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13 VIVACITY**

Anti-Citizenship Act stir spreads to varsities

Lucknow's Nadwa students pelt stones at police; protests held in MANUU, BHU, JU, TISS, IITS, IISc and other campuses

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) spilled over from Jamia Millia Islamia here and Aligarh Muslim University to several other higher educational institutions across the country from Lucknow's Nadwa College to Hyderabad's Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU); from Banaras Hindu University (BHU) in Varanasi to Jadavpur University in Kolkata; from Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) in Mumbai to Central University of Kerala, Kasargod and Pondicherry University. Students from three Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) in Kanpur, Madras and Bombay, Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in Bengaluru and IIM Ahmedabad among others also joined the protests besides the Delhi University where students boycotted exams and held a protest outside the Arts Faculty in North Campus to express their solidarity with the movement. After the protest at AMU, the administration announced closure of the university till January 5 and students were asked to evacuate the hostels. The AMU campus has been sealed and heavy patrolling is

underway, university officials said on Monday. AMU Registrar Abdul Hamid said the police entered the campus late Sunday night and clashes were reported from inside.

In Lucknow, 21 persons were arrested in connection with the students-police clash at the AMU. "Named FIR has been lodged against 56 persons and others unidentified. The process of hostel vacation is on and 25-30 per cent of them have been vacated, rest expected to be vacated by evening," SSP (Aligarh) Akash Kulhary said.

Internet services in Aligarh, Saharanpur and Meerut stand suspended, a day after protests broke out in certain parts of the State, including at AMU, against the amended citizenship law, DGP OP Singh said. In Lucknow's Nadwa College, students gathered in the hundreds shouting slogans like "Awaz do, hum ek hain" (call us we are all united) as police tried to control the situation. For a brief while, they hurled stones at the police who threw them back over a campus steel gate.

Down south, in Hyderabad in Telangana, students of Maulana Azad Urdu University, the University of Hyderabad (UoH) and the



Policemen outside Darul Uloom Nadwatul Ulama college as students protest against the Citizenship Act and indulged in stone pelting, in Lucknow on Monday

Osmania University, staged sit-in inside their campuses, holding placards.

Besides IIT-Madras, students of educational institutions in Tamil Nadu, including the Loyola College in Chennai and the Central University of Tamil Nadu at Tiruvarur, held protest demonstrations. Over 300 students and citizens staged a protest on the Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU) campus on Monday evening.

TOP DEVELOPMENTS

- Protests against the amended Citizenship Act hit new areas in Uttar Pradesh with students of Islamic seminary in Lucknow hurling stones at policemen
- As many as 21 people have been arrested in connection with the clashes between AMU students and police. Orders issued to completely vacate all hostels of the university, officials said on Monday
- Over 300 students and citizens staged a protest on the Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU) campus on Monday evening
- In Hyderabad, students of Maulana Azad Urdu University, the University of Hyderabad (UoH) and the Osmania University, staged sit-in inside their campuses, holding placards
- Angry demonstrations were also reported from the Banaras Hindu University (BHU) in Varanasi and at the Jadavpur University in Kolkata with demands that the government take action against police "hooliganism"

Jamia students protest shirtless, demand CBI probe into police action

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A day after clashes between the Delhi Police and Jamia Millia Islamia students, hundreds of students were back on the streets on Monday, some standing shirtless in bone-chilling winter demanding action against the Delhi Police over the Sunday violence on campus. Chanting slogans 'inquilab zindabad', the group of students also demanded Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) enquiry into the violence. Another group of students, formed a human chain near the university gate to resume their protest against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

On Monday, the protesters including women students, local residents and some guardians also came out in support of protesting students.

Carrying a Tricolour, students clapped and raised slogans against the Central Government and the Delhi Police. "This Government is anti-minority, anti-students, anti-poor. We won't tolerate this. Won't keep mum," they said in unison.

A group of students claimed that police on Sunday damaged two mosques on the campus, beat up the Imam and also a blind student. They said police also ransacked university central library.



Students protest shirtless at the campus against the cops' action on students at Jamia Millia Islamia on Sunday in New Delhi on Monday

3 actresses, Min's daughter trigger row

SP orders probe; Minister says law to take its course
2 actresses apologise; say ignorant about rules

PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

A video shot in the prohibited areas of Hirakud reservoir here showing three Olywood actresses and daughter of a Minister went viral on social media and triggered a row on Monday.

The video shows actresses Prakruti Mishra, Elina Samantray and Lovina Nayak having fun in the restricted areas of the reservoir along with Health Minister Naba Kishore Das' daughter Deepali.

The incidence came to the fore after one of the actresses uploaded a video on her Instagram profile.

The video drew flak from several quarters questioning the breach of security at the reservoir. Later, Sambalpur SP Kanwar Vishal Singh sought a report from the Hirakud SDPO in this connection. The SDPO has been asked to submit a clarification on the matter by 5 pm

on Monday, the SP said, adding that action would be taken on the basis of the report.

Sources said the actresses and the Minister's daughter were travelling to Burla from Hirakud on Saturday. Midway, they halted at the Hirakud Dam for refreshments and took videos. Later, Prakruti uploaded one of the videos on her Instagram profile. After the



video went viral, the actress removed it from Instagram.

In his reaction, Minister Das said law would take its own course. He said, "I have neither seen the video nor am aware of any such thing. As my daughter is an adult, she should be asked about the matter."

Actresses Elina and Prakruti sought apology for the incidence. Elina said, "I am puzzled. I don't know who shot the video and posted it in the Instagram. I apologise for the matter."

Echoing similar lines Prakruti said, "We had gone to the Hirakud Dam after taking due permission. But we did not know that photography and video shooting is banned on the dam. Influenced by the nature's beauty, we clicked photos and shot videos. Such a mistake will not be repeated."

SP calls for emergency Parliament Session

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Uniting against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), the Opposition on Monday demanded a judicial enquiry into the police action in Delhi's Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) on Sunday. While Left parties gave a call for country-wide protest on Thursday, the Samajwadi Party (SP) called for an emergency Session of Parliament to carry out an amendment to ensure no discrimination.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi described the violence and disturbances over CAA as

"unfortunate" and "deeply depressing" while the BJP attacked the Opposition saying some parties are trying to "instigate" students and using them as "pawns" to further their petty political interests. Modi reiterated that the CAA would not affect any bonafide citizen of any religion.

The Opposition parties demanded an enquiry by a Supreme Court judge into the incidents of students being thrashed on the campus.

Congress leaders Ghulam Nabi Azad and Kapil Sibal, CPI(M) leader Sitaram Yechury, CPI's D Raja, RJD's Manoj Jha, SP's Javed Ali Khan and Sharad Yadav condemned Sunday's police action against Jamia students who were protesting against the amended citizenship act.

"How could the police enter Jamia and unleash such brutality on the students when university authorities did not allow the police to enter inside.

There should be a judicial probe into the violence against students by police in the Jamia campus," said Azad at a joint Press conference.

The BJP retaliated accusing former Congress president Rahul Gandhi, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi of indulging in vote bank and appeasement politics and causing Hindu-Muslim divide.

SC takes serious note of rioting, destruction of public properties

Apex court says violence must stop
PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday took serious note of rioting and destruction of public property during protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act across the country and said that "violence must stop immediately".

The top court said it, prima facie, does not think

court can do much in the matter as it is a law and order problem and police forces have to control it.

The apex court, which agreed to hear on Tuesday pleas alleging police atrocities on students holding protests against the Act at Aligarh Muslim University and Jamia Millia Islamia here, said it will not hear this issue in such an atmosphere of violence.

A Bench headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde said, "We are not here to blame anybody. All

we are saying is that this violence must stop."

"If protests and violence and damage of public property will be there, we will not hear the matter," it added. The Bench, also comprising justices BR Gavai and Surya Kant, made the observations after a group of lawyers led by senior advocate Indira Jaising and Colin Gonsalves urged it to take suo motu cognisance of the alleged violence unleashed against protesting students.

Kunduli rape: SIT submits interim report to High Court

School-going girl was allegedly raped by four suspected security personnel

PNS ■ CUTTACK

The Special Investigation Team (SIT), formed by the Orissa High Court to investigate into the 2017 sensational Kunduli rape and suicide case of a minor dalit girl, on Monday submitted an interim report in a sealed cover to the High Court.

The plea of the SIT to grant another week's time to submit the final report was also accepted by the court; and, accordingly, a Division Bench headed by Chief Justice KS Jhaveri adjourned the matter to be heard again on December 23. Refusing a CBI investigation as demanded by the vic-

tim's family, the High Court last month had constituted the SIT comprising three senior police officers of the State. The SIT was formed after the State Crime Branch had closed the case.

Even a Judicial Commission instituted by the State Government in the case had suggested further investigation as the commission could not conclusively confirm whether the girl was raped or not and why the girl committed suicide four months after she was raped.

The school-going girl had allegedly been raped by four suspected security personnel on October 10, 2017 in the Kunduli jungles near Musaguda in Koraput district. Alleging torture and harassment by police, the girl committed suicide on January 22, 2018.

Khordha firing Drug shop owner dies; chemists down shutters

Police form 4 teams to nab assailants

PNS ■ KHORDHA

The medicine shop owner, who had sustained bullet injuries in a firing incident in Khordha town on Sunday evening, succumbed to his injuries at a private hospital in Bhubaneswar on Monday.

The deceased Krushnachandra Sahu and paediatrician Manas Das, who was also injured in the incident, had initially been admitted to the District Headquarters Hospital before being shifted to the Bhubaneswar private hos-

pital. Dr Das is undergoing treatment.

Notably, an unidentified miscreant wearing mask had opened fire at the two at Dr Das' clinic in Khordha town. The attacker later fled the spot by his motorcycle along with an accomplice.

The Khordha police, who are investigating into the incident, have formed four teams to trace and nab the culprits involved in the firing. The cops are also scrutinising the footages of the CCTVs on all the roads leading out of the town. Reports said that in one of the CCTVs it is seen the assailants were fleeing towards Nayagarh.

In protest against the firing incident, all medicine shops remained closed in Khordha



town on Monday.

Utkal Chemists' and Druggists' Association president P Satyanaryan and general secretary Prasant Mahapatra met the district Collector and SP and submitted a memorandum. They demanded immediate arrest of the culprits and stringent action against them.

The association warned that if action is not initiated against the culprits, its members would indefinitely close their shops.

Wife's killer gets life term in Jagatsinghpur

PNS ■ JAGATSINGHPUR

Jagatsinghpur District and Sessions Judge Ananda Chandra Behera delivering judgment in a dowry death case on Monday sentenced the killer husband to life and asked him to pay a fine of Rs 10,000 and, in default, undergo another five months' imprisonment.

The accused Harsabardhan Swain, a resident of Nalara village under Balikuda block, had married Mamata Rani alias Rinky from Dhanuharbelari village in June 2015. Both had been maintaining a happy marriage life, but the relationship turned sour when in-laws claimed more dowry and Harsabardhan too supported the demand.

Rinky had informed her parents about the harassment she was meted out for more dowries. Her father Purna

Chandra Swain visited her in-laws' house and expressed his inability to provide any more dowry. The in-laws later sent Rinky to her parental house when she was under three months' pregnancy.

On August 5, 2016, Harsabardhan reached Rinky's house and asked to take her for pre-pregnancy treatment in Balikuda CHC. However, Rinky did not return home along with Harsabardhan and their mobile phones were unreachable. Rinky's father informed police about it. Strangely, Rinky's mutilated body was spotted on the Dasbatia-Ichhapur road in the Balikuda area next day.

Basing on a complaint lodged by Rinky's father at the Anantapur police outpost, the police arrested Harsabardhan, who confessed to the crime.

CAPSULE

2 JAWANS MARTYRED IN PAK FIRING AT LOC IN J-K
Jammu: While Indian army celebrated Vijay Diwas, marking the 48th anniversary of 1971 Indo-Pak war on Monday, two Indian soldiers sacrificed their lives during "unprovoked" ceasefire violations by Pakistan Army along the LoC in four different sectors across J&K.

GST COMPENSATION RELEASED TO STATES
New Delhi: Facing heat over delay in payment of GST compensation, the Central Government on Monday released ₹35,298 crore to States to make up for loss of revenue due to rollout of the GST.

PRANAB BATS FOR RAISING LS STRENGTH
New Delhi: Former Prime Minister Pranab Mukherjee on Monday pitched for raising the number of Lok Sabha seats to 1,000 from the existing 543 and for a corresponding increase in Rajya Sabha's strength.

Contempt against lawyers: HC again defers hearings

Court fixes Jan 27 date to hear petition against 68 Bar Associations

PNS ■ CUTTACK

The Full Bench of the Orissa High Court on Monday once again adjourned the hearing of its suo motu contempt petition initiated against 68 bar associations of the State, including the Orissa High Court Bar Association and fixed January 27 next for the purpose.

Concerned over obstructions in the administration of justice due to frequent and continuous strikes by members of different bars and cessation of court works, the Full Bench of the High Court in October this year had initiated contempt

cases against the erring bar associations.

Sources said that only 51 bar associations through their respective counsels have so far recorded their presence before the Full Bench while 17 others have not yet entered appearance in this proceeding. Many respondents have also not completely suspended their ongoing strikes.

As a last chance, time was granted to the opposite parties, who have not entered appearance, to appear before next date of hearing and file their affidavits, the Full Bench ordered, fixing January 27 next to further adjudicate the unprecedented contempt case.

It may be mentioned that the Orissa High Court Bar Association had passed a resolution on November 1, 2019 indicating therein that the general body of the association had resolved to suspend the 'abstaining from court work'. Following this, the contempt petition against this association was dropped on November 4.

Man rapes girl in his house in Puri dist

PNS ■ PURI

A married man allegedly raped a girl in the Delanga area of Puri district after thrashing and tying her in his house.

Reports said the victim had gone to the outskirts of her village for receiving her father's pension, during which the accused asked her to come to his house. As she entered, he locked the house from inside, thrashed her and raped her.

The girl later found a mobile phone in the room and telephoned her mother to inform about the incident. On being informed by the girl's kin, the Satyabadi police reached the spot and rescued her.

On the other hand, the accused absconded after committing the offence. Police have started investigation and efforts were on to trace and nab the accused.

Plastic-Aahar exchange launched by BMC in City



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Monday launched its innovative programme under which any person can avail a meal at 11 Aahar centres in the city in exchange for 500 grams of plastic.

The programme began at an Aahar centre located near Kalpana Square where BMC Commissioner Prem Chandra Chaudhary made a citizen inaugurate it.

This initiative is being carried out by the BMC in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Touch Stone Foundation. "The citizen-centric initiative is a strategy to facilitate collection of household plastics from the city," the BMC Commissioner said.

The Aahar centres would allow exchange of only one kg of plastic per person per day and issue two Aahar coupons on the day.

Online single receipt at RTOs from today



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Keeping in view the heavy crushes at the Regional Transport Offices (RTOs), the State Government would launch a single-receipt system on Tuesday allowing the applicants to deposit fee and all kinds of charges online.

The system would be introduced for payment of learner's licence (LL), driving licence (DL), vehicle registration, permit, fitness and other charges online.

With launching of 'Online Single Receipt' mechanism, the applicants need not to stand in long queues at the RTO counters to pay service provider charges and dues. They can deposit fee online with a single click, informed the State Transport Authority (STA).

Earlier, the applicants had to deposit charges separately by visiting the RTO counters.

Odisha Annual Critical Care Conference ends



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The second two-day Odisha Annual Critical Care Conference (OACCON 2019) on theme "Emphasising the Growth of Critical Care at All Levels" concluded here on Sunday.

Director, Medical Education Training (DMET) Prof CBK Mohanty, Odisha State Critical Care Society chairman Dr Sharmili Sinha, senior researcher Dr Samir Sahu, Dr Banambar Ray and society secretary Dr Sarat Behera attended as guests on the inaugural day.

Dr Sinha said there is a need of development in quality of treatment in ICUs in different Government and private hospitals in the State. Critical care expert Dr Anirban Choudhury spoke about the steps undertaken by the State Government to increase ICUs.

Secretary Dr Behera delivered a vote of thanks and sought Government support towards critical care education. Critical care specialists and students from all across State attended and provide ways and means to make critical care available closer to people's homes in remote areas.

Tribal divyang girl raped in Nilagiri

PNS ■ BALESWAR

A married man was arrested on Monday for allegedly raping a tribal divyang girl in the Nilagiri area of Baleswar district.

The accused, identified as Budhia Singh, a neighbour of the victim, had raped the girl when she was alone at her house. Acting on a complaint lodged by the father of the girl, the Nilagiri police have registered a case and started investigation.

"We have arrested the accused and forwarded him to court. Further investigation is underway," said Nilagiri police station IIC Minati Biswal.

Boy detained for rape attempt in Begunia



PNS ■ KHORDHA

A boy was detained on Monday by the Begunia police in Khordha district for allegedly attempting to rape a minor girl. Sources said the accused took the girl forcibly to a secluded place and tried to outrage her modesty.

After the family members of the victim lodged a complaint, the cops have detained the minor boy and are interrogating him.

Man gets 10-yr RI in rape case

Phulbani: The ADJ and Phulbani Special Judge convicted one Nityananda Behera in a rape case and sentenced to him to undergo 10 years' rigorous imprisonment (RI).

The judge also ordered Behera, a resident of Kasala village under the Chhendipada police station in Angul district, to pay a penalty of Rs 15,000 and in default to undergo another six months of RI.

On April 10, 2017, the victim was returning home after watching television in her neighbourhood. Taking advantage of power cut, the accused kidnapped the girl and took her to a nearby jungle and raped her. Later, the victim's family members after a frantic search managed to locate her. They then reported the matter to police, following which the accused was arrested. PNS

CAA protests

17 trains moving through Odisha cancelled

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

In view of massive protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) going on at various railway stations in the Howrah-Kharagpur railway section of South Eastern Railway, the authorities on Monday cancelled a few more trains running through Odisha.

As many as 17 trains running through the State were cancelled connecting trains from various stations stopped. Passengers who had booked tickets faced difficulties in moving to various destinations.

While five trains including Howrah-Chennai Mail will remain off the track from Howrah, services of 12 others have been suspended in view of public agitation.

The 22201 Sealdah-Puri Express from Sealdah and



12841 Howrah-Chennai Coromandal Express, 12863 Howrah-Yesvantpur Express, 12839 Howrah-Chennai Mail and 12703 Howrah-Secunderabad Falaknuma Express from Howrah were cancelled on Monday.

Other cancelled trains are 20890 Tirupati-Howrah express from Tirupati, 22878 Ernakulam-Howrah Express from Ernakulam, 12246 Yesvantpur-Howrah Express from Yesvantpur, 22860 Chennai-Puri Express from

Chennai, 18048 Vascodagama-Howrah Amaravati Express from Vascodagama, 12864 Yesvantpur-Howrah Express from Yesvantpur, 02860 Chennai-Puri Special from Chennai, 22818 Mysore-Howrah Express from Mysore, 12246 Yesvantpur-Howrah Express from Yesvantpur, 12510 Guwahati-Bangalore Cant Express from Guwahati, 12504 Agartala-Bangalore Cant Express from Agartala and 12514 Guwahati-Secunderabad Express from Guwahati.

SOA inks MoU with Nepal's Tribhuvan



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Nepal's Tribhuvan University has signed an MoU with the SOA University, Bhubaneswar for cooperation in furthering the standard of higher education internationally and joint research.

The MoU was inked between Prof Bhupa Prasad Dhamala, Executive Director of Centre for International

Relation, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, and Prof BB Pradhan, Registrar of SOA in the presence of SOA President Prof Manojranjan Nayak on Sunday.

The MoU would enable the two universities to undertake student and faculty exchange programmes and joint research besides collaborating in conduct of seminars, workshops and conferences.

'Tech growth: Man's intellect facing decline'

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The immense progress made in technology notwithstanding, man's intellect and overall health has been facing rapid decline, an eminent expert in computer science said on Monday.

"By 2050, around 70 per cent of the world's population are expected to suffer from mental issues," Prof Raj Kumar Buyya, Director of Cloud Computing and Distributed Systems (CLOUDS) Laboratory at the University of Melbourne, said while speaking at the inauguration of a

two-day international conference on 'Intelligent and Cloud Computing (ICICC-2019)' at the SOA University here.

Prof Buyya said technologies relating to computer science have become an inseparable part of human life; and it is impossible today to live without using the social media. But it is also causing great harm to the users at the mental level.

"It is now felt necessary that man should devote attention to spiritual matters as well to protect himself," he said.



Now, he said, it is the era of Internet of Things, Intelligent Computing, Cloud Computing and Analytics which can together achieve many goals.

Prof Damodar Acharya, Chairman of SOA Advisory Board and former Director of IIT, Kharagpur, presided over the programme.

Tsunami mock drill held in Erasama coast

PNS ■ JAGATSINGHPUR

A tsunami mock drill was held at the Noliashahi multipurpose cyclone centre on the Erasama coast in Jagatsinghpur district on Saturday.

The Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services, [INCOIS] Hyderabad and representatives from UNESCO and NDM and OSDMA resource persons, NGO activists and locals witnessed the event



and discussed various Tsunami preventive measures adopted across the globe.

The visiting INCOIS scientists and UNESCO members discussed with seaside villagers on tsunami alerts and readiness of the local cyclone shelters.

District Collector SK Mohapatra apprised the visitors that the region came under highly sensitive calamity prone area and so the administration was giving special attention during any natural disaster.

Rape, murder of women rising; Odisha no exception



NIMAI CHARAN SWAIN

The increasing incidents of rape, molestation and murder of women in the country have certainly shocked and shaken the collective conscience of the sensitive citizens and posed daunting challenge to the State Governments and the Union Government as to how to curb, control and contain the rising sexual assaults

on women.

A veterinary lady doctor of Hyderabad while proceeding home after duty, was raped on the way by four truckers and set ablaze the victim by four rapists. Had the police taken instant action on the FIR submitted by the relatives of the victim, the fate of the victim would have been otherwise. But squabble over territorial jurisdiction delayed action and FIR was registered at 3 o'clock at night. This was really a heart wrenching incident perpetrated by the monsters and barbarians. The callous and apathetic response of the police registering the FIR by family members of the victim delayed the police action. Of course, the four accused have been shot down by police in an encounter while

attempted to escape. The Unnao rape case survivor was set ablaze by the two accused that were granted bail while she was en route to local court to know her case matter and subsequently she succumbed to burn injury at the hospital. The granting of bail to the accused without affording security to the victim is certainly a monumental wrong. A Class-XI girl was gang raped by six men on her 17th birthday in Tamil Nadu and police arrested all the accused instantly. On December 5, a five-year-old girl was raped by a van driver in Chennai while she was returning home from the school and the driver confessed his guilt and was arrested. In UP, Nasiruddin, a hard core criminal had killed a 30-year-old woman, her husband and killed also a four-month-old boy. The sex maniac Nasiruddin also had a sex with corpse of the woman. Further more, he also raped a ten-year-old girl who sur-

Special policy needed to curb the crimes

vived. During interrogation he admitted his numb shocking crime.

Crime against women is steadily increasing all over the country everyday and it is not possible to narrate even 5 per cent of the incidents of rape and sexual violence in day.

Odisha is not lagging behind in the occurrence of the gruesome tragedy of rape, murder and sexual violence. Viewed from the size and population of the State, the incidents of rape, murder and molestation are astoundingly enormous. The Kunduli gang rape incident was that a girl of IX had been gang-raped at Kunduli when she was return-

ing home. It evoked shock, anger and outrage across the State. It was undisputed fact that girl was gang raped but police failed abysmally to apprehend the rapists suspected of complicity in the notorious crime. Ultimately the girl committed suicide for apprehension of shame. Now the Orissa High Court has constituted SIT to probe case by responsible police officers of Crime Branch. The prime accused and his brother allegedly involved in the sensational gang rape and murder of 19-year-old girl at Pipili in 2011-12 were acquitted by the court for want of evidence since prosecution lawyer could not produce plausible evidence to punish the accused and more-over forensic report produced by the probe agency did not prove the complicity of two brothers in the pathetic and heart wrenching murder. This incident undoubtedly triggered public outcry but the dispensation of justice failed to pro-

vide succour to the distressed and depressed family of the victim. The more pathetic, heart rending and shocking instances of gang rape are forth coming. A minor girl while waiting at Nimapara bus stand to proceed to her village Kakatapur, one Jitendra Sethy offered lift in a car convincing the girl as a police personnel and she entered the vehicle and saw three persons in the vehicle. They took the helpless girl to a Government quarter and raped her. The police arrested three accused including the husband of the owner of the Government quarter.

It is not known why the State Government is apathetic about rising of sexual crimes? It is true that the burgeoning sexual crime against women cannot be curbed and contained as the outbreak of these crimes were sudden and surreptitious beyond the capacity of detection by police. But what is pathetic is that police steps are not instant and expe-

ditious after the crimes.

The Government has decided to set up 42 Fast Track Court in the State for expeditious disposal of cases of rapes, murder and sexual crimes. It seems cogently just and reasonable since disposal of these cases may not be longer and the victims and her family may get the justice of the traumatic tragedy. But the rulings of these trial courts / track courts are not final. The accused would certainly move higher courts for defence which may not be conclusive years together. If Parliament may make a law to confine these sexual crimes cases to the level of high courts from which accused cannot move further may benefit the victims and her family. Some sociologists are of the view that the parents should control their young sons not to be involved in evil design.

Rape is a social evil and stigma to our civilised democracy. Our State/nation does not

lack right minded laws but the problem is that it lacks right minded implementation. Political will and ardent administrative skill are required to end the social evil. Vice President Venkaiah Naidu while addressing in a convocation emphatically stated referring Unnao and Hyderabad rape and murder incidents that "what has happened in the recent days is really shameful and a challenge to all of us and we must take a vow to see this sort of discrimination and atrocities are stopped forth with". It is time our honourable Chief Minister considering the burgeoning instances of sexual crimes in the State must sincerely, seriously and thoughtfully formulate a policy which would effectively curb and control the rising rape and murder.

(The writer is a columnist, who lives in Nilakantheshwar Marg, Baramunda, Bhubaneswar)

K'pada non-Muslims dubbed 'Bangladeshis' happy with CAA

Were served notice by State Govt to quit land

PNS ■ KENDRAPADA

Non-Muslim Bangladeshis, who were registered as refugees here, seemed happy over the legislation of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). They were asked to quit India by the State Government. However, the CAA has been a great relief to them.

Though earlier, the State Home Department had served Quit India notices to 1,551 Bangladeshi immigrants in 2005, but due to a faulty enumeration, several Indians who were registered as refugees, were also slapped with the Quit India notice. They were reeling under a sense of insecurity and uncertainty for last 14 years that at any moment they would be deported.

One Manoranjan Mandal, who was asked to leave, is now jubilant as he is going to

get his legitimate right of being an Indian.

His father Nabin Mandal, belonged to Jhatinuagaon colony of Bhusandapur area under Tangi block of Khurda district. He came to settle at Mahakalapada block's seaside Ramnagar village 24 years back due to family feud among their siblings. Later, he started staying with his family by eking out his living by opening a private medicine store.

But due to faulty enumeration drive, the State Government had slapped Quit India notice on Mandal on January 15, 2005. "A couple of officials with four to five armed police personnel came to my house and asked to receive the notice by directing me and my family to leave the country within 30 days," said Mandal.

"Though I am a permanent resident of Khurda district as my forefather were staying at Khurda but I was termed as a Bangladeshi. I obtain the voter card of Khurda district, the Record of Rights of land in my

native district of Khurda; also I have BPL card from Khurda district administration," added Mandal.

The Quit India notice that was slapped too on his wife was also erroneous. Though his wife's name is Rekha Mandal, but the notice was for Laxmi Mandal. "Here in Ramnagar, I also possessed voter Identity card, Aadhaar Card, Resident Identity card. Even, I and my wife too cast our vote several times in the past elections. Since we were slapped Quit India notices, we faced problems to get residential certificate for the education of my children. Besides, my family was denied all the Government benefits," alleged Mandal.

If sources are to be believed, several people, who were the permanent citizens of India and residing in the State for last many years, have been branded as Bangladeshi immigrants as Quit India notices were served to them.

Dillip Sahu, the son of Dulal Sahu of Kajalapatia

under Batighar GP, was slapped with Quit India Notice No. 843. According to him, the locals have seen his forefather stay in the village.

"The Modi-led NDA Government did the right thing by passing the CA Bill to grant Indian nationality to people belonging to Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan living in India. Now, nobody will deport us from our motherland," said Sahu.

An Odia-speaking man, Sanjay Das, of Baulakani under Mahakalapada block is also happy with the CAA. The State Government earlier slapped Quit India notice on his father Chandramani, his mother Sarala Das, his brother Rabi Das along with him, despite the fact that they were the permanent residents of India and possessed voter identity card, land records, ration card and other relevant documents. Senior officials of the district administration remained tightlipped over the issue.

BJP yet to gain strength in Subarnapur

SRIKUMAR MAHANTA ■ SONEPUR

Subarnapur district has been a focal point in the BJP's efforts to make inroads in western Odisha in the last few years. However, its path doesn't seem easy in the region these days. Despite having expended much energy through aggressive implementation of developmental projects and central schemes and launching programmes to woo voters, the Subarnapur district BJP doesn't seem to have risen strong.

Lack of organisational base at the grassroots of the local leaders of the district, bitter infighting in the rank and file and weak leadership continue to hinder the party's growth, said sources.

Around two-thirds of farmers and women in the district said they were aware of Central Government schemes

like Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and Ujjwala Yojana. But they admitted the schemes were not enough to strengthen BJP's grassroots base.

To make the matter worse, Baldev Prasad Bedbak, Suresh Mahala and former district president Rajkishore Mendili in a letter to the State Election Officer of party Ranjan Kumar Patel alleged that they were not involved in the selection of Block (Mandal) presidents although they were members of the Selection Committee, giving a signal that there is lack of cohesion in the party unit.

This apart, local BJP MP Sangitarani Singh Deo has failed to maintain a strong public rapport. The locals told that they had given their votes to Singh Deo due to the Modi wave. Some party workers also admitted that the BJP unit stood a divided house at present.

Arcelor-Nippon JV acquires Essar Steel

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Arcelor-Mittal announces that it completed the acquisition of Essar Steel India Limited (ESIL) on Monday by establishing a joint venture with the Nippon Steel Corporation, called ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India Limited (AM/NS India), which will own and operate the ESIL.

While the ArcelorMittal holds 60% of AM/NS India, the Nippon Steel shares the balance.

Arcelor-Mittal CEO Lakshmi Mittal said, "The acquisition of Essar Steel is an important strategic step for ArcelorMittal. With Nippon

Steel, our combined strengths and technology will bring many new opportunities to make a positive contribution to India's target to grow steel-making capacity to 300 million tonnes per annum by 2030."

Nippon Steel president Eiji Hashimoto said, "The AM/NS India manufactures flat steel, steel plates and steel pipes mainly at its integrated steel mill with nominal crude steel production capacity of 9.6 million tonnes per year in India. I am confident that AM/NS India will play a significant role in the development of India's steel industry."



NLC to develop Talabira coal blocks

To invest ₹17,000 cr in thermal projects

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The NLC India Limited, a Central PSU, has said it is planning to invest more than Rs 17,000 crore for its thermal power projects and has undertaken afforestation programme inside and outside the coal mining areas in Odisha.

The company would produce 20 million tonnes of coal per annum from the Talabira II and III coal blocks for use in its 4,200-MW thermal power projects. It would make a model mine by planting more trees than the mandated, said an official of the company.

The NLC has already deposited Rs 134.36 crore to Odisha Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) account for compensatory afforestation, he said.

"Our drive to plant and protect 25,86,700 trees inside and outside the mining lease areas of Talabira II and III is higher than what is prescribed as per law," added the official.

Trees such as sirisa, barakoli, ambada, mango, jackfruits and bamboo would be planted. The NLC India would ensure uninterrupted electricity to lakhs of households and commercial establishments through its 3,200-MW Talabira Thermal Power Project in Odisha and the NLC Tamil Nadu Power Limited's 1,000

MW project. Thousand of direct and indirect job opportunities would be created, it added. The company would plant 13,27,702 saplings across 2,089 hectares of land in Sambalpur, Subarnapur and Balangir districts.

It will also plant nearly 12,41,000 trees inside the mining lease area. In addition, 18,400 saplings will be planted in the safety zone area and outer periphery of the mine.

Recently, the NLC India had announced compensation for the project affected families with higher land prices, pucca houses in townships.

The company also promised to support local communities through institutional support for capacity building and develop freedom fighter Veer Surendra Sai's birthplace as a tourist destination at Khinda in Sambalpur.

In Jharsuguda 2 girls jump off train, injured

PNS ■ JHARSUGUDA

Two girls sustained critical injuries after they jumped out of a moving train near the Bagdehi railway station in Jharsuguda district on Monday.

Jyotsna Naik (20) and Dhanamati (19) were then admitted to the Jharsuguda District Headquarters Hospital.

The two girls had boarded the Puri-Haridwar Kalinga Utkal Express at the Bamra railway station. The duo wanted to alight at Bagdehi, but the train has no stoppage at the station.

After realising it, the girls jumped off the train as it approached the station. Jyotsna lost her leg while Dhanamati sustained injuries in her head.

Denizens vow for a clean Puri: Awareness meet held

PNS ■ PURI

The Puri district administration organised an awareness programme titled "Sankalp Sabha for Mo Puri - Swachh Puri" on Sunday near Shree Gundicha Temple here.

A movie on decentralised model of SWM was shown to the audience. The welcome address was delivered by the Executive Officer, Puri Municipality.

District Collector Balwant Singh, who is spearheading the movement, spoke at length about the dream of Puri as the cleanest city.

"The Puri Municipality has engaged 40 such vehicles for whole city coverage. These vehicles will take segregated waste to micro composting centers (MCC) where wet waste will be converted into compost and dry waste will be segregated," said Collector,



Puri, Balwant Singh.

The Swachh Puri song was launched on the occasion after address by four former Chairpersons, Puri.

Former Minister Maheswar Mohanty said, "We all should participate because progress is not possible without cleanliness. We should be responsible enough to keep our city clean that Puri

household by the municipality free of cost. The Puri MLA addressed the gathering on the occasion and appealed everyone to support initiative of the Puri Municipality.

Urging denizens to participate, Puri MP Pinaki Misra said, "We all have to take Puri to the next level to make it a Swachh Puri. Citizens can join hands and convert it to the cleanest city in India. We should use biodegradable materials. A single person cannot make the city clean. We need to join in large numbers."

The participants then took an oath to keep Puri clean. They took oath to segregate dry and wet waste and dispose them in the garbage trucks.

The oath also emphasised on discarding the use of plastic at home and outside as well as take initiatives on encouraging neighbours to do the same.

Patient administered expired IV saline in M'ghanj Govt hosp

PNS ■ BARIPADA

A patient was allegedly administered an expired intravenous (IV) saline at a Government hospital in Mayurbhanj district.

Narendra Mohanty of Dundaria village in the district had been admitted to the Kaptipada Community Health Centre (CHC) on Sunday for treatment of diarrhoea. Following a checkup, he was allegedly administered a saline, which had expired in October 2019.

After it came into notice of his son, the family mem-

bers created ruckus in the hospital premises alleging medical negligence by the authorities.

When asked, Dr Umakant Baske, who attended to the patient, refuted the allegation. But later, he gave a clarification putting the blame on a nurse for gross medical negligence.

Receiving information, the Kaptipada police reached the hospital and controlled the situation. The police reportedly detained Dr Baske for interrogation basing on the allegation by the patient's family.

Onion price rises again; anti-CAA stir blamed

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A day after being sold at a price of Rs 75-85 per kg in the State, the price of onion suddenly skyrocketed by Rs 15 to Rs 25 on Monday.

The traders' association revealed that the crisis is due to rains in onion-producing States and the disruption in transport operations following protests in various States against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

Federation of All Odisha Traders' Associations general secretary Sudhakar Panda said, "The CAA which led to protests massively disrupted transport operations. This has



reduced onion supply to Odisha. Besides, a few places in onion-producing States received rains for two days hitting production."

"At present, onion price per kg is hovering around Rs 90 to Rs 100. The rates will again become stable in a matter of a day or two. The price will probably come down to Rs 80 again once onion stocks reach mandis," added Panda.

Paddy procurement begins in Pallahara

PNS ■ PALLAHARA

For the 2019-20 year, paddy procurement started in Pallahara block on Monday.

Under the chairmanship of Sub-Collector Ajit Pradhan, a meeting was held at the Nizigarh Cooperative Society in this connection. Angul district Collector Manoj Mohanty was chief guest, who inaugurated the paddy purchase process.

For the A-Grade paddy, the rate is Rs 1,835 per quintal and for FAQ, it is Rs 1,815 per quintal. As many as 50 registered



farmers of the society were present and the officers relating to the society explained about the purchasing systems.

Assistant Registrar, Cooperative Societies Mohan Chandra Pradhan, RMC Secretary Pratap Chandra Das, Nizigarh Society Secretary Abani Pradhan were present.

Woman hurt in murder attempt by nephew

PNS ■ BALESWAR

A woman sustained critical injuries being attacked by her nephew over a family feud at Raintara village under the Khaira police station in the district on Sunday night.

The victim was identified as Shakuntala Das, wife of Sushant Das of Raintara.

As per a complaint filed by the victim's family members with the Khaira police, Shakuntala's nephew and accused Bhagabat Das had thrashed her mercilessly five days ago over a family dispute.

While a complaint had been lodged against Bhagabat in connection with the incident, he again attacked Shakuntala to avenge the past enmity.

When Bhagabat tried to slit the throat of the victim, Shakuntala raised an alarm following which he fled from the spot.

Family members rushed the injured woman to Khaira hospital and she is stated to be out of danger.

Police have launched a manhunt to trace the absconding accused.

Tractor kills boy in Bhadrak

PNS ■ BHADRAK

A tractor ran over a six-year-old boy killing him on the spot at Karanjadia village under Basudevpur block in Bhadrak district on Monday.

According to reports, Kalandi Mallik and Anirudha Mallik were playing near their houses when the tractor mowed them down. While Kalandi died on the spot, Anirudhd sustained critical injuries and was rushed to the Bhadrak District Headquarters Hospital for treatment.

The driver of the tractor fled from the spot while police, on being informed by locals, reached the village and started an investigation.

Food for needy: Community fridge unveiled in Jharsuguda



PNS ■ JHARSUGUDA

In a bid to avoid food wastage and make food available to those in need, a community fridge (Happy Refrigerator) supported by two voluntary organisations was installed in Jharsuguda to feed the hungry people of the industrial town.

On Sunday, the community fridge was inaugurated in Jharsuguda by Health Minister Naba Kishore Das' daughter Deepali Das.

Chief guest Deepali said the objective of the initiative is to promote people donate the left-over food and keep these in refrigerators for the homeless and hungry people.

These refrigerators will be accessible to anyone who wishes to have a free meal at any time of the day, she said.

The initiative was taken by organisations like the Jharsuguda Round Table (JRT236) and the Jharsuguda Ladies Circle (JLC126). They named the community fridge initiative as 'Annapurna'.

KIIT Fest 6.0 begins amid fanfare

Amit Trivedy today's star attraction

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The sixth edition of the techno-cultural festival, 'KIIT Fest 6.0', was inaugurated by KIIT and KISS founder Dr Achyuta Samanta in the presence of KIIT University Pro-VC Prof Sasmita Samanta, Registrar Prof Jnyana Ranjan Mohanty, Director, Students Affairs Prof Biswajit Sahu and Deputy Director, Student Services Dr Syam Sundar Behura here on Monday.

The KIIT Fest is the biggest university-level techno-cultural festival in eastern India. The annual fest has attracted a crowd of more than 25,000 students, including more than 5,000 students from various reputed technical institutes and universities of the country.



During the three-day KIIT Fest 6.0, the students would compete in various events in the field of technology, culture and art. The Hindi Post-Rock Band performed on the inaugural day.

Amit Trivedy, popular theatre and jingle composer and famous music director, will perform on Tuesday. Eminent

musical artist Ritviz will perform on Wednesday. Total prize money of Rs 25 lakh, which is the highest amount for any university technical festival in India, would be given away during the fest.

Technical, cultural and innovative competitions like Instant-O-Fie, Chitra-Vichitra, Hip-Hop Cypher, Spotlight,

Dekh-Tamasha-Dekh, Star Salesman, Zara Nachke Dikha Solo and Duet and Group, Slam Poetry Event, Buzz Write Year, Frozen In Time, Melange, Fuego, Mismatch, Alankaar, Innovation, Perplex, Robotics, Coding, Business Marketing, Quizfest Events- Flames Quiz, Biz-Tech Quiz, Workshops, Say Hi To Py, etc would be held.

ITR has world-class facilities: Director

PNS ■ BALESWAR

The Integrated Test Range (ITR) has carved a niche for itself and proved its mettle time and again ever since its inception.

A laboratory of DRDO not only made India self-reliant but also it drew attention of the whole world for its performance, said Director, ITR, Dr BK Das on the occasion of the ITR's 37th Raising Day.

Addressing the gathering, Dr Das said that the ITR has got appreciation from a number of nations for a range of facilities of highest standard.

Dr Das said the friendly nations have expressed their willingness to use the ITR test facility. He also appreciated and acknowledged the sacrifice and unconditional support from the entire ITR family.

"Singapore and some other countries have evinced interest in our range," revealed Das.

Dr Das also informed that being an important organisation of Baleswar, ITR will continue to fulfil its social responsibilities such as plantation to ensure a clean and green environment, blood donation, cleanliness drives as well as providing state of the art healthcare facility. The contri-



bution from the members of ITR Cultural and Environmental Club-ladies wing, in ensuring a clean and green environment, visit to orphanage, helping the destitute etc. were highly appreciated by Dr Das.

He also set forth the new vision for team ITR, 'One Team Billion Dreams' with simultaneous objective of transforming ITR as well as the life of the denizens of Chandipur and Baleswar.

He further said the ITR

has organized several important events such as the International conference on range technology (ICORT) and the YSM with the active support of its men and ladies wing.

It has been undertaking various exercises at a regular intervals for social causes including SBM, walkathon, diabetic detection and blood donation camps, health check-up camps and hosting OPDs for satellite centre of AIIMS, he told.

Vice-Chancellor of Biju Patnaik University of Technology Chittaranjan Tripathy attended the function as chief guest. A colourful cultural programme was held by the family members of ITR staff.

Senior scientists PC Routray, Anup Sahoo, Milan Kumar Pal, Sarat Chandra Patra and Sashi Kumar Rout among others spoke, while sand artist Tuna Bhera erected an attractive art with caption 'Missile for Peace'.

VSS Nagar residents' road problem mounts

As all bus-stops shifted to Satsang Chhak

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

There is no letup for the residents of VSS Nagar here in facing road problems for moving to the rest parts of the city and outside. It is so understood from the fact that while earlier road problems have not been sorted out, another problem has emerged now with the traffic confluence point of Satsang Temple Chhak remaining jammed always.

Earlier, passengers were waiting for buses at Vani Vihar and Acharya Vihar Square, but they have all been forced to go to Satsang Temple Chhak for the purpose as long route buses are not being allowed to move through two these places. While Satsang Temple Chhak is a small place, it remains

jammed most of the time with vehicles coming from three sides from Vani Vihar service road, NH over-bridge and VSS Nagar and moving towards underpass meet there. Besides, passengers with distant destinations wait there for buses.

Due to rush, people coming to VSS Nagar area are facing trouble always, said the VSS Nagar Unnayan Parishad.

The Parishad expressed concern over the situation at meeting held under the chairmanship of president Krupasindhu Sahoo. Secretary Dillip Dashasharma said the Parishad would talk to the Traffic DCP over the issue.

Among others, vice-president Dr Jayant Parida, treasurer Maheshwar Biswal, joint secretaries Pratap Nanda, Trilochan Rath and Golak Samal, executive members Dr Kumada Mishra, Premananda Patra, Siba Prasad Mishra, Gourishankar Praharaj, Rama Chandra Samal and Mohan Kumar Hembram were present.

IN BRIEF

LAXMIPRIYA AWARDED WITH SARASWATA SAMMAN



Bhubaneswar: The Odisha Pratibha Puja Sansad awarded Laxmipriya Routray with the Odisha Pratibha Puja Saraswata Samman 2019 for her contribution towards language, literature and culture. She was felicitated at a programme held in Cuttack recently. Among others, Sansad president Dr Satya Ray and general secretary Dillip Kumar Das were present.

11 HELD, 26 VEHICLES SEIZED

Sonepur: Police on Sunday night busted a gambling den at Huturna village in the Binika area of Subarnapur district and arrested as many as 11 persons in this connection besides seizing 26 vehicles. A special squad of the district police raided the spot acting on a tipoff and apprehended the gamblers, who hail from Bheden and Binika of the district. As many as four cars, 22 two-wheelers and cash of Rs 11,350 were seized.

FIRE: 30 HOUSES REDUCED TO ASHES IN GANJAM

Brahmapur: A major fire broke out at Sunathara village under the Purushottampur police limits in Ganjam district on Monday morning reducing more than 30 houses and valuables to ashes and rendering the concerned families homeless. The fire broke out in a house and soon engulfed the nearby houses. Being informed, Fire Services personnel from Purushottampur reached the village and doused the flames. The reason behind the fire outbreak was yet to be ascertained.

GANGA KUMAR CRICKET TOURNAMENT FINAL HELD



Nuapada: The final match of the fourth Ganga Kumar Cricket Tournament was played between the teams of Bijepur and Singhar villages on Sunday at Khariar. Bijepur won the toss and decided to bat first and fixed a target of 182 runs in limited 20 overs by losing nine wickets. Singhar scored 97 runs in 17 overs losing all wickets. Darabe Sabar of Bijepur was awarded man of the match for scoring the highest 60 runs. A total of 16 teams had participated in the tournament. Sarat Sabar was awarded the man of the series for taking 13 wickets in the series. Former IRS officer Shrikant Chatterjee was chief guest in the award-giving ceremony. Organising Committee president Surendra Kumar thanked all those who cooperated for the tournament.

SBI Life supports PwD kids' learning

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The SBI Life Insurance, under its CSR initiative, has collaborated with two NGOs, the Open Learning Systems (OLS) and the Pingalakh Public Welfare Organisation (PPWO) to extend its support towards holistic development of the differently-abled children.

The 'Solar Power Systems' being installed in 'Open Learning Systems (OLS)' will help the differently-abled children experience uninterrupted educational activities without depending on the availabil-



ity of stable electricity connection. The skill development activities of the visually impaired children of the Pingalakh Public Welfare Organisation (PPWO) will be enhanced with aids for classroom learning and hostel stay.

SBI Life Insurance MD and CEO Sanjeev Nautiyal said, "We believe that differently-abled children can learn to lead a normal life if they have essential access to education, vocational training and employment opportunities."

All India Police Hockey meet kicks off IIM-S hosts workshop on FinTech start-ups

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The 68th edition of All India Police Hockey Championship 2019 began at 7th OSAP Battalion Ground here on Monday after Odisha DGP Abhay took the ceremonial salute.

The DGP welcoming the participants and officers, who have come from different Central Police organisations and State Police, advised the participants to play the game in true spirit of sportsmanship.

Abhay expressed his gratitude to the All India Police Sports Control Board for giving the Odisha Police to



organise the championship in Bhubaneswar. DGP also thanked the Chief Minister and the State Government for providing necessary support and cooperation for the

event.

The event is being organised at Kalinga Stadium here from December 16 to 24 in which as many as 500 players and 200 officials and trainers from 23 teams, consisting of Central Para Military Forces and State Police Organisations are participating.

Among others, IGP (Operation)-cum-organising secretary of the event Amitabh Thakur, CP-cum-event vice-chairman Sudhansu Sarangi and ADGP (Hdqs)-cum-event Vice Chairman VT Mishra were present.

PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

The Indian Institute of Management Sambalpur (IIM-S) on Monday hosted a workshop for the aspiring FinTech start-ups in collaboration with Visa. The workshop also marked the commencement of the Odisha Chapter of Visa Everywhere Initiative (VEI), India 2020 from the IIM-S.

The workshop witnessed key entrepreneurs and leaders in the FinTech space sharing their entrepreneurial journeys, the challenges faced and the mitigation approaches. It also featured discussions on the VEI programme, showcasing of



case studies from the past winners and networking with senior Visa executives and its clients.

Prof Mahadeo Jaiswal, Director, Indian Institute of

Management Sambalpur said, "The research focus of IIM Sambalpur is around 3 Ds (Digitalisation, De-carbonisation and Democratisation of Business); and, thus, the work-

shop in collaboration with Visa is perfectly aligned to our digitalisation research strategy as well as to our core operating value of innovation and inclusiveness."

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
e-procurement Notice for Road works
Bid Identification No. 07 of 2019-20 dt. 07.12.2019

- Number of the work :- 4 (Two) No. of Road Work
- Amount put to tender :- Rs. 11.50 lakhs to 21.65 lakhs
- Period of completion :- 3 (three) month
- Date & time of sale & receipt of bid document online :- From: 16/12/2019 at 5:00 PM To: 27/12/2019 at 3:00 PM
- Date & time of opening of bids :- 27/12/2019 at 04:30 PM
- Name and address of Inviting Officer :- Executive Engineer, R&B Division-V, Bhubaneswar

Further details can be seen from the State Govt. portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>
 Any amendment /cancellation/ retenders please refer to the above cited website.

Sd/-
 Executive Engineer,
 R&B Division-V,
 Bhubaneswar

34090/11/0011/1920

NMDC LIMITED
 (A Government of India Enterprises)
 Bailadila Iron Ore Mines, Bachel Complex, Distt: Dantewada- 494553 (CG)
 Tel: 07857-230079/230751, Fax: 07857-231253, +91-9406006585
 E-mail: bid5materials@nmdc.co.in; bid5materials@gmail.com; bmlal@nmdc.co.in
 Corporate Identity Number: L13100AP1958GO1001674 //GST Regn. #22AAACN7325A125

NOTICE FOR INVITING TENDER
 Tender are invited for the following items for Bachel Complex Post Bachel - 494553 Dist. Dantewada (CG) as per details furnished in the Tender documents.

Description of item	Display & Download of Tender document	Last Date/Time for submission of Offer	Tender Fees In Rs.	EMD in Rs.
Tender Ref. No. NMDC/Bachel/236/19-20/ET/694 Date 10.12.2019 (PI # 128057 dt. 15.09.2019)				
Supply of Spares for Metso Make Primary Gyrotory Crusher for Crushing Plant 10&11A for NMDC Limited, BIOM-Bachel Complex	10.12.2019 to 07.01.2020	07.01.2020 upto 03.00 PM	Nil	25,000/- (Twenty Five Thousand)
Tender Ref. No. NMDC/Bachel/237/19-20/ET/695 Date 10.12.2019 (PI # 11C184 dt. 01.10.2019)				
Design, Manufacture, Supply Supervision of Erection & Commissioning of 01 No. Double Deck Heavy Duty Circular Motion Vibrating Screen (8'x20') with complete Accessories required for Secondary Screen at Screening Plant, Dep-5	10.12.2019 to 07.01.2020	07.01.2020 upto 03.00 PM	Nil	25,000/- (Twenty Five Thousand)

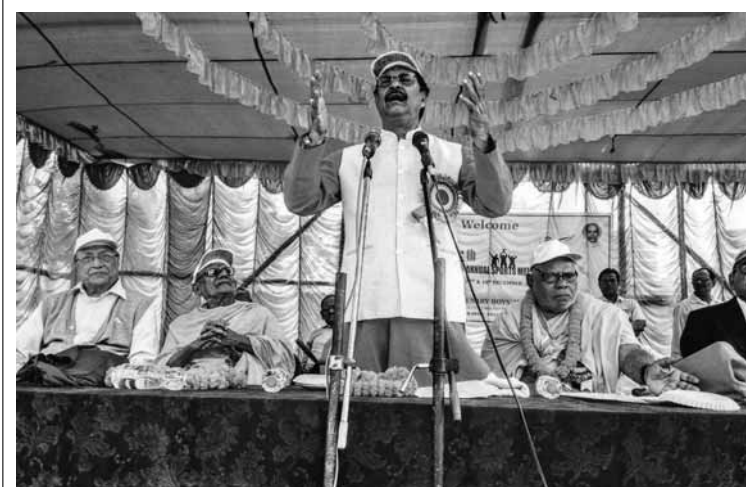
The detailed information of the tenders can be obtained from our website <http://www.nmdc.co.in> under Tender Section. Central Public Procurement (CPP) portal www.eprocure.gov.in; and MSTC portal www.mstc.commerce.com; and EPSCOHEM/www.epscocem.com Buyer login.jsp. Bidder may submit their offer through ON-LINE Tender only.

THE PROSPECTIVE BIDDERS SHOULD DOWNLOAD THE TENDER DOCUMENTS AND SUBMIT THE ONLINE OFFER THROUGH MSTC PORTAL ONLY WITHIN THE DUE DATE AS MENTIONED ABOVE.

Note: Any addendum/corrigendum/bid clarifications/time extension shall be issued on the above said websites only & will not be published separately. Prospective Bidders should visit the above websites from time to time to note the corrigendum, if any, contact for further query on 07857-230751, 94060 06585.

Jt. General Manager (Materials)

Playground teaches punctuality: Minister



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Playground teaches punctuality; and students, who lose games in seconds, know the value of time, said School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash hoisting the flag of Sivananda Centenary Boys' High School's Annual Sports Meet here on Monday.

Dash said that besides the punctuality playground also

teaches one to maintain discipline and unity.

He also said that nowadays many want to see children as 'ATMs'. But they should remember that children also have responsibilities towards the society and the country.

School Managing Committee secretary Swami Sivachidananda Saraswati spoke about the aim of the sports meet and achievements

of the school. School Managing Committee joint secretary Swami Jagannathananda Saraswati, VP Choudhury Gaurahari Mishra, members Satyendra Narayan Tripathy, Bijoy Kumar Mohanty and school Principal Prafulla Kumar Mahapatra also spoke.

School Physical Education Teacher Ashok Kumar Routray said the event would continue till December 18.

RTI activist murder: Guv urged for SIT probe



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha Soochana Adhikar Abhijan (OSAA) on Monday wrote to Governor Prof Ganeshi Lal urging him to direct the State Government for a Special Investigation Team (SIT) inquiry into the Abhimanyu Panda murder case of Baliguda in Kandhamal district.

The OSAA mentioned that Abhimanyu, as an RTI activist, had made relentless fight

against corruption and irregularities in Government works and protected public property. His death is a big loss to the RTI fraternity in the State, added OSAA.

The association also urged the Governor to direct the Government to provide Rs 20 lakh compensation to Abhimanyu's family and the DGP to ask all police stations and intelligence wing to provide security to RTI activists.

RAHUL'S 'RAPE IN INDIA' REMARK EC seeks report from J'khand poll authorities

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Following a complaint by BJP leaders, led by Union Textile Minister Smriti Irani, the Election Commission (EC) has sought a factual report from the Jharkhand chief electoral officer on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's 'rape in India' comment.

Sources in the EC said further action would be decided after getting the report. "The transcript should be with us anytime now. We are busy with polling in Jharkhand at present," said a senior EC functionary.

Addressing the rally in Jharkhand's Godda on Thursday, Rahul had said, "Narendra Modi had said

NARENDRA MODI HAD SAID 'MAKE IN INDIA' BUT NOWADAYS WHEREVER YOU LOOK, IT IS 'RAPE IN INDIA'

— RAHUL GANDHI



"Make in India' but nowadays wherever you look, it is 'Rape in India'. In Uttar Pradesh Narendra Modi's MLA raped a woman, then she met with an accident but Narendra Modi did not utter a word." His comments led to an uproar in Parliament, with BJP leaders demanding an apology from Rahul. The women BJP MP's

accused Gandhi of "using" rape incidents as a "political weapon" to settle scores with PM Modi.

Union Minister Smriti Irani, a longtime rival of Rahul Gandhi's who wrested his Amethi seat from him this year, said he had given "a clarification call" that Indian women should be raped.

IRREGULARITIES IN SAFDARJUNG HOSPITAL'S SIC No action taken against officials

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

An audit panel's report, highlighting a range of irregularities in the functioning of the Delhi-based Safdarjung Hospital's Sports Injury Centre (SIC), is languishing with the Union Health Ministry for the last several months in want of action. Interestingly, the panel was set up by the Health Ministry itself.

The seven-member panel in its extensive 62 pages report, submitted to the Ministry in March 2019 for further action, had pointed out frauds in procurement of equipments and facilities, financial mismanagement and serious discrepancies in appointments of healthcare professionals.

Prior to this report, the panel had earlier submitted an interim report to the Union Health Ministry in October 2018 which said that "available

records and evidence, prima-facie, indicate collusion of SIC with some suppliers thereby causing loss to the patients and public exchequer."

The panel headed by Joint Secretary Rajeve Manjhi was set up by the Ministry following allegations of financial mismanagement in the SIC's functioning in various areas ranging from equipments and facilities for operation theatres to their procurement and maintenance.

Both the reports have recommended a detailed probe into the matter in view of "blatant violation of CVC's instructions and has sought immediate action against those responsible for irregularities" occurred during the tenure of the then director of the SIC, Dr Deepak Chaudhary.

The matter is now under the scanner of Union Health Minister Harshvardhan. The probe panel in its



report said "On scrutiny of the files pertaining to procurement of equipments and facilities for operation theatre and physiotherapy units of the SIC, it has been observed that there are blatant violations of gener-

al financial rules (GFRs) and the procedures adopted are repugnant to CVC instructions.

"With regard to usefulness and usability of the equipment with almost similar functions have been proposed to be procured twice by furnishing a certificate that the said equipments are being procured not as replacement or additional but as a first-time procurement. Frequent purchases have been resorted to for certain equipment."

"It is surprising that these equipments have been condemned even during the manufacturers' warranty period many equipment are not in working conditions."

In fact, last December, the Ministry had issued a notice to Dr Chaudhary too for "taking up a commercial assignment with a private hospital without prior permission from the Government."

SC forms panel on expeditious disposal of rape cases

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has set up a 2-judge committee to look into the issue of expeditious disposal of rape cases across the country, a source said on Monday.

In an administrative decision, Chief Justice SA Bobde has set up the two-member committee of Justices Subhash Reddy and MR Shah, the source said.

The decision comes in the wake of rise in rape cases across the country and the recent incident of encounter killing of four accused in the gang rape and murder of a veterinarian in Telangana.



Students accuses principal, 3 teachers of sexual harassment

PTI ■ COIMBATORE

The principal and three teachers of a Kendriya Vidyalaya near here were booked on Monday for alleged sexual harassment of a class XI boy student, police said.

According to the police, the boy was stripped and sexually harassed by the three on Saturday under the guise of frisking whether he was having a mobile phone.

Based on a complaint, the police registered cases under the POCSO Act against the principal and three teachers for the alleged torture.

The boy was being treated at a government hospital here.

Besides, the student's younger brother was allegedly harassed by the teachers.

All the four - the principal and the three teachers - were booked under sections 7 (sexual assault), 8 (punishment for sexual assault) of the POCSO Act, section 66E of Information Technology Act and section 506 (i) (criminal intimidation) of the IPC, the police.

Even as the principal denied the charges, the students boycotted the classes protesting the registering of cases under POCSO Act and seeking immediate withdrawal of the cases, they said.

Further inquiry is on, they added.

Mufti questions PM over detention of Kashmiri leaders

PTI ■ SRINAGAR

PDP president Mehbooba Mufti on Monday questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi's assertion about debate and dissent being essence of democracy in the light of the detentions and curbs on opposition leaders in Kashmir.

"If debate and discussion are essential to democracy then why deprive people of J&K of the same rights?"

For us Kashmiris, its only been division, draconian laws and detentions," Mehbooba Mufti's Twitter handle, operated by her daughter Ilitija Mufti, tweeted in response to

a post by the Prime Minister.

Mehbooba Mufti and several top mainstream leaders, including Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah, have been placed under preventive detention since August 5 when the Centre announced abrogation of provisions of Article 370.

"Violent protests on Citizenship Amendment Act are unfortunate and deeply distressing. Debate and discussion are essential parts of democracy but, never has damage to public property and disturbance of normal life been a part of our ethos," Modi had tweeted earlier in day.

Army personnel killed in ceasefire violation by Pak along LoC

PTI ■ SRINAGAR

An Army personnel was killed in an unprovoked ceasefire violation by Pakistan along the Line of Control in the Gurez sector in J&K's Bandipore district on Monday, officials said.

"Pakistani troops resorted to unprovoked ceasefire violation in Gurez sector today (Monday). Our troops retaliated to the violation in adequate measure and effectively," an Army official said.

He said one soldier was killed in the firing by Pakistani troops. "The Army salutes the supreme sacrifice of the brave soldier," the official said.

48th anniversary of 1971 Indo-Pak war celebrated

PTI ■ SRINAGAR

The Army on Monday here celebrated the 48th anniversary of the 1971 India-Pakistan war that culminated in the creation of Bangladesh.

Corps Commander Lt General KJS Dhillon led officers and other ranks of the Srinagar-based Chinara Corps in paying tribute to the martyrs by laying a wreath at the war memorial, a Defence spokesman said.

"The 48th anniversary of the Indian victory in the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war was celebrated with great zeal and enthusiasm. Several functions were held to mark the occasion," he said.

The spokesman said a



felicitation function was held to acknowledge and honour the sacrifices of the veterans and martyrs of the 1971 war.

"The war veterans and families of the martyrs of the 1971 war were felicitated at a function.

Camaraderie that characterises the Army was on display as the veterans and families of martyrs interacted with the present generation of the sol-

diers," he said.

Addressing the function, Lt Gen Dhillon said the Army is grateful to the veterans for their services to the nation in their younger years and expressed the resolve that Army will look after their welfare.

"The Army immensely values the sacrifices of the Veer Naaris and their family members. The victory of such a magnitude would not have been possible without the tremendous sacrifice by the soldiers," the corps commander said, referring to the 1971 war victory.

He urged the soldiers to continue to positively contribute towards building a vibrant and peaceful Kashmir.

'BJP trying to prepare ground for making India Hindu rashtra'

PTI ■ JAIPUR

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Monday alleged that the BJP Government at the Centre is trying to prepare the ground for making India a "Hindu rashtra" instead of focusing on the country's economy.

Targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah, the chief minister said they are trying to create a "division" in the name of religion and questioned whether the country would remain intact if they continue doing so.

"A dangerous game is being played. The ground is being prepared on how to take things towards the making of a Hindu rashtra. Economy must be the prime agenda for the government but instead the agenda of the government is Article 370 and provocation in the name of nationalism,"

Gehlot said here at a press conference here. He said the amended citizenship law is "impractical" and therefore it cannot be implemented. "The northeast is burning. There is widespread reaction to the amendment. This will not be implemented because this is impractical. Six-seven states have already said this. The government should repeal it," the chief minister said.

He alleged the Income Tax department and the Enforcement Directorate are conducting raids on the directions of the that the Prime Minister's Office.

The chief minister said during the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government talks, talks of India's emergence as "economic superpower" used to be there and comparison used to be between India and China in context of economic growth but now the government has create an atmos-

phere where talks of India and Pakistan are there.

"What is Pakistan as compared to India? Pakistan's prime minister has himself stated that they cannot stand in comparison to India but now there are talks of India-Pakistan," he said.

The chief minister claimed that the Centre has significantly cut grants of the state which is a matter of concern. "States are suffering due to wrongdoings of the Centre. The grants from the Centre to Rajasthan have been cut by Rs 11,000 crore. How the developmental activities will take place?" he questioned.

The senior Congress leader also alleged that electoral bond is a scandal and the BJP government is running a campaign to end other political parties.

"Where is democracy?" he asked. Targeting PM Modi and Home Minister Shah over the BJP's 'Congress-mukt Bharat'



slogan, Gehlot said they have realised their agenda of a Congress-free India cannot be fulfilled. "After Haryana and Maharashtra assembly results, they have realised that the BJP's graph is going down. They will never say Congress-free India. People have wisdom and they understand what is going on," he said.

The chief minister also accused the BJP of trying to mislead the youths and spending crores of rupees to run propaganda.

Tributes paid to CRPF DIG killed in landslide on Jammu-Srinagar highway

PTI ■ JAMMU

The CRPF and Police on Monday paid tributes to DIG, CRPF Shailender Vikram Singh, who died after his vehicle was crushed under a huge boulder during a landslide on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway in Ramban district.

A wreath laying ceremony was organised in the DIG's honour at 160 battalion headquarters at Chatha in Jammu, CRPF officers said.

A military send off was organised, wherein DGP of J&K Police, Dilbag Singh, Special DG CRPF, Zulfiqar Hassan, Divisional Commissioner of Jammu, Sanjeev Verma, among others including CRPF and Police dignitaries and civilians laid wreaths here, they said. Singh and constable Naveen Kumar

died near Digdol in Ramsol belt on Sunday evening. Their last rites will be performed at their respective hometown with ceremonial honours.

A WREATH LAYING CEREMONY WAS ORGANISED IN THE DIG'S HONOUR AT 160 BATTALION HEADQUARTERS AT CHATHA IN JAMMU



Payal Rohatgi sent to judicial custody

PTI ■ KOTA (RAJASTHAN)

Bollywood actress Payal Rohatgi was on Monday sent to Bundi Central jail under judicial custody till December 24 after a local court rejected her bail application in the case relating to alleged objectionable content against the Nehru-Gandhi family on social media.

She was produced before the Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate court a day after being brought to Bundi from her residence in Ahmedabad where she was detained, Bundi Superintendent of Police Mamta Gupta told PTI.

She was formally placed under arrest on Sunday night, the SP said.

Meanwhile, Bhupendra Sahay Saxena, Rohatgi's legal counselor, confirmed the rejection of the bail application but added that she would

move the higher court for remedy.

The former Big Boss contestant had posted the objectionable content on her social media sites, including Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, on September 6 and 21 against Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi and other members of the family.

State Youth Congress general secretary and a resident of Bundi, Charmesh Sharma, had submitted a complaint along with copies of the offensive content after which the case was registered against the actress.

The Congress member had alleged in the complaint against the actress that the objectionable content tarnished the image of the country and spread vulgarity, religious hatred besides disgracing a woman's character.

UP Govt forms panel to make exam system foolproof

PTI ■ MATHURA (UP)

Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma said the State Government has constituted an expert committee on examinations to modernise the process and make it foolproof.

The three-member committee would submit its report within a month, Sharma, who also holds the education portfolio, told PTI on Sunday.

"In its report, the committee would suggest ways to modernise paper setting and evaluation and making the process foolproof to maintain the sanctity of examinations," the dy CM said.

The members of the committee are - Deputy Director IIT Kanpur Manindra Agrawal, Vice Chancellor AKTU Lucknow Vinay Kumar Pathak and Vice Chancellor Siddharth Vishwavidyalay Surendra Dubey -, he said. Shrama said

after several incidents of paper leak a need was felt to develop a system that would thwart the designs of copying mafia.

The committee would also suggest ways to secure digital evaluation, eliminate human error from the examination process and provide technical solutions for moderation of question papers using artificial intelligence, he said.

To fulfil its commitment of providing equal opportunities to all, the State Government has made changes in the secondary education, Sharma said.

Syllabus on NCERT pattern was introduced from 2018 academic session as the UP Board curriculum had become obsolete and its students were lagging behind in all-India competitions, then dy CM said.

The examination schedule has virtually been reduced to just two weeks so that students can utilize time for studies, he added.

K'taka Govt to offer attractive concessions for setting up Agri-related units: CM

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa on Monday said the Government will initiate measures to set up industrial clusters based on the agriculture produces grown in a particular region and offer attractive concessions to those setting up agri-related units.

He called upon farmers to minimise chemicals in agriculture by switching to organic farming.

"We are giving more thrust to organic farming. It is the only way to minimise poisonous chemicals and its negative effect on the growers and consumers. Already discussions are taking place on a large scale. I am planning to hold meetings with farmers in each taluk every month to create awareness about it," the chief minister added.

Yediyurappa said a mega convention is going on in Shivamogga on organic farming where thousands of farmers have enrolled themselves.

He recalled how his 'per drop, more crop' drive resulted

in micro-irrigation project in 26,000 acres in 2012 when he was the chief minister.

Yediyurappa said India has slipped to 102nd spot among 117 nations in the Global Hunger Index and lamented that an estimated 40 per cent of foodgrains go waste in the country annually.

"According to the Global Hunger Index-2019, India ranks 102 out of 117 nations. On the one hand, people are suffering from hunger, while on the other, there is huge wastage of agricultural produce," he said at the curtain raiser of Agro Food-tech Expo-2020 here from April 22 to 26 next year.

The event will be organised by the Federation of Karnataka Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FKCCI) at the Palace Grounds which would see attendance from experts and participants from different parts of India and abroad.

Citing a UN report, Yediyurappa said the loss due to the gap between agriculture production and its utilisation is 40 per cent, which is a matter of

grave concern.

"For example, the UN has estimated that at least 21 million metric tonnes of wheat is getting wasted annually. Around Rs 50,000 crore worth agriculture produce is getting wasted. There is a need to carry out more study and bring reform in the agriculture production, preservation and utilisation," he added.

The big question staring India is to make agriculture profitable, Yediyurappa said and emphasised the need to change the way farming and processing is done to lift the living standards of farmers.

In this regard, the Chief Minister called upon the industry to open more processing units, improvise the manner in which production is done and set up marketing units. These mega units should be set up across the nation and generate employment, he pointed out. Yediyurappa hailed the Centre for introducing 100 per cent FDI in food processing, which has already brought USD 8.7 billion of investment in the country.

Ready to become KPCC president: Muniyappa

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Former Union Minister K H Muniyappa on Monday threw his hat into the ring to fill the post of Karnataka Congress President, highlighting seniority and loyalty.

He, however said, he would abide by the party high command's decision, being a "disciplined soldier" of the Congress. "I'm among the seniors in the Congress party; a few seniors and parliament members have suggested my name. Sonia Gandhi (AICC President) and Rahul Gandhi (senior party leader) will decide," the senior party leader said. Speaking to Reporters in Delhi, he said if the high command gives him an opportunity, he was ready to take up the responsibility and work for the party.

"High command will take necessary decision, whether I'm given the responsibility or not, being the disciplined soldier of the party I will work for the party to bring it back to power,"

State Congress Chief Dinesh Gundu Rao had last week quit as KPCC president

he said.

The party leadership was yet to decide on Dinesh Gundu Rao and Siddaramaiah's (CLP leader) resignation and he will abide by their decision, he added.

State Congress Chief Dinesh Gundu Rao had last week quit as KPCC president soon after the party posted a poor show, winning only two seats, as against the 12 it had held of the 15 which went to the bypolls on December five.

Muniyappa, a seven time MP from Kolar, who faced defeat in the previous parliamentary election, had been camping in Delhi for last couple of days meeting several AICC leaders, party sources said. However, he clarified that he has not met Congress President Sonia Gandhi so far on this. Another senior party leader

D K Shivakumar and KPCC Working President Eshwar Khandre are being seen as other top contenders for the post of state president.

With former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah too resigning as Congress Legislature Party leader after the party's rout in the bypolls, lobbying is said to have intensified for that post too.

Senior leaders H K Patil and G Parameshwara are among those seen as among the front-runners for the CLP leader post.

Those loyal to Siddaramaiah are planning to request the Congress President not to accept his resignation, by highlighting the "necessity" of his leadership for the party.

Muniyappa along with party colleague B K Hariprasad had in the past repeatedly expressed resentment over Siddaramaiah and Rao's "unilateral style of functioning" and accountability not being fixed for the party's debacle in successive polls.



People gather at the Eidgah to protest against the alleged police action on AMU students who were protesting over Citizenship Amendment Act, in Aligarh, on Monday



Protesters hold placards and raise slogans against the amended Citizenship Act in Bengaluru on Monday



Protesters hold placards and raise slogans against the amended Citizenship Act in New Delhi on Monday

Violence deeply depressing: PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday described the violence and disturbances over Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) as "unfortunate" and "deeply depressing" while the BJP attacked the Opposition saying some parties are trying to "instigate" students and using them as "pawns" to further their petty political interests.

While the ruling BJP accused former Congress president Rahul Gandhi, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi of indulging in the vote bank and appeasement politics and causing Hindu-Muslim divide, Prime Minister asserted that

Citizenship Act will not affect any bona-fide citizen of any religion. Modi appealed to people to stay away from rumour-mongering and not let "vested interests" divide the society.

In a series of tweets, Modi also assured that the amended citizenship law does not affect any Indian of any religion.

As violence and unrest spread across some States against the CA, the Prime Minister said "this is the time to maintain peace, unity and brotherhood. It is my appeal to everyone to stay away from any sort of rumour-mongering and falsehoods."

Violent protests on the amended citizenship law are "unfortunate and deeply distressing", he said adding that debate, discussion and dissent

are essential parts of democracy, "but never has damage to public property and disturbance of normal life been a part of our ethos."

Modi said he unequivocally assures people that tweaked law does not affect any citizen of India of any religion.

"No Indian has anything to worry regarding this Act. This Act is only for those who have faced years of persecution outside and have no other place to go except India," he tweeted.

Asserting that the law was passed by both Houses of Parliament with overwhelming support, Modi said, "Large number of political parties and MPs supported its passage. This Act illustrates India's centuries old culture of acceptance,

harmony, compassion and brotherhood."

The ruling BJP said some parties are trying to "instigate" students and using them as "pawns" to further their petty political interests.

Addressing a Press conference, BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra accused the Opposition parties of misleading people and trying to "bifurcate" the country in the name of Hindus and Muslims by firing from the shoulders of students.

These students are educated and know that the

Citizenship Act does not discriminate against any Indian citizen irrespective of caste or religion, he said, and urged people to heed the advice of the Prime Minister and Chief Justice of India against indulging in any violence.

Patra blamed Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi wanting to curry favour for Muslim votes by orchestrating anti-Citizenship propaganda in the country.

SC to hear tomorrow pleas of Cong, Tripura royal scion challenging CAA

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday said it will hear on December 18 a batch of pleas, including those by Congress leader Jairam Ramesh and royal scion of Tripura Pradyot Kishore Deb Barman, challenging the constitutional validity of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA).

A Bench of Chief Justice SA Bobde and Justices BR Gavi and Surya Kant said the pleas will be heard along with other pending matters coming up for hearing on Wednesday.

Senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi mentioned for urgent listing of the two pleas and said they should also be heard along with a similar plea filed by the Indian Union Muslim League (IUM) that is coming up for hearing on Wednesday. "I have filed two pleas one by Indian National Congress and the other by ex-Maharaja of Tripura challenging the validity of Citizenship Amendment Act. All I want is that they should come up for hearing along with a similar petition filed by IUM on December 18," Singhvi said.

Several petitions, including by Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra have been filed in the Supreme Court challenging the constitutional valid-

ity of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2019.

All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) leader Asaduddin Owaisi has also filed a petition challenging the validity of the Act. He has sought direction declaring provisions of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 as "unconstitutional, null and void and ultra vires Articles 14, 21 and 25 of the Constitution of India and hence void ab initio".

He said the present Amendment Act miserably fails on the touchstone of Article 14 and the parameters for non-arbitrariness provided therein. "The Act is primarily focussed on establishing a religion-based classification which is, in and of itself, an impermissible classification and therefore violative of Articles

14, 21 and 25 of the Indian Constitution," his plea said.

Another petition has been filed through advocate Prashant Bhushan for five human rights activists and academicians led Harsh Mander challenging the validity of the Citizenship Act.

The plea had sought direction for striking down from the provisions of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2019 the words "Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi or Christian Community from Afghanistan, Bangladesh or Pakistan, who entered into India on or before 31st day of December, 2014, or alternatively striking down the entire proviso to Section 2(1)(b) introduced by the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 as unconstitutional, illegal and void".

It is India's internal matter, we respect that: France

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As unrest continues over the Citizenship (Amendment) Act in some parts of the country, France on Monday it is an "internal matter of India" and "we respect that". Making this assertion here, French Ambassador Emmanuel Lenain said his country believes in freedom of religion.

He also said though an advisory was issued to French citizens travelling in India to avoid certain places due to disturbances, France did not change the rating of India nor issued any demarche.

Interacting with reporters, the French envoy said it is not correct to issue any public comment on an internal matter. "India is a democracy and when there are conflicts in views of people then they can approach institutions like the Supreme Court which can competently take a decision. I don't think it is apt for any country to comment on the domestic matter of India. We believe in freedom of religion and it is not for us to comment on the matter," he said.

Asked if the Indian Government briefed countries on issues like abrogation of Article 370 giving special status to Jammu and Kashmir and the Citizenship Act, Lenain said discussions take place at various levels regularly on all issues.

Briefing mediapersons on the entire gamut of India-France relations, he said fight against terrorism is an important aspect and both the countries share intelligence and

other operational details.

Fielding a question about cross-border terrorism sponsored by Pakistan, he said "nobody can say Pakistan fulfilled its commitment" to address the issue.

Observing that the international body Financial Action Task Force (FATF) against terrorism has given Pakistan a deadline till February next year to stop terror finance, the French envoy said "we are very strict. Not an issue to be taken lightly and we will maintain pressure."

Regarding joint fight against terrorism, he said India and France are victims of this scourge and lauded the role of India in taking part in the first ever international conference hosted in Paris on financing terror last year. Australia will host the next session followed by India thereby indicating the seriousness attached to the issue, Lenain said.

On growing ties in maritime security, he said the two countries have increased their commitment in this sphere and share data besides soon starting joint patrolling. He also said India will deploy P8I maritime surveillance aircraft.

He made these observations in the backdrop of both the countries in an effort to protect their strategic interests in the Indian Ocean region deciding to embark on joint patrolling. The Indian maritime surveillance plane will be deployed with the primary aim to check illegal fishing.

In fact, last week visiting French Navy Vice Admiral Didier Malettre said, who is Joint Commander of the

French forces deployed in the Indian Ocean region, also said the two navies will ink an agreement early next year providing for sharing of classified information for better operational cooperation in the region.

Giving this information here during a media interaction, he also expressed concern over China expanding its maritime influence in the region, including through strategic bases like Hambantota port in Sri Lanka, Gwadar port in Pakistan and a key military facility in Djibouti in the Horn of Africa.

Malettre said following the attacks on two tankers in south of the Strait of Hormuz around five months back, India decided to deploy one of its frigates in the area to protect the sea lines of communication. Similarly, the French government also decided to permanently deploy one frigate in the area. The Strait of Hormuz in the Indian Ocean Region is a key area through which almost a fifth of the world's oil supply is shipped.

On the proposed Indo-French pact to facilitate sharing of classified information, he said it would be a rare occasion to have such an arrangement by France with a non-Nato country. Malettre said both Indian and French navies are going to have high-level operations featuring carrier battle group, submarines and amphibious ships.

He said both India and France share same political objectives for the Indian Ocean Region and that the high-level engagement between the two navies will further expand in the coming years.



PTI GRAPHICS

Priyanka, Cong leader hold sit-in at India Gate

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leaders led by Priyanka Gandhi Vadra held a sit-in at the India Gate on Monday in a show of solidarity with the students from Jamia Millia Islamia and several other universities across the country protesting the contentious amended citizenship law.

The Congress general secretary was joined by leaders like Ahmed Patel, AK Antony, Ghulam Nabi Azad and Randeep Singh Surjewala, besides hundreds of party workers. Before sitting on the dharna at the India Gate lawns, Priyanka Gandhi cited Delhi Police action against Jamia university students to hit out at the Modi Government, saying the atmosphere in the country has become "bad". Rahul took to twitter to express his solidarity with those protesting peacefully against them.

"The country's atmosphere is bad. Police is entering uni-



Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra along with other Congress leaders stage dharna in New Delhi on Monday

versity to beat up (students). The government has tinkered with the Constitution. We will fight for the Constitution," she said.

"This country is for everyone, it is for all those students who were beaten up yesterday. Attack on students is an attack on the soul of India," she said. She said the citizenship amendment law was against India's

Constitution and that it was brought to "destroy" the Constitution.

"Each and every Congress worker will fight against Modi government which is turning dictatorial," said Priyanka Gandhi, wondering why Prime Minister Narendra Modi is "silent" on assault on women, economy, joblessness and what

happened against the students.

In a statement Congress chief Sonia Gandhi alleged that the BJP Government's intention was clear about wanting to spread instability and creating an atmosphere of religious tension for political interests.

"A Government's job is to maintain peace and harmony, deliver governance and protect the Constitution. But the BJP government has declared a war on its own people. It has become the creator of violence and divisiveness. The government has pushed the country into an abyss of hatred and made the futures of youth uncertain," Sonia stated.

Sonia Gandhi claimed that Shah could not muster the courage to go to the northeast and the Bangladeshi foreign minister and the Japanese prime minister had to postpone their visits to India. "The reason is evident - Modi government has failed to govern. Inflation is at its peak, unemployment is on

record high levels, economy is declining and educational institutions are in a mess," Sonia alleged, adding that the Modi government is "busy spreading religious tension, creating chaos and fomenting violence to deflect attention from key issues".

The amended citizenship act and the National Register of Citizens are part of the Government's overall agenda to "divert the nation's attention from its failures".

Rahul Gandhi termed the CAA and the National Register of Citizens as "weapons of mass polarisation" unleashed by fascists on India and said the best defence against them is peaceful satyagraha.

"The CAB and NRC are weapons of mass polarisation unleashed by fascists on India. The best defence against these dirty weapons is peaceful, non violent Satyagraha. I stand in solidarity with all those protesting peacefully against the CAB and NRC," Rahul said.

MHA issues advisory to States, UTs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In the wake student protests, Union Home Ministry on Monday in an advisory asked the States and Union Territories to check violence and ensure safety of life and property and also to take strict action against those spreading fake news on social media. The advisory comes against the backdrop of violence reported from different parts of the country, especially university campuses, during protests against the amended citizenship act which was passed by Parliament and given assent by the president last week.

"It is imperative that all required measures be taken to contain violence, ensure protection of life and safety of citizens and prevent damage of proper-

ty," the advisory said. The State Governments and UT administrations have been requested to take precautionary measures to maintain law and order, peace and public tranquility. "They have also been requested to take action against circulation of fake news and rumours on social media having the potential to incite violence," it said.

Meanwhile, Home Minister Amit Shah while addressing lecture rallies in Jharkhand reiterated that there are certain elements unnecessarily trying to create chaos and the Citizenship Amendment Act will give Indian nationality to refugees facing religious persecution in three Islamic neighbouring countries and not take away anyone's citizenship in India.



Rapid Action Force (RAF) personnel keep vigil as activists of All Assam Students Union students participate in Satyagraha rally against amendments in Citizenship Act, in Guwahati on Monday

Nishank appeals to students to stay away from violence

PTI

New Delhi: HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank on Monday appealed to students to stay away from violence and maintain peace on campuses. The Human Resource Development (HRD) Minister's appeal came against the backdrop of protests on campuses across the country against the Citizenship Amendment Act and alleged police crackdown on Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) and Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) students.

"I appeal to all students to stay away from violence and maintain peace on campuses. Please do not pay heed to rumours. At this point, we need to propagate feelings of peace, harmony and brotherhood. We should not indulge in activity which is not in interests of the nation," he said. The Minister said it is unfortunate that "some anti-social elements want to damage national property by spreading violence and frenzy and disrupt the law and order situation."

"After demands from the country for long, the Citizenship Amendment Bill has

been passed. The Act passed in nation's interest is not against any religion, caste or region," he said.

Earlier in the day, he spoke to Jamia Vice-Chancellor Najma Akhtar and took a stock of the situation. Akhtar addressed the media after the university's Executive Council meeting and said she will present all facts before the HRD Ministry.

Akhtar also briefed HRD Higher Education Secretary Amit Khare who took charge of the post Monday.

In recent times the HRD Minister has taken the initiative to resolve the crisis at earliest with first being during the massive protest by the JNU students over fee hike. After protests continued for a couple of days, Nishank had appointed a three-member committee to recommend ways to restore normal functioning of the JNU. The committee was mandated to initiate dialogues with students and administration as well as submit recommendations on resolution of all issues which they did and the matter was resolved. PNS

REGIONAL PARTIES IN SOUTH DIVIDED

PTI ■ CHENNAI

As the protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) rages in various parts of the country, here is a look at the stand of key regional political parties from southern States.

Tamil Nadu: The ruling AIADMK supports the CAA and it spoke in Parliament for inclusion of Sri Lankan Tamils under the purview of the act in Parliament. It has mocked at arch-rival DMK for allegedly not doing anything to get citizenship for Lankan Tamil refugees when it shared power at the Centre for 17 years.

The DMK vehemently opposes the act both before and after its enactment.

The MK Stalin-led principal opposition has lashed out at Chief Minister K Palaniswami for supporting the CAA, alleging it was a "betrayal of minorities and Sri Lankan Tamils."

Telangana and Andhra Pradesh: The ruling Telangana



Rashtra Samiti opposes the CAA while in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh, both the ruling YSR Congress Party and main Opposition Telugu Desam Party supported the legislation.

Karnataka: Former Prime Minister and Janata Dal (Secular) chief H D Deve Gowda has opposed the act, saying it was against the principles of secularism and rights enshrined in the Constitution.

JD(S) Member of Rajya Sabha Kupendra Reddy said their party opposed the bill as it was not proper and lacked clarity on various aspects like what will happen to those who are not given citizenship under this act. "We are not saying the bill was anti Muslim or anything, I'm not blaming Government... There is lack of clarity on things like Sri Lankan Tamils being left out..." he said.

Protests against CAA continue in Bengal



Brick-bats and broken glass pieces lie on a road during clashes between the police and protesters following a demonstration against NRC and Citizenship Amendment Act, at Bankra in Howrah district of West Bengal on Monday

Kolkata: Protests over the amended Citizenship Act continued in Bengal for the fourth consecutive day on Monday, with incidents of road and rail blockades reported from various parts of the state, officials said.

In East Midnapore and Murshidabad districts, the agitators blocked thoroughfares since morning, inconveniencing hundreds of commuters, they said.

Several trains have been cancelled or delayed due to the ongoing protests.

A spokesperson of the railways said demonstrators have blocked the tracks in Sealdah-Diamond Harbour and Sealdah-Namkhana sectors.

Efforts were being made to disperse the mob, he added. Internet services remained suspended in six districts of State — Malda, Uttar Dinajpur, Murshidabad, Howrah, North 24 Parganas and parts of South 24 Parganas districts — where agitation over the amended Act have brought life to a halt.

Petitioner Surajit Saha prayed for direction to the Government to ensure maintenance of law and order, which is a state subject. The court directed the state government to file the report by December 18 when the matter will be heard next. The counsel for the state government told the court that reports have been sought from the affected districts. The petitioner further urged that compensation be given to the railways, which bore the brunt of violence, and also to private persons who were affected.

Calcutta HC asks WB Govt to file report on action taken amid violence

Kolkata: The Calcutta High Court directed the State Government on Monday to file a report on action taken regarding law and order situation in West Bengal, amid violent protests against the citizenship law.

A division bench of Chief Justice TBN Radhakrishnan and Justice H Bhattacharyya gave the directions on a petition filed by a resident of Howrah that has seen several incidents of vandalism and arson.

Petitioner Surajit Saha prayed for

BJP's Dilip Ghosh announces rally in Kolkata to 'congratulate' Modi Govt over citizenship law

Kolkata: West Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh on Monday said that the party will hold a rally in Kolkata on December 23 to "congratulate" the Centre for amending the Citizenship Act.

Ghosh said the kind of violent protests taking place in West Bengal clearly shows that there is a need for implementing NRC and the citizenship law in the state.

He said BJP working president J P Nadda will be present at the rally and the party will hold a similar mass meeting in north Bengal on December 24.

Ghosh said the way public property is vandalised and damaged in West Bengal is unprecedented.

"Even protests are being held in Assam and Tripura. But public property had not been damaged there," he claimed.

The BJP leader said the violence and arson taking place in the state has been a result of instigation by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee who has been "speaking in the same tone as that of Pakistan".

He said since the citizenship law is a central Act, the state government will have to implement it.

Protests galore in south as students join forces against it

Thiruvananthapuram/Chennai/Hyderabad: Protests by political parties and students against the CAA were held in various parts of southern states on Monday as the ruling CPI (M)-led LDF and Opposition Congress headed UDF in Kerala joined hands to oppose the law, setting aside differences.

Various educational campuses, including the prestigious Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras, the Indian Institute of Institute of Science (IISc) in Bengaluru, saw protests by the students against the police crackdown in Jamia Millia Islamia in Delhi on Sunday night and the controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA).

Actor politician Kamal Haasan led Makkal Needhi Maiam said it has filed a public interest litigation in the Supreme Court on Monday seeking a stay on the new amendment which provides citizenship to the persecuted religious minorities from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan.

In a rare show of camaraderie, bitter political foes — Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and Leader of Opposition in the assembly Ramesh Chennithala — came together at a joint protest in the state capital and condemned the act with the former saying it was an attempt to "curb" freedom.

Arch rivals join hands in Kerala against CAA

Thiruvananthapuram: They are known in Kerala as arch political opponents, strong critics of each other. Yet, they came together on the same platform, shook hands, exchanged pleasantries and raised their voices in unison against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act here on Monday, setting aside their political and ideological differences.

When Kerala Chief Minister and CPI(M) veteran Pinarayi Vijayan and senior Congress leader and opposition head in the State Assembly Ramesh Chennithala led a joint protest against the CAA, it became a rare chapter in the State's politics.

Besides them, Vijayan's Cabinet Ministers and party leaders and Chennithala's party MLAs and colleagues took part in the protest held at the special platform erected in front of the Martyrs' Column in the heart of the State capital.

A sense of togetherness against a 'common threat' seemed to have gripped the atmosphere of the joint protest venue.

Both the ruling and opposition leaders minced no words in attacking the BJP-led NDA Government over the CAA and seeing "Sangh Parivar agenda" behind the move. While Vijayan said the country was facing an 'explosive' atmosphere, Chennithala alleged the Sangh was "experimenting with the idea" of German dictator Adolf Hitler in the country.

Students protests over violence against AMU students

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Students of the Mumbai University, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Students of University of Mumbai and Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay (IIT-B) on Monday staged protests over the violence unleashed against the students of Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI), Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) and the Guwahati University.

As part of the protests, the students from TISS and University of Mumbai also condemned the Narendra Modi Government over the Citizens Amendment Act (CAA), 2019, and the proposed move to implement National Register of Citizens (NRC) across the country.

More than 300 students from the University of Mumbai assembled at Kalina and raised slogans like "Azadi" and "Samvidhaan humara bhaari hai" and condemned lathi-charge resorted to the police against the students of JMI, AMU and Guwahati University



Students hold placards and shout slogans during a protest over the Citizenship Amendment Act, in Mumbai on Monday

who are protesting against the CAA. They opposed the manner in which CAA discriminated on the basis of religion.

Hundreds of students owing allegiance to Chhatra Bharati Sanghatana (CBS) expressed their solidarity with the students of JMI, AMU students. They also opposed the

CAA and NRC laws at the Mumbai University's Kalina Campus in the afternoon. They demanded the immediate release of the JMI students who were arrested in connection with Sunday's protests.

Talking to media persons, CBS's state co-ordinator Sachin Bansod said: "Apart from con-

demning against CAA and NRC, we — through our protest — expressed our solidarity with the students of JMI students. We demand that the students who were arrested in yesterday's protests in Delhi be released immediately".

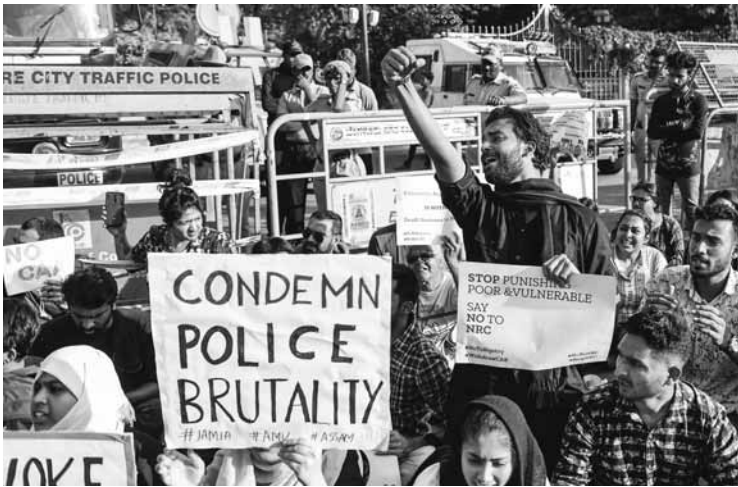
Condemning the lathi-charge resorted to against the

JMI students, Bansod said: "Just because students speak against the Government does not mean that they should be lathi-charged. We demand that stringent action be taken against all those Delhi police persons who indulged in high-handed manner against the JMI students".

Students from TISS, who gathered outside the Institute premises, carried placards with slogans against the Government over CAA and violence meted out to the students of JMI and two other universities. They demanded scrapping of CAA and NRC.

The IIT-B students staged a peaceful protest carrying torches, banners and posters around the institute campus against violence meted out JMI students on Sunday night. They carried placards and banners saying "In Solidarity With Jamia".

The IIT-B students concerned took to social media on Monday, giving details of the silent protest that they undertook on Sunday night.



Protesters hold placards and raise slogans protesting against the amended Citizenship Act and police atrocities on students demonstrating over CAA, in Bengaluru on Monday

Police fire in air, vehicles torched by protesters in Mau



Mau (UP): Protesters torched vehicles as a demonstration against the Citizenship Amendment Act and police action at Jamia Millia Islamia University turned violent here on Monday, prompting police to fire in the air.

Police lobbed tear gas shells and also fired in the air to control the situation in Mau's Dakshintola area.

An eyewitness said protesters set ablaze 15 vehicles, including those of police.

Police, however, gave out a much smaller number of vehicles damaged.

and Order) Praveen Kumar said in Lucknow, "Three or four motorcycles were set ablaze." "The unlawful assembly has been dispersed. Additional forces have been deployed. Presently, peace and order is being maintained," he said in a statement.

Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Awanshi Awasthi said senior officials are at the spot. "The mob has been dispersed. Section 144 of the CrPc is already implemented in the district," he said, referring to the section that prohibits assembly of people.

India has not seen a 'power-hungry' party like BJP before: Akhilesh

Lucknow: The BJP Government has pushed the country into "an inferno of violence" by the "destructive" Citizenship Amendment Act, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav said on Monday.

In a tweet in Hindi, Yadav said, "The BJP Government has pushed the country into an inferno of violence by its destructive law. It is inflicting fatal injuries on the future of the country. It is said that when people start losing, they become oppressive."

He alleged that the country has not seen a "power-hungry" party like the BJP before.

Anger over the police crackdown in Delhi's Jamia Millia Islamia and at the controversial Citizenship Amendment Act cascaded across many campuses in the country on Monday.

GUWAHATI AASU leaders, protesters taken into custody during rally; released later

Guwahati: AASU chief advisor Samujjal Bhattacharya and general secretary Lurinjyoti Gogoi were taken into police custody on Monday along with more than a hundred protesters during a rally in Guwahati against the citizenship law, officials said. The AASU's three-day "Satyagraha" began in the morning and the leaders addressed the protesters at the Lalati playground before beginning a march towards the deputy commissioner's office.

"We have information that we might be arrested but we want to make it clear that our demand is withdraw CAA or arrest us," Bhattacharya said in his address to the protesters.

He urged the protesters to "march in pairs and be disciplined as our protest is non-violent".



Police detain the students of Cochin University of Science and Technology (Cusat), who were protesting over the Citizenship Amendment Act, in Kochi on Monday

Regional parties in N-E, East take varied positions on CAA

Kolkata/Guwahati: The enactment of the new citizenship law has left BJP ally Asom Gana Parishad in a quandary following protests in Assam, with the party deciding to move the Supreme Court to scrap the Act, days after backing it in Parliament.

It, however, is still a partner in the BJP — led NDA. "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," AGP leader Kumar Deepak Das had told PTI on Sunday.

However, the party looked like a divided house with its president and State Minister Atul Bora appearing more resilient and accommodative.

He said on Sunday that the Brahmaputra Valley should be excluded from the purview of the law, which may be implemented in the Barak Valley. Barak Valley has vast Muslim population, besides substantial number of Hindu migrants from Bangladesh who stand to benefit from the new law.

The AGP had walked out of the NDA in January this year following the passage of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill by the Lok Sabha. It, however, returned to the NDA fold as the Bill expired with the dissolution of the 16th Lok Sabha. It contested the Lok Sabha and state assembly elections in alliance with the BJP.

Amended citizenship law won't be implemented in Sikkim: CM

Gangtok: Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang on Monday said the citizenship law will not be implemented in the State as it enjoys special status under Article 371(F) of the Constitution.

Hitting out at the Opposition, Tamang said, "Some people with vested interest are misleading people in Sikkim on amended citizenship law. It will not have any implications in the State."

"We have already been assured by Union Home Minister Amit Shah that the amended Citizenship Act will not come into force in Sikkim as the state enjoys a special status under Article 371(F) of the



Constitution," Tamang said.

The Chief Minister said despite the Union home minister giving a point of clarification in the Parliament that the Act will not be implemented in Sikkim till it is rat-

ified by the State Assembly, opposition parties in the state were "misguiding" people over the issue.

Opposition parties Congress, Hamro Sikkim Party (HSP) and the Sikkim Republican Party (SRP) have expressed fears that Sikkim, with only six lakh population, will be forced to come under the purview of the Act.

HSP working president Bhaichung Bhutia has been a fierce critic of the Act, expressing apprehensions that the amended citizenship law may change the demography of the State, which is at present in the favour of Lepchas, Bhutias and Gorkhas.

SOUTH DELHI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

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No. D/EE (SLF/SDMC/2019-20/228) Dated: 16.12.2019

PRESS NOTICE FOR TENDER

FOR ONLINE TENDERING TIME TABLE PLEASE REFER
www.tenderwizard.com/SOUTHDMCETENDER. Sealed percentage/Item rate tenders are invited for the execution of the following works by the SDMC from approved and eligible contractors. The tenders advertised on website www.tenderwizard.com/SOUTHDMCETENDER will be received as per time table and will be opened at 3.30 PM on 02.01.2020 by Executive Engineer (SLF), Room No. 6, Ambedkar Stadium. The registered contractors of SDMC/MCD only are eligible to tender as per their registered categories (eligibility) with SDMC/MCD subject to the conditions that they are neither black listed nor debarred at the time of purchase of tender. Last date of purchase and download of tender: 02.01.2020 up to 3.00 P.M. Last date of closing of financial bid: 02.01.2020 up to 3.30 P.M. Opening of financial bid : 02.01.2020 at 3.30 PM. S. No. 1, Head of Account : F-100/1062, Name of work: Providing/Laying of RMC for making various platforms for installation of Trommels at SLF Okhla, Central Zone Tender Amount: Rs. 3309102/-, Earnest money : Rs. 66200/-, Time of completion: 02 Months, Rates hold good for: 5 Months, Tender cost : Rs. 500/-

R.O. No. 134/DPI/S/2019-20 Executive Engineer (SLF), SDMC

Jackboots vs Ahimsa

The excessive and arbitrary use of violence against protesting students, who just want a voice, is simply unacceptable



It is ironic that on a day the Irish rock band U2 paid a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence by singing *Ahimsa* with AR Rahman in Mumbai, students in Delhi, protesting against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), were subjected to excesses of the most brutal kind in the name of keeping law and order. It is ironic that both the US and France, the two Western nations that are perceived to have been curated by Modi 2.0's diplomacy, have issued travel advisories to India following the widespread protests on the

CAA. It is indeed ironic that the democratic right to dissent is being subjugated by totalitarian clampdowns even at the first response stage. It is disgustingly ironic that the legitimate concerns of an entire student community are being attributed to the alternative "isms" and ideologies that are inconvenient to the establishment. Nobody is condoning the violence and arson that have been resorted to by extreme elements, outsiders even, and necessitates strict action. But to hound and scare the student fraternity as a whole is fascist and makes a mockery of our Constitution. To even classify their largely peaceful congregations as a menace to society is monstrously wrong. As images went viral of the police entering the Jamia Millia Islamia University, ostensibly even without the V-C's knowledge, barging into libraries and hostels where non-protesting students were going about the normal business of academic life and herding blood-streaked and panicked faces on a cold winter night, the iron fist forgot that it at least needed to wear velvet gloves. That containing violence was one thing, containing students' right to be heard quite the other. All this naked display of aggression did was to forge a pan-Indian solidarity among students, be it at Aligarh Muslim University and Banaras Hindu University in Uttar Pradesh, IIT and TISS in Mumbai or at campuses in Hyderabad, Chennai, Bengaluru and Kolkata. One of the students of Constitutional law summed it up, saying she was a Hindu but stood at the forefront of an agitation against exclusionary policies that questioned the Indianness of her friends. It is this heart-breaking image that will stay over the rhetoric of political aggrandisement and the Prime Minister's rather facile dismissal of troublemakers as identifiable by "what they wear." Many student protesters, therefore, took their shirts off to reveal their *janeus*, not as a sign of majoritarian guilt but as an assertion of what is right. As a democratic society, students or citizens have the right to protest peacefully and must be accorded the space to do so. Vigilance and safe-keeping don't mean turning oppressor. The Jamia episode was particularly about jackbooting on presumptions rather than finding out that the arsonists were not students as much. It also raises questions about a differential approach towards students of perceived minority institutions like Jamia and AMU and student protesters elsewhere.

This, then, becomes bigotry of the worst kind, one that actually executes the dystopia of "otherisation." Even known autocracies have been wise to step back faced with the tsunami of student activism. China did not unleash the Army on Hong Kong students as the world gaze on it changed ever since its misadventure at Tiananmen Square. And during the student-led anti-government protests in Iran, Ayatollah Khamenei told the police to restrain itself even if it meant that activists burnt his posters or tore them apart. We cannot silence students because they do what we have trained them to do, to be fired by idealism, which we fail at, to seek an equitable world and question status quo. They should not be pupeteered but seen as a barometer of our failures. As public movements gather momentum, we must also codify threshold levels for security personnel as to what demands excessive use of force against civilians. There is need for a protocol on escalation, clearly defining situations and the extent of force to be applied, using non-lethal means. It doesn't matter which political party is in power but the police force simply cannot be politicised. A civil protest has the potential to turn violent but the job of the police is to restore peace in a manner that is mandated by law and with caveats. No police in a democracy can violate basic human rights. As for the identity politics that's being relentlessly pushed with brute force, the ruling dispensation must realise that it has a mammoth verdict now, doesn't need tokenisms and can get down to doing what could be its transformative moment, develop India so that we forget that we had been just "crawling" for 70 years. Divisiveness will not dignify even its smallest best efforts.

Climate breakdown

Maybe leaders do not like being lectured by a teenager but the world cannot afford failure



Another year of UN-sponsored climate talks and another year of stagnation where nothing was achieved. Yes, 2019 will go down as the year when a Swedish schoolgirl stood up to global leaders and told them to feel some shame but the latter, rather leaders of the world's most important countries when it comes to climate change, have brushed her away. There have been record wildfires in Australia and the US, heatwaves in Europe, droughts in South America and rapidly shrinking ice levels at the Poles. It was believed that compromises and contingency plans would have been put into place at Madrid but after days of smashing heads together, nothing was achieved. The Paris deal of 2015 offered a framework for a new carbon market under the UN, but the details had not been worked out. Under it, those who have no choice but to pollute a bit would be free to trade carbon credits with developed countries. With no agreement reached, events like "Extinction Rebellion" in London, which brought the city to a standstill, are meaningless.

Partially, this is due to the Right-wing, nationalist turn the world has taken politically. Strongmen from our own Narendra Modi to Donald Trump, Xi Jinping, Vladimir Putin and now possibly Boris Johnson are not ready to compromise on their nations and liabilities. After all, fighting climate change is an expensive business and nobody wants to foot the bill. It has become a game of passing the responsibility on and telling the other guy what to do. For some Westerners, it is about countries like India and even those in the African continent which are forced to put off their dreams of development "for the sake of the planet." None of the countries will utter a peep to their own people, whose vast consumption outweighs that of many Indians. It is true that there has been a dramatic rise in global carbon levels over the past few years, thanks to China, but was it wrong on its part to haul hundreds of millions out of extreme poverty? India's moral imperative is first and foremost to end hunger and starvation and ensure that no child is left behind. Unfortunately, this will have an environmental cost, one that this country will pay dearly due to rising sea levels. Yet, India will have to make some compromises if it is to reduce the extent of climate-induced suffering. There has been a pivot towards huge investments in renewable energy and exploring new technologies but this needs the developed world to be less hypocritical.

opinion

Cloud on citizenship

The CAA has nothing to do with Indian citizens, irrespective of their religious affiliation. It is an attempt to help persecuted minorities who have been victims in neighbouring Islamic nations



A SURYA PRAKASH

The statements of six Chief Ministers belonging to parties opposed to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), that they "will not allow" the implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in their States, poses an open and grave challenge to the Constitution and to India's unity and integrity.

The opposition to the amended Act began with West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. Soon thereafter, Kamal Nath, Bhupesh Baghel and Amarinder Singh, the Congress Chief Ministers of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Punjab joined in, followed by Pinarayi Vijayan of Kerala and Arvind Kejriwal of Delhi. All of them have said that they "will not allow" the amended Act to be implemented in their States. These statements smack of recklessness and do not augur well for the preservation of national unity and integrity.

The CAA grants citizenship to six non-Muslim communities from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, who are victims of religious persecution in these Islamic nations. They are identified as Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Parsis and Christians, who fled these nations and entered India until December 31, 2014. The amendment says they will not be treated as illegal immigrants any more.

The legislative powers of the Centre and the States are clearly demarcated in the Union List, the State List and the Concurrent List in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution. Entry 17 in the Union List says, "Citizenship, naturalisation and aliens," meaning that all matters pertaining to these issues are wholly within the legislative competence of the Union Government.

Under the Constitution, no State has the right to reject a law made by the Centre within the legislative sphere allotted to it. Speaking on Centre-State relations, BR Ambedkar had told the Constituent Assembly on November 4, 1948, that "the basic principle of federalism is that the legislative and executive authority is partitioned between the Centre and the States, not by any law to be made by the Centre but by the Constitution itself. This is what the Constitution does."

Those who are opposing the amendment argue that it violates Article 14 of the Constitution, which guarantees equality before law and the equal protection of the laws. In their view, the exclusion of Muslims from these three nations constitutes an infringement of this Article. Several individuals are already knocking on the doors of the Supreme Court, questioning the vires of the amendment and one will have to await the opinion of the apex court in the matter.

This law has nothing to do with Indian citizens, irrespective of their religious affiliation and those who oppose it are aware of this. This amendment does not deny the protection of Article 14 to any citizen of India.



It appears the argument against the amendment is that it infringes on the rights of Muslim citizens of Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. Is any nation obliged to ensure Constitutional guarantees to the citizens of other nations?

Second, while the amendment speaks of six communities, they are actually a class of persecuted people, not merely adherents of certain religions. There are also decisions of the Supreme Court that Article 14 provides for reasonable classification.

The Centre's decision to reach out to these communities must be welcomed for two reasons. First, India has always been hospitable to persecuted communities for millennia. The arrival of Zoroastrians in the 12th century is an example of that tradition. In recent times, after the Chinese moved into Tibet, India saw a flood of Tibetan refugees numbering over 80,000 in 1959-60. Thereafter, there has been a steady flow of Tibetan refugees into India and the Union Government made special provisions for their settlement in Dharamshala and in other parts of the country, including Karnataka. Given the manner in which India handled the Tibetan refugee issue, one would presume this would be the template

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THE REAL ISSUE IS NOT WHY SUCH A LAW HAS BEEN BROUGHT IN NOW. THE QUESTION TO ASK IS: WHY WAS IT NOT DONE EARLIER? WHY DID INDIA, LARGELY UNDER THE CONGRESS' RULE SINCE INDEPENDENCE, TURN A BLIND EYE TO THE PLIGHT OF ADHERENTS OF INDIC RELIGIONS AND CHRISTIANS IN THESE ISLAMIC NATIONS?
 ”

to accommodate those coming in from the Islamic nations.

In other words, they will be accommodated in other parts of the country. The fears that these people will be a burden on Assam is, therefore, misplaced. Since this amendment talks about a cut-off date of December 31, 2014, the fear of fresh migrations is baseless. The benefits of this amendment will not be available to those who cross into India in future.

Further, it is not realised that this amendment is consequential to a couple of notifications issued by the Central Government in 2015 and 2016. The first notification said that individuals from these six persecuted communities, who entered India before December 31, 2014, would be exempted from the penal provisions of the Passport Act and The Foreigners Act. This meant that such people would not face criminal proceedings even if they did not have passports and other valid documents. Their entry and stay were regularised.

Thereafter, the Central Government gave these people the facility of long-term visas. The amendment became necessary because despite these notifications, these people were still "illegal migrants" as per the definition in the citizenship Act. Until this amendment is made,

these people cannot apply for Indian citizenship.

The real issue is not why such a law has been brought in now. The question to ask is: Why was it not done earlier? Why did India, largely under the Congress' rule since independence, turn a blind eye to the plight of adherents of Indic religions and Christians in these Islamic nations? Further, why has the Congress, which has encouraged Bangladeshi Muslim migrants and used them as a vote-bank all these years, now protesting over this law.

The attitude of the Congress is in line with its Muslim appeasement policy even though it is giving it diminishing returns. This party, which ruled the country for much of the post-independence era, is unable to digest its marginalisation and is adopting an "after me the deluge" kind of an attitude. The only Constitutional option available to the opponents of the amended law is to challenge it in the Supreme Court, which has been done.

When the Congress encourages its Chief Ministers to openly declare that they will not implement a Central law, the party is playing with fire. It will be wholly responsible for the consequences.
 (This writer is an author specialising in democracy studies. Views expressed are personal.)

SOUNDBITE

I don't think it is apt for any country to comment on the domestic matter of India. We believe in freedom of religion and it is not for us to comment.



French envoy —Emmanuel Lenain

Our cinema can't be progressive. If you make cinema progressive, no one will watch it because our audience is still not ready.



Actor —Neena Gupta

We do have a long year ahead. It'll be entertaining because my father will keep it so, I promise you that. It will be like Bollywood with a lot less dancing.



American businessman —Donald Trump Jr

The positive effects of the second informal summit between Chinese and Indian leaders are gradually showing and bilateral relations are developing steadily.



Chinese Ambassador —Sun Weidong

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Politics over CAA

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Take the lead" (December 16). In the wake of the abrogation of Article 370 and 35(A), the Narendra Modi Government took every precautionary measure to thwart possible violence. Similar was the case ahead of the Ayodhya verdict. It should have moved with equal alacrity during the passage of the Citizens Amendment Bill (CAB).

Knowing that it was an inflammatory issue, it should have prepared security personnel to make a distinction between peaceful protests and wilful vandalism of public properties. Also, there may be much anxiety about the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) but not all religious minorities are on their toes to come back to India, leaving their properties in nations where they have settled. Only persecuted religious minorities, who are unable to stay there, will be rehabilitated. The National Register of Citizens (NRC), too, does not aim to deport genuine citizens of the country. Only those foreign nationals, who have settled down in the country illegally, will be

No respite for people from rising prices

After onions, a hike in milk prices is set to sour matters for the common man. News reports that leading milk suppliers like Mother Dairy and Amul have increased rates come at a time when people are already suffering under deteriorating market trends. That the Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation, which sells its products under Amul brand, has announced a parallel increase in its price further portends a worrisome trend that will soon have the common man finding almost all domestic requirements way beyond his reach.

For a Government that has time and again harped on popularity as the only measure of its acceptability, it better take stock of its recent unpopular moves. Anguished over the inability of the Government to check soaring prices of essential commodities, it is equally important that people, too, realise the folly of giving into Utopian fantasies and swearing by an administration that has failed to deliver. Development for a common man commences from the kitchen. With soaring prices denying even a square meal a day, how can *achehe din* be envisaged? While people have been crying for attention, the Government has embarked on a path that is detrimental to their interests. Let us not forget that successive Governments have done so solely on the strength of their



pro-common man agenda. Time and again it has been observed that a common man's problems have been the only plank that works. Parties exploit them for electoral gains — something to be used and then unceremoniously dumped when the purpose is served. The BJP Government has been no different. As much as the Government is guilty of overlooking the problems and interests of the people, the latter, too, is responsible for not standing up for their rights.

Pachu Menon Margao

Humanitarian woes

Sir — The clash of civilisations will no longer be a big bang event but will gradually escalate through infinitesimal attrition.

With increasing levels of migration along open borders and the demographic situation exploding, politically the Right and Left wing factions have gelled into an amorphous entity. Strategically, nanobots and

drone have been game changers but conflict within technology-based societies will largely be subject to massive collateral damage as shown in the popular sci-fi movie, *The Surrogates*. Europe is an emerging theatre to study sociological assimilation and the robustness of multi-cultural societies. As in the past, when the two great wars had their epicentre here, the future will also emerge from this cauldron of humanity.

Anoop Hosmath Mysuru

Brexit blues

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "A Brexit mandate" (December 15). It was Boris Johnson's campaign promise to get Brexit done that led to the Conservative Party's historic win in the UK elections. It will, however, be a fallacy to think that Britain will be free to do whatever it wants the moment the Bill is passed. Its freedom will depend on the kind of relationship it wants with the EU and other partners.

Prarthna Via email

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Saved by vigilance

The best central banker is one which ensures that any financial recession or slowdown can be suitably prevented while ensuring price stability



KARAN BHASIN

There has been a lot of talk regarding a potential economic recession and the global slowdown in 2019 gave credence to such a hypothesis, even as equity markets world over attained newer highs. There were no apparent reasons behind the likelihood of a downturn, except for years of unconventional monetary policies combined with increased uncertainty due to the ongoing trade war. Many felt, and perhaps rightly so, that the low levels of capacity utilisation due to trade disruptions would eventually impact investment in these countries, thereby slowing their economies. The causality was correct and we witnessed a substantial slowdown in China, Europe (including Germany) and other South Asian economies that are heavily dependent on exports and international trade. The fact that there was an additional uncertain element of whether Brexit would happen and if so, under what terms for the Eurozone, further compounded the situation. Intuitively, investments (and even consumption) are likely to take a hit when there's increased uncertainty and therefore, a deceleration was eminent in these economies. However, many of these economies have their own set of domestic problems that have afflicted their growth rates. A classic example would be China which has seen an increase in its wages, making it relatively less competitive. This occurred simultaneously with its practice of exchange rate manipulations. No wonder there is a trade war that resulted in a prolonged period of tariff uncertainty as China has been known to bend the rules to its advantage through levy of serious Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs).

Despite many countries facing domestic bottlenecks to growth, there's been a consistent argument that a recession is imminent because of these trade-induced uncertainties. However, certain international developments are important. Last week, the US-China trade talks arrived at the first phase of a potential trade deal. This implies limited ad-hoc changes in trade policies for the foreseeable future, thereby reducing uncertainty. The trade war is likely to be behind us till at least the US 2020 elections and therefore, the outlook for the coming financial year should be better than the one before. Similarly, the recently-concluded UK elections have resulted in a conservative victory as Boris Johnson emerged as the Prime Minister with full majority. Johnson has been a poster-boy for the Brexit campaign and was adamant on getting it done even with a minority Government. Though the fractured Parliament failed to agree to a deal with the EU, thereby making Brexit a reality, a full majority ensures that it will finally happen. It also implies that the exit from the EU would come with a deal between UK-EU which will reduce the initial cost of this disruption. All of this is likely to result in reduced uncertainty in the Euro-region.

Leading central bankers have moved to accommodative monetary policies over the last year as they braced themselves for a likely economic recession due to unpredictable trade policies. Some of them have even argued for a more active fiscal policy over the last couple of months. With these two developments, the root cause of uncertainty is removed.

However, some vulnerability exists as equities have continued to rally despite earnings not catching up. Therefore, the only concern at the moment is to do with financial markets and their stability. As long as markets continue to be stable there is little scope for an economic recession and to ensure this, growth needs to revive. Perhaps, the scale of the 2008 economic crisis resulted in central bankers realising the importance of being extremely vigilant and since then, we've seen them ensure macro-financial stability. The positive policy story throughout 2019 is that central bankers perhaps have learnt their lesson from the 2008 global meltdown. They're more proactive, open to taking bold policy choices and politically savvy enough to navigate the complex web of policymaking.

A consequence of this is that somehow, central banks saw a recession coming in 2019 and they took corrective measures well in advance. Through these measures, they have managed to ensure that the recession doesn't hit us for now. This illustrates an increasingly important role played by central bankers. It is important to note how, during the Jackson Hole Economic Symposium, leading central bankers had advocated a trade deal which was originally outside their purview. The fact that a deal has happened only reinforces their importance. While 2019 redefined the role of monetary masters the world-over, back home in India, we continued to be conservative with our fiscal policy which seems to have prolonged the recovery. Though we have bottomed out, there is an excellent lesson for the RBI from the experience of other central banks over the last year. Unconventional policies should never be a strict "no" but they must be embraced from time to time. After all, the best central banker isn't one that ensures just price stability for economic recovery but one which ensures that any financial recession or economic slowdown can be adequately prevented while ensuring price stability. Hopefully, as our central bank evolves, we will witness it playing an increasing role to ensure just the same.

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

POINT COUNTERPOINT

THE CONGRESS AND ITS ALLIES ARE STOKING FIRE OVER THE CITIZENSHIP ACT BUT PEOPLE OF THE NORTHEAST HAVE REJECTED VIOLENCE.

—PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI



INSTEAD OF LISTENING TO THE PEOPLE, THE BJP GOVERNMENT IS REPRESSING STUDENTS AND JOURNALISTS IN THE NORTHEAST, UP AND DELHI.

—CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY (UP) PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA

Don't be ivory towers

Academicians must speak a language which the common man understands and engage with the community through articles, debates, meetings and maybe even a YouTube channel



GAUTAM CHOUBEY

Three of India's leading central universities, located in the Capital, are going through a phase of student-faculty unrest. While students at the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) are opposing the recent fee revision, Delhi University (DU) teachers have hit the streets demanding absorption of ad-hoc teachers, disbursement of suspended pensions and promotion. Over the past few days, Jamia Millia Islamia has erupted too, with students denouncing the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA). According to the agitators, the issues which have rattled these campuses violate notions of inclusivity, individual dignity and impartiality, as guaranteed by the Constitution. However, even as the dramatic visuals of demonstration keep trickling in and many decry the situation as "unprecedented", one needs to admit that Indian universities have never been immune to such turbulence.

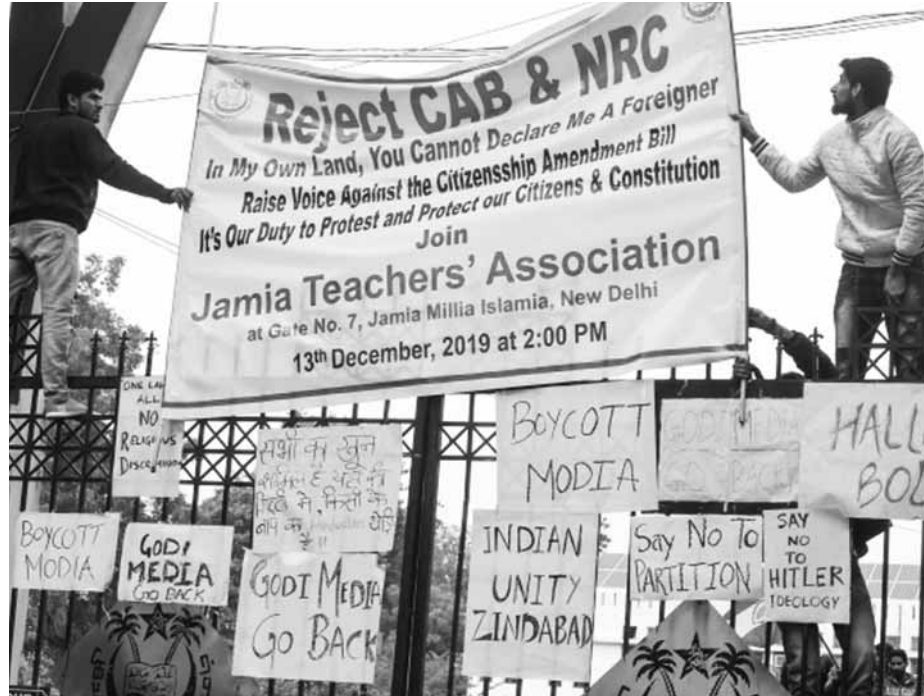
During the days of the Civil Disobedience Movement in the 1920s, "nationalist" universities such as Jamia were conceptualised and established as pockets of resistance. Over the years, these institutions have offered the most trenchant critique of authority, whether British or Indian. From the Independence struggle to the JP Movement, and from Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee to Arun Jaitley, universities have supplied both leadership and spine to mass movements in India. However, the state of affairs in 2019 begs an important question: Was there ever such a phase in modern India when public sympathy for State-funded universities had shrunk to the extent it has today?

The custom of criticising universities is nearly as old as the history of modern education in India. As harbingers of change, these institutions have often been accused of corrupting time-honoured traditions and causing social anarchy. In a scene from Sunil Gangopadhyay's celebrated historical novel *Those Days*, which portrays the lives of several legendary reformer-educationalists in 19th century Bengal, Scottish philanthropist David Hare bemoans the conservatives of Calcutta who believe that "book-learned women are liable to lose their husbands." However, this suspicion has moved beyond the realm of superstition and has now developed into an incisive politico-economic critique. Over the past few years, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas, this criticism has reached a fever pitch. The majority appears to have bought the argument that subsidising universities is wastage of tax-payers' money, since these institutions foment secessionist and pro-Naxal sympathies. And that the "aging" researchers, who inhabit these campuses, are mere shirkers. Unfortunately, nothing seems to have bolstered public estimation of these universities or their students — not their dominance of the National Institutional Ranking Framework, positions in the Union Cabinet or even a Nobel Prize.

Arguably, had it not been for its proximity to newsrooms in Delhi and Noida, the State election in Delhi, the notoriety which JNU has acquired since 2016 and the agitation at the three universities would have evaded media attention. Although DU caters to nearly 300,000 students and a large number of students at JNU and Jamia come from extremely underprivileged backgrounds, news of unrest has failed to trigger a national debate on the need to protect institutions which continue to provide affordable education in India.

There is no denying, that part of the problem lies in uncharitable portraiture by certain news channels,

“ AT THE SAME TIME, GIVEN THE LEGACY OF UNIVERSITIES AND THEIR ENORMOUS CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY-BUILDING IN INDIA, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE GOVERNMENT AND THE UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION HONOUR THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THEIR ORIGIN. THEY WERE IMAGINED AS CENTRES OF CRITICAL THINKING, AND THEY MUST REMAIN SO. IT WAS PRECISELY THIS CULTURE OF DISSENT AND PROTEST IN THE UNIVERSITIES WHICH MILITATED AGAINST STATE OPPRESSION DURING THE DARK DAYS OF EMERGENCY AND SAW TO IT THAT A REINVIGORATED DEMOCRACY WAS RESTORED IN THE COUNTRY



nels, misinformation peddled on social-media and a voyeuristic interest in campus life. But these aren't the only ones to be blamed. Popular culture, cinema and by extension, public imagination are sated with several problematic representations of the idea of a university.

First, in a number of films, universities are depicted as breeding grounds for extremists and delusional idealists, typified by JNU and its bespectacled *jhola chhaap* (cloth bag-toting) students. The famous thief-scene from the film *Raanjhanaa* (2013), where students indulge in a futile night-long debate into the origins of delinquency, is a snide remark on the culture of debates that universities pride themselves on. Second, in films such as *Haasil* (2003) and *Gulaab* (2009) and the recent web-series *Mirzapur* (2018), universities are portrayed as battlegrounds of violent student politics, puppeteered by corrupt mucklemen. A third variety emerges in Karan Johar's fairyland colleges, exemplified by the *Student of the Year* franchise. Of late, thanks to the army of technocrat-turned-comedians, and films such as *Three Idiots* (2009) and *Chhichhore* (2019), engineering colleges are being imagined as zoos of quirky characters, lechery and such. In a country where cinema, television and now YouTube define the scope of reality for millions, such representations have dented their public perception.

At the same time, mass media has persistently, if not deliberately, shied away from portraying the challenges and the disappointments of university life. No mainstream film speaks of those non-glamorous, bookish-students who wage daily battles against social sanctions, poverty, joblessness and an endlessly frustrating bureaucracy in the academia. No TV-show or web-series examines the existential struggles of thousands of tempo-

rary professors across India who are forced to spend their lives in perpetual fear of termination. University life is not romantic enough to the viewers except when presented in one of the aforementioned templates. Perhaps no film or book portrays the agony of university teachers better than Anita Desai's *In Custody* (1984). But then again, outside the academic circuit, how many have even heard of this book?

The academic fraternity lacks the wherewithal to contest media hostility or misrepresentation. Nevertheless, they must reach out to the community at large and share their stories. While many professors have become spokespersons of major political parties, and in that capacity, they appear routinely on national television, rarely, if ever so, do they speak of the challenges they face in their professional lives as educators and mentors. These "ambassadors" must utilise television to highlight the difficulties faced by their students, colleagues and institutions. The participation of professors in textbook production, school pedagogy and social movements, which has lately declined, must be reinvigorated as well.

Unfortunately, the university ecosystem insinuates the semblance of a universe unto itself. It creates the illusion that if all is well inside the campus, things are well elsewhere too. And that the fight for higher education is as much an emotional subject to people outside, as it is to the academic fraternity. But we need to break out of this chimeric. At a recent Delhi University Teachers' Association protest, when I advised a colleague against raising a certain slogan which has attracted considerable popular condemnation over the past few years, he argued that it was raised with an objective to educate the masses. It is important to realise that respect for popular sentiments or simplic-

ity of expression does not tantamount to surrender of ideas, however indispensable or progressive they might be. Even though perception management is not their forte, academicians must speak a language which the common people understand and respect. Through popular articles, public debates, parent-teacher meetings and maybe, even a YouTube channel, they have to find ways to engage with the community they so sincerely serve.

As the President of India pointed out recently, universities shouldn't behave like ivory towers. At the same time, given the legacy of universities and their enormous contribution to society-building in India, it is important that the Government and the university administration honour the circumstances of their origin. They were imagined as centres of critical thinking, and they must remain so. It was precisely this culture of dissent and protest in the universities which militated against State oppression during the dark days of Emergency and saw to it that a reinvigorated democracy was restored in the country. Had it not been for this spirit of rational inquiry and the desire to question the sacrosanct, our progress towards ensuring social justice wouldn't have been half as successful. It is, therefore, imperative that the Government gives a patient hearing to the students and the academic fraternity. It must constitute forums and coordination committees to engage students on policy decisions which concern them. Contrary to popular perception, they aren't always delusional idealists or virulent anarchists. Besides, even from the perspective of law and order, a controlled outlet of pent-up sentiments, as philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin has argued, is preferable to the vicious cycle of mob arson and State reprisal.

(The writer teaches English at Delhi University)

Re-shape regional economic ties

To maintain parity, an experiment like RCEP must offer fair competition to other member countries not luckier than China in protecting the economy and playing comfortably in the world



ATUL K THAKUR

Not just a believer of the heterodox school of economic thought, even a stickler for classic political economy can't negate that "dialectics" has not ceased to influence the course of history and materialism. While Hegel, Marx and Engels had their interpretation of it, now in a different context, when the "late stage capitalism" is shaping up regional geo-strategic and economic considerations in unprecedented ways, the necessity to comprehend the "contradictions" well is something essential.

As globalisation is in the process of travelling extra miles, leading economies are willingly making efforts to go beyond bilateral and other con-

ventional economic diplomacy arrangements. Playing safe with the regional cooperation framework a large economy gains disproportionately out of the sentimental grouping of unequal participants. China has been a formidable player on this turf, so it sensed the criticality of India's non-affirmative positioning on the much-touted Free Trade Agreement (FTA) experiment called the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). However, RCEP being a China-dominated association, had to receive India's response as per its "enlightened self-interest" to keep history in perspective, house in order and domestic manufacturing businesses shielded.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had summed it up eloquently when he said, "Whenever I try and gauge India's interest in light of her joining RCEP, I do not get an answer in the affirmative. Neither Gandhiji's policy of self-reliance nor my wisdom allows me to join RCEP." He made the statement based on realistic considerations. Among them, one was a silent confession that India's economy is passing

through a rough phase. Noticeably, India's GDP growth has been slowing down for five consecutive quarters. It is believed that the economy was severely hit by demonetisation and the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and the core manufacturing and real estate sectors have lost their way. India joining the RCEP would have exposed its inability to come to terms with challenges of a new regional framework that was totally bereft of anything promising for the industry in the country.

Also, RCEP keeps conflicting intent with the existing regional and sub-regional associations, such as South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), South Asian Sub-regional Economic Cooperation (SASEC), Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN) and Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral and Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC).

India's decision not to join RCEP was a conscious one, after calculating all the costs and gains that usually come with entering a new arrangement. Delivering the recent Ramnath

Goenka Memorial Lecture in New Delhi, India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar made his statement on it, saying, "And it was that no agreement at this time was better than a bad agreement. It is also important to recognise what the RCEP decision is not. It is not stepping back from the Act East Policy, which in any case is deeply rooted in distant and contemporary history."

He further added, "Our cooperation spans so many domains that this one decision does not really undermine the basics. Even in trade, India already has Free Trade Agreements with 12 of the 15 RCEP partners. Nor is there really a connection with our Indo-Pacific approach, as that goes well beyond the RCEP membership."

What the Minister made out was a narrative that India didn't miss on "grand strategy". In fact, this was close to the reality, as it was not an idea whose time had come. RCEP was not just a matter of trade for India; it was related to strategy and foreign policy as well. While India was at the brink of taking a decision on it, its neighbours, especially Nepal, watched the

proceedings closely. Nepal, which has been grappling with high trade deficit and low manufacturing base, would not have gained much from India's entry into RCEP and the possibility of cheap goods from member-countries being dumped into it.

As Nepal is passing through a developmental phase where the mode, locale and scale of production have to see a big shift for reciprocating mass aspirations, it should aim to work with a model that combines "Make in Nepal" with "Make for Nepal". Only this can lead towards an inclusive and sustainable growth agenda. A more inward-looking approach for industrial activities, eyeing both domestic and international markets, is the need of hour. Moreover, policy-makers in Nepal must think seriously over the unchecked outbound migration, which is causing enormous losses to its own prospects.

India's tryst with FTAs has been disappointing. Take, for instance, the Indo-ASEAN FTA, the Indo-Korea FTA and the Indo-Japan FTA. Notwithstanding the initial excitement, in practical terms, FTAs have

proved to be a faulty arrangement for the country. The experience of many other countries has not been better either. The fault lines can be spotted in the "late stage capitalism" that necessitates developing countries to go ahead with the public policy of developed and saturated economies. One of the common issues with regional associations is that there is little scope for a level playing field, as for the protectionist measures, they only offer "double-standards."

To maintain parity, an experiment like RCEP must offer fair competition to other member-countries not luckier than China in protecting the economy and playing comfortably in the world. To make RCEP or any new formation, a positive factor for the Asia Century, the strategic and economic fundamentals have to be ascertained. Simply put, whims and fancies don't help the grand plan. Above all, what matters is the fairness in intent and working for a shared goal. With RCEP, this was and is missing.

(The writer is a New Delhi-based public policy professional and columnist.)



FOREIGN EYE



YOUTH ACTIVISM IS UNSTOPPABLE

Youth activism is unstoppable around the world and tries to pick up where Governments have failed. Young people are resourceful and they are able to divert attention to their cause using different forms of social media and other unconventional channels. They focus on what is important to them, be it climate justice, democracy, equality, LGBT rights, or social and economic equity.

(Courtesy: South China Morning Post)

Govt releases ₹35,298 cr GST compensation

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Facing heat over delay in payment of GST compensation, the central government on Monday released ₹35,298 crore to states to make up for the loss of revenue due to rollout of the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

When GST was rolled out on July 1, 2017, states were through legislation promised to be compensated for the loss of revenue as not just their taxes such as VAT were being subsumed in the new levy but also their right to levy taxes was being snatched.

The compensation amount was fixed at 14 per cent on top of revenue in the base year of 2016-17. The corpus for paying compensation was collected by levying a cess on top of GST rates on tobacco products, cigarettes, aerated water, automobiles, and coal.

This compensation was to be released after every two months but the same was

pending since August, drawing protests from states, particularly non-BJP ruled ones.

"The central government has released GST compensation of ₹35,298 crore to States and Union Territories today," the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) said in a Twitter post.

This comes just days before the 38th meeting of the GST Council — the highest decision-making body of the new indirect tax regime — on December 18, where the opposition-ruled states had planned to again raise the issue of delayed payments.

Opposition-ruled states such as Punjab, West Bengal and Kerala have since last month upped the ante for the immediate release of GST Compensation Fund. Their finance ministers had also met Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and the issue came up during the just-concluded Winter Session of

Parliament. Sitharaman had in press conferences and industry events acknowledged the dues but never mentioned timelines for making the payment.

She had in the Rajya Sabha on December 12 stated that in 2017-18, the total cess collected was ₹62,596 crore, of which ₹41,146 crore was released to states. The remaining ₹15,000 crore was accumulated in the Cess Fund. In the next year,

₹95,081 crore was collected and ₹69,275 crore released to states but "cess accumulated in the Fund was zero," she had said, according to a verbatim transcript of her speech available on the Rajya Sabha website.

It wasn't clear how no money was accumulated in the Cess Fund in 2018-19 when, according to her, only ₹69,275 crore out of ₹95,081 crore was paid.

She also hadn't said what happens to the surplus that accumulates in the Fund.

According to Sitharaman, during the current fiscal year that began in April 2019, cess collections till October 31 were ₹55,467 crore but compensation released to the states was ₹65,250 crore. "The Government of India has released ₹9,783 crore more than the amount raised through cess collections (this fiscal)," she had said in the Rajya Sabha.



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Will not renege on GST compensations, says FM

Mumbai: Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday assured States that the Centre will not "renege" on the promise of GST compensations. The delays to pass on the money are due to a slip in collections and the States have nothing to be embarrassed about, she said. The remarks come at a time when states like Maharashtra and Kerala have been demanding the compensation sooner.

"It is certainly their right, I am not denying. At the same time, I am also making clear to say that I am not renege on that. States will be given. We are certainly not renege on it."

"I admit that the payments which had to go the compensation head have not been given for two months slot," Sitharaman said, addressing the Times Network's India Economic Conclave through video conferencing. The GST Council, the highest decision making body for indirect tax, is slated to hold its meeting on December 18.

"I do not want them (states) to feel embarrassed

because it's not their fault nor is it personally my fault," she said, admitting that the GST collections have been much lower than expectations.

She attributed the dip in collections to a slip in GST filing due to natural calamities and also due to a slowdown in consumption that has a direct impact on the collections.

"I am working with the states. Each of them have taken a lot of effort from their end to improve the GST collection. I guess with their efforts and the centre and revenue department officials...The prospects of improving GST collection is likely to go up," she said.

When asked about reports of cuts in GST rates, Sitharaman said there is no such call to review.

"I don't think, I am even talking about raising or rationalising the slabs at all at this stage. But Eventually at some time the GST Council would want to talk about it, but I am not readying myself for this particular meeting on this particular issue," she said. PTI

Insolvency law to have positive impact on corp bond mkt: Sebi chief

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Sebi Chairman Ajay Tyagi on Monday expressed hope that positive impact of the insolvency law will be visible on the domestic corporate bond market in five years. Describing the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) as a "landmark reform" in the country's economic history, Tyagi said the Code has brought in behavioural changes among corporate debtors.

The Code came into force in December 2016.

"IBC has been a landmark reform that has successfully empowered creditors by increasing their recoveries, improved their debtor discipline... There is scope for further improvement," Tyagi said here. According to him, reforms in bankruptcy laws leading to bolstering of credi-

tor rights have generally been found to have a positive impact on corporate bond markets owing to increased investor confidence in the markets.

"In case of three BRICS countries — Brazil, Russia and China — the five-year average of outstanding corporate bonds to GDP ratio after implementation of bankruptcy reforms have nearly doubled compared to five-year average of outstanding corporate bonds to GDP ratio prior to implementation of the reforms.

"While there is a positive correlation between recovery rate, recovery timeline and corporate bonds to GDP ratio, experiences also show that there is a time lag between implementation of bankruptcy laws and effect on bond market to the extent of 5-10 years," he noted.

Gadkari OK's changes in Interest Subvention Scheme guidelines for MSMEs

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Monday approved changes in the Interest Subvention Scheme guidelines for MSMEs and dispensed with the requirement of Udyog Aadhaar Number for states eligible for GST and settlement of claims based on internal or concurrent auditor certificate.

The Minister for Road Transport & Highways and MSME reviewed the functioning of the scheme, and said the changes are expected to boost productivity of MSMEs through access to credit at reduced cost.

The modifications in operational guidelines carried out are based on suggestions made by various stakeholders, including banks and lending institutions who had brought to light

operational difficulties that were hindering a smooth rollout of the scheme, an official statement said.

The improvements are set to provide momentum giving fillip to the MSME sector, it added.

"It is expected that the modifications in the scheme guidelines will lead to fulfilment of objectives of the scheme, i.e. To increase productivity in MSMEs through access to credit at reduced cost," Gadkari said.

The minister highlighted that the government is committed to enhancing credit to the MSME sector and the implementation of the scheme is being closely monitored to help micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) get incremental credit of up to ₹1 crore with an interest subvention of 2 per cent.

Wholesale inflation rises to 0.58% in November with onion remaining sore point

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Wholesale inflation rose to 0.58 per cent in November mainly on account of rising prices of food articles, with onion alone spurring by over 172 per cent during the month vis-a-vis a year ago, government data showed on Monday.

The annual rate of inflation, based on monthly wholesale price index (WPI) was at 0.16 per cent in October.

The inflation was at 4.47 per cent in the same month a year ago (November 2018).

Build up inflation rate in the financial year so far was 2 per cent compared to a build up rate of 4.56 per cent in the corresponding period of the previous year, as per the data released by the Office of Economic Adviser, Ministry of Commerce & Industry.

Inflation in food articles as a group rose to 11.08 per cent during the month as against 9.80 per cent in the previous month, mainly driven by exorbitantly high onion prices, the rates of which spiked by over 172 per cent from a year-ago.

BUSINESS CORNER

TATA TEA PREMIUM CELEBRATES DUMDAAR SPIRIT OF UTTAR PRADESH IN ITS NEW AVATAR



New Delhi: Tata Tea Premium, the flagship brand from Tata Global Beverages portfolio, pays tribute to Uttar Pradesh with an all new packaging madeppecially for the state. The new packaging captures the essence of Uttar Pradesh and showcases the elements that truly reflect the pride of the State. With iconic places like the Varanasi Ghats and the Taj Mahal, and iconic aspects like the Kathak dance form, the pack highlights elements of pride that will resonate with the people of Uttar Pradesh. The new communication, based on region specific insight, captures the Dumdhaar spirit of the people of Uttar Pradesh, which complements the Dumdhaar Chai of Tata Tea Premium. The new packaging and communication was launched at an event held at the iconic Gomti Waterfront in Lucknow. Speaking about the Dumdhaar UP campaign, Puneet Das, Vice President — Marketing — India, Tata Global Beverages, said, "Tata Tea Premium's expertise has always been catering to local taste preferences. And this is why we've always offered blends meeting consumer's taste preferences in various geographies across India. This has made Tata Tea Premium one of the leading brands across India, and the Desh ki Chai in the truest sense of the term. Today, Tata Tea Premium has taken the bold step of going hyper local, by launching with a state specific marketing mix one of its key markets — Uttar Pradesh, to shift the needle from celebrating 'India Pride' to evoking 'Regional Pride'."

UK HC dismisses Chinese bank \$680 m claim against Anil Ambani

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

UK High Court has dismissed a \$680 million claim application filed by Chinese banks against Reliance Communications Chairman Anil Ambani, a spokesperson of Ambani said on Monday.

The hearing in the matter took place on November 7 and the order was issued on Monday, the spokesperson said in a statement.

UK High Court has dismissed "summary judgement application of Chinese banks

against Anil Ambani" in which the "Chinese banks had claimed \$680 million from Mr. Ambani against Chinese banks' corporate loans to Reliance Communications Limited (RCom)," it said.

"Mr Ambani's position that the claim made by Chinese banks in relation to his alleged guarantee for corporate loans available by Reliance Communications Limited (RCom) could not be granted by way of a summary judgement has been duly upheld by the UK High Court," the spokesperson said.

US-China trade deal to support global economic pick-up in 2020: Gita Gopinath

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The announcement of a trade deal between the US and China that will de-escalate trade tensions, along with other developments like reduced likelihood of a no-deal Brexit, is likely to support a pick-up in the global economic activity in 2020, said IMF Chief Economist Gita Gopinath.

Global growth moderated to the lowest level since the global financial crisis this year, Gopinath said adding that this is an outcome of heightened trade and geopolitical tensions and country-specific factors in

emerging markets. In addition, advanced economies' growth is being weighed down by weak productivity growth and aging demographics. These factors lead to sharp weakness in manufacturing and trade almost across the globe, she added.

The IMF's October 2019 World Economic Outlook projected global growth at 3 per cent this year and 3.4 per cent in 2020 — 0.3 and 0.2 percentage points lower than our April forecast respectively, she noted.

"A recovery is expected in 2020 but that remains precarious. Since then, global growth has been lower-than-forecast-

ed in some large emerging markets, notably India, and civil unrest is taking a toll on some countries," Gopinath told PTI in an interview.

Gopinath, 48, one of the top world economist, joined the IMF early this year. "I have been a wonderful learning experience and I am enjoying all aspects of the job," she told PTI when asked about her experience at the world body.

"At the same time, we are seeing tentative signs of stabilisation, with the decline in manufacturing and trade appearing to have bottomed out.

'India should focus on structural reforms, clean-up of banks & labour reforms'

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

With economic growth slowing to a six-year low, IMF Chief Economist Gita Gopinath says the government should undertake structural reforms such as bank clean-up and labour reforms to address the slowdown in domestic demand.

Gopinath, 48, who is travelling to India this week, root-

ed for government policies focusing on managing a slowdown in domestic demand, and on boosting productivity growth and supporting employment creation in the medium term," she told PTI in an interview.

"Given the cyclical position and the structural challenges of the Indian economy at this point, we recommend that policies focus on managing the slowdown in domestic

demand, and on boosting productivity growth and supporting employment creation in the medium term," she told PTI in an interview.

Recommending a series of key policy priorities for the Prime Minister Narendra Modi government, she said, "Politically, the time — early in the government's second term — is right for a structural reform push."

BEFORE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-II, DELHI
4TH FLOOR, JEEVAN TARA BUILDING, PARLIAMENT STREET, NEW DELHI-110001

OA NO 507/19 Date: 23.11.2019

PUNJAB NATIONAL BANK VERSUS APPLICANT

M/S OLYMPUS METALS PVT. LTD. & ORS. RESPONDENT

To, DEFENDANT

- M/S OLYMPUS METALS PVT. LTD.
402, 4th Floor, Aditya Tower, Laxmi Nagar, Distt. Centre New Delhi-92, Also at: C-32, FIE Patpargunj Industrial Area, Delhi-92
- SH. PREM CHAND GUPTA
R/o 2853-54, Gali No. 5, Chuna Mandi, Paharganj, New Delhi-55, Also At: 6, 1st Floor, Park End Vikas Marg, New Delhi-92
- SH. MADHULATA
Smt At: R/o 2853-54, Gali No. 5, Chuna Mandi, Paharganj, New Delhi-55, Also At: 6, 1st Floor, Park End Vikas Marg, New Delhi-92
- M/S NAMO GANPATI GARMENTS PVT. LTD.
R/o 2853-54, Gali No. 5, Chuna Mandi, Paharganj, New Delhi-55
- M/S RAKHEJA FASHION PVT. LTD.
R/o Plot No. 6, 1st Floor, Park End Vikas Marg, New Delhi-92

Whereas the above named applicant (s) has / have instituted a case for recovery of Rs. 95,04,27,380/- (Rupee Ninety Five Crore Four Lakh Twenty Seven Thousand Three Hundred and Eighty Only) against you and where as it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in the ordinary way therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance in the Tribunal on 21.01.2020 At 10.30 A.M.

Take notice that in default of your appearance on the day before the mentioned, the case will be heard and determined in your absence.

BY ORDER OF THE TRIBUNAL,
SECTION OFFICER, DRT-II, DELHI.

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that one boy namely Kanhiya S/o Babu Chander Ram R/o Village Barndai, Lahul, Distt. Nalanda, Bihar, has been missing from Balsaahyog Connaught Place in the area of P.S. Barakhamba Road, New Delhi since 18.11.2019. In this regard, a case FIR No. 125/19 U/s 363 IPC dated 18.11.2019 has been registered at P.S. Barakhamba Road, Delhi. The description of the missing boy is as under.

Age: about 13 Years, Complexion: Shallow, Height: about 4'8", Face: Long, Build: Thin, Wearing: Green colour T-shirt and creamy pant. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out him but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone has any information about the missing boy then please inform P.S. Barakhamba Road, New Delhi at following Tel No. / e-mail: c/c@cbi.gov.in and Website: http://cbi.nic.in

Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641 Sd/- S.H.O.
Fax No. 011-24368639 P.S. Barakhamba Road, Delhi
DP/2162/NDD/19 Ph: 011-23413800

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that one unknown male name & address unknown, Age: 35 Yrs., Height: 5'6", Complexion Trefied condition. Identification: Kalwa Tied on the wrist of right hand. Wearing yellow T-shirt & Blue Shorts & Black colour chappal in feet was found dead at Lotus Pond, Bio-Diversity Park, Jagatpur, in the area of P.S. Wazirabad, Delhi on 26.11.2019.

In this regard a D.D. No. 23-A dated: 26.11.2019 has been lodged at P.S. Wazirabad, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this deceased may kindly inform the following.

S.H.O., P.S., Wazirabad, Delhi
Ph.: 011-23810076, 23810073

Mobile phone industry seeks tax rationalisation, clarity on export incentive cut

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

IT hardware and mobile manufacturers on Monday sought clarity over recent reduction in export incentives and demanded rationalisation of tax structure, including GST rate on handsets, during a pre-Budget meet with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman.

According to the India Cellular and Electronics Association (ICEA), reduction in export incentives will lead to massive job losses.

"Many have emphasised

that some schemes that are on the anvil can be brought in quickly like some incentives for large-scale manufacturing. There are a number of incentives," Electronics and IT Secretary Ajay Prakash Sawhney said after the pre-Budget meeting.

On the meeting, ICEA Chairman Pankaj Mohindroo said the government has strong intention to support Indian companies as well as attract global brands to make the country a hub of mobile manufacturing.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person Amit @ Raju, S/o: Sh. Munna Lal @ Nanhe Lal, R/o: E-239, Shahbad Dairy, Delhi has committed (or suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 190/13, u/s 323/354-A/506 IPC has been registered at P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Amit @ Raju cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Amit @ Raju has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said Amit @ Raju accused of FIR No. 190/13, u/s 323/354-A/506 IPC has been registered at P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi is required to appear before this Court or to me to answer the said complaint on or before 14.02.2020.

By Order
Ms Swati Sharma,
MM/Mahila court-02, Room No. 104,
DP/853/ON/19 1st floor (North Distt.), Rohini Court, Delhi

SEARCH FOR MISSING BOY

General public is hereby informed that one boy namely Kartik Kuamr Verma, S/o Shri Ram Partap Verma, R/o C-1/322, 1st Floor, Muskan Apartment Sector-17, Rohini, Delhi, Age 22 years, Height 5'8" Complexion Shallow, Long Face, Wearing Black colour shirt, blue colour jeans pant and white colour jacket & canvas shoes has been missing/kidnapped from the area of PS KNK Marg, Delhi since 22.11.19. In this regard a vide DD No. 24-A dated 23.11.19 has been lodged at PS KNK Marg, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about this missing/kidnapped boy may kindly inform to the following.

E-mail ID:c/c@cbi.gov.in SHO
Tele: 011-24368638, 24368641 PS : KNK Marg, Delhi
Fax: 011-24368639 Ph.: 27571171, 27571162
DP/3505/RD/19

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr. P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Desh Raj @ Deshu, S/o Mansi Ram, R/o H.No. B-108, Near Jahaj wali Kothi, Hari Enclave, Aman Vihar, Delhi is involved in case FIR No. 558/18 u/s 411 IPC, at P.S. Mangol Puri, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Desh Raj @ Deshu cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Desh Raj @ Deshu has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Processing U/s 82 Cr. P.C. has been initiated in the case. Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Desh Raj @ Deshu, case FIR No. 558/18 u/s 411 IPC, at P.S. Mangol Puri, Delhi, is required to appear in this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 24.02.2020

By Order
Sh. Rakesh Kumar,
Metropolitan Magistrate-II, North-West Distt.,
DP/2942/OD/19-(Court Matter) Room No. 105, Rohini Courts, Delhi

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED

SEE SECTION 82 Cr. P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused (1) Gautam Prasad S/o Manoj Prasad R/o Vill. Chhotki Auraiya, PS Aadapur, Distt. East Champaran, Motihari, Bihar (2) Jitender S/o Sh. Prem Sagar Prasad R/o Vill. Bargania, PS Bargania, Distt. Sitamarhi, Bihar (3) Dharmender S/o Sh. Prem Sagar Prasad R/o Vill. Bargania, PS Bargania, Distt. Sitamarhi, Bihar are involved in case FIR No. 348/12, u/s 307 IPC & 25/27/54/59 Arms Act, at P.S. Samaipur Badli, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused Gautam Prasad, Jitender & Dharmender, cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Gautam Prasad, Jitender & Dharmender, have absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant) Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Gautam Prasad, Jitender & Dharmender, in case FIR No. 348/12, u/s 307 IPC & 25/27/54/59 Arms Act, at P.S. Samaipur Badli, Delhi is required to appear on this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 19.01.2020.

By Order
Ms. Neha Gupta,
Metropolitan Magistrate, North Distt. Room No. 319,
DP/850/ON/19-(Court Matter) 3rd Floor, Rohini Courts, Delhi



WhiteToRescue

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



DOCYARD

DR SATNAM SINGH CHHABRA

Head, Neuro and Spine department



SIR GANGARAM HOSPITAL



Timely detection is key

While those of us who thought TB is a pulmonary disease affecting our lungs need to think again! According to the medical statistics, 5-10 per cent of the total TB patients in India suffer from bone TB and the figure is on constant rise, more due to ignorance about bone TB, during which the bacterium causing TB affects bones and the spine. In fact, if we talk about numbers, India is home to about one lakh people who suffer from osteoarticular tuberculosis which leads to limb shortening in growing children and full body paralysis in a few cases.

Although TB, primarily affects the lungs, it can spread through the blood stream to other sites, commonly called extra pulmonary or disseminated tuberculosis. Usually the ends of long bones and the vertebrae are common sites of extra pulmonary tuberculosis and the disease can hit people of every strata, no matter whether they are rich or poor.

Also, it can affect any bone, but most commonly it attacks the spine and weight-bearing joints, like hands, wrists and elbows. The type of pain too depends on the exact location of the tuberculosis, for instance in case of spine TB the pain in lower back is so severe that the patient ends up seeking medical treatment.

How to diagnose? Bone TB in its early stages is often misdiagnosed as arthritis. Therefore, to distinguish it from arthritic pain, patients should observe the nature of pain. Most patients of arthritis experience relief at night when lying down. Whereas for those suffering from bone TB, lying flat increases discomfort due to increased bacterial activity.

Diagnosis of the disease is made by X-ray and lab tests on fluid aspirated from the affected joint area. While in case of spine and skeletal TB, diagnosis are to be done with the help of CT scans and MRI reports.

Spinal tuberculosis, also called Pott's disease, usually affects the thoracic part of the spine. It causes constant and unbearable back pain as the virus degrades the discs cushioning the vertebrae. TB in the joints also causes an aching pain along with stiffness. While Tuberculous osteomyelitis, or bone infection, causes constant pain in the bone itself and can cause complications in nearby tissues, such as carpal tunnel syndrome if the wrist is affected.

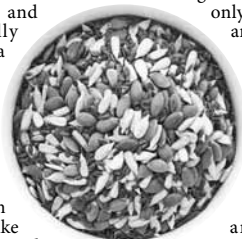
How to identify the correct symptoms? Patients with TB in their bones might or might not exhibit generalised signs of tuberculosis such as fever, fatigue, night sweats and unexplained weight loss. Although about half of all patients with bone TB also have infected lungs, the disease usually is not active there which also means that most patients with bone TB do not suffer from coughing and probably do not suspect that they have tuberculosis. At times it may take years to start showing its initial symptoms.

Patients with bone TB are generally not contagious because the disease spreads through coughed up active virus particles unless you come in contact with a patient's pus. Another important point to remember is that bone TB may affect the bone marrow, so timely and complete course of treatment can only cure the patients.

The treatment for normal bone TB may last at least one year and in case of spine TB causing paralysis treatment and recovery time depends if paralysis is mild, moderate or severe. Also, in case of MDR TB, in which patients fail to respond well to multi drugs, it may take longer to recover completely. The TB patients are strictly advised to complete the medication course and never to leave it in between, without consulting their doctor. It's important for patients to understand that TB is curable if it is timely detected and treated well. In case of bone TB, bed rest, good diet, medicines and physiotherapy can help you get back to normal life. Therefore, don't ignore symptoms or take them lightly. If proper medical attention is not received, TB can be fatal.

WARMFOODS

PUMPKIN SEEDS: A pumpkin seed is the edible seed of a pumpkin or certain other cultivars of squash. The seeds are typically flat and asymmetrical, have a white outer husk and are light green in colour after the husk is removed. The seeds are rich in antioxidants like carotenoids and Vitamin E.



Antioxidants can reduce inflammation and protect your cells from harmful free radicals. That's why consuming foods rich in antioxidants can help protect against many diseases. They are also high in fibre that is known for promoting digestive health. Not only this the seeds are rich in magnesium. Consuming adequate magnesium levels result in better sleep. The presence of high amounts of antioxidants and phytochemicals ensure a good immune system and further reduce the possibility of viral infections that may lead to cold, flu, fatigue and other ailments.



KEEP BONES FIT

Winters can trigger the risk of hip arthritis in young adults too. DR AKHILESH YADAV throws light on the problem

The cold reduces the blood circulation in joints which amplifies arthritis pain. Less sunlight during winters means lower Vitamin D levels and leads to weakened bones and joints arthritis, a progressive disorder, typically starts gradually and gets worse with time. Such patients who often find difficulty in walking feel stiffness, or pain ranging from sharp pain to dull ache in hips more during the winters.

Though joint problems are often neglected until they cause distress, it is important especially during winters to diagnose the condition early for better treatment outcomes.

To describe it in simple terms, arthritis occurs when the joint space of your hip is narrowed and the soft tissues surrounding it start to shrink and tighten. The condition may arise due to genetic or hereditary reasons and certain other conditions like wear and tear of joints over time or due to tough training regime, or being obese as well.

If we examine the make-up of our hip joint, it is a ball and socket joint and is very mobile. During arthritis when we stretch and move, the hip joint hurts and over time leads to greater stiffness and worsening of the condition that alleviates pain. Thus, it explains why the hip is one of the most common joints affected by arthritis.

There are different types of arthritis that can affect the hip and its treatment is based on factors such as the type of arthritis, how early the condition is diagnosed, age of the patient and medical history (if any).

Types: There are three main types of arthritis that can affect the hip joint. These are:

“ ARTHRITIS MAY BE DUE TO GENETIC OR HEREDITARY REASONS AND CONDITIONS LIKE WEAR AND TEAR OF JOINTS OVER TIME OR TOUGH TRAINING ”

Types: There are three main types of arthritis that can affect the hip joint. These are:

Osteoarthritis: This is most common form of arthritis seen especially in elderly people. Although it is also caused due to structural problems with the hip joint, advancing age, obesity, hip injury and others. Obesity is one of the major causes of Osteoarthritis and knee-related ailments, where knees undergo six times the body weight thereby affecting the joints.

Rheumatoid Arthritis: Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) affects your entire body and not just the hip joint. It affects people of all age groups including children and is commonly seen in women than men. The cause of inflammation in RA is due to an immune system response rather than wear and tear. The condition causes pain and swelling in both the hips unlike osteoarthritis that occurs only

in one hip, and eventually, it leads to deterioration of the bone and cartilage of the joint. Besides pain and swelling, RA also causes weakness and fatigue.

Ankylosing spondylitis: It is a chronic inflammation of the spine and sacroiliac joint (the joint where the spine meets the pelvis). The condition may affect people of all age groups, including children, but typically its onset is between the age of 17 and 35. Unlike RA, Ankylosing spondylitis is more common in men than women.

Some of the factors leading to hip joint problems in the oldage include usage of steroids or supplements during younger age for body building.

Symptoms: Common symptoms associated with arthritis of hip are: Pain in the hip joint that includes the groin, outer thigh and buttocks Pain is worse in the morning and lessens over the day Difficulty in walking Stiffness in the hip Pain over back and radiating to knee through front of thigh

Diagnosis: If you suspect of having arthritis of the hip, get diagnostic evaluation immediately. This may include:

- Your medical history and physical examination
- X-rays can help in determining abnormalities in the joint.
- Blood tests.

Non-surgical options: Based on your diagnosis, your surgeon will prescribe the type of treatment that is appropriate for your condition.

Non-surgical treatment for arthritis of the hip may include:

- Anti-inflammatory medications
- Physiotherapy or exercise programs to improve flexibility and muscle strength
- Swimming is an excellent exercise for arthritis
- Weight reduction in case of overweight patients
- Devices such as canes/walkers to make it easier to walk

Surgical options: Many people with arthritis of the hip are candidates for surgery. Surgery can help to reduce pain, enhance quality of life, and improve an individual's ability to perform everyday activities with no restrictions.

TREATMENT



ity to perform everyday activities with no restrictions.

Minimally invasive hip replacement surgery: It is an appropriate treatment option if the hip joint is severely damaged or if pain and swelling reduces motion in joints and affects quality of life. Hip replacement surgery is one of the most successful modern orthopaedic surgical procedures and it is performed with smaller incisions which mean quicker recovery. During a hip replacement surgery, the surgeon removes damaged cartilage and bone from the hip joint and replaces them with man-made parts.

The writer is Senior Transplant Head Joint Replacement(Hip & Knee), Centre for knee and Hip Care, Vaishali

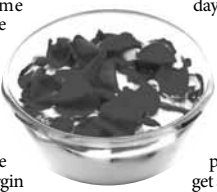
DadiKaKehna

Dry and chapped lips are common problems during the winter months. While lip balms help, ROSHANI DEVI shares home remedies that can prove beneficial



Dry, cracked and chapped lips can be a problem — be it winters or summers. The peeling skin is not only annoying, it doesn't look good as well. But there are several home remedies that one can follow with great results.

Virgin coconut oil is not just good for the skin and hair, but also for the lips. Get some virgin coconut oil and grape-seed oil. One can use grape-seed oil as well. If you don't have virgin coconut oil and grape-seed oil, mix olive oil and jojoba oil or almond oil and neem oil. Add one to two drops of both the oils and apply onto the lips. Do this two-three times a day. One can use honey and



TIPTOP

Rubiya Khursheed, a PhD research scholar at School of Pharmaceutical Sciences of Lovely Professional University (LPU) has developed a herbal formulation containing a combination of Synbiotics (a dietary supplement that combines prebiotics and probiotics) and curcumin (haldi) that helps in the treatment of Diabetes.

She recently made India proud by presenting her path breaking research at one of the world's foremost Pharma conferences, American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists PharmSci 360, held at San Antonio, Texas, US.

Titled Exploring the role of Synbiotics as carrier to solidify Self-Nano emulsifying Drug Delivery System, her research explores the usage of Synbiotics. The emulsified drug

is absorbed by the body easily, leading to significantly lower dosage requirement of just 5 mg against 500 mg that is generally prescribed for Type 2 Diabetes.

This not only brings down the cost of the medicine for the patients but also eliminates the side effects caused by high dosages like low blood sugar, upset stomach, skin rashes or itching. Interestingly, Rubiya has used mushroom polysaccharide as prebiotic and friendly bacteria probiotic to develop the Synbiotics, leading to it being 100% chemical free and non-synthetic.

Fifteen Nobel Laureates, 6000-plus scientists and 600-plus pharmacy industry representatives from across the world including Dr Vivek H Murthy, 19th Surgeon General of the US, attended the conference.

SLIMLINE

Low-and middle-income countries have high levels of overweight and obesity along with undernutrition, say researchers, adding that these two issues have become increasingly connected.

“Our research shows that overweight and obesity levels of at least 20 per cent among adults are found in all low-income countries. Furthermore, the double burden of high levels of both undernutrition and overweight occur primarily in the lowest-income countries — a reality that is driven

by the modern food system,” said study lead author Barry M Popkin from University of North Carolina in US.

“This system has a global reach and is preventing low- and even moderate-income countries and households from consuming safe, affordable and healthy diets in a sustainable way,” Popkin added.

Globally, estimates suggest that almost 2.3 billion children and adults are overweight, and more than 150 million children are stunted.

GO BACK TO ROOTS



It's high time that we should say no to plastic utensils and switch to the ones made from pure kansa, says DR NAMITA JAIN

Plastic has implanted into our everyday lives like an unavoidable fundamental. We have been abusing it since a better than average time frame not exclusively leaving plastic-impressions on earth anyway also delivering significant damage in our well being framework. From putting away nourishment to cooking and utilisation from it, the Petro-compound issue is keenly rotting our environment. The key compound utilised for the assembling of plastics is Bisphenol-A or BPA.

BPA is a modern concoction that has been utilised to make certain plastics and pitches since the 1960s. BPA is found in polycarbonate plastics and epoxy saps. Polycarbonate plastics are frequently utilised in compartments that are utilised for putting away nourishment and refreshments, for example, water bottles. They may likewise be utilised in other ordinary buyer products. BPA and different poisons broke down in nourishment and water put away in plastic holders advance into your circulation system, which can cause a large group of issues including different malignant growths such as liver and kidney harm.

These destructive synthetic concoctions disintegrate even quickly when interact with hot nourishment or fluid. To be better protected and grieved, plastic containers ought to be stayed away from to keep up legitimate wellbeing capacity. Our typical plastic jugs and holders can be supplanted with gut-solid kansa.

■ Pure kansa or bronze is an ultra-predominant metal compound comprising 78 per cent of copper and 22 per cent of tin.

■ It is seen for its great wellbeing and recuperating properties and is profoundly established in our way of life and ayurvedic science.

■ Also used to make sanctuary stock, pure kansa is known to be the best metal to be utilised for feasting and water stockpiling purposes because of its restorative advantages.

■ It has properties that stem unadulterated, profound vibrations which likewise refine the nourishment and water we consume. Kansa has an exceptional character that doesn't enable it to respond with nourishment or water independent of its temperature.

■ Since a large portion of our customs are tied with great wellbeing, pure kansa is profoundly prescribed to drink and eating from going for vast prosperity.

■ Kansa sharpens our insight and pays tribute to its remedial forces, its antacid properties sanitise the nourishment as well as eliminates microbes and microorganism.

■ The water or nourishment put away in kansa vessels naturally gains the crucial therapeutic and remedial properties.

■ If utilised for eating and drinking every day, it energetically improves gut wellbeing.

■ It helps in improving insusceptibility and hinders sickness

Boycotting plastic and inclining toward unadulterated kansa metal for every day utilisation can be a stage towards a more beneficial condition with decreased carbon impressions and prosperity. To ensure the immaculateness of the metal whenever ringed is should make a reverberant sound like tolls utilised for uncommon otherworldly vibrations. Kansa is a fundamental material in building the vitality frameworks of things to come. It assumes a significant job in sustainable power source frameworks, for example, sun oriented, wind, tidal, hydro, biomass and geothermal.

The writer is a Wellness Expert & Managing Director, Kishco Ltd

STUDYCENTRE

E-cigarette use significantly increases a person's risk of developing chronic lung diseases like asthma, bronchitis, emphysema or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, says a new study.

The study, published in the American journal of Preventive Medicine, also found that people who used e-cigarettes and also smoked tobacco by far the most common pattern among adult e-cigarette users were at an even higher risk of developing chronic lung disease than those who used either product alone.

“What we found is that for e-cigarette users, the odds of developing lung disease increased by about a third, even after controlling for their tobacco use and their clinical and demographic information,” said study senior author Stanton Glantz, PhD, Professor at the University of California in the US.

“We concluded that e-cigarettes are harmful on their own, and the effects are independent of smoking conventional tobacco,” Glantz said.

The study also found that switching from smoked tobacco to e-cigarettes lowered the risk of developing lung disease, fewer than one per cent of the smokers had completely switched to e-cigarettes.

“This study contributes to the growing case that e-cigarettes have long-term adverse effects on health and are making the tobacco epidemic worse,” Glantz added.

'Impeachment needed to stop a crime in progress'

AFP ■ WASHINGTON

A key Democratic lawmaker said on Sunday that President Donald Trump's misconduct amounted to "a crime in progress" that threatens US democracy...

"Do we have a constitutional democracy, or do we have a monarchy, where the president is unaccountable?" Representative Jerry Nadler asked on ABC's "This Week."

He expressed anger with Senate Republicans who said they had already made up their mind to exonerate the president — even without hearing evidence or testimony — in the Senate trial expected next month.

When the Democratic-controlled House convenes Wednesday to weigh the two charges approved by Nadler's Judiciary Committee, Trump is expected to become only the third US President to be impeached...

Richard Nixon resigned in 1974 just before a House impeachment vote. Neither Johnson nor Clinton was convicted in the Senate.

Trump is counting on the Republican majority in the Senate to exonerate him.

In repeated tweets Sunday he mocked a process that, to judge by his frequent tweets, appears to consume him.

He retweeted one conservative commentator as saying:

"The President did nothing wrong here. There is no crime, before adding: "Impeachment Hoax!"

Some influential Senate Republicans have suggested they have already made up their minds and don't need to hear the evidence compiled by House Democrats in several weeks of hearings.

Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell has promised "total coordination" with the White House and said there is no chance Trump will be convicted.

And Republican Senator Lindsey Graham, a Trump confidant, told CNN, "I'm not trying to pretend to be a fair juror here," dismissing the charges against Trump as "partisan nonsense."

China: HK had its 'grimmest' year since handover

AP ■ BEIJING

Chinese President Xi Jinping reiterated his support for Hong Kong's embattled leader on Monday even as he declared that the former British colony has faced its "grimmest and most complex year" since its return to China.

Xi praised Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam for holding fast to the principle of "one country, two systems," and for courage and commitment during an "extraordinary period" for Hong Kong, where Lam has faced harsh criticism for how she has handled months of fiery anti-government protests.

Lam briefed Xi and Premier Li Keqiang during her first visit to Beijing since pro-democracy candidates swept local Hong Kong elections last month in a clear rebuke of her administration.

Hong Kong has been

"haunted by this social unrest," Lam said at an evening news briefing, adding that the Chinese leaders called the situation "unprecedented."

"Given the severity of the situation and the difficulties that we are facing, I can say that the leaders are fully appreciative of the efforts needed," she said.

"I am heartened because we know that our work to stop the violence hasn't ended. We are not out of this crisis yet."

Hong Kong was returned to China in 1997 under a "one country, two systems" framework that promises the city more democratic rights than are allowed on the mainland.

In recent years, however, the arrests of booksellers and activists have stoked fears of a growing encroachment by the ruling Communist Party.

The mass demonstrations began in June in response to

proposed legislation that would have allowed Hong Kong residents to be tried for crimes in mainland China. While Lam has since withdrawn the bill,

protesters have continued calling for broader democratic reforms and an independent inquiry into accusations of police brutality.

Xi praises Hong Kong leader, police for crackdown on protest

PTI ■ BEIJING

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Monday praised beleaguered Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam as well as the city's police and said Beijing has "unswerving determination" to protect China's sovereignty over the former British colony as he met her for the second time in two months.

Since June, Hong Kong has seen massive, regular demonstrations, which started in opposition to a proposed Bill that would have allowed its citizens to be extradited to the mainland.

The protests quickly morphed into wider calls for democracy and opposition to growing Chinese influence.

Lam, who is visiting Beijing for consultations with the Central Government on the future course of

action, met President Xi and Premier Li Keqiang and other top officials.

China calls expulsion of diplomats from US a 'mistake'

AFP ■ BEIJING

China on Monday called the expulsion of diplomats from the US a "mistake", following reports that Washington quietly expelled two embassy officials in September after they drove onto a sensitive military base in Virginia.

The incident is the latest spat between the world's two biggest economies and comes days after they announced a truce in the form of a mini-deal to reduce some tariffs in a bruising trade war which has weighed on both sides.

York Times report, foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang called the accusations "completely contrary to the facts" and said they "strongly urge the US to correct its mistake."

Geng said Beijing had lodged "solemn representations and protests to the US" and called for Washington to "protect the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese diplomats".

The incident appeared to be the first time in over 30 years that the US has expelled Chinese diplomats on suspicion of espionage, the newspaper said on Sunday, citing people familiar with the episode.

First stop, Brexit: Johnson gets down to work

AFP ■ LONDON

Prime Minister Boris Johnson got down to work on Monday following his sweeping election victory, appointing Ministers and announcing plans to publish legislation this week to get Britain out of the European Union.

The Conservative leader was expected to carry out a limited cabinet re-shuffle before welcoming new MPs to parliament following his landslide win in Thursday's general election.

But his main focus is on fulfilling his promise to get



Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson's senior adviser, Dominic Cummings arrives at 10 Downing Street, before the Prime Minister holds the first Cabinet meeting after the General Election in London on Monday

Britain out of the European Union by the end of next month after years of acrimonious debate in parliament and across the nation.

Johnson will present legislation on Friday that begins the process of ratifying the divorce terms he struck with Brussels in October, his spokesman said.

"The government has just been elected with a clear majority to deliver Brexit, and we're focused on passing the legislation to ensure that happens by January 31," he said.

Johnson's simple promise to "get Brexit done" resonated in a snap election Thursday

that for many became a re-run of Britain's 2016 EU membership referendum.

A narrow majority had opted to leave the EU back then but was followed by years of debate in parliament over how — or even when — Britain should end almost five decades of integration with its closest neighbours.

Johnson declared the argument settled when his Conservatives won 44 percent of the vote on Thursday, giving it a majority of 80 in the 650-seat Commons — its biggest since the heyday of Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s.

The main opposition

Office of the Project Manager Construction Unit Uttarakhand

E-Tender Notice
1. Name of the work:- (i) CONSTRUCTION OF ADDITIONAL CLASS ROOMS AND LAB FOR G.G.I.C. SITARGANJ (U. S. NAGAR) (COST RS. 88.70 LAKH)
Period of Completion:- 08 Months

EASTERN COALFIELDS LIMITED (A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)

E TENDER NOTICE FOR ON LINE BIDDING
Name of Area: MATERIALS MANAGEMENT Dept./ECL Hqs. Tender No. and date: ECL/Hq/Pur/Open/41911067/2019-20/Induction Motor/071 Date: 11.12.2019

BEFORE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-II, DELHI

4TH FLOOR, JEEVAN TARA BUILDING, PARLIAMENT STREET, NEW DELHI-110001
O.A NO 506/19 Date: 23.11.2019
PUNJAB NATIONAL BANK VERSUS APPLICANT
M/S WORLD WIDE METALS PVT. LTD. & ORS. RESPONDENT

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FASHION TECHNOLOGY (A Statutory Institute governed by the NIFT Act 2006)

Tender No. -NIFT-DEL/Building/4778/2019
NIFT invites Sealed Tenders for water proofing treatment work at NIFT Campus, Hauz Khas, New Delhi -16 from reputed & eligible manufacturers/ agencies.

Erdogan threatens to close two US military bases

AFP ■ ISTANBUL

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Sunday threatened to close two strategic military bases used by the United States in Turkey, after Washington warned of sanctions over Ankara buying Russian arms.

"If necessary, we can close Incirlik and we can close Kurecik," Erdogan said on the pro-government A Haber television channel. The two bases sit on Turkey's southwest coast, near the border with Syria.

Erdogan has regularly raised this possibility in the past, at times of tension between the two countries. The US air force uses the airbase at Incirlik for raids on positions held by the so-called Islamic State group in Syria. The Kurecik base houses a major NATO radar station.

Qatar FM says talks with Saudi break 'stalemate'

AFP ■ DOHA

Qatar's Foreign Minister said on Sunday that talks with Saudi Arabia have broken into a "stalemate" but stressed Doha's unwillingness to downgrade ties with Turkey as a pre-condition.

"Honestly, from our perspective in Qatar, we want to understand the grievances. We want to study them and to assess them and to look at the solutions that can safeguard us in the future from any other potential crisis."

The Saudi-led bloc made 13-key demands to resolve the dispute, including shutting down broadcaster Al Jazeera, downgrading ties with Iran and closing a Turkish military base on its territory.

But the UAE has sought to downplay the emerging reconciliation effort.

"The recent Qatari leaks regarding resolving Doha's crisis with Saudi Arabia, under the three other countries, are a repetition of Doha's quest to divide ranks and evade commitments," Abu Dhabi's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash wrote on Twitter at the weekend.

Several diplomats and analysts have suggested to AFP that Saudi Arabia could embrace an rapprochement with Doha while the UAE keeps its distance, a position echoed by sources briefed on the nascent talks.

Responding to the charges of Gulf boycott countries, Qatar's foreign minister denied Doha had direct ties with the Brotherhood, branded by several countries — including Saudi Arabia — as a terrorist organisation.

"We have broken the stalemate of non-communication to starting communication with the Saudis," Qatari Foreign Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani told CNN in an interview broadcast on Sunday.

US envoy: N Korea comments 'hostile and unnecessary'

AFP ■ SEOUL

The top US representative in talks with North Korea on Monday slammed Pyongyang's demands as hostile and unnecessary as its end-of-year deadline approaches, but held open the door for fresh negotiations.

The North has insisted that Washington offer it new concessions by the end of 2019 with the process largely deadlocked since the collapse of a summit in Hanoi in February.

Pyongyang has issued a series of increasingly strident declarations in recent weeks, and US special representative Stephen Biegun told reporters in Seoul: "We have heard them all."

"It is regrettable that the

11 PEOPLE INJURED IN BLAST IN PAKISTAN

Peshawar: At least 11 people were injured when an explosives-laden auto-rickshaw went off outside the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly and Peshawar High Court here on Monday, according to media reports.

3 DEAD, 7 MISSING IN PHILIPPINE QUAKE

Padada (Philippines): Rescuers pulled out two bodies on Monday from a three-story building that collapsed in a strong earthquake in the southern Philippines and scrambled to find at least seven more people who were trapped inside.

MASSIVE POLIO VACCINATION DRIVE IN PAK

Islamabad: A massive anti-polio drive to vaccinate 6.75 million children started in 33 districts of Pakistan on Monday, amidst fresh reports of the disease surfacing in the country's southwest Balochistan province, according to media reports.

HOLOCAUST ARCHITECT'S GRAVE DUG UP IN BERLIN

Berlin: The grave of a top Nazi who helped plan the Holocaust and was assassinated by British-trained agents during World War II has been dug up in Berlin, German police said on Monday.

Zimbabwe V-P's wife charged with attempting to kill him

AP ■ HARARE (ZIMBABWE)

The wife of Zimbabwe's vice president has been charged with attempting to murder her husband.

Marry Chiwenga, a former model and wife of Vice President Constantino Chiwenga, appeared at the Harare Magistrates Court Monday where she was also charged with money laundering and fraud, amid reports of a troubled marriage.

Wearing a floral dress, she waved to journalists as she entered the court's holding cells. The magistrate ordered that she remain in custody pending a bail hearing. She is accused of trying to kill her husband in South Africa in July.

First, she tried to dupe medical

After violent weekend, Lebanese talks on new PM postponed

AP ■ BEIRUT

Lebanon's president on Monday postponed talks on naming a new prime minister after security forces repeatedly used tear gas, rubber bullets and water cannons against hundreds of protesters over the weekend.

The clashes were the most violent since daily anti-government demonstrations erupted in Lebanon in mid-October. The protests have plunged Lebanon into unprecedented political and financial turmoil.

President Michel Aoun was to meet with the heads of Lebanese parliamentary blocs on Monday to discuss the naming

of the new prime minister amid divisions on the shape of the next government.

The presidential palace said the consultations would instead take place on Thursday, following a special request from outgoing Prime Minister Saad Hariri. A similar postponement happened last week as well.

The UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon Jan Kubis warned Monday that, with the collapsing economy, such postponements were "a risky hazard both for the politicians but even more so" for the people.

Hariri resigned in late October, after protests first broke out earlier that month over

widespread corruption and mismanagement. The palace said Hariri had asked Aoun to allow for more time for discussions among political groups before official consultations.

Earlier, the country's main Christian groups refused to back Hariri, who has served as premier three times. The Lebanese Forces Party, with 15 seats in the 128-member parliament, said it won't name anyone, while the Kataeb Party said it will propose Lebanon's former UN Ambassador Nawaf Salam for the post. Hariri is now apparently trying anew to persuade Christian parties to back him.

Netanyahu's Likud challenger surging ahead of primary launch

AP ■ JERUSALEM

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's challenger for the post of ruling Likud party leader is picking up more endorsements ahead of the official launch of his primary campaign on Monday.

Gideon Saar's associates expect about 1,000 party activists to attend the launch and have been buoyed by support of a half-dozen Likud lawmakers, including the powerful chairman of the party's executive body.

Saar's leadership bid marks

the first serious internal challenge to Netanyahu in his decade-plus in power. Though still a decided underdog to the embattled prime minister, Saar seems to be gaining traction ahead of the December 26 vote among the party faithful where there is growing skepticism that Netanyahu can still deliver after two indecisive election results and a corruption indictment that may force him out of office.

Netanyahu faces charges of bribery, fraud and breach of trust in three corruption cases in which he is accused of trading

legislative or regulatory favors in exchange for lavish gifts or favorable media coverage. He denies wrongdoing and has waged an angry campaign against the media and law enforcement officials he said are bent on ousting him from office.

Outwardly, Likud members have strongly supported their leader and joined in denouncing the alleged "coup" of the liberal elites against him. But Saar's burgeoning insurrection has begun to reveal some cracks.

While Netanyahu's vari-

ous opponents across the political spectrum have called on him to resign because of his legal woes, Saar has kept saying the party needs a new leader because Netanyahu has been unable to form a stable coalition government and is unlikely to be able to again if given another chance.

Recent polls show that with Saar as leader, Likud would make a more powerful bloc with its natural ultra-Orthodox and nationalist allies. Saar would also be in an easier position to create a national unity government with the

centrist Blue and White party if, as expected, the upcoming March election produces a deadlock like the previous two rounds have.

Blue and White have ruled out serving with Netanyahu because of his indictment. Even amid the political disarray, Saar's challenge is a risky maneuver in a party that fiercely values loyalty and has had only four leaders in its 70-plus-year history.

Netanyahu himself has denounced Saar as "subversive."

FORM NO. 5 DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL 600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Mandir, Lucknow-226007 (Area of Jurisdiction- Part of Uttar Pradesh) SUMMONS FOR FILING & APPEARANCE BY PUBLICATION Date: 13/12/2019

Trend Slazer

Priyanka wraps up The White Tiger

Actor PRIYANKA CHOPRA has wrapped up shoot for *The White Tiger*, the Netflix film co-starring Rajkumar Rao and based on Aravind Adiga's Man Booker Prize-winning novel of the same name.

Priyanka took to Instagram to announce the news. "Happy tired but so excited to have wrapped #the-whitetiger," she wrote.

Thanking the film's cast and crew, she wrote, "It was such a pleasure to work with the best in the business in every department. The most hard working crew and such a delightful cast. Thank you for all your brilliance. I can't wait to see the finished product and share it with the world."



'Gauri, my character in *Damaged* is a complex person. She is burdened by her secrets and that has

forced her to smoke and be dependent on alcohol. This prevents her from being in her senses. I am strictly against smoking and have been very outspoken about it. However, the show required me to smoke for a few scenes. Since I have asthma, my director was concerned about me.' —Hina Khan

For the first time, actor SALMAN KHAN will start a promotional tour of his forthcoming film *Dabangg 3* down South, in Chennai, Hyderabad and Bengaluru.



The decision is obviously prompted by the fact that the film is scheduled to release in Tamil, Telugu, and Kannada languages, besides the original Hindi version.

Co-stars Sonakshi Sinha and Saiee Manjrekar and director Prabhudeva will accompany him during the promotions. Directed by Prabhudeva, the film is slated to release on December 20.

Cusack condemns attack on students

Hollywood star JOHN CUSACK has condemned the attack on students in Delhi in a series of tweets. He also proclaimed that India's economy is "in ICU."

Cusack, who has starred in blockbusters like *2012*, *High Fidelity* and *Serendipity*, took to Twitter and flooded his entire social media account with a series of tweets about the events that has shaken India.

He wrote in one thread, "Fascists in India trying to set students against each other — to cover for economic collapse of demonetisation but they are standing together in solidarity with their Muslim brothers and sisters." He commented on India's economy. "Indian economy in ICU, chaos, civil war," said he.



Iconic Irish rock band U2 made sure that their first-ever Mumbai concert was nothing less than legendary. The band had the audience grooving to their popular tracks such as *With or Without You*, *Where the Streets Have No Name* and *I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For* from their 1987 album, *The Joshua Tree*.

Paparazzi surrounded the band in Mumbai but they had no qualms striking quirky poses for the shutterbugs. This was their first-ever concert in India and marked the closure of *The Joshua Tree Tour 2019*, which celebrated 32 years of their album *The Joshua Tree*.

Celebrities around town queued up. Spotted at the concert were B-town stars Ranveer Singh and Deepika Padukone, Hrithik Roshan, Sussanne Khan, Amaal Mallik, Diana Penty, Riya Sen with husband Shivam Tewari, Anurag Kashyap and Rohit Dhawan. Kunal Kapoor with wife Naina Bachchan, Nitya Mehra, Mira Rajput, Rannvijay Singha with wife Priyanka Vohra, Shaheen Bhatt, and Javed Jaffrey with son Mizaan Jaffrey were there as well.

Cricket maestro Sachin Tendulkar with wife Anjali Tendulkar and Ness Wadia were also seen grooving to U2 beats.

The concert turned into a magical affair as Indian maestro AR Rahman joined Bono, The Edge, Adam Clayton and Larry Mullen Jr on stage. Rahman took to the stage with his daughters Khatija and Raheema, and performed the single *Ahimsa*, which he composed in collaboration with the rock band. Bono described the ideal practised by Mahatma Gandhi "India's greatest gift to the world." Psychedelic lights paired with Bono's vocals and Rahman trio's chant-like rendition which cast a spell.

In their special segment, called *Herstory*, the musicians paid tribute to icons of the country and featured photos of women — projected on a giant screen which formed the backdrop of the stage — as the band played their track *Ultraviolet*. Author-activist Arundhati Roy, Smriti Irani, astronaut Kalpana Chawla, journalists Gauri Lankesh and Rana Ayyub were some who were featured. U2 also acknowledged the contribution of Greta Thunberg.

To highlight the security concern women face the world over, the band also included pictures from the recent protest march in Hyderabad after a young vet was raped and killed. "When women feel safe at homes or walking on the street, that's a beautiful day.



UNTIL THE END OF THE WORLD

Irish rock band U2's concert, which celebrated 32 years of their album *The Joshua Tree*, was their first ever performance in India

When sisters around the world are in school like their brothers, that's a beautiful day. When women of the world unite to rewrite history as their story, that's a beautiful day. To rewrite history as her story is a beautiful day," Bono said as the crowd erupted in applause.

Bono, in his greeting to the audience which began with "namaste Mumbai," acknowledged that it took them a while to visit the country. "It took us only

four decades to come here. India, what a country! Tonight it's going to be the best ever show. We have fallen head over heels in love with India. Our prayer for the evening is for an epic night of rock and roll which transcends beyond. We come to India as pilgrims. We are students, you are our teachers," Bono said.

The singer-songwriter said the band was honoured to close their tour in the country. "We have been here for a few days but it



already looks to me that we just have to come back," Larry said. The Edge said though it has taken the band quite some time to come to the country, "It's such a thrill. This feels something special. We are grateful that our journey

has brought us to India. I'm so glad these companions have come here tonight," Adam added.

"We say thank you for your patience. Tonight is the last night for *The Joshua Tree* tour... When women and men, left and right

work together for change, that's how we change the world," he said. (The concert was brought by Bookmyshow. It was held on Sunday evening at Navi Mumbai's DY Patil Stadium.)

—PTVIANS

The mic says it all

Comedian SAPAN VERMA tells CHAHAK MITTAL that the risk of people getting offended by comedy is more when they watch the content online rather than when they experience it live

How did you conceptualise your set for *Black Dog Easy Evenings — Savour The Pause?* What inspired it?

The conceptualisation for a set often depends on the crowd that you are performing for. In the case of *Black Dog Easy Evenings*, it is mostly a very classy audience comprising of HNIs in their 30s or 40s, so I plan my set accordingly. It is different as compared to when I am on tour and there is a much younger audience in attendance. The content also depends a lot on the venue. Again, in this case, locations are mostly at fancy hotels and clubs so my primary focus while conceptualising my set automatically depends on the audience, the demographics and the venue of the show.

Earlier, comedy was only looked at as something that was fun and was supposed to give people a break from monotony. Today, humour has become a tool of dissent and something that could be used to put across a strong perspective in a satirical way. What's your take on this change in stand-up comedy?

The comedy scene today has evolved as a whole. Comedians are becoming content creators and are conceptualising it in various forms. But we are all very different from each other in our approach and work. While some of us may want to take a firm stand on certain issues, some would shy away from it. Comedy is, however, a great tool of communication since you are putting across a message in a funny way and that almost always makes people listen to what you have to say. Even filmmakers are taking that path these days to put across a strong message in the society without preaching by making it funny.

Adding to that, it seems like stand-up comics are becoming the primary opposition party when the politicians are floun-



dering. Kunal Kamra is an example...

Comedians are comedians at the end of the day and while they might put across points that challenge authority, they are only cracking jokes. Let's look at it that way...

How have you seen the comedy industry evolve in India? There have been talent hunt shows around dance and music but *Comicstaan* was first of its kind...

The comedy scene in India is very new. We are only around 10 years-old. It is now going to get

bigger and better. Two to three years ago, we had comedy clubs only in the metro cities, Mumbai, Delhi and Bengaluru. Today, they exist in Tier 2 cities like Chandigarh and Jaipur as well. A lot of comedians and comedy is also going international, which aids in increasing the volume of audience that is exposed to it. There is online content being created and uploaded onto platforms like YouTube and Amazon Prime Video which is again getting a large audience for it.

You had said in an interview

some time ago, "Indians get offended very easily." What's this pressure on comedians to write and tell their jokes in a way that it is palatable to the audience?

There is no pressure as such. However, you always have to use your discretion when you put out content. The main point of difference lies between watching the show live versus watching the same video online. When it is live, the audience has paid money and bought a ticket. They know what to expect, are prepared, have a sense of comedy and its style. They are already in that zone and frame of mind, so that they don't really get offended. When they do, it takes place mostly online. When it is just a snippet of the larger set or when people don't necessarily have a context to the joke as they are watching it from a different part of the world and are maybe unaware of your work and your style of humour, is when they might get offended. So it varies as per the situation and venue as well as platform.

The American web show, *The Marvelous Mrs Maisel*, revolves around the journey of a young comedienne and how the industry functions. Do you think there should be more such shows when it comes to talking about comedians in everyday life?

Yes definitely, the more comedy shows there are, the better it is for the whole industry. Vipul Goyal did a show with TVF called *Humorously Yours* that showcased him building his comic brand. With the rise of OTT platforms, I'm sure there will be many more.

How did you conceptualise *One Mic Stand*. What made you get actors, a YouTube sensation and a politician on board? What were the risks and onground challenges?

I always wanted to do a show with stand-up as the focal point. I knew that I wanted to get a variety of guests onboard which would improve the quality of content. I didn't want it to be only Bollywood-led. Since this was being done for the first time, a lot of guests did back out as they were scared. However, anything which is done for the first time has challenges. Season 1 took off really well and I am glad that it was received warmly.

SHAPED BY PERFORMANCE

Designer-duo SHANTANU & NIKHIL collaborated with Porsche for the launch of Cayenne Coupé as they feel both the brands share similar traits. By TEAM VIVA



You might find similarities between two fashion houses. But it is not often that a car and a fashion brand share similar traits. Recently, designer-duo Shantanu & Nikhil collaborated with Porsche for the launch of Cayenne Coupé.

Shantanu Mehra believes that the car blends into the world of contrasts like they do in their clothing line. "You see a lot of glory but at the same time there is lot of guts too. There is a hint of vintage in the structure but at the same time it seems contemporary. These are the features that both the brands bring to the table," he said.

The duo known for crafting dresses with narratives traced their journey and said that they broke the stereotypical notion of Indian fashion when they started off. "An emphasis on draping became an entrance to a new revolutionary fashion. It came to us in a way that even after 15 years we continue to focus on it. It is the true form of wearability and functionality," said Shantanu. Another out-of-the-box thought that they introduced was men's drape. "Initially, it was mocked and



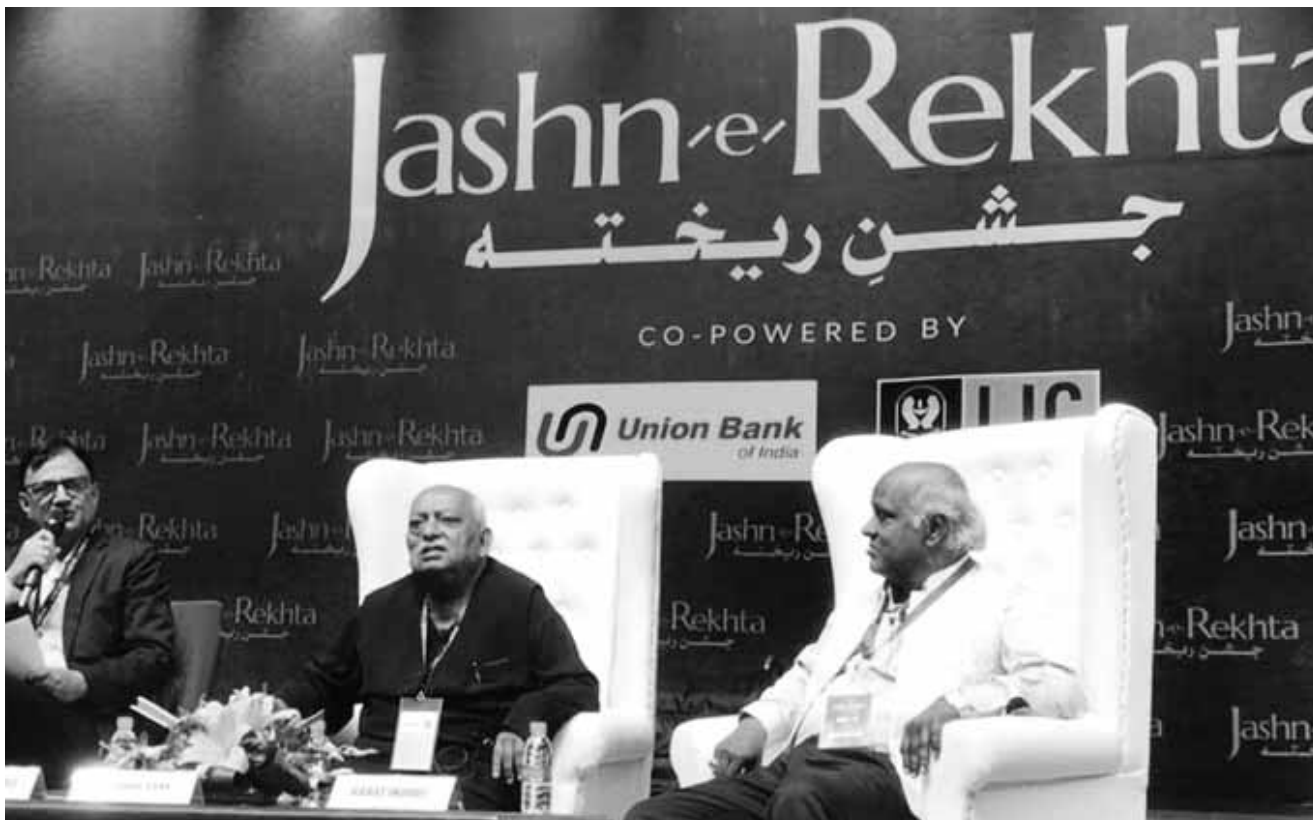
not welcomed by people but later it became mainstream. We wanted to create a gender-fluid world where everyone can stand tall wearing gender equality," added Nikhil.

At the launch, models walked the ramp donning golden and pale chestnut gowns and floral printed jackets. The showstopper, Jacqueline Fernandez, grabbed eyeballs for her red gown which was colour coordinated with Coupé. She said, "I resemble a lot with the Coupé, on one hand there is ease and on the other, strength and endurance."

This version of the car that features an all-new body shape and two different roof concepts shares the same technical attributes as the third generation Cayenne, what sets it apart are its sharpened proportions and dramatically sloping roofline that give it a more athletic appearance.

For the love of Urdu

In its ninth edition, *JASHN-E-REKHTA* has gradually become one of the must-attend events on the social calendar of Delhi, says **SAIMI SATTAR**



The fact that the crowds have swelled is obvious even to a casual observer who has been visiting *Jashn-e-Rekhta* since its second edition. How many of them reached the Major Dhyani Chand National Stadium for the pure love of Urdu could be anyone's guess as the festival has gradually acquired the connotation of must-be-seen at event in the December calendar. Or maybe it has just become the place to rub shoulders with Bollywood celebrities or post check-ins on social media as the number of people clicking selfies at several premier spots were practically tripping over each other.

While entering, one encountered the beautiful *pandals* with colourful strips adorning the ceiling at each venue. There were, of course, performances and discussions which form the mainstay of the festival along with the sideshows which consist of food stalls and vendors selling different merchandise. However, the proceedings this year were marred, especially on the third day, with reports of violence coming in from Jamia Milia Islamia. In between the debates about which session to attend next, snatches of conversation could be heard about the Central University as well.

The inauguration on the first day by Dr Karan Singh was followed by a performance by singer

Harshdeep Kaur who set the stage on fire with her foot-tapping numbers.

The second day saw a variety of performances where Javed Akhtar, speaking on Sahir Luhiyanvi, shared not just his work but his personal life too. While he elaborated on Luhiyanvi's paradoxical nature, the loudest roars and appreciation were reserved for the time when Akhtar said that increasingly the way to judge if a personal was nationalistic was to find out if s/he hated anyone or not? Coming against the backdrop of his latest recital of his poem, *Jo baat kehke darte hain sab, tu woh baat likh* (write what everyone is afraid of writing),

there was no mistaking who was at the receiving end of his subtle criticism.

Old friends Munawwar Rana and Rahat Indori got together to discuss the falling standards of *mushairas* while detailing the perils of inviting poets on the basis of Instagram likes. Peppered with funny incidents, it was a display of the camaraderie that the two poets share.

The next day, too, saw Bollywood representation. While at one place actor Divya Dutta held forth on her book followed by Piyush Mishra, at the larger enclosure, sufi Kathak dancer Manjari Chaturvedi performed on the Begums and Baijis of Bollywood. Ustad Shujaat Khan

wove magic on the sitar with poetry written by the likes of Amir Khusrau and Krishna Bihari Noor.

In the evening, a rock fusion band, Indie Routes, tried to match the high notes of Ustad Nusra Fateh Ali Khan and Rahat Fateh Ali Khan.

A performance by Jaspinder Narula concluded the ninth edition of the *Rekhta*, even as the initial days leading upto it were mired in a controversy. The festival, which till date, had proclaimed to celebrate Urdu, in its posters had changed it to say it was a festival of Hindustani languages. The uproar that followed on social media meant that it was restored to the original.

Maps of memory's landscape

Author **TARAN KHAN's** *Shadow City: A Woman Walks Kabul*, captures the Afghan capital through the writer's eyes and reveals a fragile city in a state of flux: Stricken by near-constant war but flickering with the promise of peace

You tell her that you read somewhere that the most beautiful places in the world are cursed with conflict. She pauses, and whispers that she didn't really emotionally investigate that thought in the book. You then ask what is the first image that comes to her mind when she hears the word 'Kabul'? She says, almost immediately, "Mountains. And snow sitting on top of them".

Author Taran Khan's *Shadow City: A Woman Walks Kabul*, published recently by Penguin Random House India captures the Afghan capital through the writer's eyes, who has been spending time there since 2006, and reveals a fragile city in a state of flux: stricken by near-constant war, but flickering with the promise of peace, a shape-shifting place governed by age-old codes, but experimenting with new modes of living.

She goes to the unvisited tombs of the dead, and to the land of the living: the booksellers, archaeologists, intrepid filmmakers and entrepreneurs who are remaking and rebuilding this ancient 3,000-year-old city.

Talking about the city, Khan emphasises that she wouldn't want to create a romantic vision of Kabul or use the cliché 'there is more to the place than war' because that would also be a kind of disservice. She thinks it is always important to describe people as people while writing about them.

"For me, the key was to shed light on everything — the nuances, the situations, the entire environment. I think that's what I really enjoy doing in this book — essentially talk about the humanity of these people by focussing on specifics, by stressing on their experiences," says she.

Insisting that for her the overwhelming emotion in people there was humanity, great humour, warmth and extraordinary hospitality as decades of conflict has taught them how quickly life could change, and it was, therefore, important to hold on to those qualities.

Khan says, "I felt that warmth when I went for the first time and I continue to feel it, even today. I certainly never felt that they were unidimensional and defined by their suffering, unlike how they have been portrayed by the media."

Stressing that she was still in touch with many of the characters in the book, even those who have left Kabul and taken refuge in different countries, Khan adds, "Some of them were in the process of leaving when I was there. Things have changed for them as well, but these are relationships that are continuing, beyond the life of a book."

The author reveals that she didn't set out to write the book in a certain way, but in fact, derived the essence from meeting people over several years, observing things that changed and remained unchanged in their lives.

She says, "There was both continuity and alteration. They were generous enough to include me in their lives. That helped me get the perspective — that comes from participation and observing the every day. You know that automatically gives you a way, layers to talk about complexity or ordinariness. And the latter can be a wonderful thing. You often don't get to hear that quality about Kabul... how ordinary days are, how everyday life goes, what do you do when you are sitting by a window and reading. I was fortunate enough to see and describe that."

Interestingly, fortified and high security-areas, and not the streets and people's homes made her uneasy and insecure. She laughs and adds, "Maybe that's just me. Honestly, if I was in an armoured car, moving through the city's traffic, I felt very 'exposed'. For me, it was always less frightening to be a regular, normal home or a restaurant."

Though she had been writing elaborate pieces for different publications from Kabul since 2006, somewhere along the way, it stuck her that maybe she was just scratching the surface.

"It was a peculiar 'writer' instinct. I felt there was something more, and there was



a different way of getting at that. So I started writing longer stories, which went into lucid themes, which I found very enjoyable. I kept writing them and finding places to pitch them. I thought yes, there is a book here, somewhere." However, it was only after she left Kabul in 2013 that she actually started writing the book.

Ask her if the 'distance' helped put things in perspective, and she asserts, "Yes, I think leaving Kabul was part of the writing process and helped me see patterns. I could see how things connected and could therefore, move pieces around in a freer way."

Khan, who wrote three drafts, admits that being a journalist did help, as she didn't feel that she was attempting something dramatically different.

"I had the discipline of writing. Of course, this book required a completely different kind of immersion and I loved every moment of it, despite it being extremely difficult. Also, a lot of help came my way — friends and other writers who would read drafts and encourage. If I weren't a journalist, I wouldn't have this community of people who understood the process and could hold me up when they felt my resolve wavering. I also had access to resources that I could ask other journalists for help. I knew where I needed to look when I need information," says Khan.

She is not worried going back to journalism with its demand of set templates and word counts... "I like writing non-fiction generally and not worried about getting bored with it. In fact, the last series I did was about Afghan refugees in Germany, an eight part series boasting of about 24,000 words."

So we can expect a non-fiction now? She laughs and says, "Well, why can't we expect it? I would love to work on another book but it has to be something consuming. I would like to find something that I can invest myself in, something that can hold myself with the kind of power that Kabul did."

Ask her about her plans to go back to Kabul and if she will encounter the city through the book's prism, Khan says, "No immediate plans but if I go back, I know it will be to a very different city. In the book, I looked through the prism of my memories. The people I spent so much time with there, don't live in Kabul anymore. But yes, when I meet them in different parts of the world, it is like the city takes a form there, and comes alive beyond its geography."

—JANS

History of man and woman

Artist **PROBIR GUPTA's** latest show, *Family is Plural*, is an intuitively blended act of compassion as well as an innate sense of duty. By **UMA NAIR**

Probir Gupta's immersively installed solo show, *Family is Plural*, traverses the history of loss and the beauty of knowledge to create fragments of human relationships.

COLLECTIVE FRAMING

Curator Shaheen Merali says, "In Gupta's artworks, one can find transitional compositions that together create new 'half-forms'. The collective framing organises these parts or sometimes suggests possibilities in their unrealised forms. Throughout his images, one is drawn by the skill set necessary for the audience to comprehend the diverse aspects that reveal empathy and care."

INDIAN BOAT AND THE RAFT

Two installations become notes of a flashback because Gupta flits through the pages of time. His art has always been a response to the social and political unrest of his times. He often oscillates between the past and the present. Gupta creates two works that talk to us about ongoing relationships and the collaborative influences on human activity. Influences from life, other struggles and events impact his art and understanding of the world as he creates narratives.

Gupta employs conceptual and personal strategies of great conviction to med-



Indian Boat
Metal, Wood, Fiber Glass and Print on Canvas

itate on the nature of his own artistic practice. He also brings the viewer into the conversation about the role of an artist as both a preternaturally talented individual and the link to the history of both literature and culture. An example of this is seen in a manner of his narrative power that makes his works unravel like a series "sequence-portraits" — altered or staged. He finds his own language in pivoting away from conceptual work and explores the complex possibilities inherent in the art of creating installations. These speak of the spectacle and of the power of the human figure.

Merali says Gupta's is a sovereign practice with comments on race, gender and caste. In the process, he makes use of modernist visual art tropes to suggest both immediacy and the place of the infinites-

imal event in the making of history. The inventive use of chroma and the camouflage is an innovative source which is a difficult space of multiple encounters. Yet it allows Gupta to re-examine trauma in the pursuit of our ethnographic televisual lives.

THE WALL

Fibre glass bricks upholstery and hair come together in a deeply surreal installation *The Wall*. This singular installation makes us think of pastoral scenes and quaint portraits created with a singular palette of bricks and hair that reference human as well as architectural motifs. The artist makes us think of many things — a visual response to industrialisation and modernism, a specifically



For the Museum of Victory
Iron, Fiber Glass, Wood, Bamboo

complex psychological narrative and abstract concepts like time and the place of man in the journey of trials and tribulations.

What endears is Gupta's ability to translate the passage of time through his incisive approach of capturing differing lighting situations as we think of stories that unveil over many seasons, months or even different times of day.

VISUAL SHIFT AND DEPTH

The impulse Gupta feels to transform the nature of his work culminates in a powerful visual shift that has preoccupied him for decades and resulted in this series of paintings and installations. The display has incredible depth, consistency and nuance. Also in a subtle way, Gupta rebuts modern day monochromatic aesthetics in the hyper-saturated, imagined landscapes and cityscapes that we see as run of the mill.

Family is Plural is about the history of man and woman, art and its lasting influence on modern and contemporary tastes alike.

WATCH OUT

Shri Ram Centre for Performing Arts organises its annual theatre festival, *The Panna Bharat Ram Theatre Festival*. It presents a fine assortment of plays of different genres such as William Inge's such as *Splendor in the Grass*, a Hindi adaptation directed by Feisal Alkazi, Girish Karnad's *Agni aur Barkha*, *Bali* from KS Rajendran, Mahesh Dattani's *Tara* and many others. **WHEN:** December 21 to 29 **TIME:** 7 pm onwards **WHERE:** Shri Ram Centre, Mandi House.



Specially-abled children from Deepashram (home for **Shri Boys**) presents an exhibition — *My Dreams, My World*. These children have used pastels, crayons, sketch pens, pencils, water colours for the exhibition and even for collages. They will also release a book that captures their story. **WHEN:** Till December 20 **TIME:** 5.30 pm **WHERE:** Arpana Fine Art Gallery, 4/6, Siri Fort Institutional Area.

All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society (AIFACS) presents its Annual exhibition which includes some of the most recognised artists across India. The exhibition has been organised under four categories, paintings, drawing, sculpture and graphics. **WHEN:** Till December 25 **TIME:** 11 am to 7 pm **WHERE:** AIFACS, Galleries of the Society, 1 Rafi Marg.



Sahitya Kala Parishad along with Delhi Government organises Sopan festival. The festival is about young musicians and dancers who are the scholarship holders of Sahitya Kala Parishad. Spread over six days, around 24 artists will perform this year. **WHEN:** Till December 18 **WHERE:** Central Park, Rajiv Chowk.

Monica Jain, curatorial director of Art Centrix Space, presents *Con Tempus/ With Time*, a group exhibition of artworks that perceives the been, being and becoming as one. **WHEN:** Till January 15 **TIME:** 11 am to 6 pm; Sunday closed **WHERE:** Art Centrix Space, Jain Farm, Behind Sector D 2, Vasant Kunj.



Need to play acc to situation: Pant

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Often accused of not putting enough premium on his wicket, rising Indian batsman Rishabh Pant says he has now understood that there is no concept of "natural game" in international cricket where one has to play according to the situation.

Pant's reckless strokeplay at crucial junctures, leading to soft dismissals, as well as poor work behind the stumps have been the talking points and a matter of concern for the Indian team.

But the 22-year-old wicketkeeper-batsman from Delhi finally came good and struck his maiden ODI half century, albeit in a losing cause, in the first one-dayer against West Indies. Pant said he is constantly trying to improve his game.

"I've realised after playing a fair bit at international level that unlike at amateur levels of cricket, there isn't anything like a natural game. At the international level, you have to play according to the situation or what the team demands," Pant said at the post-match press conference.

"It's my learning curve, I'm thinking that. From team's point of view, whatever I can do to help my team win, to have a good score on the scoreboard, that's what I was focussing on. In the end, I got some runs," he added.

He said he will continue to focus on his game rather than think about the "talk going around" about him.

"As an individual and as a player, I want to focus on my processes. All the talking going around, they're good and sometimes they're not. At the moment, I'm concentrating on my



India's Rishabh Pant, right, bats during the first one day international cricket match between India and West Indies

BCCI/Twitter

game and that will hold me in good stead," said Pant who scored 71 off 69 deliveries for his maiden ODI half-century.

Asked what kept him going despite the constant criticism, Pant said it was all about believing in himself and following the process of growth.

"I will always tell a person that you have to believe in yourself. It doesn't

matter what people say around you. Sometimes you don't get runs, sometimes you get runs but the process is always important," said the wicketkeeper-batsman.

Asked how important this knock was in the current circumstances, he said every innings was important for him and he wanted to improve every day.

"Personally, if I play for India,

every innings is important for me. As a youngster I want to improve each and every day," Pant said.

Pant has been greeted with chants of 'Dhoni, Dhoni' by crowds at various stadiums but not here.

"Sometimes it's important when crowd supports you. From an individual point of view, I was trying to improve myself every day but I wasn't getting there. I am not saying I got

there, but I try to improve."

Pant, who revived the Indian innings after the loss of three quick wickets in the company of Shreyas Iyer (70), said the idea was to stitch together a partnership and stay longer on the crease.

"At the start, (Shreyas) Iyer and I were thinking of first stitching together a partnership and taking the game to the 35th-40th over because a 50-over game is a fairly long one.

"Our idea was that the longer our partnership will be, it'd help us in capitalising late in the innings," said Pant who plays for Delhi Capitals in the IPL.

Asked if the Indian bowling lineup was missing pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, Pant backed the current lot and said they were learning. Bumrah is currently recovering from a stress fracture of the back and is expected to be fit for the tour of New Zealand next year.

"Bumrah is a top bowler. Everyone knows that. He's out because of an injury. The other bowlers who are playing here aren't doing badly. As youngsters, these guys are learning," Pant reasoned.

"Bumrah has now become an experienced bowler. He has learnt quite a bit having played so much of international cricket. These players will also learn as they go along," he said.

On his thought process on and off field, he said, "If I'm practising I think about cricket. If I'm off the field, I'm not thinking about it too much.

"I talked to the team management and they told me, 'just calm yourself, see what you can do around to improve your game, improve your fitness, just try to improve yourself in every way.'"



India captain Virat Kohli in action

BCCI/Twitter

Kohli retains top spot

PTI ■ DUBAI

in the ODIs.

Indian skipper Virat Kohli retained his top spot among batsmen while the injured bowler Jasprit Bumrah slipped a rung to sixth in the latest ICC Test rankings issued on Monday.

Kohli (928 points) is 17 points clear of Australia's Steve Smith who scored 43 and 16 in the first Test against New Zealand which Australia won by 296 runs.

Cheteshwar Pujara (791) and Ajinkya Rahane (759) held on to their fourth and sixth spots respectively.

Australia batsman Marnus Labuschagne continued his surge, entering the top five in the list of batsmen after scores of 143 and 50 in the Perth Test.

Labuschagne, who narrowly missed joining Pakistan's Zaheer Abbas and Mudassar Nazar in scoring at least 150 in three successive Test innings, has gained three slots to occupy fifth place.

He has overtaken compatriot David Warner and is the second-highest ranked Australia batsman after Steve Smith.

Pakistan batsman Babar Azam reached the top 10 for the first time, moving from 13th to ninth position after his unbeaten knock of 102 against Sri Lanka in the drwan first Test. He is currently No.1 in the T20I rankings and second

en 109, which made him the first male cricketer and only the second after former England woman opener Enid Bakewell to score centuries on both Test and ODI debuts, has entered the rankings at an impressive 78th position.

Among the bowlers, Bumrah, who has been out since the start of the home series against South Africa due to a stress fracture, slipped to the sixth spot in the list headed by Australia's Pat Cummins.

Neil Wagner's seven wickets against New Zealand helped him reclaim third position among bowlers with a career-best tally of 834 rating points. Tim Southee is back in the top 10 after his nine-wicket match haul.

Another Australian bowler Mitchell Starc's effort of 9/97 in the first Test has lifted him to a career-best fifth spot and career-best 806 rating points. Josh Hazlewood has moved from eighth to seventh position.

India's Ravindra Jadeja, meanwhile, remained at number 2 behind Jason Holder of the West Indies among Test all-rounders.

In the ICC World Test Championship, India stand on top with 360 points, way ahead of Australia (216), Sri Lanka (80), New Zealand (60) and England (56).



Shimron Hetmyer reacts after playing a shot

It was my best knock: Hetmyer

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Swashbuckling West Indies batsman Shimron Hetmyer described his match-winning 139 against India in the first one-dayer as the best knock of his career but said he would have been happier had he finished off the game.

Hetmyer was out in the 39th over after stitching 218 runs for the second wicket with fellow centurion Shai Hope (102 not out), with the West Indies at the stage needing 59 runs from 11.2 overs with eight wickets in hand.

"This is my highest score in international cricket, so this would be the best one. It's always nice chasing a score than a setting one. Chasing and taking the team home is a much better feel-

ing. Sad that I didn't finish the game, but it's a work in progress for me," Hetmyer said.

He said he just kept it simple and batting with Hope also made it easier as they have good understanding between them.

"We just keep it simple because we've played with each other for quite a while now. So, I know his game and he knows mine. So, basically when we're batting together, most of the time, I'm the aggressor and he's the person who sticks around and bats around," said Hetmyer who faced 106 deliveries during his knock.

"And if he gets the boundary ball, he puts it away. For us, it's always nice batting with someone like him because he's going to make sure you get the strike as much as possible and it's easier

to execute," he added.

His career-best knock also came just before the IPL auction on December 19 but the 22-year-old batsman said he was not thinking much about the upcoming cash-rich T20 league at the moment.

Asked if he was trying to prove a point with a ton days before the IPL auction, he said for him it was about enjoying his batting.

"To me it's about enjoying my batting, it's cricket, sometimes you score runs and sometimes you don't. Didn't have the best IPL (2019 season), it's a nice experience, it always helps you to come back much stronger from there. I just try as much as possible to put that behind me," he said.

Babar wants to match Virat's status

PTI ■ KARACHI

Prolific Pakistan batsman Babar Azam wants to achieve the "legend" status that Virat Kohli has acquired but concedes that despite the often-repeated comparisons, he is still some time away from getting anywhere close to the Indian captain.

The 24-year-old is a self-confessed fan of Kohli spoke about his aspiration to emulate the world's No 1 Test and ODI batsman.

"Look he (Kohli) has already achieved a lot. He is a legend in his country. Honestly there is no comparison with me right now but eventually I also want to get where he is today," Azam said.

"The media and people have drawn comparisons between me and Virat Kohli but I realise that I still need to get more runs in red ball cricket to be ranked among the top players. That is why in recent months I have been focusing a lot on getting consistent scores in Test matches," he added.

Babar, who scored his sec-



Babar Azam raises his bat

Yasir wants to play Test against India

PTI ■ KARACHI

Pakistan leg-spinner Yasir Shah on Monday said it is "unfortunate" to have not got a chance to play red ball cricket against India since making his debut and he is now eagerly waiting to test his skills against the likes of Virat Kohli in Test matches.

Shah, 33, who has 207 wickets from 37 Tests, has never played a Test against India since his Pakistan debut in 2011.

"It is unfortunate and I feel disappointed when I think about the fact that I have not played a Test against India. Even the white ball matches have been far and few against them in recent years," he said. "I would like to play



Yasir Shah poses for a photo

against them because they have some top players and for a leg-spinner it is always enjoyable when you are bowling too or getting wickets of high profile players (like Kohli)," he said.

Pakistan toured India in the winter of 2012 for a short limited over series, but the two teams have not played a Test against each other since the Mumbai terror attacks in 2008.

anyone compares me with Kohli or (Steve) Smith. I am now more focused on my batting and I spend hours watching videos

of my innings. I catch my mistakes and then I try to ensure I don't commit them again the next time," he said.

Kohli is cricketing version of Ronaldo: Lara

PTI ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Virat Kohli is the cricketing equivalent of soccer superstar Cristiano Ronaldo for his sheer commitment towards the game even though a K L Rahul can consider himself at par with the India captain in terms of talent, feels West Indies batting icon Brian Lara.

One of the greatest batsmen to have played the game and for many, the best left-hander of all-time along with Sir Garfield Sobers, Lara says he is in awe of how Kohli has honed his skills to take batting to an "unbelievable level".

"I think it has got a lot to do with Virat's outstanding commitment besides his preparation. I don't think he is any more talented than a KL Rahul or a Rohit Sharma but his commitment to prepare himself properly stands out. He is, for me, the cricketing equivalent of Cristiano Ronaldo," Lara told PTI during an exclusive interaction.

"His fitness level and his mental strength is unbelievable."

For the 50-year-old Lara, who scored nearly 12,000 runs in Test cricket, Kohli can fit into the best teams of any era — be it Clive Lloyd's 'Unbeatables' of the '70s or Sir Don Bradman's 'Invincibles' of 1948.

"His batting skills are unbelievable. He is a guy you cannot leave out in any era. If a guy is averaging 50 plus in all versions of the game, then that is something which is unheard of," the legend said.

Another player Lara praised was English all-rounder Ben Stokes, who enjoyed a stellar run in the World Cup and the Ashes.

Lara himself has been a part of some of the most memorable fourth innings chases against Australia where he batted with the tailenders.

Therefore, it wasn't surprising to see Lara gush about Stokes' Ashes-saving 135 not



Indian captain Virat Kohli celebrates with teammates

BCCI/Twitter

out at the Headingley.

"It was an unbelievable innings that he played. You must give him the credit not only for that innings but also for his 84 not out in the ODI World Cup final. He came up through a very rough period couple of years back (Bristol pub brawl and subsequent suspension) and he has shown the mettle to put things aside and soldiered on as a cricketer."

Talk about West Indies cricket and how most of the talented players are being lured by private leagues, Lara refused to call them "mercenaries".

"Certainly not," said Lara, who didn't agree with the view, saying some of the illustrious predecessors in the '70s had already set the precedent by joining Kerry Packer's World Series Cricket (WSC).

"Each cricketer has to make a choice. Back in the day in late '70s, there was Kerry Packer and there was an exodus of cricketers. I can't say that there's something that's new. "Not everyone will be playing for the West Indies. So if you can make a living playing T20 leagues then why not?

I don't see it as a mercenary act," Lara said.

However, he wants Cricket West Indies (CWI) to draw a plan that would keep youngsters interested in Test cricket keeping their below-par show in the longest version during the past few years.

"I am hoping that West Indies don't have to get involved in a lower Test level. Series like West Indies vs Australia (Worrell Trophy), West Indies vs England (Wisden Trophy) have always had a legacy created over the years," he said.

"West Indies have 5 to 6 million people, different islands, different politics. You have seen Usain Bolt run for Jamaica and not for the West Indies. Cricket is the only unifying force but still has its problems to keep it unified in terms of getting the infrastructure needed," Lara said.

The lure of private leagues will be there but then it's the custodians of the game in the Caribbean, who need to take the initiative and show the world that they care about their players, Lara said.

"...It's a situation where as a youngster, you have an opportunity to go out there and make a living for yourself. So hopefully, it doesn't do too much damage but it still belongs to West Indies board, the power to ensure that it doesn't happen," he asserted.

"A youngster may want to do different things, (but) if you have a structure in place, I am sure you can have the effect of what the baggy greens have in Australia.

"Look at the current Indian cricket team. They have the most exciting T20 league (IPL) and yet they are excited about Test cricket as well as all the versions of the game," he said.

He is not averse to contributing actively to West Indies cricket but then he wants CWI to decide how badly they want his services.

"It depends on Cricket West Indies to decide on who all they want in their set-up. Over the years there has been a lot of involvement by former cricketers. As far as I am concerned, it might be in the horizon, you never know," he said.

SA include Six uncapped players for Eng Tests

AFP ■ CAPE TOWN

South Africa on Monday named six uncapped players in a 17-man squad for the first two Tests against England, starting at Centurion on December 26.

Five players who played in a recent 3-0 series defeat in India were dropped, while fast bowler Lungi Ngidi was not considered because of a hamstring injury.

The squad will assemble for a training camp tomorrow, with three of the players to be released to play for South Africa A in a three-day match against England in Benoni, starting on Friday.

The uncapped players are opening batsman Pieter Malan, who may get his chance if Aiden Markram has not fully recovered from injury, top-order batsman Rassie van der Dussen, all-rounder Dwaine Pretorius, fast bowlers Dane Paterson and Beuran Hendricks and wicketkeeper-batsman Rudi Seccombe.

The squad is the first to be named by



Pieter Malan raises his bat

CSA/Twitter

dent selector Linda Zondi.

Despite the large number of uncapped players, there are no major surprises in a squad which includes the core of the players who have represented South Africa in recent times.

Three of the dropped players were spin bowlers — Senuran Muthusamy, George Linde and Dane Piedt — who went to India primarily because of conditions there.

Keshav Maharaj is the only spinner in the squad for the England Tests.

There is no place for top-order batsman Theunis de Bruyn, who played in seven of South Africa's most recent nine Tests, or wicketkeeper-batsman Heinrich Klaasen.

Regular Test top-order batsman Temba Bavuma, Malan and all-rounder Andile Phehlukwayo will play for South Africa A against the tourists, while others, including Markram, are likely to be released to play for their franchises in four-day domestic matches, starting on Thursday.

MADRID CALLING

Liverpool face Atletico while City clubbed against Real in Champions League last 16

AFP ■ NYON

Holders Liverpool will return to the scene of last season's Champions League triumph after they were drawn against Atletico Madrid in the last 16 of the competition on Monday and Manchester City face 13-time winners Real Madrid.

Jürgen Klopp's side will travel to the Wanda Metropolitano, where Liverpool lifted the trophy in June, for the first leg of their tie against three-time runners-up Atletico.

"Madrid is the place where we only have fantastic memories, all of us, so that's great, but this time we play Atletico there and it's their home ground," said Klopp.

"It's a tough one, but if you go through all of the draws, there are pretty much four or five potential finals already in the last 16."

Pep Guardiola's City, who are trying to win a first Champions League crown, face a tough task against Real, the record winners of Europe's top club prize, for a place in the quarter-finals.

The two clubs met in the 2015-16 semi-finals, the furthest City have progressed in the tournament. That tie was won 1-0 on aggregate by Real.

"It is a difficult one, of course. Real Madrid have won 13 times so they are the best," City director of football Txiki Begiristain told *BT Sport*.

"We want to be the best so we want to beat them."

The clash is a first competitive meeting between Guardiola and Zinedine Zidane, who won the Champions League three times in a row with Real from 2016.

"They are a big opponent, very powerful in every sense," said Real director Emilio Butragueño.

"It's going to be an exciting tie — one of those that makes us love this wonderful sport."

Chelsea face German giants Bayern Munich in a repeat of the 2012 final won by the Blues.

However, Bayern goalkeeper



Former AS Roma player Kostas Manolas scores against Barcelona during UCL 2017-18 quarter final second leg match. Manolas, who now represent Napoli will once again face La Liga leaders in the last 16 round UCL/Twitter

Spain, will lock horns with Bundesliga leaders RB Leipzig, who are through to the knockout stages for the first time.

Spurs can count on the experience of new coach Jose Mourinho — a two-time winner of the competition, with Porto in 2004 and Inter Milan in 2010.

The Portuguese is one of five managers appointed by clubs who made it through to the knockout rounds who were not in charge when the draw for the group stage was made.

Champions League debutants Atalanta continue their adventure against two-time former finalists Valencia, who knocked out Ajax in midweek to finish top of their group.

This is the first time since the current Champions League format was introduced in 2003 that every club through to the last 16 has come from Europe's biggest five domestic leagues.

The first legs will be played over February 18-19 and February 25-26 with the return fixtures scheduled for March 10, 11, 17 and 18.

The final is on May 30 at the Ataturk Stadium in Istanbul, where Liverpool won a thrilling 2005 final on penalties against AC Milan.

Manuel Neuer has fond memories of London, where the Bavarians beat Borussia Dortmund in the 2013 final at Wembley.

"We're happy to go to London, we have great experiences from there. Chelsea are a dangerous team and we must take them extremely seriously," said Neuer.

Bayern forward Robert Lewandowski is the competition's leading scorer this season after netting 10 times in five group stage games.

Paris Saint-Germain, who impressed in the group stage and will be trying to avoid a fourth successive

last-16 exit, will take on 1997 champions Dortmund.

BARCELONA MEET NAPOLI

Barcelona will play Napoli for the first time as the Catalan giants, five-time European champions, attempt to move on from last season's painful semi-final loss to Liverpool.

Napoli appointed Gennaro Gattuso as coach last week after Carlo Ancelotti was sacked just hours after a 4-0 win over Genk which sent the Italian side into the last 16.

Italian champions Juventus and Cristiano Ronaldo will fancy their chances of overcoming French side Lyon, who lost captain Memphis Depay to a season-ending injury on Sunday.

"We can't complain. Last year we faced Atletico which was a harder draw, I think," Juventus vice-president Pavel Nedved told *Sky*.

"We can be happy, but if you're not in form come February, March you won't get through." Tottenham Hotspur, beaten 2-0 by Liverpool in last season's final in



DRAW RESULT			
WOLVERHAMPTON WANDERERS FC (ENGL)	FC BARCELONA (ESPA)	FC PORTO (POR)	FC INTERNAZIONALE MILANO (ITA)
SPORTING CP (POR)	FC BAYERN MÜNCHEN (GER)	FC SALZBURG (AUT)	FC SALZBURG (AUT)
GETAFE CF (ESPA)	MANCHESTER CITY FC (ENGL)	FC SEVILLA FC (ESPA)	FC SEVILLA FC (ESPA)
BAYER 04 LEVERKUSEN (GER)	JUVENTUS (ITA)	ARSENAL FC (ENGL)	ARSENAL FC (ENGL)
F.C. COFENHAGEN (DEN)	LIVERPOOL FC (ENGL)	LASK (AUT)	LASK (AUT)
APOEL FC (CYP)	FC BARCELONA (ESPA)	MANCHESTER UNITED FC (ENGL)	MANCHESTER UNITED FC (ENGL)
CFR 1907 CLUJ (ROM)	FC BARCELONA (ESPA)	FC INTERNAZIONALE MILANO (ITA)	FC INTERNAZIONALE MILANO (ITA)
OLYMPIACOS FC (GRE)	FC BARCELONA (ESPA)	FC SALZBURG (AUT)	FC SALZBURG (AUT)
AZ ALKMAAR (NED)	FC BARCELONA (ESPA)	FC SALZBURG (AUT)	FC SALZBURG (AUT)
CLUB BRUGGE (BEL)	FC BARCELONA (ESPA)	FC SALZBURG (AUT)	FC SALZBURG (AUT)
PFC LUDOGORETS 1945 (BUL)	FC BARCELONA (ESPA)	FC SALZBURG (AUT)	FC SALZBURG (AUT)
EINTRACHT FRANKFURT (GER)	FC BARCELONA (ESPA)	FC SALZBURG (AUT)	FC SALZBURG (AUT)
FC SHAKHTAR DONETSK (UKR)	FC BARCELONA (ESPA)	FC SALZBURG (AUT)	FC SALZBURG (AUT)
VIL WOLFBURG (GER)	FC BARCELONA (ESPA)	FC SALZBURG (AUT)	FC SALZBURG (AUT)
AS ROMA (ITA)	FC BARCELONA (ESPA)	FC SALZBURG (AUT)	FC SALZBURG (AUT)
RANGERS FC (SCO)	FC BARCELONA (ESPA)	FC SALZBURG (AUT)	FC SALZBURG (AUT)

The match fixtures are shown on a TV screen during the UEFA Europa League 2019/20 round of 32 draw, at the UEFA Headquarters in Nyon on Monday

Man Utd draw Brugge, Arsenal get Olympiakos

AFP ■ NYON

Manchester United will take on Club Brugge in the last 32 of the Europa League while struggling Arsenal will face Greek side Olympiakos following Monday's draw in Nyon.

United, who won the competition under Jose Mourinho in 2017, travel to Bruges for the first leg on February 20 before returning to Old Trafford a week later.

"There is no easy team at this stage but the team is doing well and hopefully we can get a good result," United club ambassador Park Ji-Sung told *BT Sport*.

"A couple of years ago we won the trophy and we know how beneficial it is, particularly with qualification to the Champions League."

Arsenal are languishing ninth in the Premier League after sacking coach Unai Emery but finished top of their group in Europe and are also away in the first leg.

"We are not doing so well, unfortunately in the Premier League, so this could be a route

into the Champions League next year, so I'm sure it will be one of our priorities," said Arsenal club secretary David Miles.

Ajax were drawn with Spanish outfit Getafe following their surprise exit from the group stage of the Champions League, while Serie A leaders Inter Milan travel to Ludogorets.

Antonio Conte's side will be among the favourites for the competition alongside last season's Champions League semi-finalists Ajax after failing to get past Barcelona and Borussia Dortmund in Europe's top competition.

Celtic face FC Copenhagen of Denmark while Steven Gerrard's Rangers come up against Portuguese outfit Braga.

Sevilla travel to Romanian side Cluj with the five-time winners riding high in La Liga, while fellow Spaniards Espanyol travel to Wolverhampton Wanderers, who are enjoying their first European campaign in nearly four decades.



SINGLES

NGIDI RULED OUT OF 1ST ENG TEST

JOHANNESBURG: As South Africa aim to break five-Test loss in the upcoming England series, they have received a major setback as fast bowler Lungi Ngidi has been ruled out of the Boxing Day Test. Ngidi has been diagnosed with a "significant Grade 1 hamstring muscle tear", which he picked up during warm-ups ahead of the Mzansi Super League play-offs. Cricket South Africa confirmed. "He will commence his rehab and return to play in January 2020, and based on his progress, a decision will be made regarding his availability for selection for the Proteas team," CSA chief medical officer Shuaib Manjra said.

STOKES TAKES BBC'S TOP SPORTS AWARD

ABERDEEN: Cricket World Cup winner Ben Stokes ended a sensational 2019 by claiming the BBC's Sports Personality of the Year prize. His performances in the World Cup final, which England won on an unprecedented boundary countback against New Zealand, and the third Ashes test helped him seal the public vote for the award, ahead of six-time Formula One world champion Lewis Hamilton and world 200-meter champion Dina Asher-Smith at Sunday's ceremony in Aberdeen. The award ceremony got off to a poignant start as former Scotland rugby international Doddie Weir was presented with the Helen Rollason award.

WI FINED FOR SLOW OVER-RATE

CHENNAI: West Indies players have been docked 80 per cent of their match fees for maintaining a slow over-rate in the first ODI against India in Chennai. ICC match referee David Boon imposed the fine after Kieron Pollard's side was ruled to be four overs short of its target after time allowances were taken into consideration. There was no need for a formal hearing as West Indies skipper Pollard pleaded guilty to the offence after the end of the match and accepted the proposed sanction.

PSV DISMISS BOMMEL OVER POOR RESULTS

AMSTERDAM: PSV Eindhoven axed former Dutch international Mark van Bommel as manager following a string of disappointing results which came to a head after a 3-1 loss against arch-rivals Feyenoord. The move comes after the southern Dutch club won just two of their last 12 games and with PSV 10 points adrift of Ajax and AZ Alkmaar in the Eredivisie title race. "PSV's board decided this morning to end its cooperation with chief coach Mark van Bommel," the club said in a statement. "The decision is based on the continual series of negative results," the club said, with general manager Toon Gerbrands adding "It's a large decline and unworthy of PSV."

NEUFC-BFC IN GUWAHATI TO GO AHEAD

GUWAHATI: The Indian Super League (ISL) match between NorthEast United FC and Bengaluru FC will be held as per schedule today with normalcy slowly returning to the Assam capital following days of unrest owing to the passing of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill. Sporting activities took a hit in Guwahati last week and NEUFC's earlier home match against Chennaiyin FC was postponed after the host city was placed under a curfew following protests against CAG. But as per team sources, today's match is very much on course. AGENCIES

Benzema salvages draw at Valencia

AFP ■ VALENCIA

Real Madrid missed the chance to replace Barcelona at the top of La Liga ahead of tomorrow's Clasico but salvaged a 1-1 draw against Valencia as Karim Benzema scored a dramatic injury-time equaliser on Sunday.

Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois ventured up for a final corner at Mestalla and it was his header that caused panic in the Valencia box, before the ball fell perfectly for Benzema to strike in the 95th minute.

"Opponents can get a little nervous if I go up," said Courtois. "Toni (Kroos) hit the corner to the near post and I just saw the ball was at my height and I caught it well."

Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane said: "He decided to go up and that shows we want more, than we never give up. The draw is a reward for the effort we made, which was a lot. This is Real Madrid, a team that never gives up."

Valencia looked set for an impressive victory after Carlos Soler had put



Thibaut Courtois attempts to score Real Madrid's equaliser against Valencia RMFC/Twitter

them ahead in the second half but both sides had to settle for a point at the end of a compelling contest between two of the league's form teams.

It means Barcelona remain top of the table but in front of Madrid only on goal difference,



after they were also held to a 2-2 draw away at Real Sociedad on Saturday.

Madrid were celebrating at the final whistle but the result completes a strong week for Valencia, who won away at Ajax on Tuesday to go through

as group winners to the Champions League last 16.

They stay eighth, now three points adrift of the top four.

Real Madrid have been on a good run too, now 10 matches unbeaten to crank up the pressure on Barca and leave behind their early-season stumbles that had put Zidane's future in doubt.

Zidane had said on Saturday nobody at the club would be looking ahead to the Clasico prematurely and while the draw against Valencia may mean an opportunity was missed, their late show still sends them to Camp Nou with a spring in their step.

"The team keeps up the unbeaten run and the boost to the mood from today is fantastic," said defender Dani Carvajal. "Now we have to win at Camp Nou to go into the break at the top."

Benzema, in particular, will be a key threat. The Frenchman had Courtois to thank for his latest effort but he now has 15 goals already this season and nine in his last eight games.

Mbappe extends PSG's lead

AFP ■ ST ETIENNE

Kylian Mbappe helped Paris Saint-Germain extend their Ligue 1 lead on Sunday with a brace in a comfortable 4-0 win over 10-man Saint-Etienne.

France forward Mbappe took his league tally to nine



in 11 appearances as his side took advantage of second-placed Marseille only drawing at Metz on Saturday to move seven points clear and tighten their grip on the French championship, which they have won six out of the last seven seasons.

"We have played three matches with a good mentality and lots of quality," said coach Thomas Tuchel.

"We played with the ball with intensity and seriousness. We created lots of chances and never stopped working defensively ... I'm happy." Leandro Paredes set the ball rolling in the

10th minute with a deflected strike and once Jean Eudes Aholou was sent off in the 25th minute for a dreadful late tackle on the Argentine PSG could stroll their way to three points.

Mbappe then ended any question of a Saint-Etienne comeback a minute before the break when he swiftly collected Neymar's brilliant through ball before sweeping his finish past Stephane Ruffier. Brazilian Neymar then

Depay's Euro 2020 at risk

AFP ■ LYON

Memphis Depay's bid to play for the Netherlands in Euro 2020 suffered a huge blow after Lyon revealed that their star attacker had torn the anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee during Sunday's 1-0 defeat to Rennes.

Depay's season is over after Lyon said that he would be out for "no less than six months", confirming an injury coach Rudi Garcia had revealed was a strong possibility in the aftermath of their loss at the Groupama Stadium.

Garcia said after the

defeat that he feared the worst for the 25-year-old, who has scored eight times in his last eight matches in all competitions for Lyon, including the goal that took them to the last 16 of the Champions League.

On a dreadful day for Lyon, Depay's teammate Jeff Reine-Adelaide has also been ruled out for the season after tearing the same ligament in his right knee.

"Memphis' injury is a catastrophe because he is our most decisive player ... we'll have to forget about him for the rest of the season," said Lyon's sporting director Juninho.

missed the chance to make it three from the penalty spot just after the hour mark, his spot-kick clipping the outside of the post, before Mauro Icardi made it 13 goals in all competitions this season with a tap-in 11 minutes later.

Mbappe put the cherry on the cake in the final minute as the home fans let off a cascade

of fireworks in the stands to celebrate the birthday of one of their hardcore supporter groups.

The 20-year-old collected another Neymar pass and burst past Wesley Fofana before lashing his shot in the far corner, celebrating by the stands as flares and fireworks billowed smoke and flame towards the pitch.

Inter held in Fiorentina

AFP ■ FLORENCE

Inter Milan failed to go two points clear of Juventus at the top of Serie A table on Sunday after Antonio Conte's side were held 1-1 at Fiorentina.

Dusan Vlahovic snatched a point for Fiorentina two minutes into injury time to frustrate Inter Milan who had led following Borja Valero's opener after eight minutes in Tuscany.

Both Juventus and Inter Milan have 39 points from 16 games, with Antonio Conte's side ahead on goal difference.

Valero scored off a Marcelo Brozovic cross against his former club.

But the visitors failed to kill off the game. Lautaro Martinez had the ball in the net after 39 minutes but it was disallowed because of Romelu Lukaku's offside position.

And Fiorentina goalkeeper Bartlomiej Dragowski did well to deny Lukaku minutes later at full stretch.

But just as it looked like Fiorentina were set to fall to



Borja Valero reacts after he scores Inter Milan's first goal Inter/Twitter

a fifth consecutive defeat, 19-year-old Serb Vlahovic broke through from his own half, outpacing Milan Skriniar to rifle in from an angle.

It condemned Inter to their second consecutive stalemate after Roma last weekend, and follows their Champions League exit to Barcelona on Tuesday.

"It's the third game where we did not get what we deserved," said Conte. "We weren't good at

Renewed fears of unrest have even raised the possibility of the match being postponed for a second time.

Meetings have taken place between the police, clubs and the Spanish Football Federation (RFEF) to ensure the safe arrival of the two squads and referees, as well as the nearly 100,000 fans expected to attend.

The operation will involve some 3,000 security personnel, as well as a cordon to prevent demonstrations blocking entrances to the ground.

In the stands, the numbers of private security staff will also be increased to reduce the threat of pitch invasions that could interrupt the game. AFP