in 2015, findings showed that there were just three incidents of gunfire in the country's student politics between 1951 and 1977. The first was recorded at Karachi University in 1968, in which a student was arrested for possessing a pistol but one that was never actually fired. Then a pistol was used for aerial firing during a student union election at the same university in 1974. There were no casualties. A pistol was also fired during the union elections at Lahore's Punjab University in 1975 in which a student was killed.

However, between 1981 — the year Pakistan fully joined the so-called "Afghan jihad" — and 1984, all hell broke loose and dozens of students lost their lives in gunfights between opposing student outfits — both from the Left and the Right — and between students and the police. It is thus important to comprehend under what circumstances violence became a norm in student politics.

Second, ever since student activism played a major role in the movement against the Ayub regime in the late 1960s, Governments in Pakistan start to worry when students manage to exhibit an impressive show of strength.

What gets missed in this urge to keep a lid on student politics, is the important underlying fact behind student uprisings and violence. For example, most scholars who studied the global rise and fall of student activism between the 1960s and 1970s, point out that student violence and agitation mushroomed in the 1960s when universities and colleges failed to accommodate the large influx of middle-class students in that decade.

The students' anger towards the logistical and administrative problems caused by this influx boiled over and was expressed through political action. Student activism receded when, in the 1970s, colleges and universities (in the West) managed to better accommodate the students.

The same thing happened in Pakistan in the 1960s. Pakistani universities and colleges also began to receive a large-scale influx of students. Then, in the 1990s, when most students began to join private educational institutions, politicised student unions fell out of favour. But as we are now seeing, this was a stopgap arrangement.

No one is talking about the damning 2009 and 2013 reports prepared by the British Council in Pakistan. The

reports speak about a growing youth bulge in the country, with over 60 per cent of the country's population being under the age of 30.

The reports' findings warn that disillusionment among the youth would continue to grow due to political and economic instability, and this might lead many young people to adopt extreme measures.

We have already seen the growth of incidents in which educated young people have been involved in committing crimes or joining extremist organisations. The pouring out on to the streets of students on November 29 can also be explained and seen in this context.

In fact, this should actually encourage the Government to restore the unions. Because unions can once again become conduits for the students to express their aspirations and concerns in a democratic manner, rather than become despondent, cynical and desperate; or worse, join clandestine extremist groups which, ever since the late 1990s, have been surreptitiously operating on campuses in the vacuum created by the absence of student unions.

(Courtesy: Dawn)



WE SHOULD ALL BE GRETA

Amid protests, clashes and expulsion of activists, the COP25 wound up recently, once again producing more promises and little political will that could save the planet for our children and generations to come. To make measures work, every one of us should be a Greta Thunberg. Every head of State or Government should be a Greta. By avoiding the use of plastic as much as possible, we can start this change from our homes.

(Courtesy: Daily Mirror)

FM to hold pre-Budget consultations with stakeholders

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Beginning the customary pre-Budget consultation exercise from Monday, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will seek inputs from various stakeholders including industry bodies, farmer organisations and economists for reviving consumption and boosting growth.

Sitharaman is likely to present her second Budget for the Modi 2.0 Government in Parliament on February 1.

Sources said the pre-Budget consultations starting Monday will last till December 23. They said the main focus of the Budget this time will be on boosting economic growth,

which slowed to an over six-year low of 4.5 per cent in the second quarter of 2019-20.

As per the finance ministry, Sitharaman will meet stakeholder groups of 'New Economy: Start-ups, Fintech and Digital Sector' on Monday morning, and financial sector and capital market representatives later in the day.

Industry sources said the Government has sought their views on matters like ease of doing business, regulatory environment impacting private investment, export competitiveness, role of state (delayed payments, contract enforcement), and revival of private investment and growth, among others.



Industry sources said the Government has sought their views on matters like ease of doing business, regulatory environment impacting private investment, export competitiveness, role of state (delayed payments, contract enforcement), and revival of private investment and growth, among others

The Minister is likely to meet industry chambers on December 19.

With the government already effecting significant cut in corporate taxes, expectations are high that it would

announce some relief for the salaried class by making changes in the personal income tax structure.

Industry bodies have demanded that income up to ₹5 lakh should be exempt from

tax for individual taxpayers from the current ₹2.5 lakh to spur demand for goods and services. They are also demanding hiking the overall deduction limit to at least ₹3 lakh (from the current ₹1.5 lakh under Section 80C of the Income Tax Act) to boost investments and increase tax savings for individual taxpayers. The Finance Ministry has already started the Budget preparation exercise, with different ministries and departments making expenditure projections.

The Budget will be keenly watched by market participants for numbers on key macroeconomic indicators like fiscal deficit.

Citizenship Act stir hits oil, gas output in Assam

PTI ■ GUWAHATI

Crude oil and gas production in Assam have witnessed a drastic fall due to the ongoing state-wide protest against the contentious Citizenship (Amendment) Act, affecting supply of petrol, diesel and LPG in many districts.

The two major PSU fuel producers Oil India Ltd (OIL) and Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) on Sunday said their gas output have totally stopped, while oil production is down by over 75 per cent after protests erupted in the State. "Our gas production has completely stopped. In the crude oil segment, we were producing 9,000 tonnes per day, which came down to just 1,000 tonnes," a senior official from the OIL told PTI from its field headquarters at Dulaijan in upper Assam. The company is operating only around 50 wells out of its about 400 oil and gas producing wells, he added.

The crude supply to Digboi refinery has gone down to 800 tonnes instead of 1,800 tonnes of daily plan, while the same to Numaligarh refinery has totally stopped, he said.

"Besides, drilling of our wells has fully stopped for the last six days. Our oil collection stations have also been shut by people protesting against the

amended Citizenship Act. "We have not been able to send gas to our clients like NEPCO, Namrup Thermal, BCPL and Assam Gas Company," the official said.

He also added that filled LPG cylinders and tankers are lying in OIL terminals as vehicle transport has come to a halt, thereby adding a risk factor to the terminals. "Keeping LPG inventory is always dangerous because of its highly flammable character," he said. On Saturday, the OIL appealed to people of the state in local papers to allow it to carry out day-to-day operations, which the firm said, have been "severely impacted". An official of the ONGC said that its daily oil output has fallen to 1,650 tonnes from 2,200 tonnes.

"Our gas production has completely stopped. Drilling facilities have also come to a halt after the protests started. The situation is grim as our central tank can stock fuel only for 3-4 days," he added.

The PSU major Indian Oil Corporation said vehicle fuel and LPG supply in Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, Sivasagar, Golaghat and Jorhat districts in upper Assam have been severely affected. "As per our information, petrol depots in these five districts have dried up. LPG distribution is also affected as

transporters are not able to send their trucks," IOC Chief General Manager (IndianOil-AOD) Uttiya Bhattacharyya told PTI. However, he said that fuel supply in other districts of Assam and neighbouring states are not affected as the company is sending tankers with police escorts. "The Guwahati and Bongaigaon refineries are functioning normally. All our tankers and trucks are moving under heavy police protection and we are not taking chances," Bhattacharyya said.

A Numaligarh Refinery spokesperson said that their employees could not go to the plant from the township as their vehicles were torched a few days ago. An official of the state-run power major NTPC's Bongaigaon plant said that coal from Margherita mines in Tinsukia district is not reaching the plant.

"However, our production is not affected as we also get coal from Raniganj in West Bengal," she added.

Violent protests had erupted in the city and other parts of the state earlier this week after the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill was passed in Parliament, with agitators engaging in pitched battles with the police, forcing the administration to impose curfew.

Centre likely to sell 28% stake in BEML through strategic disinvestment

PTI ■ KOLKATA

The Centre is likely to sell 28 per cent of its stake in BEML Ltd through strategic disinvestment and retain 26 per cent after the dilution of its shareholding in the public sector undertaking, a senior company official said.

The Government currently holds 54.03 per cent stake in the diversified engineering company.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs in October, 2016 had given an in-principal approval for strategic disinvestment of 26 per cent equity shares in BEML Ltd.

"The Government will divest 28 per cent of its stake in the company through strategic disinvestment and there is no plan to demerge the business verticals," a senior company official told PTI.

The Centre has already "initiated preparatory work" for the disinvestment, he said.

BEML, a mining equipment maker, has diversified into manufacturing of rail coaches and defence production that already accounts for almost half of its current topline, the official said.

"There are private sector players who are into diversified engineering including defence

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs in October, 2016 had given an in-principal approval for strategic disinvestment of 26 per cent equity shares in BEML Ltd

but the number of such large corporate is not many," he said.

The government has set an all-time high disinvestment target of ₹1.05 lakh crore, up from ₹90,000 crore projected in the Interim Budget 2019-20 in February.

In 2018-19, the Centre raised ₹84,972 crore from CPSE disinvestment, while in 2017-18, the figure was ₹1,00,056 crore.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has recently approved strategic disinvestment of its equity shares in five PSUs - BPCL, Shipping Corporation of India, Container Corporation of India, Tehri Hydro Development Corporation and North Eastern Electric Power Corporation.

CAIT urges Govt to take action against e-commerce firms flouting FDI policy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Traders' body CAIT on Sunday urged the government to take action against e-commerce companies flouting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) norms and indulging in unfair practices.

Termining such firms "global economic terrorist" and "economic intruders, tax offenders and policy & law violators", the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) in a letter sent to Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal demanded early enforcement of e-commerce policy and national retail policy.

It also called for constituting an e-commerce ombudsman and a Retail Regulatory Authority.

CAIT also criticised the Ministry of MSME's reported move to join hands with some prominent e-commerce companies for onboarding of small retailers on their platforms.

This is highly deplorable and the traders of the country will not accept such collusion with these firms, it added.

Their business model is greatly hampering 'Make In India' program as domestic producers are unable to compete with their predatory pricing and deep discounting tactics, CAIT said.

Mobile handset import duty may be kept at 20% in Budget

IANIS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government is unlikely to increase the basic customs duty on import of mobile handsets from 20 per cent in the upcoming budget, according to official sources. No proposal was under consideration to increase duty, said the sources. The import of mobile phones (push button types) decreased to \$400 million in 2018-19 from \$935 million in 2019-18. Smartphone imports have also fallen from \$2,602 million in 2017-18 to \$1,216 million in 2018-19.

The production of mobile handsets has gone up from ₹18,900 crore (six crore units) in 2014-15 to ₹1,70,000 crore (29 crore units) in 2018-19, as per the commerce ministry figures.

Almost all foreign mobile phone makers — Vivo, Oppo, Nokia, Samsung and Xiaomi — have set up units in India and are manufacturing handsets and not just assembling.

According to Telecom Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, Apple Inc, world's largest and most advanced telecom tech firm, has started making its latest iPhone XR in India and is also expanding operations.

In the budget 2018-19, the basic customs duty was

increased from 15 per cent to 20 per cent on cellular handsets. Handset makers three years ago had suggested imposition of duties to thwart imports of electronic products, beginning from mobile phones to its components to help build local capacities to generate volumes and exports.

The government thus imposed basic customs duty of up to 15 per cent on imports of more than half a dozen components and 20 per cent duty on fully-made phones.

In the last few years, the tariff structure has been rationalised to promote domestic manufacturing of electronic goods, including cellular handsets. Specified capital goods for manufacture of mobile handsets are permitted for import at the zero duty. To promote domestic value addition in mobile handsets and their sub-assemblies/parts manufacturing, a phased manufacturing programme was notified. As a result, India rapidly started attracting investments into this sector and significant manufacturing capacities have been created during the past four years.

The Government has permitted 100 per cent FDI for manufacture of mobile handsets and their sub-assemblies/parts.

Over 14K prosecutions withdrawn under Companies Act

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Sunday said more than 14,000 prosecutions have been withdrawn under the Companies Act as it undertook various steps to improve the ease of doing business in the country, including de-criminalisation of various penal provisions under this law.

Listing out the measures taken, the corporate affairs ministry said it has set up the Central Registration Centre for name reservation and incorporation of companies and LLPs within 1-2 days as opposed to an average of at least 15 days earlier.

"During the last three years more than 1,25,000 companies have been incorporated every year in the country in this manner, as compared to 50-60,000 companies in earlier years," the ministry said in a release.

Among others, the ministry has made the process transparent and non-discretionary for dematerialisation of securities of unlisted public

companies. It noted that "more than 14,000 prosecutions under the Companies Act, 2013" have been withdrawn and that second phase of de-criminalisation of penal provisions under the law has been initiated.

As part of de-criminalisation of technical and procedural violations under companies law and reducing the burden on criminal courts as well as the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), the government has shifted 16 offences sections to monetary penalty regime.

India has improved its ranking on the World Bank's 'Doing Business 2020' report, moving up 14 positions to the 63rd spot.

As per the latest report on the Resolving Insolvency Index, India's ranking jumped 56 places to 52nd in 2019 from 108th in 2018, the release said.

"Recovery rate increased from 26.5 per cent in 2018 to 71.6 per cent in 2019 and time taken in recovery improved from 4.3 years in 2018 to 1.6 years in 2019," it added.

Air India mulls launching Mumbai-London Stansted service

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Mumbai: Disinvestment-bound national carrier Air India is mulling launching a flight service to London Stansted from the country's financial capital, a senior airline official said. Air India currently operates a flight to Stansted from Amritsar. It also has operations to London Heathrow from Mumbai.

British Airways and Virgin Atlantic are the two other airlines flying to London from Mumbai. Air passenger traffic on Mumbai-London route has spiked 25 per cent in the last five years. It is expected to go up by 27 per cent this fiscal following the resumption of services on the route by Virgin Atlantic in October, despite the grounding of Jet Airways which used to have three daily flights to London Heathrow from the city.

"There is a need for more traffic to London region. However, due to the slot constraint issues at the London Heathrow, we are not able to add new flights on the Mumbai-London route. PTI

SBI may pay Essar lenders today as ArcelorMittal pays up

IANIS ■ NEW DELHI

The State Bank of India (SBI), the lead banker of the bankrupt Essar Steel, is likely to settle dues of other lenders as it received ₹40,000 crore on Friday from ArcelorMittal, which is going to takeover the company bringing to an end to the much-prolonged resolution process.

The SBI may settle the dues of all the other lenders on Monday.

The development followed the tabling of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Second Amendment) Bill, 2019, in the Lok Sabha on Thursday, which also provides for protection of buyers from criminal proceedings against previous promoters of the bankrupt firm.

ArcelorMittal had kept the promised ₹42,000 crore in an escrow account, but didn't release it immediately after the Supreme Court's order in the case last month, as the company wanted immunity for Essar Steel's assets from probe against its previous promoters.

The SBI had the largest exposure to Essar Steel of over



₹13,000 crore, while the amount approved by the committee of creditors (CoC) stood at ₹12,161 crore. The other lenders of Essar Steel included IDBI Bank, Canara Bank and Punjab National Bank.

Both ArcelorMittal and SBI, however, are yet to respond to questions sent by IANS.

As per the resolution proposal, banks would recover over 90 per cent of their claims against Essar Steel, amounting to over ₹40,000 crore. The operational creditors would initially get ₹196 crore, and another ₹1,000 crore later, allowed by the CoC, taking the total repayment to ₹1,196 crore.

The resolution of Essar Steel can be marked as a land-

Positive momentum in market to continue post US-China trade deal, say analysts

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Equity markets are expected to sustain their positive momentum this week after the US and China reached their much-awaited trade deal, analysts said. The US-China trade truce and Boris Johnson's win in the UK general elections drove global markets higher late last week. The US and China have suspended additional tariffs on each other's goods after reaching a 'phase one' trade deal after prolonged negotiations.

"The recent developments on the global front have subsided the fear of prolonged crisis and that cheered the participants across the world markets including ours. And, we feel the positive momentum to extend further in the coming week too," said Ajit Mishra, VP -Research, Religare Broking.

The current market momentum can sustain this week as well, provided there is more clarity on the US-China trade settlement, said Siddhartha Khemka, Head -Retail Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services.

China suspends planned tariffs on US goods

AFP ■ BEIJING

Beijing suspended additional tariffs on US products that had been due to kick in on Sunday, after Washington and Beijing announced a major thaw in their trade war Friday.

China will suspend the planned addition of 10 percent and 5 per cent tariffs on some US imports, and "continue to suspend additional tariffs on US-made autos and spare parts", China's finance ministry announced Sunday.

The move follows US President Trump's cancellation of new tariffs on Chinese products as part of a "phase one" trade deal.

China's commerce ministry said on Friday it had agreed with the US a mini-deal that includes a progressive rollback of tariffs and the protection of intellectual property rights.

The two sides have yet to sign the agreement, which represents a major breakthrough in the 21-month standoff between the world's two largest economies.

Housing sales may rise marginally by 4% in 2019: Report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Housing sales are estimated to rise by mere 4 per cent to 2.58 lakh units across seven major cities during this calendar year on subdued demand because of liquidity crunch and overall economic slowdown, according to property brokerage firm Anarock.

"Indian real estate was devoid of any appreciable forward momentum in 2019. Dwindling consumption, lacklustre investment appetite and the global slowdown overshadowed all possibilities for growth," Anarock Property Consultants Chairman Anuj

Puri said. India's GDP growth rate slumped to a six-year low of 4.5 per cent in Q2 FY20.

In its yearly round-up for the real estate sector, Anarock said that collectively, all four quarters of 2019 are likely to see housing sales of 2,58,410 units (assuming 56,200 units in Q4 2019) as against 2,48,300 units sold in entire 2018.

Sales were better in the first half of this year but demand fell in the third quarter. Anarock tracks seven major cities — Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), National Capital Region (NCR), Bengaluru, Pune, Hyderabad, Chennai and Kolkata.

First-time homebuyers were given further tax deductions (now amounting to ₹3.5 lakh in a year) on interest amount of home loans below ₹45 lakh availed within FY 2020-end

"The real estate sector's performance — a reliable barometer of India's overall economic health — painfully reflected the macro-economic state of affairs. The liquidity crisis did not relent and dented any 'real' growth during the year," Puri said.

"Multiple developers fell off



the grid while others still struggle to stay viable. However, strong players with healthy balance sheets — in many cases diversified beyond real estate — sailed through 2019 and recorded decent housing sales and revenue growth," he added.

For the housing sector, 2019 was a non-event in terms of sales growth and investor interest.

"Sentiments remained subdued, sustaining almost solely on end-user activity focused on ready-to-move-in or almost-complete homes. Branded developers gained ground, with some listed players performing

exceptionally well on sales and commensurate revenue growth," he said.

For the housing sector, Puri said the only light at the end of the dark financial tunnel was the announcement of the alternative investment fund (AIF) of ₹25,000 crore to facilitate the completion of stuck affordable and mid-segment homes.

In fact, affordable housing remained upbeat in 2019 thanks to multiple government sops throughout the year.

amount of home loans below ₹45 lakh availed within FY 2020-end.

Luxury and ultra-luxury segments remained limited to end-user interest, with no serious investor activity.

Co-living and student housing gained momentum during the year.

In the organised housing brokerage business, Noida-based Investors Clinic, Anarock, News Corp-backed PropTiger, Anil Ambani-led Reliance group-backed Square Yards, Quirk Realty, Gurugram-based 360 Realtors and Wealth Clinic are the leading players.

Scheme	NAV	1Yr%	UTI Banking and Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	102.33	13.31	UTI MEPUS Edelweiss Tax Advantage Fund-Reg(G)	111.05	9.25	9.25	ICICI Pru Exports & Services Fund(G)	57.23	5.86	IDBI Nifty Junior Index Fund(G)	21.18	1.35
Kotak World Gold Fund(G)	10.08	30.48	UTI Nifty Index Fund-Reg(G)	79.35	13.28	Baroda Multi Cap Fund(G)	99.55	9.06	9.06	DSP Healthcare Fund-Reg(G)	10.60	5.86	UTI Healthcare Fund-Reg(G)	84.41	1.14
DSP World Gold Fund-Reg(G)	13.61	27.33	Axis Long Term Equity Fund-Reg(G)	48.49	13.25	Aditya Birla SL Equity Advantage Fund(G)	421.28	9.02	9.02	Kotak India Growth Fund-Sr 4(G)	9.52	5.84	UTI LT Adv Fund-IV(G)	10.17	0.98
Sundaram Fin Serv Opp Fund(G)	47.99	27.09	ICICI Pru Growth Fund-1(DP)	11.83	13.21	ICICI Pru S&P BSE 500 ETF	158.26	8.96	8.96	Tata India Pharma & Healthcare Fund-Reg(G)	9.17	5.82	Sundaram Value Fund-VIII-Reg(G)	10.64	0.80
Tata Banking & Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	21.27	26.55	IDFC Nifty ETF	124.96	13.20	DSP World Mining Fund-Reg(G)	39.90	8.84	8.84	ICICI Pru Value Fund-16(G)	11.09	5.82	HDFC Mid-Cap Opportunities Fund(G)	52.93	0.80
Baroda Banking & Fin Serv Fund(G)	25.92	24.62	IDBI India Top 100 Equity Fund(G)	25.69	13.07	ICICI Pru Value Fund-11(G)	12.89	8.78	8.78	Franklin India Taxshield(G)	570.84	5.82	Nippon India Value Fund(G)	74.26	5.38
SBI Tax Advantage Fund-III-Reg(G)	27.67	22.98	HDFC Index Fund-NIFTY 50 Plan(G)	110.41	13.01	Canara Rob Emerg Equities Fund-Reg(G)	96.07	8.76	8.76	ICICI Pru FMCG Fund(G)	246.87	5.77	Sundaram LT Tax Adv Fund-Sr I-Reg(G)	13.88	5.76
SBI Banking & Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	20.01	22.62	IDFC Nifty Fund-Reg(G)	25.08	12.93	Edelweiss Long Term Equity Fund (Tax Savings)-Reg(G)	47.81	8.73	8.73	Sundaram LT Tax Adv Fund-Sr I-Reg(G)	13.88	5.76	UTI Core Equity Fund-Reg(G)	60.61	0.68
Invesco India Financial Services Fund(G)	63.16	21.95	L&T India Large Cap Fund-Reg(G)	28.77	12.89	Axis Emerging Opp Fund-2-Reg(G)	12.47	8.72	8.72	Franklin India Opportunities Fund(G)	72.96	5.54	SBI Contra Fund-Reg(G)	102.58	0.54
Franklin Asian Equity Fund(G)	24.15	20.67	UTI Focussed Equity Fund-I(G)	14.38	12.89	Tata Mid Cap Growth Fund(G)	140.65	8.58	8.58	DSP World Energy Fund-Reg(G)	13.27	5.50	Nippon India Pharma Fund(G)	150.59	0.52
Nippon India US Equity Opp Fund(G)	17.07	20.45	Tata Index Fund-Nifty Plan(G)	73.27	12.85	ICICI Pru LT Equity Fund (Tax Saving)(G)	386.21	8.54	8.54	ICICI Pru Value Fund-10(G)	11.71	5.50	UTI LT Cap Fund-Reg(G)	98.75	0.34
Sundaram Services Fund-Reg(G)	12.34	20.22	Canara Rob Consumer Trends Fund-Reg(G)	42.24	12.85	PGIM India Large Cap Fund-2-Reg(G)	12.97	8.54	8.54	Baroda ELSS 96(G)	44.40	5.49	SBI Magnum Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	70.63	0.32
ICICI Pru US Bluechip Equity Fund(G)	31.41	20.21	Nippon India Banking Fund(G)	292.22	12.84	ICICI Pru Growth Fund-3(DP)	10.60	8.50	8.50	Tata Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	54.27	5.48	L&T Emerging Opp Fund-II-Reg(D)	9.72	0.21
Edelweiss ETF - Nifty Bank	3261.96	19.91	Franklin India Focused Equity Fund(G)	41.97	12.79	Edelweiss Multi-Cap Fund-Reg(G)	14.96	8.46	8.46	IDBI Diversified Equity Fund(G)	21.86	5.40	SBI Consumption Opp Fund-Reg(G)	115.27	0.12
Sundaram World Brand Fund-Sr III-Reg(G)	16.69	18.89	Mirae Asset Large Cap Fund-Reg(G)	54.00	12.79	ICICI Pru Bharat Consumption Fund-5(G)	11.08	8.41	8.41	ICICI Pru Bharat Consumption Fund-Reg(G)	65.09	5.37	HDFC Capital Builder Value Fund(G)	282.85	-0.02
Principal Global Opportunities Fund(G)	31.11	18.37	Tata Large Cap Fund(G)	230.88	12.71	Aditya Birla SL Equity Fund(G)	753.48	8.41	8.41	L&T Business Cycle Fund-Reg(G)	15.34	5.36	Sundaram Mid Cap Fund(G)	452.91	-0.05
Franklin India Feeder - Franklin U.S. Opportunities Fund(G)	33.40	18.29	Kotak Standard Multicap Fund(G)	37.14	12.66	Aditya Birla SL Global Real Estate Fund(G)	20.52	8.40	8.40	IDBI Equity Advantage Fund-Reg(G)	27.79	5.34	ICICI Pru Bharat Consumption Fund-2(-G)	9.59	-0.10
DSP Focus Fund-Reg(G)	25.55	18.27	SBI LT Advantage Fund-IV-Reg(G)	13.88	12.60	HDFC Equity Fund(G)	667.05	8.35	8.35	Nippon India India Opp Fund-Sr-A(G)	10.79	5.32	UTI LT Adv Fund-V(G)	9.38	-0.12
BNP Paribas India Consumption Fund-Reg(G)	12.68	18.15	SBI Nifty Index Fund-Reg(G)	104.00	12.57	Nippon India Capital Builder Fund-IV-A(G)	10.16	8.20	8.20	L&T Equity Fund-Reg(G)	83.28	5.32	HDFC Infrastructure Fund(G)	15.33	-0.18
SBI Tax advantage Fund-II(G)	39.49	18.03	Canara Rob Equity Diver Fund-Reg(G)	140.89	12.45	UTI Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	52.97	8.15	8.15	HDFC Focused 30 Fund(G)	76.90	5.28	Baroda Mid-cap Fund(G)	8.67	-0.23
Axis Bluechip Fund-Reg(G)	31.80	18.00	Motilal Oswal Long Term Equity Fund-Reg(G)	18.59	12.40	Aditya Birla SL Frontline Equity Fund(G)	231.34	8.13	8.13	Aditya Birla SL Digital India Fund(G)	53.34	5.27	IDFC Equity 9.92	-0.30	
DSP Equity Fund-Reg(G)	42.32	17.26	Kotak Equity Opp Fund(G)	125.86	12.40	Aditya Birla SL Resurgent India Fund-2-Reg(G)	12.41	8.10	8.10	Aditya Birla SL MNC Fund-Reg(G)	783.69	5.26	Opportunity-5-Reg(G)	94.00	-0.36
ICICI Pru Banking & Fin Serv Fund(G)	69.48	17.23	Aditya Birla SL Index Fund-Reg(G)	118.77	12.36	PGIM India LT Equity Fund-Reg(G)	14.57	8.01	8.01	UTI India Consumer Fund-Reg(G)	26.81	5.22	ICICI Pru Midcap Fund(G)	9.64	-0.52
BNP Paribas Large Cap Fund(G)	96.63	17.20	Nippon India Index Fund - Nifty Plan(G)	20.25	12.36	ICICI Pru Value Fund-17(G)	10.68	7.99	7.99	Kotak Infra & Eco Reform Fund(G)	19.58	5.22	Aditya Birla SL Resurgent India Fund-2-Reg(G)	239.83	-0.69
Aditya Birla SL Banking & Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	31.12	16.99	SBI LT Advantage Fund-I-Reg(G)	13.83	12.35	DSP World Agriculture Fund-Reg(G)	16.94	7.93	7.93	Aditya Birla SL Tax Relief '96(G)	32.25	5.15	L&T Midcap Fund-Reg(G)	130.49	-0.84
IDBI Banking & Financial Services Fund-Reg(G)	11.40	16.80	IDBI Nifty Index Fund(G)	22.32	12.35	HDFC Growth Opp Fund-Reg(G)	115.44	7.86	7.86	Aditya Birla SL Tax Relief '96(ELSS U/S 80C of IT ACT)(G)	32.25	5.15	SBI Healthcare Opp Fund-Reg(G)	117.84	-1.21
PGIM India Global Equity Opp Fund(G)	19.71	16.77	BNP Paribas Focused 25 Equity Fund-Reg(G)	10.14	12.35	Nippon India Large Cap Fund(G)	35.27	7.66	7.66	Mirae Asset Healthcare Fund-Reg(G)	10.81	5.14	DSP Small Cap Fund-Reg(G)	51.68	-1.44
SBI Focused Equity Fund-Reg(G)	151.50	16.72	BNP Paribas Multi Cap Fund(G)	49.57	12.28	Franklin Build India Fund(G)	41.38	7.53	7.53	JM Large Cap Fund(G)	67.98	4.95	Nippon India Power & Infra Fund(G)	92.37	-1.71
Axis Multicap Fund-Reg(G)	12.65	16.70	DSP Equity Opportunities Fund-Reg(G)	232.80	12.27	Nippon India Consumption Fund(G)	67.55	7.50	7.50	Franklin India Technology Fund(G)	160.19	4.83	UTI MNC Fund-Reg(G)	195.33	-1.85
Sundaram Multi Cap Fund-Sr II-Reg(G)	11.01	16.63	Aditya Birla SL Focused Equity Fund(G)	62.35	12.26	DSP India T.I.G.E.R. Fund-Reg(G)	90.85	7.46	7.46	Nippon India Quant Fund(G)	25.53	4.80	SBI-ETF Sensex Next 50	317.09	-2.07
Invesco India Feeder - Invesco Global Equity Income Fund(G)	14.05	16.27	Kotak Tax Saver Fund(G)	46.35	12.24	Invesco India Infrastructure Fund(G)	17.15	7.46	7.46	HDFC TaxSaver(G)	514.76	4.78	Tata India Consumer Fund-Reg(G)	17.29	-2.43
Canara Rob Bluechip Equity Fund-Reg(G)	27.03	16.01	SBI BlueChip Fund-Reg(G)	41.33	12.09	IDFC Focused Equity Fund-Reg(G)	37.90	7.24	7.24	ICICI Pru Value Fund-13(D)	10.62	4.73	ICICI Pru Dividend Yield Equity Fund(G)	15.67	-2.79
Sundaram Multi Cap Fund-Sr I-Reg(G)	11.03	15.96	Franklin India Index Fund-NSE Nifty(G)	9.34	12.04	ICICI Pru Value Fund-17(G)	10.68	7.99	7.99	BNP Paribas Mid Cap Fund(G)	32.20	4.71	Nippon India Capital Builder Fund-IV-B(G)	7.64	-2.84
JM Multicap Fund(G)	34.48	15.94	JM Core 11 Fund(G)	9.34	12.04	DSP World Agriculture Fund-Reg(G)	16.94	7.93	7.93	SBI Magnum TaxGain'93-Reg(G)	142.15	4.70	Sundaram Emerging Small Cap-Sr-III-Reg(G)	8.80	-3.35
Edelweiss Emerging Markets Opp Eq. Offshore Fund-Reg(G)	13.70	15.88	Invesco India Growth Opp Fund(G)	36.12	12.00	ICICI Pru Value Fund-17(G)	10.68	7.99	7.99	Invesco India Multicap Fund(G)	48.08	4.68	Aditya Birla SL Midcap Fund(G)	272.13	-3.04
Nippon India Japan Equity Fund(G)	14.36	15.85	Baroda Large Cap Fund(G)	15.21	11.92	DSP Natural Res & New Energy Fund-Reg(G)	31.83	4.57	4.57	ICICI Pru Value Fund-8(D)	10.77	4.66	Aditya Birla SL Mfg. Equity Fund-Reg(G)	12.85	-3.09
Aditya Birla SL Sensex ETF	383.72	15.49	JM Value Fund(G)	33.19	11.91	L&T India Value Fund-Reg(G)	35.83	4.46	4.46	DSP Equal Nifty 100 Quality 30	283.16	3.71	Sundaram Value Fund-VII-Reg(G)	8.28	-3.25
DSP US Flexible Equity Fund-Reg(G)	27.36	15.41	Kotak India Growth Fund-Sr 5(G)	10.27	11.89	Kotak Small Cap Fund(G)	71.53	4.41	4.41	Kotak Small Cap Fund(G)	71.53	4.41	Sundaram Emerging Small Cap-Sr-III-Reg(G)	29.10	-3.87
HDFC Sensex ETF	4316.01	15.40	Parag Parikh Long Term Equity Fund-Reg(G)	26.28	11.88	Canara Rob Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	44.32	4.38	4.38	Edelweiss Mid Cap Fund-Reg(G)	26.54	4.37	IDFC Infrastructure Fund-Reg(G)	13.66	-3.87
IDFC Sensex ETF	423.06	15.14	SBI LT Advantage Fund-VI-Reg(G)	11.06	11.81	Principal Multi Cap Growth Fund(G)	143.10	4.36	4.36	L&T Tax Advt Fund-Reg(G)	54.91	4.21	Sundaram Emerging Small Cap-Sr-V-Reg(G)	9.22	-4.31
Kotak Bluechip Fund(G)	251.41	15.10	ICICI Pru LT Wealth Enhancement Fund(G)	11.38	11.79	Franklin India Prima Fund(G)	953.60	4.10	4.10	Franklin India Prima Fund(G)	953.60	4.10	Sundaram Emerging Small Cap-Sr-II-Reg(G)	8.05	-4.33
DSP Tax Saver Fund-Reg(G)	51.20	15.07	Edelweiss Large Cap Fund(G)	37.40	11.64	ICICI Pru Bharat Consumption Fund-1(-G)	10.54	3.94	3.94	ICICI Pru Nifty Low Vol 30 ETF	90.76	3.77	L&T Emerging Opp Fund-I-Reg(D)	9.01	-4.44
Aditya Birla SL India GenNext Fund(G)	90.84	15.00	Principal Focused Multicap Fund(G)	68.64	11.46	ICICI Pru Nifty 30 ETF	90.76	3.77	3.77	Franklin India Equity Fund(G)	585.37	3.77	Nippon India Small Cap Fund(G)	37.73	-4.61
Sundaram Select Focus(G)	192.76	14.99	ICICI Pru LT Wealth Enhancement Fund(G)	11.38	11.79	Edelweiss ETF - Nifty 100 Quality 30	283.16	3.71	3.71	Edelweiss ETF - Nifty 100 Quality 30	283.16	3.71	UTI LT Adv Fund-VII(G)	8.38	-4.85
HDFC Index Fund-Sensex(G)	364.86	14.89	Sundaram Large and Mid Cap Fund(G)	36.56	11.09	Sundaram Rural and Consumption Fund(G)	42.18	3.69	3.69	Sundaram Rural and Consumption Fund(G)	42.18	3.69	Sundaram Emerging Small Cap-Sr-I-Reg(G)	7.78	-4.99
Motilal Oswal Focused 25 Fund-Reg(G)	23.86	14.89	UTI Focussed Equity Fund-V(G)	10.05	11.24	Principal Dividend Yield Fund(G)	53.75	3.60	3.60	Principal Dividend Yield Fund(G)	53.75	3.60	IDFC Equity Opportunity-4-Reg(G)	7.20	-5.01
Kotak US Equity Fund(G)	18.03	14.84	IDFC Equity Opportunity-6-Reg(G)	10.77	11.15	Weight Nifty(G)	71.68	3.52	3.52	Weight Nifty(G)	71.68	3.52	Franklin India Smaller Cos Fund(G)	48.61	-5.92
Tata Index Fund-Sensex Plan(G)	101.23	14.79	Sundaram Large and Mid Cap Fund(G)	36.56	11.09	IDFC Core Equity Fund-Reg(G)	45.31	3.38	3.38	IDFC Core Equity Fund-Reg(G)	45.31	3.38	IDBI Small Cap Fund(G)	8.81	-6.08
Edelweiss Eur Dynamic Equity Off-shr Fund-Reg(G)	11.67	14.78	ICICI Pru Growth Fund-2(DP)	12.70	11.01	Sundaram Smart NIFTY 100 Eq Weight Fund-Reg(G)	11.79	3.32	3.32	Sundaram Smart NIFTY 100 Eq Weight Fund-Reg(G)	11.79	3.32	Sundaram Small Cap Fund(G)	73.66	-6.33
Axis Focused 25 Fund-Reg(G)	30.44	14.78	UTI Focussed Equity Fund-VI(G)	10.51	11.00	UTI Dividend Yield Fund-Reg(G)	64.76	3.30	3.30	UTI Dividend Yield Fund-Reg(G)	64.76	3.30	UTI LT Adv Fund-VI(G)	8.01	-6.63
DSP Top 100 Equity Fund-Reg(G)	223.58	14.78	SBI Equity Opp Fund-Sr IV-Reg(G)	15.95	10.95	DSP Equal Nifty 50 Fund-Reg(G)	9.79	3.23	3.23	DSP Equal Nifty 50 Fund-Reg(G)	9.79	3.23	IDFC Sterling Value Fund-Reg(G)	46.92	-6.87
Invesco India PSU Equity Fund(G)	18.29	14.67	SBI Magnum Multicap Fund-Reg(G)	50.56	10.89	Invesco India Smallcap Fund-Reg(G)	10.55	3.23	3.23	Invesco India Smallcap Fund-Reg(G)	10.55	3.23	Sundaram Value Fund-IX-Reg(G)	8.57	-7.02
SBI Magnum Equity ESG Fund-Reg(G)	112.49	14.55	ICICI Pru Global Stable Equity Fund(FOF)(G)	16.62	10.73	ICICI Pru Infrastructure Fund(G)	49.20	3.19	3.19	ICICI Pru Infrastructure Fund(G)	49.20	3.19	Sundaram Value Fund-X-Reg(G)	8.53	-7.17
Axis Growth Opp Fund-Reg(G)	11.74	14.54	Kotak India Growth Fund-Sr 7(G)	10.85	10.62	HDFC Equity Opp Fund-Sr 2-1126D-May 2017(1)-Reg(G)	10.39	3.10	3.10	HDFC Equity Opp Fund-Sr 2-1126D-May 2017(1)-Reg(G)	10.39	3.10	L&T Emerging Businesses Fund-Reg(G)	22.38	-8.38
ICICI Pru Sensex Index Fund(G)	12.76	14.47	Edelweiss Large & Mid Cap Fund-Reg(G)	32.72	10.55	ICICI Pru Bharat Consumption Fund-3(-G)	10.57	3.02	3.02	ICICI Pru Bharat Consumption Fund-3(-G)	10.57	3.02	Aditya Birla SL Resurgent India Fund-7-Reg(G)	7.76	-8.92
Tata India Tax Savings Fund-Reg(G)	19.21	14.32	UTI Equity Fund-Reg(G)	149.19	10.55	Tata Ethical Fund-Reg(G)	159.64	3.01	3.01	Tata Ethical Fund-Reg(G)	159.64	3.01	Sundaram Select Micro Cap-Series VIII-Reg(G)	11.91	-9.11
PGIM India Large Cap Fund(G)	177.71	14.29	SBI Equity Opp Fund-Sr I-Reg(G)	16.67	10.51	Aditya Birla SL Resurgent India Fund-3-Reg(G)	11.70	2.90	2.90	Aditya Birla SL Resurgent India Fund-3-Reg(G)	11.70	2.90	Sundaram Select Micro Cap-Series IX-Reg(G)	8.84	-9.96
Mirae Asset Emerging Bluechip-Reg(G)	56.96	14.19	Axis Capital Builder Fund-1-Reg(G)	10.84	10.50	UTI-Nifty Next 50 ETF	288.67	2.66	2.66	UTI-Nifty Next 50 ETF	288.67	2.66	Aditya Birla SL Pure Value Fund(G)	45.89	-9.74
Nippon India Index Fund - Sensex Plan(G)	20.17	14.09	Sundaram Global Brand Fund(G)	17.75	10.44	Nippon India Multi Cap Fund(G)	96.62	2.65	2.65	Nippon India Multi Cap Fund(G)	96.62	2.65	Principal Tax Savings Fund	206.05	2.61
BNP Paribas Long Term Equity Fund(G)	40.88	14.04	DSP Global Allocation Fund-Reg(G)	13.16	10.44	Tata Equity P/E Fund(G)	138.00	6.91	6.91	Tata Equity P/E Fund(G)	138.00	6.91	Templeton India Equity Income Fund(G)	45.58	2.50
Aditya Birla SL Global Emerging Opp Fund(G)	13.63	13.99	Canara Rob Equity Tax Saver Fund-Reg(G)	67.64	10.41	Nippon India Focused Equity Fund(G)	46.82	6.86	6.86	Nippon India Focused Equity Fund(G)	46.82	6.86	Sundaram LT Tax Adv Fund-Sr IV-Reg(G)	8.84	-9.96
Sundaram Select Small Cap Series-III-Reg(G)	15.14	13.89	Tata Value Fund-Sr-1-Reg(G)	10.41	10.41	Sundaram									

HONG KONG VIOLENCE BREAKS OUT AGAIN

Many turn out in support of police

AP ■ HONG KONG

Several thousand people, some smacking heart signs with their hands, turned out in Hong Kong on Sunday in an unusual display of support for the police force, even as riot officers clashed elsewhere with protesters and pepper-sprayed a crowd.

Competing rallies on Hong Kong Island and wildcat protest actions, including vandalism, by black-clad youths at shopping malls dramatically exposed the deep gulf between pro- and anti-establishment camps carved out by six months of demonstrations that have shaken and split the semi-autonomous Chinese territory.

Truncheon-wielding riot officers fanned out at a shopping mall where demonstrators spray-painted protest slogans on the polished stone floor and smashed glass panels.

Watched by shoppers, officers pepper-sprayed bystanders and made several arrests, pinning detainees to the floor and marching them away.

Roaming groups of youths in black popped up at other shopping malls, too, shouting slogans.

At one mall, a small group adapted a Christmas carol into a protest song and a woman



Protesters gather during a rally in Hong Kong on Sunday

played "Glory to Hong Kong," a protest anthem, on a harmonica.

The scene was completely different at a waterfront park on Hong Kong Island, where a large crowd showered love on the 30,000-strong police force, broadly criticised as heavy-handed by the protest movement.

The rally echoed the Hong Kong government's view that protesters have become unacceptably violent.

Pro-police demonstrators

described protesters as rioters and terrorists and police officers as gallant heroes. They directed thumbs-up signs and shouted words of thanks at officers who policed the sidelines of the rally.

One woman yelled that they looked handsome in uniform. "I'm not against the protesters. It's OK for them to speak, but in a peaceful way," said Max Cheng, an IT worker who took part.

When mass anti-government demonstrations first erupt-

ed in June against a proposed extradition law, Cheng said she was among the hundreds of thousands who marched.

But she said she later felt repulsed by violence that increasingly accompanied protests. She said she didn't demonstrate again until Sunday, when she came out to support police, who have shot 26,000 tear-gas and rubber-baton rounds and arrested more than 6,000 people during the six months of snowballing protests.

"It has just gone too far," she said. "People are too upset, too divided and very emotional."

Man 'missing' after crossing China bridge checkpoint

AFP ■ HONG KONG

Hong Kong's immigration department said on Sunday they have received reports a man went missing on a cross-border mega bridge to the gambling hub of Macau that currently hosts a Chinese mainland police checkpoint.

The disappearance first emerged on Saturday when the man's son told local media his father had texted to say he was being detained while passing through an artificial island manned by Chinese police on his way to the semi-autonomous city of Macau. The man, surnamed Chan, was travelling by bus on Friday afternoon along the bridge and tunnel network linking Hong Kong, Macau and mainland city Zhuhai, his son said.

Johnson vows to repay trust of opposition voters

AFP ■ LONDON

Prime Minister Boris Johnson vowed Saturday to repay the trust of former opposition voters who gave his Conservatives a mandate to take Britain out of the European Union next month.

Johnson toured a leftist bastion once represented by former Labour leader Tony Blair in a bid to show his intent to unite the country after years of divisions over Brexit. The northeastern region fell to the Tories in a general election Thursday that turned into a re-run of the 2016 EU membership referendum in which Johnson championed the Brexit cause.

Johnson told cheering campaigners that he understood how difficult it was for traditional Labour voters to switch sides and back his right-wing government.

"I can imagine people's pencils hovering over the ballot paper and wavering before coming down for us and the Conservatives," he said.

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

The working class north of England dropped its longstanding support for Labour and relegated the century-old party to

its worst finish since before World War II.

Johnson now commands an 80-vote majority in the 650-seat House of Commons -- a margin last enjoyed by the late Tory icon Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s.

The lead assures Johnson safe passage of his divorce deal with the European Union when he re-submits it to parliament next week.

This would pave the way for

Britain's formal withdrawal from the other 27 EU nations by the January 31 deadline set by Brussels.

The sides would then set off on the tricky task of trying to reach a brand new comprehensive trade agreement by the end of 2020. Failure to meet that deadline -- which Johnson has repeatedly promised not to extend -- would have unknown repercussions for global markets and economic growth.

PM Boris celebrates election win with spicy chicken curry

AP ■ LONDON

Following his landslide victory in the December 12 general election, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson celebrated his win by tucking into a spicy chicken curry made by his girlfriend Carrie Symonds, accompanied by a glass of wine, it was reported on Sunday.

In the December 12 election, Johnson gained a Commons majority of 80, his ruling Conservative Party's largest since 1987, and in contrast, the opposition Labour

suffered its worst election result since the 1930s.

On Friday night, Symonds cooked the spicy dish for an elated Johnson in no.11 Downing Street, *The Sun newspaper* reported. "Boris was exhausted but elated on Friday night - and Carrie treated him by cooking him his favourite chicken curry, nice and spicy the way he likes it," a source said.

This was also the first time he drank alcohol since the election campaign began at the beginning of November.

Longest UN climate talks end with no deal on carbon markets

PTI ■ MADRID

The longest UN climate talks held here ended on Sunday with no deal on carbon markets as sleep-deprived delegates from almost 200 countries, after two weeks of marathon negotiations, failed to come up with more ambitious targets to cut greenhouse gas emissions to fulfil the terms of the 2015 Paris agreement.

The negotiations which extended till Sunday saw no agreement on major issues such as Article 6, loss and damage, and long term finance.

Despite clear warnings from scientists through 2019, record levels of protests and severe climate impacts, the COP25 talks held between December 2 and 13 saw major differences between countries

that are proving hard to resolve. According to experts, few countries came to this year's talks with updated plans to reach the Paris goals.

The observers blamed G20 countries for the poor outcome. Leading economies were faulted for their complacency and their failure to deliver more support to vulnerable nations in the face of brutal impacts and push for a tougher collective response in 2020 when new climate plans are mandated under the Paris agreement.

The EU tried to play its role as bridge-builder between developing and developed countries. However, it will take a major diplomatic push and bigger leadership alliance to deliver substantial outcomes at COP26 in Glasgow next year.

COP25's final decision text "re-emphasises with serious concern the urgent need to address the significant gap between the aggregate effect of parties' mitigation efforts in terms of global annual emissions of greenhouse gases by 2020," according to the final draft.

It also "stresses the urgency of enhanced ambition in order to ensure the highest possible mitigation and adaptation efforts by all parties".

Negotiators failed to reach an outcome on carbon markets. In the final hours of negotiations, over 30 governments joined behind the San Jose Principles in an effort to preserve the integrity of carbon market rules and prevent loopholes and the ability for double-counting carbon credits, it said.

14 killed, 18 injured after bus veers off road in Nepal

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

A passenger bus veered off the road and fell some 100 metres along the Araniko Highway in Nepal's Sindhupalchok on Sunday, killing at least 14 people and injuring 18 others.

The bus was heading towards Bhaktapur from Kalinchok in Dolakha district when it skidded off the highway and plunged down from Chha Kilo area, police said.

Three children and 11 adults were killed in the accident, the Kathmandu Post reported, quoting police. "Of them, 12 people died on the spot," police said.

Home food in Iraqi square brings protesters together

AP ■ BAGHDAD

In Baghdad's Tahrir Square, there are the anti-government protesters demonstrating for a better future for Iraq, and there are the volunteers who feed them.

From stuffed lamb and fish, to the giant pots of soups and rice, to the plates of lentils and other beans, there is no shortage of food to go around. Volunteers from the capital and southern provinces cook traditional dishes that reflect the country's rich cuisine and bring protesters together.

Tahrir Square has been the focal point for the protests that have continued to roil Iraq since October 1.

The spontaneous, leaderless demonstrations were organized on social media over long-standing grievances including Government corruption, unemployment and a lack of



A volunteer chef prepares to serve free portions of the popular sweets of Awamah, fried dough balls to protester in the center of Baghdad, Iraq

basic services. For many, the square in central Baghdad has become a miniature model for the kind of state they dream of, where factional and sectarian politics play no part and public services exist.

Services, including the near-constant supply of food, have been integral to keeping people in the square, but vol-

unteers are eyeing a gradual drop in donations with concern. Iraqis are used to communal meals and many volunteer food. Every year, during the annual Shiite religious commemoration known as Arbaeen, volunteers prepare food for pilgrims making their way to their sect's holy shrines in the city of Karbala.

Shortly after the protests started Oct. 1, volunteers began setting up similar tents to cook and distribute traditional Iraqi dishes for the protesters in and around Tahrir Square.

"We make it for the hungry people, and people in need here in Tahrir Square," said a woman who gave her name as Um Ammar, which means "Ammar's mother." She is from the southern province of Misan and was cooking Seyyah, a thick mixture of rice flour and water fried on a hot plate. Other popular dishes are lentils and beans; Tepsy, a traditional Iraqi casserole; Dolma, consisting of stuffed cabbage and grape leaves, onions and aubergines cooked in tomato sauce; and Makhlama, a mixture of potato, tomatoes, onion and egg all fried together and put in bread. It is a favorite breakfast for people in Baghdad.

Boko Haram kill 19 Nigeria herders in clashes: Sources

AFP ■ KANO

Boko Haram jihadists beheaded 19 cattle herders Saturday in northeast Nigeria, civilian militia sources and residents told AFP on Sunday.

Ethnic Fulani herders, besieged by a spate of armed attacks targeting their cattle, pursued Boko Haram, sparking a fierce gunfight outside Fuhe village, near Ngala close to the border with Cameroon.

"The insurgents killed 19 of the herders in the fight," anti-jihadist militia leader Umar Kachalla told AFP.

Bodies of the slain herders were brought to the police by

militiamen, Kachalla said.

The herders had earlier repelled an attack by Boko Haram fighters who invaded the village to steal livestock, killing one of the militants, Mada said.

The herders then decided to pursue the jihadists and fight them "once and for all", Mada said, but were overwhelmed.

"The herders were subdued by the better armed Boko Haram gunmen," he said.

Jihadists then returned to Fuhe village and burnt homes and food supplies while herders fled, according to Ngala resident Abubakar Yusuf, who saw the dead bodies at the police station.

Tens of thousands evacuated in Italy as WWII bomb defused

AFP ■ ROME

Around 54,000 people were evacuated from the southern Italian city of Brindisi on Sunday as experts worked to defuse a World War II bomb, in the largest operation of its kind in the country, media said.

The British bomb, one-metre (three-feet) long and weighing 200 kilograms (440-pounds), was found on November 2 during work on a cinema.

The device was damaged by the workers' equipment, making the operation more tricky.

All residents within a 1.5-kilometre radius were evacuated, and gas supplies were cut in homes within 500 metres of the site.

Some air traffic and rail services were also suspended.

Singapore targets Opposition party with misinformation law

AFP ■ SINGAPORE

Singapore has ordered an opposition party to correct online posts under a controversial law against misinformation, the first time the legislation has been used against a rival party, ahead of elections expected within months.

The Singapore Democratic Party (SDP), one of a host of small opposition parties in the city-state, was ordered to correct two Facebook posts and an article on its website related to employment issues, authorities said in a press release on Saturday.

The Facebook posts claimed that many Singaporeans had been displaced from white-collar jobs by foreign employees, which the author-

ities said was false.

"These false and misleading statements by the SDP have a singular objective -- to stoke fear and anxiety among local PMETs (Professionals, Managers, Executives and Technicians). It is important to set the facts straight so that Singaporeans are not misled," the government said on its fact-checking site.

Authorities used the measure twice last month, ordering Facebook to put a correction by a post for the first time, and telling an opposition party member to correct a message.

According to the SDP, Google also cited the new regulation, which prohibits adverts seeking to influence public opinion, when it announced a ban on political ads in Singapore this month.

Military probes possible 'white power' hand signs at Army-Navy game

Washington: US military officials said they are investigating an incident where Army and Navy students used hand signs that can signal white power during a television broadcast.

The symbol was shown by two West Point cadets and a Naval Academy midshipman during festivities televised live by ESPN Saturday before a football game in Philadelphia between the Army and Navy. The gesture resembles the "okay" sign, with the thumb and forefinger touching to form a circle and the remaining three fingers played, pointing upwards. It has only recently become a white supremacist symbol, and was adopted partly because of its ambiguity, according to the Anti-Defamation League.

Iran says it's defused 2nd cyberattack in less than a week

AP ■ TEHRAN

Iran's telecommunications minister announced on Sunday that the country has defused a second cyberattack in less than a week, this time "aimed at spying on government intelligence."

Mohammad Javad Azari Jahromi said in a short Twitter post that the alleged attack was "identified and defused by a cybersecurity shield," and that the "spying servers were identified and the hackers were also tracked." He did not elaborate.

Last Wednesday, Jahromi told the official IRNA news agency that a "massive" and "governmental" cyberattack also targeted Iran's electronic infrastructure. He provided no

specifics on the purported attack except to say it was also defused and that a report would be released.

On Tuesday, the minister dismissed reports of hacking operations targeting Iranian banks, including local media reports that accounts of millions of customers of Iranian banks were hacked.

This is not the first time Iran says it has defused a cyberattack, though it has disconnected much of its infrastructure from the internet after the Stuxnet computer virus, widely believed to be a joint US-Israeli creation, disrupted thousands of Iranian centrifuges in the country's nuclear sites in the late 2000s.

Tokyo's new stadium: A masterpiece by Japan's Kengo Kuma

AP ■ TOKYO

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe spoke at Sunday's official completion of the new national stadium, the venue for the opening and closing ceremony of next year's Tokyo Olympics.

It will also host track and field and some soccer.

He could have spoken for anyone who has been inside the creation of Japanese architect Kengo Kuma, whose venue is sure to be up for many design prizes.

"It blends with its surrounding and the natural environment," Abe said, noting it showcased Japan's ties to nature with its use of wood lattice work around the stadium's rim and roof, and earth-tone colours in the seats that are randomly coloured brown, gray, two

shades of green and white.

Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike pointed out the other strong feature as she spoke.

"This stadium uses a lot of trees in its structure," she said, speaking of the greenery that is everywhere -- from flower planters, to trees and shrubs.

Although Tokyo is densely urban, it is also dotted with many parks and green areas. The stadium works off that theme, making sure it is functional and linked to nature.

A walkway on the fifth level is called the "Grove of the Sky."

It's about 30 meters (100 feet) above street level and runs 850 meters (1/2 mile) around the entire circumference of the stadium. It's lined with benches, flowers and trees. A stroll offers a breathtaking view of Tokyo, and on a

clear day Mt. Fuji is visible to the west.

Makoto Sato, a spokesman for the Japan Sport Council, a national government body that built the venue, said the walkway will be open to the public on days when there are no events at the Olympics.

"We have tried to emphasize all four seasons and people can use it around the year and enjoy it," he said.

The stadium seating rises in a steep gradient from the field level and the nine-lane track, getting steeper the higher it goes.

The colours of the seats also get lighter the higher up you go with more brown seats near the bottom -- the earth -- and more green, gray and white near the top.

"Because of the gradient, it creates an atmosphere where

people can feel close," said Takeo Takahashi, another Japan Sport Council spokesman.

The stadium is sure to be the centerpiece of the 2020 Olympics, built at a cost of 156.9 billion yen, about USD 1.43 billion at the present exchange rate.

The capacity for the Olympics will be 68,000 and can be expanded later to 80,000. Tokyo's 1964 Olympics left behind several architectural jewels, the most famous of which was Kenzo Tange's Yoyogi National Stadium.

It was the swimming venue in '64 -- American swimmer Don Schollander won four gold medals there -- and will host handball this time, and badminton and wheelchair rugby at the Paralympics.

The new stadium also feature items from the old nation-

al stadium, which was razed in 2015.

The most prominent are two mosaic-tile murals featuring the Greek goddess Nike and Nomino Sukune, a legendary sumo wrestler. They are located at the Aoyama Gate entrance.

The venue will be open to the general public on December 21, which will also feature a visit by eight-time Olympic gold medalist Usain Bolt. The first real event will be January 1, 2020 with the Emperor's Cup, the championship of the Japan football league. Governor Koike noted that the Olympics open in just over seven months -- July 24, 2020.

"I can already envision the scene where the athletes are sprinting on this field and spectators are cheering for them in this stadium," she said.



Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Minister for the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games Seiko Hashimoto, Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Kazuyoshi Akaba, Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike and Tokyo Organizing Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Vice President Toshiaki Endo attend the construction completion ceremony of the New National Stadium on Sunday

Trend
Blazer

I don't follow any particular plan: Anil

At 62, ANIL KAPOOR's fitness level serves as a goal for youngsters. He is counted among the fittest actors in the industry and is also enthusiastic about yoga and weight training.

Opening up on his fitness secret, he said: "My trainer keeps changing my workouts so that my body doesn't get too comfortable in any one thing. But the idea is to have a good balance between cardio and weight training."

On his diet routine, the actor commented, "I don't follow any particular plan. I just eat what feels right for my body, and that's usually healthy and simple food."

The actor rose to stardom in the eighties when fitness was not a priority for actors. Quizzed if today's generation of actors is more conscious about health and fitness, the actor smiled and replied: "That's a fair assumption. Today's youth are very knowledgeable about health & fitness."



I am very lucky to have a team which doesn't leave my side. They are very hardworking. I never have to worry about certain things which can really derail any actor from focusing on giving their 100 per cent in acting. They also ensure that nothing distracts me. More than me, they have a professional attitude towards everything.

—Aparshakti Khurrana

Quirking up the promotional game for their forthcoming film *Good Newwz*, actors AKSHAY KUMAR and DILJIT DOSANJH tried the labour pain test to understand what expecting mothers go through during child birth.

Akshay shared a video on Instagram where he and Diljit are trying the test.

He wrote: "Good Newwz... A small step to understand what mothers go through by Diljit Dosanjh and me. Respect to all the mummies out there, delivering #GoodNewwz is harder than anyone can imagine!"



Ryan resembles Kate Beckinsale

Actor RYAN REYNOLDS says his resemblance to actor Kate Beckinsale is something that he has heard about for a long time.

The 43-year-old Reynolds revealed that he was aware of the talk about his resemblance to Beckinsale during an appearance on a show.

"It is like looking in a mirror," Reynolds joked, adding of the gown Beckinsale was wearing in a clip the show displayed of the actor. "I mean, I was going to wear that today!" he quipped. In October, Beckinsale also talked about the uncanny resemblance to Reynolds while on a show.



OVER THE BOUNDARY

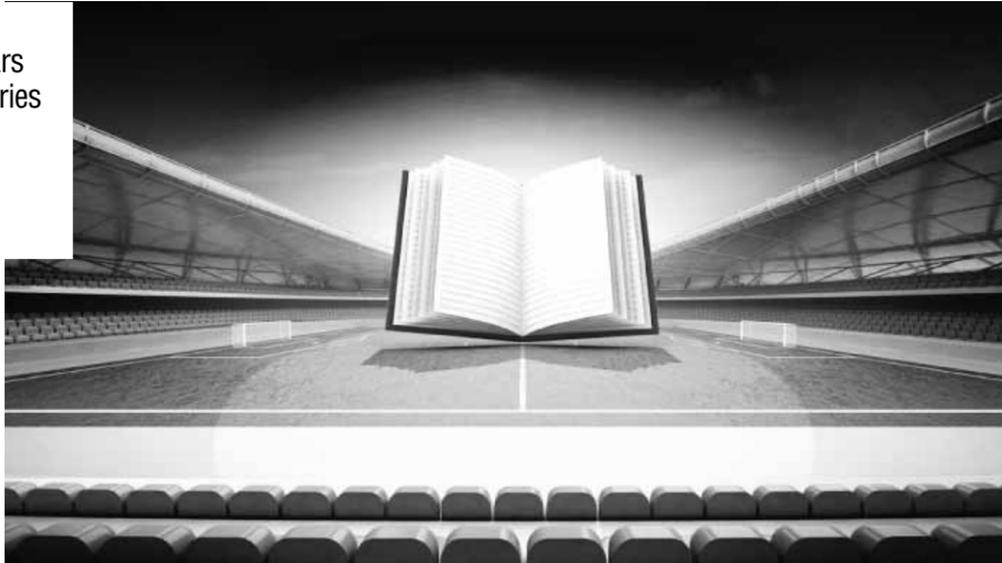
Sports writing has evolved over the years and inspirational stories now make for an independent literary genre, says CHAHAK MITTAL

Cricket, as often said, is nothing less than a religion in India. And this is reflected not just in the fan-following that the cricketers command but even in sports literature. Be it *Wizards: The Story of Indian Spin Bowling* by Anindya Dutta, Sujit Mukherjee's *Autobiography of an Unknown Cricketer*, *Pundits From Pakistan* by Rahul Bhattacharya, *Azhar* by Harsha Bhogle, *Swami and Friends* by RK Narayan, Ramachandra Guha's *States of Indian Cricket*, there have been numerous books on the sport in India.

Other disciplines, now boosted by international wins, have equally inspirational stories. This is the gap that the Ekamra Sports Literature Festival is trying to bridge. Shireen Sethi, founder-director of the festival, said that this was the main topic of debate at this festival — Why so many books on cricket and none on other sports? She said, "We cannot even blame the writers and publishers for giving us so many books on cricket because it sells the most, especially in India. But this is why this festival was conceptualised to also make all kinds of sports and sports stories a part of mainstream literature."

The festival, that concluded yesterday, also witnessed the first-ever sports book awards in six categories — *Autobiography of the Year*, *Biography of the Year*, (authorised or unauthorised), *Cricket Book of the Year*, *Outstanding Sports Book Award*, *Best Sports Book Publisher* and *Sports Book of the Year*.

Another reason which made the festival relevant was that the depiction of sports in literature, however engaging, never finds the same resonance as a film. Case in point, *Lagaan* (2001) probably the first film, which documented the history of cricket in India. Through the film, the



audience realised how Indians had struggled to defeat Britishers in a game they barely knew. For them, it was like a war and the only way was to save their hard-earned crops and money. The film became a national favourite. On the contrary, a similar reference in Ramachandra Guha's *A Corner of a Foreign Field: The Indian History of a British Sport*, which presents the history of how cricket became an Indian sport, does not feature anywhere in the consciousness of Indians.

Shireen said that while conceptualising it, many sports authors, journalists and publishers agreed that writing a book is one thing and getting recognition or finding visibility is another and much tougher, which is why "we wanted to create a platform for sports writers to talk and give them more visibility in terms of readership."

Author Kristen Worley, whose book, *Women Enough*, was released in India at the festival, talked about how sports literature and writing have changed over time and said, "I think it has evolved greatly in the past several years. From the printed glossy sports editions to digital publication, the publishing world is increasingly investing in the human stories of the 'athlete experience'. However, books



always reveal more. They not only talk about the life of an athlete or a sportsperson, but also illustrate his/her relationships, the 'ins and outs' of career and develop a real authentic voice and a tactile and unique relationship between the reader and him/her. Today, unlike earlier times, magazine publications and digital stories only provide the 'high-

lights, whereas the book format is able to reveal intimate details of an athlete — on and off the field. The crucial aspects of the athlete's career are missed in these highlights which also means that his/her hard work and struggles go unrecognised."

Journalist and author Tim Wigmore, whose *Cricket 2.0* was also released at the festival, said, that it's very obvious in case of journalism that sports writing has

evolved manifold with simultaneous focus on statistics. "These are not a replacement for human interest stories but a supplement to them. I think modern fans are very curious and demand more from sports writing, which is making it grow," added he.

His book talks about how Twenty20 changed the face of cricket over the years. He told us the reason for writing the book. "Since its initiation in 2003, Twenty20 has upended the norms in cricket and turned what was an old, traditional game on its head. We wanted to

understand how and why it has become the most popular format of the sport, take a step back and understand the journey we have been on and where we could be headed next. We wanted to read a book telling this story. And we couldn't find it, so we thought writing it would be the next best thing," he said.

This was also the focus of what Wigmore talked about at the event where he said, "There are many ways in which T20 has changed cricket both on and off the field — encompassing everything from the rise of club cricket, hyper-commercialisation and cricket as entertainment. It has also changed the market for this sport, creating certain tensions. This festival is a great way to connect with those interested in sport on a deeper level and generate stimulating debate."

So how can we involve sports literature in education? Apart from RK Narayan's *Swami and Friends*, there is no other prominent Indian author's sports fiction that is a part of literature courses in graduation colleges. Shireen said, "For that, universities need to introduce writing courses like the ones in the US, especially Columbia, which is famous for its creative writing. I think it's time we take sports writing seriously like the rest of the arts."

Kristen added, "The festival is vitally important as it can encourage more people to tell stories and even hear the authentic voice of athletes who are willing to share their tales. It can broaden the understanding and create a system that supports sportspersons and make their stories of victory as well as struggle more inclusive."

While most of them would argue that sports is something that is best experienced live or visually rather than being read, she argued, "There is something very powerful about the written word as it is limitless and draws on our imagination with no restrictions, whereas the lived experience is limited to that moment in real-time."

Wigmore disagreed too, "It has never been an either or. The best sports writing can enhance our enjoyment of what we see live on the field of play, providing a deeper perspective and way to appreciate the sport. Indeed, with relentless coverage, I'd say the benefits of this deeper perspective through writing are greater than ever."

TECH TALK

The dominant shift

Here's how streaming and #MeToo shaped TV decade of change



Game of Thrones was both an unprecedented achievement and old-school role model in the TV decade that's rolling its final credits. Instalments of the elaborately produced hit were doled out one at a time by an established outlet, premium cable channel HBO. That was standard TV operating procedure until, suddenly, it wasn't. The new era arrived in 2013 when a full season's worth of *House of Cards* popped up amid Netflix's on-demand movies and old TV shows.

The drama's unexpected home appeared simply to be an option to the 500-channel universe born in the 1990s. But *House of Cards* foreshadowed a streaming gold rush and volume of programming dubbed Peak TV in 2015 — and with no drop in altitude in sight.

The result — nothing is the same, whether it's how much television we consume; how and where we do it; who gets to make it, and the level of respect given the creatively emboldened small screen. We don't just watch TV, we binge it until we're bleary-eyed if not sated. We still change channels with a remote control, but more often we're logging in to watch shows on our phones or other devices and on our schedules, not network-dictated appointment TV.

A comic strip, *Zits*, recently summed up the current reality in three panels. "What's on?" a father asks his teenage son, who's sitting cross-legged in front of a TV set and is bracketed by a smart phone on one side and a laptop on the other. "Everything ever videotaped, filmed, recorded, photographed or otherwise documented whenever I want to watch it," the teen answers, nonchalantly tossing popcorn into his mouth. "I miss television," the downcast dad tells his wife.

ALL HAIL STREAMING

Generational nostalgia aside, consumers have embraced the change in their media world, said Robert Thompson, director of Syracuse University's Bleier Center for Television & Popular Culture. "This was the decade that streaming became for many, many people the dominant way in which they watch television," said Thompson. It's a rapid shift that bears little relation to the previous entertainment industry revolu-

tion, cable TV.

Only about a quarter of the US homes had cable in 1980 despite its availability since the mid-20th century. While growth finally exploded in the 80s, it wasn't until the tail end of the 1990s and the arrival of HBO's *The Sopranos* and *Sex and the City* that premium cable received critical praise and honours, Thompson said.

In contrast, it took less than a decade for leader Netflix to skyrocket from about 12 million US subscribers at the decade's start to 60 million this year and 158 million worldwide. The streamer reportedly lavished \$15 billion on programming for 2019 alone, and earned buzz with series including *The Crown*, *Stranger Things*, and *Orange Is the New Black*. Even major films, among them Martin Scorsese's *The Irishman*, are making themselves at home on Netflix while still in theatres.

Others in the fray include Amazon Prime Video, although "streaming wars" became the aggressive phrase applied to the increasingly competitive marketplace. With newly emboldened (and sometimes mega-expanded) media companies intent on getting a piece of the streaming action, there was a growth surge that won't abate in the new decade.

Apple TV Plus launched on November 1 with Oprah Winfrey and Steven Spielberg among its

first wave of producers, and was quickly followed by Disney Plus. The latter has a storehouse of Disney movies and TV shows to draw on, along with acquired properties from Marvel Entertainment and Lucasfilm and its *Star Wars* franchise.

While cord-cutting became a quest for viewers seeking to shed hefty cable bills, there is still a price tag for the gusher of riches, as much as \$14.99 monthly for HBO Max alone. A bonus for viewers as they sort through the competing options — more programming doesn't just mean more of the same.

VARIETY STORE

If retailers can provide every type of yogurt known to humanity, why can't TV take the same eclectic approach? It has in the past 10 years, as the increasing demand for content and the growth of niche programming created opportunities for diverse and candid voices. Ongoing efforts by advocacy groups also contributed to the gradual but unmistakable shift.

Ryan Murphy, already established as a successful producer with *Nip/Tuck* and *Glee*, exercised his clout to make FX's *Pose*, set in the LGBTQ ballroom culture scene of the 1980s and 90s. Its star, Billy Porter, became the first openly gay man to win the best actor Emmy.

Even mainstream broadcasting expanded its field of vision, with ABC the first network in 20 years to air an Asian American family sitcom, *Fresh Off the Boat*, ending this season. Nahnatchka Khan was its executive producer, one of the women who gained prominence behind the camera in a sector long dominated by men.

African American women took the spotlight in creator-star Issa Rae's *Insecure*, while Jenji Kohan's *Orange Is the New Black* featured characters notable for their ethnic, sexual and class diversity. Some established female producers further cemented their success. Shonda Rhimes added *Scandal* and *How to Get Away with Murder* to her body of work, with the latter's star, Viola Davis, becoming the first African American to win a best drama actress Emmy. Ava DuVernay, already a filmmaking force, spearheaded *When They See Us* and *Queen Sugar*.

Reese Witherspoon, adding producing to her portfolio, made good on her vow to bring strong female characters to the screen with the hit series *Big Little Lies* and *The Morning Show*.

Statistics confirm the anecdotal evidence. Across all TV platforms in 2017-18, women accounted for a historic high of 31 per cent of those working in key behind-the-scenes jobs including directors, writers and editors, according to research by San Diego State University's Center for the Study of Women in Television & Film.

While television moved toward better reflecting the world at large, it was forced to look inward as well.

#METOO FALLOUT

Revelations of sexual misconduct hit the TV industry hard and with more lasting effect than any other sector of Hollywood, even compared to producer Harvey Weinstein's fall from filmmaking heights. Two of media's top power-brokers were brought down in the #MeToo era — Les Moonves and Roger Ailes.

Top-tier actors also lost their jobs, including Jeffrey Tambor of *Transparent* and Kevin Spacey of *House of Cards* and Louis CK, whose TV projects included *Louie*, which he starred in and produced. —AP

WEBBED



THE GIFT

A painter in Istanbul embarks on a personal journey as she unearths universal secrets about an Anatolian archaeological site and its link to her past. Starring Beren Saad, Mehmet Günsür and Metin Akdülger, season 1 releases on December 27 on Netflix.



CRASH LANDING ON YOU

A paragliding mishap drops a South Korean heiress in North Korea and into the life of an army officer, who decides he will help her hide. Created by Lee Jeong-hyo and Park Ji-eun, starring Hyun Bin, Son Ye-jin and Seo Ji-hye, the show releases on December 21 on Netflix.



AFTER THE RAID

A large immigration raid in a small town leaves emotional fallout and hard questions for its church-goers about what it means to love thy neighbour. The documentary film release on December 19 on Netflix.

Teaching at a Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) school has always filled me with a sense of purpose, joy and accomplishment. With every transfer, the experience of mentoring a new set of students has thrown up rich learnings. My stint at Subhash Nagar BMC School in Mumbai's Chembur suburb was no different. If there were challenges, then there were good times too.

I can still recall the day I took charge of the seventh graders as their class teacher. It was a bright bunch, and I was informed that they all came from impoverished homes. While the majority was from the nearby Anand Nagar slum, a few lived in the crowded basti across the railway line. Their parents were rag-pickers and usually set out for work before dawn to ensure they were in time to pick up the 'valuable' trash before their 'competitors' get to it. They came back well past noon, only to queue up at the trash dealer's house to earn their daily wage. Left behind to fend for themselves and their siblings, the children doubled up as household help, baby-sitters and chipped in whenever their parents needed them. Most were either too distracted or extremely exhausted to pay attention in class. There was a general sense of indifference towards education. Their parents, unfortunately, just didn't have the time or energy to pay attention to them or to their future for there were more immediate existential challenges that they faced.

But, with over 28 years of teaching experience, I was prepared to engage with my students. During the roll call, I chatted with them as they introduced themselves. Around 10 students were absent that day. Apart from three girls who were visiting their native place and were supposed to be back in school in two or three days, there were six boys, namely, Amol, Krushna, Amit, Pandhari, Prakash and Kishan, who missed the class.

Things quickly fell into a routine and the girls came back as expected. However, the boys continued skipping school. Every day, I thought they would come, only to be disappointed. I felt sad while marking them absent. When a week went by and the six didn't turn up, I decided to visit them in Anand Nagar. As I reached the slum and asked for Amol and Krushna, I was directed towards a gym in a narrow lane. They were surprised to see me but quickly assured me that they would show up in school the next day. They even apologised for not coming earlier. We had a warm interaction and I treated them to *vada pav*.

I went back home peacefully. I thought, perhaps, home visits were the answer to bringing in the absentees. But I was wrong. They didn't show up and I felt let down. I discussed their absence with my class and that's when I got to know their

SHILPA NAIK, a retired teacher at a Mumbai suburb school, transformed the lives of a few students in her class so that they metamorphosed from child labourers into a music band

TRYST WITH TALENT



story. "They are part of *Banjo Party* (musical group). They are called for events and festivals like *Dahi Handi* on *Gokulashstami*, *Navaratri* and birthday parties in the *basti*. They are also called for playing *dhol*," said their friends from Anand Nagar. I learnt that each one earned ₹300 per event, although sometimes they were not paid the entire amount. "They earn and have a good time. Why would they attend the school?" my informants exclaimed.

What did they mean by 'good time', I asked. "Don't tell them that we have told you all this but they smoke, drink and..." they said and started giggling. I was taken aback. My children are into all this? Yes, I considered them 'my children'. They were kids, who had been forced into child labour, they had taken to substance abuse, they were truanting from school and they have a troubled life. They had been deprived of a childhood and parental care. Clearly, they were not afraid to work hard but their circumstances had denied them the chance to shape their life through education. They were carrying the cross of their life on their young shoulders.

But how could I reach out to them, earn their trust and let them know that I cared? These questions troubled me constantly. If I could just get them to come to school, I was sure I could teach them many things. The empty benches scoffed

at me. I was being defeated daily. I realised that these boys needed vocational training more than bookish knowledge. So I came up with a plan to make sure that they got both. I gathered some students and went to meet them again. "How about forming a *Banjo Party* of your own?" I suggested to Amol, Krushna and company. "But how is it possible?" asked Krushna. "You work for someone else and they don't even pay you enough. They avail all the benefits and you get hardly anything in return," I said. "Yes ma'am, but how can we go about it? We don't have enough money to buy musical instruments," he said.

"Let's discuss this in class tomorrow. We will work out a plan," I told them. Amol, Krushna and others were elated and made sure that all six came to school before the first call for morning prayers. "Ms Naik, your 'heroes' have showed up," remarked the other teachers. I felt a sense of satisfaction when I marked 'P' (present) against their names.

The whole class was eager to discuss the formation of the *Banjo Party*. After the prayer, we returned to the class. The boys started off animatedly. "Ma'am, we will have to purchase instruments from Parel and Lalbaug (South Mumbai localities). We have prepared a list of the things we require — instruments

like small and big *dhol*s, *dholki*, sticks, *khanjira*, and also t-shirts and trousers. We've already prepared the budget." The boys were excellent at calculations, I discovered. "We need around ₹6,000," they announced and added, "But we don't have the cash. Making a list is okay but one needs money at the end."

I said, "Don't worry, I will give you the money. You can repay me in instalments. But I have one condition — you have to attend school every day." They agreed readily. The next day, I gave them the start-up money and a day later, they bought the instruments. The group proudly showed off their talent after class while their classmates danced to their tunes.

The boys not only started attending school regularly, they also practised music under a banyan tree near the local railway station. Many of their classmates visited them. I, too, dropped by a few times. As their peers and elders encouraged them, their confidence and self-esteem grew. The 'P' against their names in the roll call shone.

A few days later, the school had been shut for 10 days for Ganesh Chaturthi. When the school reopened, I came back to find a packet of money, a box of sweets and flowers on the table. The beaming *Banjo Party* greeted me. "You don't have to pay me back so soon. Have you received proper

payment?" I inquired.

"Ma'am, during the Ganapati festival, we were invited to play on all 10 days. In fact, we played during the procession on the first day when the Ganapati idol was placed. That honour is normally reserved for a well-known musical party. We have made so much money that even after paying you, each one of us has ₹3,000 left. Additionally, we have kept aside ₹2,000 in the group's joint kitty," they shared with delight.

The boys had brought kilos of *peda*, which were more than enough for the class of 29. Instead of distributing more than one *peda* each, I requested them to cut them into quarters and distribute them to the entire school. "While doing so, please tell them that we are talented businessmen but we are studying, too," I said.

That was one of my most rewarding days in the school. My small experiment had changed the lives of these amazing, gifted boys. From being labelled as 'absentees', 'ruffians' and 'child labourers', they had transformed themselves into shining examples of hard work and enterprise. What's more, they started attending the school regularly.

(The author is a retired BMC teacher. The article has been translated from Marathi to English by Alka Gadgil.)

—Charkha Features

Time to bridge the age gap

Youth should be seen as an effective instrument of social change rather than of conflict, says RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJ JI



Most of us are aware about the 'generation gap,' which can be defined as "wide difference in cultural norms between the younger generation and their elders." It can also be described as a situation where the older and younger generation have conflicting views because of a difference in experiences, opinions, habits and behaviour. Though the generation gap is not seen as a serious issue but it often becomes one.

It is a known fact that the youth are filled with energy, stamina, strong will and zest. But certain other valuable characteristics of youth, which can be great tools for social transformation are not fully realised or utilised by the society, as a result of which they get confused and disturbed. One such important personality trait of the youngsters is that they strongly aspire to do something new.

They want to initiate change and are open to new challenges. Hence it is easier for them to adapt to any kind of change as compared to the older generation. The latter is undoubtedly more experienced but most of their ideas have already been applied to real-life situations and they may not have new concepts and enthusiasm to work for a change. So the old order has to transform, giving place to the newer generation who will play an active role in social evolution. It has, therefore, rightly been said that if the youth are awakened, the whole world will follow their lead including the generations that follow their example. They will prepare themselves mentally and physically for the dawn of new era. But have the youth's potential been utilised for national reconstruction so far? Is it given the opportunities and the guidance to fulfill their dreams of taking the world into a new era of peace and prosperity? Well, with reference to our country we can say that the youth is restless and disappointed because it is not provided enough channels for self-expression. Today the youth complains about the society and people in power. It believes that its energies, both mental and physical, are not fully utilised for national development because the older generation denies the young adequate participation, thinking that they are inexperienced and immature. On one hand, the youth says that the "experience" and "maturity" of elders is, in fact, a hindrance in breaking new ground. The need of the hour is to bring forth new initiatives, ideas and innovation. On the other hand, elders feel that the youth is

indifferent to their spiritual heritage which is responsible for the crisis of morals and values. This, in turn, has created an ever-widening emotional gap and an atmosphere of violence in the society.

An impartial analysis of the present Indian conditions would lead us to the conclusion that, to some extent, both sides are right. The more relevant question here is: How can this gap be bridged? Who will work as the link between the two generations? Who will catalyse this change?

Everyone would agree that, to bridge this ever-widening gap between the two generations, the formal and informal educational centres and institutions should inculcate higher principles and ideals among the youth. The institutions should provide a new interpretation of society where there is no violence and everyone lives peacefully in the family of mankind. These educational centres should have people of noble character, pleasing manners and loving demeanour who can utilise the youth's potential and also enable the older generation to contribute in nation building. Unless the youth is given this new vision and co-operation to work towards this goal, the society will remain split by various divisive forces and acts of violence. And the youth will continue to be exploited by various sections of the society for their parochial ends and narrow objectives.

We are aware of the fact that the population of the young is higher than the middle-aged and the elderly. So they should be seen as effective instruments of social change. Otherwise they will drift towards violence and drug abuse which will result in a dark future for our society. Let us, therefore, be wiser to consider our youth to be our strength and prospective nation-builders, for, "the youth is not only the leaders of tomorrow but also the partners of today."



BLOSSOM ALL THE WAY

Now is the time to ensure that your garden is a riot of colour even before spring sets in

Daffodils sitting on a windowsill against a backdrop of white snow make a fragrant and pretty midwinter scene. This picture, with bulbs "forced" for early bloom, takes planning that should start now. Choose plump, fresh-looking bulbs from those now on display at garden centres, hardware stores and supermarkets.

PREP THE BULBS

Unless you buy pre-planted bulbs in pots, you have the choice of growing them in water, pebbles or soil. For growing in water, use special bulb glasses pinched in with a neck to support a single bulb

with its base in the water or support them in a drinking glass with three toothpicks stuck around its side.

Growing bulbs in pebbles is just like growing them in water except the pebbles support them (and you don't get entertained watching the roots grow).

In a flowerpot, plant bulbs shoulder to shoulder in potting soil with their tops level with the soil surface. Once planted, they are ready for the first of four stages of forcing.

FOUR STAGES OF GROWTH

The first stage awakens the flower buds buried within the bulbs and allows for some root growth. Cool temperatures — about eight weeks' worth — are needed to fool the flower buds into feeling that winter is over and it's time to wake up. Provide those temperatures by plunging the containers into holes outdoors, then mulching with

leaves or straw, or by putting containers into an unheated garage or room. No light is needed at this point.

Cold can keep bulbs waiting in Stage One until you are ready to move on. The goal in Stage Two is to slowly draw out the stems, and the way to do this is with a little warmth and a little light. The amount of light that peeks through the drainage hole of a flower pot or a paper cone inverted over your bulb container is about right. After a couple of weeks, depending on the temperature, the bulbs are ready for Stage Three.

In this third stage, we hasten growth along with the warmer temperatures and bright light of a sunny windowsill. A daily turn of the plants toward the light prevents lopsided growth. Be careful not to coax growth along so rapidly that the blossoms blast open and fall apart.

Step Four: beautiful, fra-

grant blossoms. We want to drag this step out the longest, so keep the bulbs where the light is bright but out of direct sun. If the indoor temperature can be maintained on the cool side, and the air humid, these harbingers of spring provide delight for two weeks or more.

FLOWERS ALL WINTER

With good planning, you can have new pots full of blooms ready to open and waiting in the wings as old blooms fade. Or you could have mixtures of different bulbs, blooming at different times, filling each pot.

Any spring-flowering bulb can be forced indoors, although some are easier than others. Easiest of all are paper-white daffodils. Native to year-round warm climates, they start growth and flower without any cool treatment at all, so they're also the first to bloom.

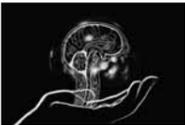
—AP



The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong. —Mahatma Gandhi

BRAIN PROTEIN PROTECTS FROM ALZHEIMER'S

Researchers have found that a protein that regulates white blood cells in the human brain could protect against Alzheimer's disease. The results published in the journal *Communications Biology* suggest that this protein, called CD33, could have important implications in the fight against Alzheimer's disease.



"Immune cells in the brain, called microglia, play a critical role in Alzheimer's disease. They can be harmful or protective. Swaying microglia from a harmful to protective state could be the key to treating the disease," explained study co-author Matthew Macauley, Assistant Professor at University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada.

"The fact that CD33 is found on microglia suggests that immune cells can protect the brain from Alzheimer's disease under the right circumstances," said Abhishek Bhattacharjee, first author and postdoctoral fellow in the Macauley lab.

PRESCRIPTION OF ANTIBIOTICS HIGH IN LMICs

Kids in low and middle-income countries (LMICs) are receiving an excessive amount of antibiotic prescriptions that could harm the children's ability to fight pathogens as well as increase antibiotic resistance worldwide, warns a new study.

Children in these countries received 25 antibiotic prescriptions through age five, a "remarkable" estimate, given that two antibiotic prescriptions per year is considered excessive in many high-income settings, said the study published in the journal *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*.

"We knew children in LMICs are sick more often, and we knew antibiotic prescription rates are high in many countries. What we did not know was how these elements translate into actual antibiotic exposure and the results are rather alarming," said lead author of the study Gunther Fink from Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute (Swiss TPH), Basel, Switzerland.

WHY CASUAL DRINKERS TURN INTO ALCOHOLICS

Don't just blame it on his friends if your husband has suddenly started drinking more in recent times.

Scientists have found neurons that might be responsible for triggering sudden uptick in alcohol consumption.

Researchers have long known that central nucleus of the amygdala in brain (CeA) plays a role in behaviours related to alcohol. A team at University of North Carolina's school of medicine have found a specific neural circuit that, when altered, caused animal models to drink less alcohol.

"The fact that these neurons promote reward-like behaviour and that activation of these drive alcohol drinking in animals without extensive prior drinking experience, suggests that they may be important for early alcohol use," said senior author Zoe McElligott, assistant professor of psychiatry and pharmacology. "By understanding the function of this circuit, we can better predict what happens in the brains of people who transition from casual alcohol use to subsequent abuse of alcohol," professor added.



EXERCISE WON'T HELP WOMEN WITH MIGRAINE

Despite doctors recommending regular aerobic exercise to prevent migraine, physical exercise can actually be a trigger of migraine attacks for most women because of "anxiety sensitivity" in them, find researchers. "Anxiety sensitivity" refers to one's fear of experiencing anxiety arousal due to harmful physical, cognitive and socially-observable consequences, may be related to physical activity (PA) avoidance in migraine patients.

Migraine affects around 10-15 per cent of the population around the globe and among its most common diagnosis criteria include a throbbing, unilateral head pain, hypersensitivity to lights, sounds, odour, and aggravation by activity.

The researchers assessed 100 women with probable migraine, who filled an online survey covering anxiety sensitivity scores, intentional avoidance of moderate and vigorous physical activity (PA) in the past month, as well as the self-rated perception that exercise would trigger a migraine attack and worse migraine symptoms.

SALIVA TEST DETECTS MOUTH CANCER EARLY

A non-invasive saliva test can detect human papilloma virus-16, the strain associated with oropharyngeal cancer (OPC), showing promise for earlier and easier detection of mouth and throat cancer, report researchers.

The novel technique detected OPC in whole saliva in 40 per cent of patients tested and 80 per cent of confirmed OPC patients. OPC has an approximate incidence of 1,15,000 cases per year worldwide and is one of the fastest-rising cancers owing to increasing HPV-related incidence, especially in younger patients.

Cancers that occur in the back of the mouth and upper throat are often not diagnosed until they become advanced, partly because their location makes them difficult to see. "The successful detection of HPV from salivary exosomes isolated by our acoustofluidic platform offers distinct advantages, including early detection and risk assessment," added Dr Huang in a paper published in *The Journal of Molecular Diagnostics*.





Teenager Greenwood rescues Utd in Everton draw

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Manchester Greenwood came off the bench to rescue Manchester United as the teenage striker's late equaliser secured a 1-1 draw against Everton on Sunday.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's side fell behind to Victor Lindelof's controversial first half own-goal after United's appeals for a foul on David de Gea were ignored by VAR.

But Greenwood, introduced in the second half, underlined his vast potential with a clinical strike 13 minutes from full-time.

The 18-year-old is the third youngest player to score a Premier League goal at Old Trafford after former United forwards Federico Macheda and Danny Welbeck.

Bradford-born Greenwood, a product of United's youth academy, now has seven goals in his breakthrough season after netting twice in his previous appearance against Alkmaar in the Europa League on Thursday.

This was his second Premier League goal after his strike against Sheffield United in November and his rapid progress is a bright spot in a difficult season for Solskjaer's sixth placed team.

It was fitting that Greenwood scored in the 4,000th senior match in succession in which at least one youth graduate was represented in United's first-team or matchday squad, an extraordinary record stretching back over nine decades.

After their impressive wins over Tottenham and Manchester

City in their last two league games, United's frustrating draw reaffirmed how much improvement is still needed under Solskjaer despite Greenwood's ascent.

For Duncan Ferguson, Everton's caretaker manager, this spirited performance built on the momentum from last weekend's win over Chelsea.

Hit by injuries and illness, Everton avoided losing for the seventh time in their last eight away league matches.

Another of United's home-grown products should have opened the scoring within 20 seconds when Fred's burst into the Everton area ended with Jesse Lingard swivelling onto the loose ball and shooting wide from 10 yards.

Daniel James' blistering pace

was on full display when the winger raced clear for a low drive that flashed wide of the far post, prompting an angry exchange between Everton keeper Jordan Pickford and team-mate Lucas Digne about who was to blame for the break.

FOCUSED AND COMBATIVE

Marcus Rashford tested Pickford with a swerving free-kick, but United—at their best when counter-attacking—were too often forced into slow build-up play that was easy for Everton's well-drilled defence to stifle.

United were losing their grip and it was Everton who took the lead in bizarre fashion in the 36th minute.

When Leighton Baines sent over an inswinging corner, De Gea

came and missed as he tried to punch clear, with the ball bouncing off Lindelof into his own net.

United protested that Everton forward Dominic Calvert-Lewin had fouled De Gea by putting an arm across his face, but although the goal was reviewed by VAR it was allowed to stand.

The farcical goal meant United had failed to keep a clean-sheet in 12 consecutive top-flight matches for the first time since 1971.

United pressed harder after half-time and Luke Shaw drove forward from left-back for a stinging drive that Pickford pushed away to James, who accidentally drove the rebound into Lingard's face.

Everton were far more focused and combative than under the

sacked Marco Silva.

But Solskjaer introduced Greenwood with 25 minutes left and it proved an inspired move.

Greenwood immediately had an effort saved by Pickford and, with United firmly on the front foot, the teenage starlet equalised in the 77th minute.

Picked out by James, Greenwood steadied himself on the edge of the area with a perfect first touch before drilling his low left-foot shot through a crowd of Everton defenders and past Pickford.

In a tense finale, Alex Iwobi almost won it for Everton with a dipping shot that De Gea pushed away before Ferguson hauled off substitute Moise Kean only 18 minutes after putting him on.

Atletico comeback with 2-0 win over Osasuna

IAN S ■ MADRID

Atletico Madrid won a La Liga victory against Osasuna as Alvaro Morata and Saul Niguez found the back of the net successfully.

Atletico's victory was postponed by Osasuna goalkeeper Sergio Herrera with some astonishing saves until well into the second half. Particularly on three occasions, Joao Felix's shots seemed unstoppable, but Herrera was like a wall on Saturday night, reports Efe news.

It was not until minute 67 when Atletico's top scorer Morata took a free kick from Kieren Trippier from the right sideline and headed it into the net that the comeback team went ahead 1-0.

The game was all over for Osasuna, because eight minutes later Saul netted the ball making the final score 2-0 at minute 75.

Juve regain top spot

AFP ■ TURIN

Cristiano Ronaldo scored twice as Juventus bounced back from their first defeat of the season to beat Udinese 3-1 and move top of Serie A on Sunday.

Ronaldo struck twice in the first half to make it five goals in four games as champions Juve move one point ahead of leaders Inter Milan ahead of their trip to off-form Fiorentina later on Sunday.

Maurizio Sarri's side had taken just one point from their last two league games, falling 3-1 to Lazio in Rome last weekend after a 2-2 draw against Sassuolo the previous week.

But Portuguese star Ronaldo

tapped in his first after nine minutes at the Allianz Stadium, and burst through to finish off a Gonzalo Higuain cross on 36 minutes.

Leonardo Bonucci sealed the three points just before the break when he headed in from close range.

Ignacio Pussetto pulled a goal back for 17th-placed Udinese four minutes into injury time with his close range effort beating Gianluigi Buffon in the Juventus goal.

Juventus play their final Serie A game before the winter break at Sampdoria on Wednesday, before a rematch against Lazio in the Italian Super Cup in Saudi Arabia next weekend.

Atalanta fell 2-1 at Bologna just days after the Champions League newcomers sealed their place in the competition's last 16 despite losing their first three matches.

Rodrigo Palacio tapped in the first after 12 minutes for Bologna off a rebound after a Riccardo Orsolini effort came off the post.

Andrea Poli nodded in the second eight minutes after the break, before Ruslan Malinovskyi connected with a Musa Barrow cross to pull a goal back on the hour mark.

AC MILAN LACK PARTY SPIRIT

Atalanta failed to take advantage of their numerical superiority



late on, as Bologna played the last five minutes a man down after Brazilian defender Danilo was sent off for two bookable offences.

Gian Piero Gasperini's side are sixth on 28 points, one point off the Champions League places, with European rivals Cagliari, Lazio and Roma still to play this weekend.

AC Milan were held to a goal-less draw against Sassuolo at the San Siro as the former European giants marked their 120th anniversary in tepid style.

Theo Hernandez had a goal ruled out after half an hour following a Franck Kessie handball in the buildup, with Rafael Leao hitting the crossbar and the post.

Stefano Pioli's side failed to make it three wins in a row and sit 10th with Sassuolo four places and five points below.

Hellas Verona battled back from three goals down with all three

substitutes scoring in a 15-minute second-half spell to hold Torino 3-3.

Torino had taken a comfortable lead at the Stadio Bentegodi after Christian Ansaldi scored a brace with Alex Berenguer also on target for the visitors.

But the hosts hit back with three goals after 69 minutes from players who all came off the bench.

Giampaolo Pazzini converted a penalty on 69 minutes after Gleison Bremer was deemed to have used his elbow to block the ball.

Pazzini was then involved in the second with Valerio Verre smashing in off a rebound, before Mariusz Stepinski added a third by punching on a defensive error from Ola Aina to finish off.

Torino are ninth, with Verona two points back in 12th, in the hosts' final match before the winter break.

Tottenham up to fifth after late win at Wolves

AFP ■ WOLVERHAMPTON

Jan Vertonghen's stoppage time header continued Tottenham's turnaround under Jose Mourinho as Spurs moved up to fifth with a 2-1 win at Wolves.

Mourinho's men were largely outplayed at Molineux, but were ruthless with their chances to inflict Wolves' first league defeat in 12 games.

Adama Traore's spectacular strike had cancelled out Lucas Moura's early opener before Vertonghen stooped to guide home Christian Eriksen's corner.

Spurs can now move into the top

four before Christmas if they beat Chelsea at home next weekend.

That speaks volumes for the impact Mourinho has made in less than a month in charge as Tottenham trailed Chelsea and the top four by 12 points when he was appointed.

Wolves drop to eighth as their longest unbeaten run in the top flight since 1962 came to an end, but there was little more Nuno Espirito Santo's men could have done to at least avoid defeat.

After an industrious start by Wolves, it was Spurs who scored after eight minutes.

Son Heung-min's drive was beaten away by Rui Patrício but the ball

was worked to Moura, who glided into the area before rifling in high from an angle for his third goal in seven games under Mourinho.

Wolves remained undaunted though and after Paulo Gazzaniga gathered Traore's low effort they began to create openings.

Diogo Jota was a menace and it was from his work Raul Jimenez nearly levelled after 26 minutes but his low effort flashed wide.

Soon after Jota was denied by the recovering Davinson Sanchez after the defender's initial mistake allowed the forward through.

Wolves continued to dominate but should have been 2-0 down nine

minutes before the break.

Referee Stuart Attwell played a good advantage after Moura was fouled to allow Eric Dier forward.

He played a cute one-two with Dele Alli to leave the midfielder with just Patricio to beat but his low strike hit the post.

It would have been harsh on Wolves and they continued to push after the break.

Jota failed to turn in Traore's cross and Gazzaniga pushed away Jimenez's shot.

Spurs' defence had lived dangerously, with Vertonghen in particular struggling against the pace of Traore.

Wolves finally got their reward on 67 minutes.

Traore had given the visitors problems all game and he made them pay, collecting Jimenez's pass and unleashing a rocket which flew past Gazzaniga from 20 yards.

Tottenham then never looked like restoring their lead before the late drama.

Wolves remained the aggressors and Romain Saiss' glancing header four minutes later forced Gazzaniga into a fine stop.

But Spurs silenced the hosts in the first minute of injury time when Vertonghen nodded in Eriksen's corner.



Mohun Bagan eyeing full points against Kerala

PTI ■ KOLKATA

On a high after thrashing TRAU FC, city giants Mohun Bagan will look to bag full points against Gokulam Kerala in their I-League fixture at Kalyani Stadium on Monday.

The match will be the Mariners penultimate fixture before the high-voltage derby against East Bengal.

Gokulam have an all-win record from their two games so far and look well organised while Bagan redeemed themselves with a 4-0 victory over debutants TRAU FC in their previous game, after failing to register a win in their first two.

They went down 2-4 to Churchill Brothers at home in their second game.

Ugandan frontman Henry Kisekka and Trinidadian striker Marcus Joseph have scored all of Gokulam's three goals so far

and are their standout performers by a mile, while another Trinidadian, Nathaniel Garcia, imposed himself very well in midfield in the second game against Indian Arrows.

Their Spanish coach Fernando Varela, however, refused to read much into Gokulam's recent form and success against their Monday opponents who they had beaten in their only previous encounter this season, in the Durand Cup.

Sharing his thoughts ahead of the game, he said, "Mohun Bagan are a very competitive side with great players and with quality to make a combined game. We must be concentrating for 90 minutes to beat them and we will concentrate on our improvement as a team and how to play a good game. The league has just begun and we must continue to improve."

Confident Punjab FC face Indian Arrows

PTI ■ LUDHIANA

High on confidence after their impressive win over defending champions Chennai City FC in their previous match, Punjab FC will play host to All India Football Federation developmental side's Indian Arrows in an I-League game here on Monday.

The match against the Arrows will be Punjab's third successive match at home, while for the travelling youngsters, it will be their first on the road this season.

Since losing to Churchill Brothers in their season opener in Goa, Punjab have drawn against East Bengal 1-1 before

beating Chennai City 3-1 in a thoroughly impressive performance on December 10 at home.

Reflecting on his side's impressive display, Punjab FC head coach Yan Law said, "Against Chennai, the boys showed good tactical discipline and a fantastic desire to win."

"Even after a late equaliser from Chennai, the lads showed pure class and pulled back two more goals in the dying minutes of the game. I'm very proud of each and every one of them and I know they are capable of doing much more."

He remains wary of the



threat that the Arrows possess and added, "Arrows are a good side who have tremendous quality and potential. They have given both their oppositions, Gokulam and Aizawl a tough time in their first two fixtures."

"This is a team to take very seriously and not underestimate. It is going to be a tough game as they are quite a compact and structured team."

Indian Arrows, on the other hand, have played twice at home and despite showing grit and tenacity came up short against Gokulam Kerala and Aizawl. A positive result against Punjab in an away trip

Caribbeans taste the first blood

Hetmyer, Hope score hundred to guide Windies to 8 wicket win in 1st ODI

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Rishabh Pant struck his maiden half-century at M S Dhoni's spiritual home to silence his critics as India shrugged off a poor start to post a challenging 287 for eight in the first ODI against West Indies here on Sunday.

Shreyas Iyer (70 off 88), who is emerging as a solid number four, and Pant (71 off 69) paired up for a 114-run stand for the fourth wicket after India lost opener K L Rahul (6) and skipper Virat Kohli (4) in the seventh over of the innings. It was Iyer's third consecutive half-century.

Rohit Sharma (36 off 56) too struggled on a slow surface before Iyer and Pant resurrected the innings with their gritty partnership.

A quickfire half-century partnership between Kedar Jadhav (40 off 35) and Ravindra Jadeja (21 off 21), who batted ahead of debutant Shivam Dube, provided the thrust in the slog overs.

Left-arm paceman Sheldon Cottrell (2/46 from 10 overs including 3 maidens), Keemo Paul (2/41) and Alzarri Joseph (2/45) were among the wickets for



West Indies' Shimron Hetmyer, left, celebrates with batting partner Shai Hope after scoring a century during the first one day international cricket match

the visiting team.

The home team appeared to be in a spot of bother at 80 for three in the 19th over on a sluggish pitch when Iyer and Pant came together. After taking their time to get going, the two played some splendid shots and were not afraid to hit the ball in the air when the opportunity presented itself.

The fact that the first six of the innings came in the 28th over when Pant smashed offie Roston Chase over mid-wicket was an indicator of the slow proceedings.

Iyer displayed his class as he came up with some lovely cuts against the spinners-Chase and leggie Hayden Walsh. Pant, on his part, showed patience and hit some powerful shots after gaining in confidence and assessing the nature of the pitch.

The two handled the spinners well and hit a six each apart from some well-timed drives.

Walsh, who had bowled impressively in the T20s preceding this series, was not allowed to settle into any rhythm as Rohit first, and then the Iyer-Pant duo went after him. He was taken for 31 runs in 5 overs.

Iyer perished for a well-made 70 with his dismissal coming against the run of play, when his flick landed in the safe hands of Pollard off Joseph's bowling, ending a brilliant 114-run fourth wicket partnership with Pant.

Pant fell going for a big hit, caught by Shimron Hetmyer in the deep of Pollard's bowling. It was a much needed knock for an under-fire Pant, who is seen as

Dhoni's heir apparent.

Then the duo of Jadeja and Jadhav, who both play for Chennai Super Kings under Dhoni in the IPL, joined hands for a crucial 59-run stand for the sixth wicket during the course of which they batted judiciously and ran well between the wickets.

While Jadhav holed out to Pollard off Paul, Jadeja was run out. Jadeja was beaten by a Roston Chase throw but was initially not given out. An appeal by a West Indian fielder resulted in the on-field umpire going upstairs, following which the Indian southpaw was declared out.

India got off to a slowish start as Sheldon Cottrell bowled two maiden overs to start with and Jason Holder did not give away much as the openers Rohit and Rahul chose to play cautiously.

After Rahul's dismissal, Kohli walked in to a roar from the Chepauk crowd and played an imperious on-drive off the fourth ball he faced. In an anti-climax, he fell the next ball, bowled off the inside edge as he tried to run one from Cottrell down to the third-man area.

Rohit Sharma gained in confidence and scored a couple of boundaries including a superb straight drive off Holder in the 10th over. He appeared set for a big score before he hit Joseph's first ball in the match tamely to Pollard at mid-wicket to be dismissed for 36 (56 balls, 6 fours).

There was a moment of mirth for the spectators as a dog entered the field of play in the 26th over with Pant and Iyer at the crease.

ABID SCORES HUNDRED IN DRAWN TEST

AFP ■ RAWALPINDI

Opener Abid Ali became the first batsman to score hundreds on both Test and one-day debuts as Pakistan's first home match in the long form of the game since the 2009 attack on the visiting Sri Lanka team ended in a tame draw against the same opponents Sunday.

On 95, the 32-year-old hit paceman Vishwa Fernando for a boundary and then drove him through cover for two to complete his hundred, raising his hands in jubilation before kneeling on the ground to offer a prayer of gratitude.

His hundred came in 267 minutes, laced with 11 boundaries, and was the highlight of a Test badly affected by bad weather.

Pakistan finished at 252-2, with stylish batsman Babar Azam knocking his third Test century with a boundary off spinner Dilruwan Perera.

Azam ended with 102 not out, which came in 151 minutes of punishing batting spiced by 14 crisp boundaries.

But the day belonged to Abid, one of 15 batsmen to score a hundred on their one-day international debut - against Australia in Dubai in March his year -- since the inception of limited over cricket in January 1971.

None of the others also scored a century on their debut in Test cricket, which started in 1876.

Abid is the 11th Pakistani batsman to score a century on Test debut.

Abid's feat spiced up the historic Test, the first in Pakistan since the 2009 attacks on the Sri Lankan team bus left international cricket suspended in the country.

Only 91.5 overs were possible on the first four days as rain, bad light and overcast conditions affected play. The fourth day was abandoned without a ball being bowled.

But there was bright sunshine on Sunday as Sri Lanka batted for 20 minutes to declare their first innings at 308-6 with middle-order batsman Dhananjaya de Silva scoring an unbeaten 102.

With gates opened to the crowd for free, about 12,000 fans were kept entertained by Dhananjaya and then Abid.

Pakistan lost opener Shan Masood for nought when he drove a full toss from paceman Kasun Rajitha straight into the hands of Dinesh Chandimal at cover Skipper Azhar Ali scored a shaky 36 before he was caught off Lahiru Kumara.

Dhananjaya finally completed his sixth Test century in the morning.

The 28-year-old right-hander drove paceman Mohammad Abbas for his 15th boundary to bring up the hundred in his 28th Test.

De Silva remained unbeaten on 102 after 241 minutes of batting, having come in with the score on 127-4 on Thursday. Dilruwan Perera remained unbeaten on 16.

The pick of the Pakistan bowlers were 16-year-old quickie Naseem Shah, who took 2-92, and Shaheen Shah Afridi with 2-58.

The second Test is in Karachi starting December 19.



Abid Ali raises his bat PCB/Twitter

Lyon, Starc power Aus to massive win

AFP ■ PERTH

Australia recorded one of their biggest wins over New Zealand on the fourth day of the first Test at Perth Stadium on Sunday.

Having trailed by 250 runs on the first innings the Kiwis were set a mammoth 468 to win - which would have been a record chase in Test cricket - on a deteriorating pitch after Australia declared at 217 for nine in their second innings.

The visitors were never in contention after losing their first wicket with just six runs on the board and were unable to push the match into a fifth day after Mitchell Starc and Pat Cummins cleaned up the Kiwi tail under lights in Perth's first ever day-night Test.

New Zealand were dismissed for 171 and were beaten by 296 runs, the last five wickets falling in a hurry for just 17 runs.

It was just one run shy of their biggest losing margin to Australia - in runs - in a match where both teams batted twice.

Australia's biggest win, other than innings victories, was 297 runs in Auckland in 1974.

Starc (4-45), who claimed nine wickets for the match, and Cummins (2-31) used the pink ball to good effect under lights to bring the match to a quick conclusion after none of the recognised Kiwi batsmen offered significant resistance.

The chase started poorly, with opener Jeet Raval making just one before being caught at



Mitchell Starc celebrates after taking wicket of New Zealand's Neil Wagner

Cricket.com.au/Twitter

gully by Nathan Lyon (4-63) from the bowling of Starc.

Star batsman and captain Kane Williamson then made just 14, before falling to Lyon's first ball of the innings.

Williamson got off to a fast start with boundaries for the first two balls he faced, but was caught at short leg fending a ball that bounced and turned sharply off his glove into the hands of Matthew Wade.

Ross Taylor was their last real hope of making a revival but on 22 he tried to pull a Starc delivery and got a bottom edge through to wicketkeeper Tim

Paine to give the left-arm quick his seventh wicket of the match.

Tom Latham showed plenty of application to face 68 balls for his 18, but was given out leg before wicket to Lyon after an Australian DRS review, with umpire Aleem Dar initially giving him not out.

BJ Watling attempted to stem the tide with a gritty 40 and enjoyed a bit of luck as Australia didn't review when he got a faint outside edge through to Paine.

Smith then dropped a tough chance off the bowling of Lyon at first slip. He was given out on review caught down leg side by

Paine off the bowling of Starc after umpire Nigel Long had turned down the appeal - a dismissal that signalled the end of the Kiwi resistance.

Earlier, Australia's second innings fell away dramatically after being 131 for one at one stage on the third day.

The home team lost seven wickets for 58 runs, as they struggled against a sustained barrage of short-pitched bowling on another hot Perth day.

Tim Southee again impressed with 5-69, after also picking up four wickets in the first innings.

Aussies on the rise again: Paine

AFP ■ PERTH

Skipper Tim Paine believes Australia is climbing back towards the top of Test cricket after a third successive powerhouse victory at Perth Stadium on Sunday.

The home side went into the Perth Test ranked fifth on the International Cricket Council rankings, while New Zealand were second.

"We are getting there, but we can get better," he said.

"We are still improving, but certainly over the last 18 months there has been drastic improvement in this cricket team.

"We've got some players back, which are helping, but we have also seen some real improvement in the guys who got a chance 18 months ago, and the experienced guys have come back and put a bit of icing on top.

"We are moving in the right direction and happy with the way we've played in the last three or four Tests."

Paine said it was also pleasing to see other players stepping up, after Smith almost single-handedly retained the Ashes for Australia with his batting heroics in his first series after suspension.



Tim Paine celebrates after Kane Williamson's wicket Twitter

For the first time in his career Smith has gone three Tests without a half-century, but Paine actually views that as a positive.

"We touched on at the end of the Ashes," he said. "We needed other guys to stand up and can't be reliant on Steve."

"Obviously Marnus (Labuschagne) has been unbelievably good, and Davey (Warner) and Joe Burns have been scoring runs."

"If we want to be one of the better teams in the world guys have got to stand up and we can't be reliant on too few."

"We are really happy with how our batting has developed."

Lakshya wins Bangladesh international challenge

PTI ■ DHAKA

Fast-rising Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen notched up his fifth title of the season, claiming the men's singles crown at the Bangladesh International Challenger with a straight game win over Malaysia's Leong Jun Hao in the final here on Sunday.

The 18-year-old Indian has capped a superb year with a 22-20, 21-18 win over Hao in the summit clash to clinch his fifth title in last seven tournaments.

"Happy to end the year on a winning note with my 5th international title here in Bangladesh!! Hope to continue my good form in the next year 2020. Like to thank all my sponsors @OGQ_India @HerbalifeIndia @YonexIndia @Sports_PDCSE @ppba @bai_media," Lakshya tweeted.



Lakshya Sen in action during Bangladesh International challenger BAI/Twitter

Momota wraps 11th title

AFP ■ SHANGHAI

World number one Kento Momota fought back from a game down to win a record 11th title of the year on Sunday with victory at the BWF World Tour Finals.

The peerless Japanese player defeated Indonesia's Anthony Ginting 17-21, 21-17, 21-14 in 87 high-quality minutes in the final at the season-ending showpiece in Guangzhou.

Momota celebrates a new mark in men's badminton, overtaking Malaysian great Lee Chong Wei's 10 tournament wins in 2010.

"At this World Tour Finals I played carefully from the first match partly with the aim of winning an 11th title," the 25-year-old Momota said.

"Even in tough games I did not give up."

Momota was pushed all the way by the speedy Ginting and the Japanese fell 12-5 down in the deciding third game to the world number eight.

However, the reigning two-time world champion surged back.



Kento Momota poses for a photo

BWF/Twitter

Ginting was trailing 17-14 when he called the doctor on court for treatment on his right foot.

The fading Indonesian continued but Momota rammed home his advantage to seal a stellar season in style.

The 23-year-old Ginting has now tasted defeat in all five of his finals this year.

"He led (in the deciding game) but I was patient," said Momota, who was banned for a year in 2016 for illegal gambling. "And then I got to know that he was suffering pain so all I needed to do was stay calm."

In the women's final China's Chen Yufei also roared back from a game down to defeat Taiwan's Tai Tzu-ying 12-21, 21-12, 21-17.

Chen, who will replace Tai as world number one in the latest rankings, had lost 14 of their previous 15 clashes.

"I'm very excited," said Chen. "I didn't think much about my 1-14 record against her, I had to focus on the task today."